



**A University of Sussex DPhil thesis**

Available online via Sussex Research Online:

<http://eprints.sussex.ac.uk/>

This thesis is protected by copyright which belongs to the author.

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Please visit Sussex Research Online for more information and further details

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

‘Is It Good for the Jews?’  
Jewish Intellectuals and the Formative Years  
of Neoconservatism,  
1945-1980

Nadja A. Janssen

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS

for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Field of American History, Literature and Social Studies

Brighton, United Kingdom

11 January 2010

For my family

## Acknowledgements



This work would not have been possible without the unflinching support, patient encouragement and constructive advice of Clive Webb and Jarod Roll. My gratitude also goes to Margaret Reynolds and Alun Howkins at the Postgraduate Centre of the School of Humanities for their alacrity in arranging financial assistance for research trips and conferences and to the American Studies Department for the provision of continued teaching throughout the past four years. Furthermore, I wish to thank the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, whose funding enabled me to visit archives in the United States.

I wish to express my gratitude to the following librarians for their excellent advice and help: Adina Anflick at the American Jewish Historical Society, Roberta Saltzman and her amiable colleagues at the Dorot Jewish Division of the New York Public Library, and Jennifer Brathovde and her teammates at the Manuscript Division Library of Congress. I thank Cyma Horowitz at the American Jewish Committee's Blaustein Library for being ever so courteous with locating valuable material. Also of great help were Jennifer B. Lee at the Rare Books & Manuscript Library at Columbia University, as well as Ronald Bulatoff and Carol A. Leadenham at the Hoover Institution Archives.

I would also like to thank my interview partners for the time taken out of their busy schedules to share their knowledge with me: Jonathan Sarna at Brandeis, Ruth Wisse and Nathan Glazer in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Irwin Stelzer in Washington D.C., Norman Podhoretz in New York, William Kristol at the *Weekly Standard*, Neal Kozodoy at *Commentary*, Joshua Muravchik at the American Enterprise Institute and Daniel Kimmage of Radio Liberty/Radio Free Europe. Thank you also to Michael

Kimmage for introducing me to Ruth Wisse, to Tristan Stubbs for putting me in touch with Irwin Stelzer and to Leyre Gonzalez for arranging the interview. Finally, I want to thank Stephen Whitfield and Nathan Abrams for all the valuable advice given throughout the last four years.

Moreover, I am thankful to those who helped me locate or provided me with accommodation while researching archives and libraries in the United States: Fabian Rühle, Richard Parker, Frank Janssen, Joshua Derman, John Woods, Kerstin Hofmann, Aila Hofmann-Woods, Michael Wood and family, Alain Vandepeute, Michael Kimmage, Karla Goldmann, Natasha Canlas and Brandon Erina. Last but certainly not least, my gratitude belongs to my family and my friends for their unconditional love, everlasting loyalty and indispensable support.

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be submitted in whole or in part to this or any other university for the award of any other degree.

Nadja A. Janssen

11 January 2010

## Thesis Abstract



This thesis re-evaluates the emergence of the neoconservative critique of American post-war liberalism from 1945 to 1980. Its original contribution to the scholarship on neoconservatism lies in the claim that a particular understanding of Jewishness fundamentally shaped the neoconservatives' right turn, as well as neoconservative ideology. Few scholars have recognised the primacy of Jewish identity politics in the evolutionary history of neoconservatism. Those who have, have done so inadequately and unmethodically. Therefore, my thesis systematically analyses the Jewish dimension of early neoconservatism by placing particular focus on its two principal mouthpieces, *Commentary* and *The Public Interest*, while drawing on autobiographical writings, personal papers and oral interviews.

Reconsidering neoconservatism from this angle also contributes to a re-evaluation of modern Jewish political history by debunking the myth that the American Jewish community is governed by consensus based on political identification with liberalism. My thesis shows that neoconservatism not only contributed to the rise of conservatism and the fall of liberalism on a national level, but also played an important role in post-1945 Jewish intra-communal contentions about which political affiliation best expresses modern Jewish American identity. Accordingly, it demonstrates that Jewish political culture is more diverse than is usually appreciated and that neoconservatives draw on a tradition of Jewish conservatism, which has so far received little attention from scholars of modern Jewish history.

## CONTENTS



<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>Chapter 1</b>	
<b>‘Unparalleled Opportunities’: From Anxious Subculture Into the Mainstream, 1930-1945</b>	17
Introduction	17
‘Still a Distinctive Race’: American Jewry in the 1930	23
Franklin D. Roosevelt and the ‘Jew Deal’	31
The Impact of the Second World War and the Destruction of European Jewry on American Jews	39
Conclusion	50
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
<b>‘Exile and Homecoming’: <i>Commentary</i> and the Renegotiation of Jewish American Identity, 1945-1959</b>	53
Introduction	53
‘An Act of Faith in America’: The Birth of <i>Commentary</i> Magazine	58
‘Is America Exile or Home?’: Pro-Americanism, Anti-Communism and the Legacy of the Holocaust	74
‘What Is Good for Israel is Good for America’: Israel and <i>Commentary</i> Magazine	87
Conclusion	97
<b>Chapter 3</b>	
<b>‘Liberal Judaism is a Contradiction in Terms’: <i>Commentary</i> and the Anti-Progressive Backlash, 1960-1965</b>	99
Introduction	99
Norman Podhoretz: ‘The Meir Kahane of the Intellectuals’	104
The ‘New <i>Commentary</i> ’: A Voice of Radicalism?	109
‘A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance’: Hannah Arendt’s <i>Eichmann in Jerusalem</i>	116
The Civil Rights Movement and <i>Commentary</i> Magazine	122
‘The True Democrats Are the Few’: Old versus New Radicals	132
Conclusion	141

<b>Chapter 4</b>	
<b>‘A Crisis in Values’: <i>The Public Interest</i> and the Limits of Liberalism, 1965-1972</b>	143
Introduction	143
<i>The Public Interest</i> : ‘A Middle-Aged Magazine for Middle-Aged Readers’	147
The Defence of the Bourgeois Populist Order against Countercultural Millenarians	168
<i>Commentary</i> , the Spectre of Anti-Semitism and Jewish Radicals	175
‘Come Home Democrats’:	
The Coalition for a Democratic Majority and Democrats for Nixon	186
Conclusion	191
 <b>Chapter 5</b>	
<b>‘Come on in, the Water is Fine’: Towards a Consolidation of the Neoconservative Critique, 1972-1980</b>	194
Introduction	194
‘Into the Right’:	
Neoconservative Institution- and Coalition Building	198
‘Reverse Discrimination’:	
The Neoconservative Case Against Affirmative Action	209
‘Who Is Kosher and Who Is <i>Treif</i> ’:	
Israel, Anti-Semitism and Jewish Radical	222
‘The Culture of Appeasement’:	
A Resurgence of ‘the Spirit of Munich’	231
Conclusion	243
 <b>Conclusion</b>	
<b>‘Outsiders Still’: Neoconservatives, American Jews, and the New Right</b>	246
 <b>Bibliography</b>	263
 <b>List of Abbreviations</b>	302

## Introduction



In 1988, the traditionalist conservative Russell Kirk predicted that, “within a very few years we will hear no more of the Neoconservatives”.<sup>1</sup> A couple of years later, the self-professed “godfather” of neoconservatism, Irving Kristol, seemed to agree. Kristol claimed that neoconservatism had been but “a generational phenomenon”, which had been “absorbed into a larger, more comprehensive conservatism” by the mid-1990s.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, in March 1996, one year after he had stepped down as editor-in-chief of the “neocon bible” *Commentary*, Norman Podhoretz, “the mandarin general” of neoconservatism, wrote, “neoconservatism is dead...it no longer exists as a distinctive phenomenon”. Yet he also warned the liberal “enemies” of neoconservatism that this was not cause for celebration, since the legacy neoconservatives had left behind would “continue to plague them for a very long time to come”.<sup>3</sup>

With the World Trade Center bombings of September 2001 and the subsequent war on terror, neoconservatism found a new lease on life.<sup>4</sup> In the years following 9/11 the term

---

<sup>1</sup> Russell Kirk, “The Neoconservatives: An Endangered Species”, Heritage Lecture 178 (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1988, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/PoliticalPhilosophy/HL178.cfm> (accessed August 30, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Irving Kristol, “Neoconservatism: An Idea Whose Time is Now”, *Esquire*, February 13, 1979, 23-42; Irving Kristol, *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1995), 40.

<sup>3</sup> Max Boot, “What the Heck Is a ‘Neocon’?” *Wall Street Journal*, December 30, 2002, <http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110002840> (accessed June 18, 2009); Sidney Blumenthal, *The Rise of Counter-Establishment: From Conservative Ideology to Political Power* (New York: Union Square Press, 2008), 121; Norman Podhoretz, “Neoconservatism: A Eulogy”, *Commentary*, March 1996, 19.

<sup>4</sup> Until September 11, 2001, neoconservatives were junior players in the Bush administration. John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, *The Right Nation: Why America is Different* (London: Penguin, 2005), 200. Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay show that the neoconservative influence on the Bush administration’s policies has been greatly overstated. *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2003); James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush’s War Cabinet* (New York: Penguin, 2004).

experienced a revival as pundits rushed to characterise as neoconservative the Bush administration and the group of thinkers who allegedly provided Bush with the rationale for regime change and pre-emptive military action. There was talk of a revolution in U.S. foreign policy, supposedly instigated by a cadre of policy intellectuals, who had emerged from conservative think tanks such as the Hudson Institute, the now defunct Project for a New American Century (PNAC), the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and also the world of magazines, such as *Commentary*, *The Public Interest (PI)*, and *The Weekly Standard* to manipulate the president into implementing their ideas for ‘remaking the world’.<sup>5</sup> Prominent neoconservatives within the Bush administration included Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, Richard Perle and Elliot Abrams. If one believes most commentators as well as neoconservatives themselves, they were highly successful in their effort to “whisper in the ears of the powerful”.<sup>6</sup>

While Wolfowitz, Feith, Perle, Abrams and others were correctly identified as neoconservatives, the usage of the term itself often bordered on the anachronistic with a tendency towards exaggerating neoconservatives’ power by neoconservatives and critics alike. The terminology was not only applied to define its legitimate legatees, but in many cases extended to include George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Condoleezza Rice, and Colin Powell - all of whom neither accepted the label nor objectively qualified for it. Moreover, neoconservatism was often described in terms implying a hard-line Zionist

---

<sup>5</sup> Joshua Micah Marshall, “Remaking the World: Bush and the Neoconservatives”, *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2003, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/59380/joshua-micah-marshall/remaking-the-world-bush-and-the-neoconservatives> (accessed November 9, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Shadia B. Drury, “Saving America: Leo Strauss and the Neoconservatives”, *Evatt Foundation*, September 10, 2003, <http://evatt.labor.net.au/publications/papers/112.html> (accessed June 17, 2009).

conspiracy out to subvert American interests in the name of Likkudnik, Greater-Israel ideology.<sup>7</sup>

Neoconservatives certainly hold a partial responsibility for the failures of the disastrous Iraq adventure – and yet recent coverage often misrepresented them, announcing once again, the death of neoconservatism, as the Bush administration was preparing to leave office. This recurring need to eulogise neoconservatism is itself an interesting phenomenon, which not only testifies to the emotionality and divisiveness that surrounds discussions of neoconservatism, but also highlights its continued relevance to contemporary American political discourse. Yet the recent debates have shown that our current understanding of neoconservatism is marked by misrepresentations and misconceptions, which this thesis seeks to correct. Moreover, a reconsideration of its evolutionary history demonstrates that even though contemporary neoconservatism may appear divorced from its original intent and has undergone a number of changes since its inception, in essence and style it still remains very much the same. Ruth Wisse describes its development as a process by which, over a period of forty years, “certain things were coming into the foreground and others receding into the background”.<sup>8</sup>

A historical re-evaluation of neoconservatism’s genesis, of its original ideas and the main factors actuating it, will therefore be the aim of this thesis. While taking into consideration a number of variables, which led to the emergence of neoconservatism, this thesis primarily seeks to determine the extent to which a particular perception of Jewish identity and interests informed the birth of neoconservative ideas. Even though neoconservatism was and is not an exclusively Jewish rationale, its main early proponents

---

<sup>7</sup> Stephen J. Sniegowski, *The Transparent Cabal: The Neoconservative Agenda, War in the Middle East, and the National Interest of Israel* (Norfolk, Va.: IHS Press, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> Ruth Wisse, interview with author, Cambridge, Ma., April 11, 2008.

were all Jewish. Moreover, it was indeed the gradual reclaiming of their Jewish identity, defined in ethnic terms that fundamentally shaped the political right turn of these intellectuals - a fact few scholars have recognised. Reconstructing the history of neoconservatism from this perspective allows for an improved appreciation of contemporary events and demonstrates that neoconservative ideas emerged at a much earlier time than is generally understood. Moreover, it complicates the evolutionary history of neoconservatism, qualifies traditional interpretations of modern American Jewish political culture and revises the role played by disenchanted Jewish liberals in the formation of modern American conservatism during the 1970s and 1980s.

At the present time, the term ‘neoconservatism’ is generally used as pejorative, referring to an ideological tendency within conservatism, which promotes an ‘imperial’ foreign policy and a hyper-nationalist approach to American power. Yet, upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that neoconservatism evades simple characterisation. Most neoconservatives speak of an intellectual orientation or political tendency, infused with internal differences, constituted of a few core members and many vague sympathisers. Podhoretz described neoconservatism as “a movement...fed by various strands”, while Kristol referred to it as a “persuasion” whose adherents were anti-communist liberals “mugged by reality”.<sup>9</sup> Midge Decter defined a neoconservative as “a special kind of conservative, one who has arrived at conservatism from the left, and whose politics are far more in the head than in the local precinct or even national political party”.<sup>10</sup> Timothy Noah characterised a neoconservative as a liberal “who has been seduced by the notion that

---

<sup>9</sup> Norman Podhoretz, Lecture at “Neo-Conservatism” conference, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, September 3-6, 1981, Transcript, 1, Box 4, Interviews and Speeches January to November 1982, Norman Podhoretz Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., cited hereafter as NPP.; Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, ix.

<sup>10</sup> Midge Decter, “A Neocon Memoir”, *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June-September 1999): 183.

America is in steep decline and must reassert itself as a moral and military force in an otherwise corrupt world”.<sup>11</sup> While all of these definitions capture one or another aspect of neoconservatism, none grasp it in its entirety, reflecting the elusiveness and the polymorphous nature of the matter.

Most original neoconservatives were radicals in their youths, many of them children of eastern European immigrants, and belonged to the New York intellectuals, a loose circle of self-professed public thinkers. Having felt alienated from American mainstream as well as from Jewish culture, a number of them began a simultaneous reconsideration of their American and Jewish heritage through the prism of the Second World War and the Holocaust after the war.<sup>12</sup> In the process of reasserting these identities, they reinterpreted not only the American tradition of liberalism, but also Jewish political culture in narrow and highly defensive terms. As adherents to the liberal Cold War consensus from the late 1940s onwards, future neoconservatives began to argue that a perverted liberalism had taken over mainstream politics by the middle of the 1960s, one which was anti-middle-class, anti-American and anti-Jewish in nature. Hence they began to develop a rationale with which the perceived destructive tendencies of the new liberalism could be thwarted. By 1980 neoconservatives were an integral part of Reagan’s New Right and embraced a jingoistic patriotism and Jewish ethnocentrism.

---

<sup>11</sup> Timothy Noah, “Fathers and Sons”, *The New York Times*, January 13, 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/books/review/Noah-t.html> (accessed November 12, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> For the history of the New York intellectuals see: Alan M. Wald, *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left From the 1930s to the 1980s* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987); Alexander Bloom, *Prodigal Sons: The New York Intellectuals And Their World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); William Phillips, *A Partisan View: Five Decades of the Literary Life* (New York: Stein and Day, 1983); William Barrett, *The Truants: Adventures Among the Intellectuals* (New York: Doubleday, 1982); Terry A. Cooney, *The Rise of The New York Intellectuals: ‘Partisan Review’ and Its Circle, 1934-1945* (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986); Ruth R. Wisse, “The New York (Jewish) Intellectuals”, *Commentary*, November 1987, 28-38; Irving Howe, “The New York Intellectuals: A Chronicle and a Critique”, *Commentary*, October 1986, 29-51; Irving Howe, *A Margin of Hope: An Intellectual Autobiography* (San Diego: Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982); Neil Jumonville, ed., *The New York Intellectuals Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

This re-evaluation focuses on the years 1945 to 1980. Beginning their journey into mainstream American society and the intellectual establishment after the Second World War, neoconservatives had by 1980 instituted themselves as conservative critics of liberalism and risen into positions of political power within and outside the Reagan administration. Throughout these years, neoconservative thought did not develop in a linear manner, but rather as a bundle of *ad-hoc*, often fragmented, contradictory and highly individualistic responses to events and developments, as they were unfolding on the communal, national and international stage. This is demonstrated by a systematic evaluation of both *Commentary*, founded under the auspices of the American Jewish Committee (AJC), and, as of 1965, *PI*, a brainchild of Irving Kristol and Daniel Bell.

While future neoconservatives also published in *Encounter*, *The New Leader*, *American Scholar*, *Harper's Magazine*, *The New York Post*, and *The Washington Post*, this thesis places a particular focus on *Commentary* and *PI* as the two principal mouthpieces of early neoconservatism. The contiguous analysis of both *Commentary* and *PI* discredits those interpretations of neoconservatism that assess it almost exclusively either from a foreign policy standpoint, such as John Ehrman's *The Rise of Neoconservatism*, or from a domestic policy perspective, such as Peter Steinfels's *The Neoconservatives*.<sup>13</sup> These approaches disregard the fact that the domestic and international spheres were intricately interconnected in early neoconservatism and part of a comprehensive critique of modern American liberalism. Finally, this thesis also draws on under-used autobiographical writings, personal papers and oral interviews.

---

<sup>13</sup> John Ehrmann, *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1994* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1995); Peter Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979); see also: Garry Dorrien, *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

The main proponents of early neoconservatism were Norman Podhoretz, Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, Daniel Bell, Sidney Hook, Milton Himmelfarb, Midge Decter and Getrude Himmelfarb. Some of the younger and/or less central neoconservatives whose voices nevertheless played a minor part in re-evaluating neoconservatism's rise are Lucy Dawidowicz, Ruth Wisse, Joshua Muravchik, Irwin Stelzer, William Kristol, Neal Kozodoy, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, James Q. Wilson, Ben J. Wattenberg, David Brooks, and Michael Novak, to name but a few. While others contributed to the emergence of neoconservatism, the above-mentioned actors constituted the core group of thinkers who developed the ideas that gave rise to the neoconservative rationale.

Neoconservatism has received little comprehensive and serious treatment. Much of the literature consists of essays, newspaper articles, and essay collections. Moreover, many studies are driven by political agendas, either condemning or defending neoconservatism. No one enjoys discussing neoconservatism more than neoconservatives and their supporters. These publications are highly stylised canticles, such as Kristol's *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea* or Norman Podhoretz's numerous autobiographical polemics, which interpret the rise of neoconservatism as an unavoidable and heroic development, according to which neoconservatives remained true to 'real' liberalism in response to the rise of the New Left.<sup>14</sup> They generally disregard the

---

<sup>14</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*; Irving Kristol, *On the Democratic Idea in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972); Irving Kristol, *Reflections of a Neoconservative: Looking Back, Looking Ahead* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); Thomas L. Jeffers, ed., *The Norman Podhoretz Reader: A Selection of His Writings from the 1950s through the 1990s* (New York: Free Press, 2004); Christopher DeMuth and William Kristol, eds., *The Neoconservative Imagination: Essays in Honor of Irving Kristol* (Washington, D.C.: The AEI Press, 1995); Midge Decter, *The Liberated Woman and Other Americans* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1971); Midge Decter, *Liberal Parents, Radical Children* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1975); Irwin Stelzer, ed. *Neoconservatism* (London: Atlantic Books, 2004); Norman Podhoretz, *Making It* (New York: Random House, 1967); Norman Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks: A Political Memoir* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979); Norman Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends: Falling Out with Allen Ginsberg, Lionel and Diana Trilling, Lillian Hellman, Hannah Arendt and Norman Mailer* (New York: Free Press, 1999); Norman Podhoretz, *My Love Affair with America: A Cautionary Tale of a Cheerful Conservative* (New York: Free Press, 2000);

polymorphous nature of neoconservatism and the extent to which early neoconservatism was very much in tune with the emerging New Right. As examples of political biography, these testimonials are valuable primary sources, which allow scholars to infer a sense of the polemical atmosphere that surrounded neoconservatism's emergence. However, they also were "written for the benefit of posterity", and as such "overlaid with intentions that are inconsistent with strict regard for historical truth".<sup>15</sup> It is therefore essential to not to approach them at face value.

A similar problem exists with those narratives, which try to politically discredit neoconservatism.<sup>16</sup> Leftist critics, such as Lewis Coser and Irving Howe, accused neoconservatives to be "liberals who got cold feet", whose gratitude to a system, which enabled their social climb, turned into "a self-satisfied conservatism".<sup>17</sup> Bernard Avishai, writing for *Commentary*'s leftist nemesis *Dissent*, cast Jewish neoconservatives as traitors, having turned into spokespeople of the Jewish establishment and replaced the Jewish commitment to social justice with Jewish jingoism.<sup>18</sup> According to conservative Paul Gottfried, neoconservatism was too worldly, too issue-oriented and too little informed by "permanent principles" of human nature, which organise society in terms of an ascriptive

---

Norman Podhoretz, *World War IV: The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism* (New York: Doubleday, 2007); Norman Podhoretz, *Why Are Jews Liberals?* (New York: Doubleday, 2009); see also: Mark Gerson, *The Neoconservative Vision: From the Cold War to the Culture Wars* (New York: Madison Books, 1997); Mark Gerson, ed., *The Essential Neoconservative Reader* (Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1996); Oliver Kamm, *Anti-Totalitarianism: The Left-Wing Case for a Neoconservative Foreign Policy* (London: Social Affairs Unit, 2005); Douglas Murray, *Neoconservatism: Why We Need It* (London: Social Affairs Unit, 2005).

<sup>15</sup> John Tosh and Sean Lang, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* (Harlow, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 63-65, 119-122.

<sup>16</sup> Gore Vidal, "The Empire Lovers Strike Back", *The Nation*, March 22, 1986, 350-353; Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*; Patrick J. Buchanan, *Where the Right Went Wrong: How Neoconservatives Subverted the Reagan Revolution and Hijacked the Bush Presidency* (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 2005); Paul Gottfried, "What's In A Name? The Curious Case of 'Neoconservative'", VDARE.com, <http://www.vdare.com/gottfried/neoconservative.htm> (accessed August 11, 2009).

<sup>17</sup> Lewis Coser and Irving Howe, eds., *The New Conservatives: A Critique from the Left* (New York: The New American Library, 1977), 4-5.

<sup>18</sup> Bernard Avishai, "Breaking Faith: *Commentary* and the American Jews", *Dissent*, Spring 1981, 236-256.

social hierarchy in accordance with the belief in a superior force as the mainspring of all things. Critics, both on the left and on the right, contended that neoconservatives were so concerned with the interest of Israel, that it seemed as if, in the words of Kirk, “some eminent Neoconservatives mistook Tel Aviv for the capital of the United States”.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Kirk believed that neoconservatives were busy “pursuing a fanciful democratic globalism rather than the national interest of the United States”.<sup>20</sup> While these approaches offer an insight into the hard-fought ideological battles between the left and the right, as well as within the right itself, they are extremely reductive and distortive and do not allow for systematic insight into a subject.

The Jewish dimension of early neoconservatism is central to Murray Friedman’s *The Neoconservative Revolution* and Jacob Heilbrunn’s *They Knew They Were Right*.<sup>21</sup> While these studies concede that Jewish identity politics was central for the emergence of neoconservatism, they overlook the central role played by early Holocaust consciousness during the 1950s and early 1960s amongst future neoconservatives. The Holocaust and its memory is conspicuously absent from Friedman’s narrative. Friedman’s explanation that it was a heightened awareness of “totalitarianism and massive human suffering” as well as “an unabashed proclivity for intellectualism” which gave neoconservatism a specifically Jewish note, does not in itself explain the emergence of Jewish neoconservatism. As a matter of fact, one comes away from Friedman’s study not really knowing what the Jewish dimension of neoconservatism is.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Kirk, “The Neoconservatives” (accessed August 30, 2009); Sniegowski, *The Transparent Cabal*.

<sup>20</sup> Kirk, “The Neoconservatives” (accessed August 30, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> Murray Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution: Jewish Intellectuals and the Shaping of Public Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Jacob Heilbrunn, *They Knew They Were Right: The Rise of the Neocons* (New York: Doubleday, 2008).

<sup>22</sup> Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution*, 8.

The same holds true for Heilbrunn who claims at the outset that the emergence of neoconservatism was “shaped by the Jewish immigrant experience, by the Holocaust, and by the twentieth century struggle against totalitarianism”, but never investigates the subject in any meaningful and comprehensive way.<sup>23</sup> Both studies discuss the issue in dissociation from the larger Jewish intra-communal debates about the meaning of Jewish identity in a post-Holocaust world, which were crucial in defining the Jewish character of early neoconservative thought. Furthermore, neither Friedman nor Heilbrunn take into consideration the impact the civil rights movement had on the Jewish self-perception of future neoconservatives and their anti-progressive reaction to it. Finally, both studies strongly base themselves on secondary sources and fail to draw sufficiently on the wealth of primary sources to make their case.

Additionally, the Jewish dimension of neoconservatism is reduced often to a hawkish support for Israel. According to Robert Wright “Critics murmur that neoconservatism ‘is all about Israel’”.<sup>24</sup> This thesis will show that while the defence of Israel and the emergence of a hard-line pro-Zionist stance played an important role in the intellectual genesis of neoconservatism, it was not initially a central driving force in its emergence. While Israel’s security and its strategic importance to the U.S. are central tenets, neoconservatism is primarily concerned with the state of American power and democracy. Neoconservatism, in the words of Podhoretz, “would have been better named neonationalism than neoconservatism”, since its main impulse was “a reaffirmation of the

---

<sup>23</sup> Heilbrunn, *They Knew They Were Right*, 10.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Wright, “The Neocon Paradox”, *The New York Times*, April 24, 2007, <http://select.nytimes.com/2007/04/24/opinion/24wright.html> (accessed November 13, 2009).

liberal democratic virtues” of the American system and “of the culture of the West in general”.<sup>25</sup>

Chapter 1 locates the emergence of Jewish neoconservatism within the context of American Jewish political history of the twentieth century, which, since the late 1920s, has been defined by a strong attachment to liberalism and the Democratic Party. As Jews became fully integrated into American society after 1945, a new set of anxieties with respect to Jewish life emerged, which according to future neoconservatives were no longer to be remedied by liberalism but by a more conservative approach to politics. Chapters 2 and 3 show how this anti-progressive outlook began to develop during the 1950s and early 1960s with respect to issues of anti-communism and the budding civil rights movement. By the early 1960s, those who would a decade later become known as neoconservatives began to argue in the pages of *Commentary* that defending the civil liberties of communists and a strong attachment to civil rights were no longer compatible with the Jewish interest and that those Jews who promoted these issues were undermining Jewish group cohesiveness. Chapter 4 introduces the other primary mouthpiece of early neoconservatism, *PI*. The journal was founded with the proclaimed intent to focus on non-ideological social policy analysis. Yet, as the chapter shows, *PI* was an ideological undertaking from the beginning and very quickly turned into a proponent of a value-driven conservatism, which believed that governmental interventionism in the social realm created more problems than it solved. Together with *Commentary*, *PI* mounted a full-blown attack against interventionist liberalism and 1960s radicalism, and a defence of traditional cultural and social values. Chapter 5 deals with the burgeoning alliance between neoconservatism and the New Right.

---

<sup>25</sup> Podhoretz, Lecture at “Neo-Conservatism” conference, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, September 3-6, 1981, Transcript, 6, NPP.

While neoconservatives had been closer to traditional conservatism throughout the later 1960s and early 1970s than is generally assessed, the alliance remained complicated. By the 1980s, however, they came to embrace the New Right candidate Ronald Reagan and, with him, the neoconservatives moved into the realms of political power.

This thesis argues that the right turn of a number of Jewish intellectuals is seminally informed by their rediscovery of their Jewish identity in the aftermath of the Second World War and the Holocaust, as well as by a renewed appreciation of the American status quo. This approach demonstrates that the emergence of neoconservatism was intricately shaped by Jewish intra-communal debates relative to the lessons of the Holocaust, anti-communism, civil rights and liberal politics generally. Informed by an existential angst and an intertwining of neoconservatives' insider status with an outsider memory, early neoconservatives began to develop a particularistic interpretation of Jewish identity, informed by ideas of Jewish group survivalism and an excessive pro-Americanism. This mindset translated for example into an embrace of unqualified hard anti-communism and a rejection of pro-active racial integrationist measures, such as such as busing and affirmative action. Arguments made with respect to these issues show that neoconservatives rationalised their distancing from progressive liberalism in the name of perceived Jewish interests and that the emergence of neoconservative thought was intricately connected to Jewish intra-communal debates about the essence of Jewish identity in a post-Holocaust world.<sup>26</sup>

At the centre of neoconservative evolutionary history lay the idea that American society was undergoing a crisis in values and authority, brought about by the perceived

---

<sup>26</sup> Kirsten Fermaglich, *American Dreams and Nazi Nightmares: Early Holocaust Consciousness and Liberal America, 1957-1965* (Waltham, Ma.: Brandeis University Press, 2006).

excesses of progressive liberalism, which not only undermined America's original liberal-democratic tradition, but also directly affected Jewish group interests and survival. Podhoretz intricately connected the neoconservative defence of the American status quo "at a time when America has been under moral and ideological attack" from liberal and radical forces to the defence of "the Jewish people and the Jewish state". To him there was "no conflict or contradiction involved in defending this dual heritage by which I have been formed".<sup>27</sup> By the late 1960s, neoconservatives believed that "new threats to Jewish security" were no longer coming from the right, as in the past, but from the left.<sup>28</sup> Part of the neoconservative agenda was therefore a concerted effort to convince American Jews, who continued to vote Democratic and identify with liberalism in great numbers, that their security was no longer tied to forces of liberalism but rather to forces of conservatism.<sup>29</sup>

The investigation of the Jewish dimension of neoconservatism, therefore, partially revises the traditional narrative according to which American Jews are congenitally predisposed to be politically liberal. Indeed public opinion polls have repeatedly shown that American Jews consider political liberalism to be the essence of American Jewish identity. The idea that Jews are 'by nature' liberal has become so ingrained in popular Jewish American culture that many American Jews have come to consider that "the contents of liberal American and Jewish culture...as almost identical".<sup>30</sup> Revisionist scholars, however, claim that conservatism is actually more emblematic of traditional Jewish thought than liberalism. Jonathan Sarna, for example, has shown that there are ample, but under-

---

<sup>27</sup> Norman Podhoretz, "Editing *Commentary*: A Valedictory", *Commentary*, June 1995, 19-20.

<sup>28</sup> Norman Podhoretz, Interview for the William E. Wiener Oral History Library, December 2, 1980, Transcript, 33, Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library, cited hereafter as Wiener Oral History Library.

<sup>29</sup> Wisse, April 11, 2008.

<sup>30</sup> Steven M. Cohen, *The Dimensions of American Jewish Liberalism* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1989), 33; Sylvia Barack Fishman, *Jewish Life and American Culture* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2000), 179.

discussed, precedents within American history of Jews who embraced a politics defined by ideas of a limited federal government on the one hand and by an emphasis on social stability and moral authorities on the other.<sup>31</sup>

While neoconservatives never argued explicitly from within a tradition of Jewish political conservatism, they nevertheless denied the idea of an ‘organic’ connection between liberalism and Jews. By revising this axiom, they contributed to creating patterns of political identification according to which Jewish conservatism was no longer “a contradiction in terms”.<sup>32</sup> Neoconservatives rejected what they regarded as the “moral solipsism” of Jewish liberal politics, according to which Jews had felt uncomfortable throughout their history with the acquisition and exercise of political power and tended, both as a collective and as individuals, to pay greater attention to their own moral performance rather than to the necessities of survival.<sup>33</sup> While this thesis agrees with revisionist historians that Jewish neoconservatives were not an aberration within broader Jewish American political culture, it also shows that this culture has always been more diverse and dynamic than either traditional or revisionist interpretations allow for. This thesis demonstrates that while there are indeed precepts within Jewish religious and cultural tradition from which rationalisations for political liberalism flow, the same holds true with regard to political conservatism.

Lastly, this thesis reconsiders the role played by formerly leftist Jewish intellectuals in the rise of modern American conservatism. While some, such as Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke’s *America Alone*, consider neoconservatism as “little more than an

---

<sup>31</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, “American Jewish Political Conservatism in Historical Perspective”, *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June- September 1999): 113-122.

<sup>32</sup> Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution*, 8.

<sup>33</sup> Ruth R. Wisse, *Jews and Power* (New York: Schocken Books, 2007).

aberration” within American conservatism and broader American political culture, most analyses either describe the emergence of neoconservatism in isolation from the rise of the New Right or suggest, as for example Friedman, an excessive influence of neoconservatism within the modern American conservative movement.<sup>34</sup> While Peter Steinfels’ *The Neoconservatives* and Garry Dorrien’s *The Neoconservative Mind*, for example, render a telling account of the alleged cultural crisis, which early neoconservatives diagnosed, both focus heavily on the intellectual warfare of budding neoconservatives against the liberal establishment. Steinfels described this conflict within the liberal intelligentsia in terms of an updated version of the battles between the Stalinists and the anti-Stalinists of the 1930s and 1940s, an interpretation, which reduces neoconservatism’s emergence to a personal feud amongst policy intellectuals and avoids discussion of the ways in which neoconservative ideas were in tune with and fed into the rise of modern American conservatism.<sup>35</sup>

This thesis demonstrates that neoconservatives, together with New Right intellectuals, contributed in important ways to redefining the idiom of populism, which had historically been a language of reform or radical movements, into a language of the right. This populism of the right was not intent on promoting social change but on stalling and reversing it. Indeed, neoconservatism was not an aberration within the wider context of the conservative movement or within American intellectual history, but fit in with a tradition of anti-statist and anti-progressive intellectuals and contributed to the rise of the New Right by connecting their fight against liberalism to popular ideas, such as republican virtue,

---

<sup>34</sup> Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*, 7; Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution*, especially Chapter 8.

<sup>35</sup> Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*; Garry Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind: Politics, Culture, and the War of Ideology* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); see also: John Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism*. Ehrman describes neoconservatism as a contemporary version of Cold War liberalism, thereby ignoring the extent to which neoconservatives created a new ideology.

individualism and equality of rights. According to Christopher Lasch, neoconservatives' main contribution to the New Right was to redefine successfully the enemy of the American people as the liberal establishment rather than Big Business.<sup>36</sup>

Considering neoconservatism as an integral part of the rise of modern American conservatism shows that it was not a force running counter to the emerging "silent majority", as often maintained by traditional interpretations of neoconservatism or neoconservatives themselves. Moreover, Jewish neoconservatives, with their backgrounds in the Jewish working-class milieu contributed to the creation of a conservative populist identity, which appealed to working-class and middle-class white ethnics and constituted a conservative alternative to leftist identity politics. Thereby they contributed to the creation of a conservative ideology, which not only appealed to Jewish concerns, but also opened the conservative movement to white ethnics and ultimately prepared the way for the rise of so-called multicultural conservatives.<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), 512.

<sup>37</sup> Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 182.

**Chapter 1**  
**‘Unparalleled Opportunities’:**  
**From Anxious Subculture**  
**Into the Mainstream,**  
**1932 - 1945**



Introduction

In 1936, *Fortune* magazine observed in a report on contemporary American Jewish life: “Misgivings and uneasiness have colored the thinking of American Jews”. Moreover, it noted, “the apprehensiveness of American Jews has become one of the important influences in the social life of our time”. The article continued to show that, contrary to widespread anti-Semitic stereotypes, Jews were not omnipotent. Simultaneously, the report denigrated the excessive concern over anti-Semitism, calling on Jewish leaders to abandon their “provocative...defense measures”.<sup>38</sup>

The 1930s and early 1940s were indeed a period of mixed messages for American Jews, which translated into widespread insecurity in relation to their position in American society. American Jews, mainly children of eastern European immigrants who that had left the Old World around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were moving up the socio-economic ladder and beginning to enjoy the comforts of middle-class life in large numbers. By the 1930s, the majority of American Jews were “supremely modern, urban, educated and secularised” – a condition that would intensify over the next two decades.<sup>39</sup> Paralleling this development were efforts to exclude Jews from certain elite universities and colleges, as

---

<sup>38</sup> Archibald McLeish, “Jews in America,” *Fortune*, February 1936. Published as monograph *Jews in America* (New York: Random House, 1936), 71, 141.

<sup>39</sup> Stephen J. Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time: Essays in Modern Culture and Politics* (Hamden, Ct.: Archon Books, 1988), 100.

well as residential areas, certain business sectors, and social clubs.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, anti-Jewish sentiment was an integral part of public discourse at the time and increased as U.S. entrance into the Second World War became more likely. Anti-interventionists, such as Charles Lindbergh, capitalised on anti-Semitism in order to keep the country out of war. Consequently, American Jews tended to segregate themselves even further - a trend, which resulted in the emergence of what historian Jonathan Sarna has referred to as an “anxious subculture”.<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless, integration continued to be the highest priority on the agenda of most Jewish leaders and organisations. The question dominating Jewish discourse during the inter-war years was just what integration should look like. Aware of the need and driven by the desire to fit in with mainstream society, Jewish leaders sought to develop diverse strategies with which American Jews could find full inclusion in American society, while simultaneously retaining a distinctly Jewish identity. While a great majority of Jewish leaders sought integration either by accommodation to the dominant patterns of gentile society or by cultural transformation, it has to be noted that there was no single ideological position that characterised a “normative” Jewish stance.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, in his work on American Jewish political culture Arthur Goren demonstrated that “Organizational diversity, ideological ambiguity, and even contentiousness appear to be endemic to the communal experience of American Jewry” at any given time.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> There was, for example, a sharp rise in newspaper advertisements during the 1930s, which specifically cautioned Jews not to apply, especially for large corporations and chain stores. Jews were also systematically denied teaching positions in colleges and universities. Gerald Sorin, *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 183.

<sup>41</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 2004), 208.

<sup>42</sup> Charles S. Liebman, “American Jews: Still a Distinctive Group”, *Commentary*, August 1977, 57.

<sup>43</sup> Arthur A. Goren, *The Politics and Public Culture of American Jews* (Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1999), 29.

It was primarily the alliance with Franklin D. Roosevelt's Democratic Party, which began to move large numbers of Jews into the centre of American society during the 1930s. Until the early twentieth century American Jewish voting behaviour had been characterised by a diversity of political positions and it was only with the advent of the New Deal coalition that Jews affiliated themselves with the Democratic Party and political liberalism in large numbers. Accordingly, a majority of Jewish leaders set out to renegotiate Jewish American identity within the liberal paradigm during the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>44</sup>

The inclusive spirit of Rooseveltian liberalism rallied Jewish leaders behind the effort to merge Jewish religious and cultural traditions with American values and political liberalism into a unified entity.<sup>45</sup> Many Jewish leaders came to promote the idea that American and Jewish values were congruent and that both cultures were based on the values of equality, the rule of law and individual rights. In accordance with this interpretation, Jewish commitment to liberal causes did not run counter to particularly Jewish values and interests but reinforced it.<sup>46</sup> The Jewish identification with liberal ideas and politics was seen as a way to embrace universalism, which contributed to bringing America closer to its egalitarian ideals and making it more inclusive for Jews and other minorities, while simultaneously offering a vehicle for expressing a particular Jewish identity through affiliation with liberalism.<sup>47</sup> This rationale, which ignored conflicts and

---

<sup>44</sup> Marc Dollinger, *Quest for Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

<sup>45</sup> Jerold S. Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution* (Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1990).

<sup>46</sup> Milton R. Konvitz, *Judaism and the American Idea* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978).

<sup>47</sup> Jewish liberalism has been the subject of many scholarly studies. For example: Lawrence H. Fuchs, *The Political Behaviour of American Jews* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1956); Lawrence H. Fuchs, "American Jews and the Presidential Vote", *The American Political Science Review*, 49, no. 2 (June 1955): 385-401; Lawrence H. Fuchs, "Sources of Jewish Internationalism and Liberalism", in *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, ed. Marshall Sklare (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960), 595-613; Werner Cohn, "The Politics of American Jews", in *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, ed. Marshall Sklare (Glencoe, Ill.: The

contradictions between the two cultures, would eventually be questioned by a number of Jewish intellectuals, first and foremost by neoconservatives.

Before taking a closer look at the emergence of neoconservatism and the extent to which neoconservatives came to dominate certain agendas within intra-communal Jewish debates, it is essential to explain how large numbers of Jews developed a strong attachment to liberalism. The period of the 1930s and early 1940s was marked by intense bigotry and some of the most concerted efforts of exclusion in the American Jewish history. At the same time, a number of developments and events – first and foremost the success of Rooseveltian liberalism and the experience of the Second World War - gave way to a process of increased inclusion into mainstream American society. This chapter therefore investigates the extent to which large numbers of American Jews connected their hopes for the future with liberal political culture and how, in the process of which, they renegotiated modern Jewish American identity.

Equating Jewishness with being politically liberal is an important master narrative of American Jewish history, which is recounted by historians, community leaders and laypeople alike. The belief that liberalism “has been bred into the bone of American Jewry,” as Murray Friedman described it, is so widely held that it has become part of the popular mythology of American Jewry.<sup>48</sup> According to this interpretation, Jewishness is not exclusively measured by synagogue attendance and other formal religious and cultural expressions, but also, and sometimes solely, in terms of affiliation with liberal politics. Within this context, many American Jews came to understand their affinity for liberalism as part and parcel of their American Jewish identity. Studies of voting behaviour during the

---

Free Press, 1960), 614-626; Steven M. Cohen and Charles S. Liebman, “American Jewish Liberalism: Unraveling the Strands”, *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (Autumn 1997): 405-430.

<sup>48</sup> Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution*, 3.

last half century document that American Jews indeed have been and continue to be overwhelmingly and consistently in support of liberal causes and Democratic candidates, even long after a great majority of American Jews have ascended to a socio-economic status normally associated with a conservative/Republican predilection.<sup>49</sup>

According to the narrative of Jewish liberalism, Jewish conservatism is a contradiction in terms. Yet, Jewish neoconservatives, who made Jewish concerns central to their shift from political left to right, complicate the idea that being Jewish translates into being politically liberal. Furthermore, it demonstrates that by drawing on traditional tenets of Diaspora conservatism, conservative Jews are not an aberration from modern Jewish history but an integral part of it. A number of scholars, such as David Dalin, Jerold Auerbach and Jonathan Sarna, have in recent years echoed the constitutional lawyer, community leader and lifelong Republican Louis Marshall, who claimed that “the Jew is not by disposition a radical. He is essentially conservative, wedded to the ideals of his forefathers”.<sup>50</sup> These scholars have tried to debunk the myth according to which the Jewish Diaspora experience has been dominated by political liberalism. While they do not deny the fact that there is a strong tradition of Jewish liberalism in the U.S., they demonstrate that there has always been a significant conservative Jewish tradition, rooted in Jewish religious law, political philosophy and historical experience.<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> After the presidential election in 1968, Milton Himmelfarb commented on the fact that Hubert Humphrey received Jewish votes equal to those of blacks and chicanos, that “Jews are like Episcopalians in income, but vote as if they were Puerto Ricans”. Quoted in Nathan Glazer, “The Anomalous Liberalism of American Jews”, in *The Americanization of the Jews*, eds. Robert M. Seltzer and Norman J. Cohen (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 133.

<sup>50</sup> Quoted in: David G. Dalin, “Louis Marshall, the Jewish Vote, and the Republican Party”, *Jewish Political Studies Review* 4, no.1. (Spring 1992): 55-84.

<sup>51</sup> Auerbach, *Rabbis and Lawyers*; Jerold S. Auerbach, “Liberalism, Judaism and American Jews: A Response”, in *The Americanization of the Jews*, eds. Robert M. Seltzer and Norman J. Cohen (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 144-148.

While Jewish neoconservatives are often considered an aberration within the larger context of American Jewish political culture, Jonathan Sarna suggested that Jewish conservatism in the U.S, while by no means widespread, was certainly more prevalent than generally imagined. This conservatism based itself on central tenets regulating Jewish political behaviour in pre-emancipatory times, which, in the prophet Jeremiah's Letter to the Exiles, called on Jews to "seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace".<sup>52</sup> This and similarly religious tenets were over centuries worked into a political philosophy, which considered a gentile government of laws, even if it was oppressive, superior to social chaos and anarchy.<sup>53</sup> This also points to another principle of Jewish political thought, namely that of "royal alliance," according to which Jewish experience in the Diaspora has taught that Jewish safety always depended on political and social stability and consequently on the authorities who exercised legitimate power.<sup>54</sup> A combination of religious tenets, political philosophy and historical experience therefore generally reinforced conservative, pro-authority behaviour amongst Diaspora Jewry.

This chapter contextualises the emergence of the Jewish neoconservative critique of the liberalism many Jews grew so attached to within a framework of the larger forces that shaped the American Jewish experience in the second half of the twentieth century. It will assess the extent to which a number of national, as well as international developments from 1932 to 1945 reshaped American Jewish life and evaluate how these changes set the stage for the rise of neoconservatism amongst a small but leading group of Jewish intellectuals in

---

<sup>52</sup> Prophet Jeremiah writing from Jerusalem to the Jewish community in Babylonia (Jer. 29:7)

<sup>53</sup> Sarna, "American Jewish Political Conservatism in Historical Perspective", 113-122.

<sup>54</sup> Ben Halpern, "The Roots of American Jewish Liberalism", *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (December 1976): 194-195.

the 1960s and 1970s. While Jewish neoconservatives were partially successful in moving the focus of intra-communal debates towards the right, it has to be acknowledged that they are a minority amongst American Jews, who in large numbers continue to identify as liberal up to the present day. In order to comprehend fully the driving forces behind this shift in Jewish political culture and make sense of the conservative turn of intellectuals such as Sidney Hook, Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, Norman Podhoretz, Midge Decter, and Gertude Himmelfarb, it is important to take a closer look at a series of decisive events and changes, which introduced what Norman Podhoretz referred to as the “Golden Age of Jewish Security”.<sup>55</sup>

#### ‘Still a Distinctive Race’: American Jewry in the 1930s

Jews occupied a complex and ambivalent position within the racialised atmosphere, which characterised American society during the 1930s and 1940s. Like other ‘white ethnics’, such as Italians and Irish, they were generally considered as a racial group distinct from the ‘white’ category. Anti-Semitic stereotypes, such as those of the overly influential and powerful Jews reigned supreme in American discourse and were translated into marginalising Jews in specific areas. Their ‘racial’ status, for example, excluded Jews from the WASP-dominated elite institutions and organisations; housing patterns, induced by housing covenants, in major urban centres like New York revealed a high degree of segregation between Jews and non-Jews. This exclusion, in turn, created a sense of unease and self-segregation on behalf of American Jews while simultaneously diminishing ethnic and religious differences amongst them, as for instance those between Jews of German and

---

<sup>55</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “Is It Good For The Jews?” *Commentary*, February 1972, 14.

Eastern European heritage. Many accepted the idea that they belonged to a ‘race apart’ - some with pride, others in resignation - and even tried to turn it into a positive attribute. Others, reacted with care to efforts to racialise Jewish identity; some even denied Jewish difference altogether, racial or other.<sup>56</sup>

Therefore, while Jewish identity became more homogenised during the 1930s, American Jewish communal life was also characterised by divisive debates between leading heads, on whether Jews should consider themselves as belonging to a race, a nation, a cultural group, an ethnic group or a religious denomination. How should Jewishness be defined in such an environment and how could Jews harmonise the demands of being Jewish and being American? Many Jewish leaders countered exclusionary tendencies by developing a rhetoric, which justified and/or legitimised racial difference and sought a middle ground between the perceived racial distinctiveness of Jews and white Americans.<sup>57</sup>

Comprehensive documentations of Jewish contributions to America and Western civilisation, which represented the alleged Jewish distinctiveness as a positive force in society, were part of an effort to develop ways with which the racial categorisation could be positively embraced. Magazines, such as *The American Hebrew* and the *Jewish Tribune*, regularly published articles about Jewish cultural, political, scientific and athletic achievements. Books such as Mac Davis’ *They All Are Jews: From Moses to Einstein* sought to illustrate Jewish accomplishments in various fields, interpreting them as the very

---

<sup>56</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Social Characteristics of American Jews, 1654-1954”, in *American Jewish Yearbook*, ed. American Jewish Committee (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1955), 14-20.

<sup>57</sup> Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race and American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 178. See also Karen Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks And What That Says About Race in America* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Eric L. Goldstein, “‘Different Blood Flows in Our Veins’: Race and Jewish Self-Definition in Late Nineteenth Century America”, *American Jewish History* 85, no. 1 (March 1997): 29-55.

fruit of distinctiveness. Many contended, however, that Jewish difference had to be defined in psychological rather than in purely biological terms.<sup>58</sup>

Other voices warned of overusing the racial label with respect to Jewish identity. The journalist Walter Lippman, for example, criticised the tendency towards self-segregation and expressed concern that the racial label might easily be turned against Jews. Labour activist Bertha Wallerstein called on Jews to fight for acceptance “as human beings without making a whole romance of the race”.<sup>59</sup> Since the general American discourse of the time stressed nativist conceptions of Americanness and often singled out Jews for allegedly interfering with the stability of this perceived homogeneous construct, a number of public Jewish figures urged Jews not to be too conspicuous about Jewish distinctiveness.<sup>60</sup>

Whether the concept of Jewish ‘racial’ difference was accepted or rejected often depended on the social status, national heritage and/or ideological positions of respective actors. The idea that Jews were in some way racially distinct resonated especially positively with descendants of eastern European Jewish immigrants who had begun moving into the organisational structures of the Jewish community and taking up leadership positions since the 1920s. As opposed to Jews of central and western European descent, many eastern European Jews understood Jewish identity primarily in terms of a ‘people religion’ - a concept, which fit well into the racialised discourse of the time. While many American

---

<sup>58</sup> The American Jewish Historical Society was founded in 1892 partly with the implicit aim of documenting the contribution Jews made to America. Much of the historiography on American Jewry produced up to 1945 was driven by a perceived need to point out the distinct and positive input of Jewish culture to American history and often tended to mythologise and venerate the Jewish experience in America. Marc Lee Raphael, “The Maturing of American Jewish Historiography”, *Review in American History* 1, no. 3 (September 1973): 336-342; Jonathan D. Sarna, “American Jewish History”, *Modern Judaism* 10, no. 3 (October 1990): 343-365; Mac Davis, *They All Are Jews: From Moses to Einstein* (New York: Jordan Publishing Company, 1937); Gdal Saleski, *Famous Musicians of a Wandering Race* (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1927); Max Margolis, “The Truth About the Jews”, *B’nai B’rith News*, June 1924.

<sup>59</sup> John Morton Blum, ed., *Public Philosopher: Selected Letters of Walter Lippman* (New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1985); Bertha Wallerstein, “The Jewish Babbitt,” *The Nation*, May 28, 1924, 603-604.

<sup>60</sup> Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 132, 171-172; Sorin, *Tradition Transformed*, 184.

Jewish leaders had previously often followed a policy of denying Jewish racial, or even cultural identity, a new type of leadership was now increasingly claiming a group status that went beyond merely religious elements and was heavily based on ethnic and cultural features and principles.<sup>61</sup> Many spokespeople for a cultural or national definition of Jewish identity were Zionists - labour, cultural, or political Zionists - who promoted a racial or at least national understanding of Jewish identity. Louis Lipsky, head of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), as well as Maurice Samuel and Ludwig Lewisohn, all condemned what they saw as the assimilationist tendencies of American Jews and urged them to embrace positively their Semitic origins.<sup>62</sup>

Many others, who viewed Jewish distinctiveness negatively, sought to escape it by embracing Marxist ideology and politics, which held the utopian promise of creating a social order in which ethnic and religious particularism would be irrelevant. In many ways substituting Judaism and Jewishness with Marxism and socialism in politics and modernism in culture, these radicals broke with what they perceived as the confining ethnocentric world of their parents, while at the same time articulating their alienation from American mainstream culture and society. Refusing to differentiate between people on the basis of nationality, ethnicity or race, they stressed a universalist ideology as a means with which to deal with the issue of Jewish difference and anti-Semitism.<sup>63</sup>

This approach also characterised a group of anti-Stalinist leftist thinkers and writers that became known as the New York intellectuals, which assembled around leftist journals such as *Partisan Review*, *The Nation*, *Menorah Journal* and *The New Republic*. Even

---

<sup>61</sup> Nathan Glazer, *American Judaism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 62, 64. The “people religion” concept signifies that the religious framework is not based on an explicit system of belief but rather on rituals and symbols, which regulated the entirety of their lives in minute detail - the religion of a people.

<sup>62</sup> Charles E. Silberman, *A Certain People: American Jews and Their Lives Today* (New York: Summit, 1985), 28-31.

<sup>63</sup> Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 61-62.

though not all of the New York intellectuals were Jewish, most core members were. First generation New York intellectuals were for instance Philip Rahv, William Phillips, Lionel and Diana Trilling, Meyer Shapiro, Clement Greenberg, Eliot E. Cohen, Sidney Hook, Alfred Kazin, and Lionel Abel. They felt estranged from Jewish as well as American mainstream culture and found a home in modernist cultural criticism, as well as political radicalism which offered a refuge from the perceived parochialism of established Jewish and American culture, as well as from anti-Semitic forces. Due to their politics and to the fact that they were largely excluded from the WASP-dominated intellectual establishment, they looked upon American society with suspicion. According to Norman Podhoretz, “They did not feel they belonged to America, or that America belonged to them”.<sup>64</sup>

Like a number of early New York intellectuals, a younger generation, such as Irving Howe, Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, Daniel Bell, Seymour Martin Lipset, Gertrude Himmelfarb, and Midge Decter, would eventually rediscover their Jewish, as well as American heritage, and some of them would go on to become stern defenders of the national status quo after the Second World War. During the inter-war period, however, this self-conscious cadre of intellectuals existed on the margins of American and Jewish society. In his autobiography, *A Margin of Hope*, Irving Howe expressed the ambivalence many New York intellectuals felt with respect to their Jewish heritage, leading them “to subordinate our sense of Jewishness to cosmopolitan culture and socialist politics”. Accordingly, “We did not think well or deeply on the matter of Jewishness – you might say we avoided thinking about it.” However, as opposed to what they wrote and discussed, there was also “what we felt, and what we felt was rarely quite in accord with what we

---

<sup>64</sup> Wald, *The New York Intellectuals*; Podhoretz, *Making It*, 117.

wrote or thought”. With respect to everyday life, “the fact of Jewishness figured much more strongly than we acknowledged in public”.<sup>65</sup>

It was at City College of New York (CCNY), the “poor man’s Harvard”, that many of them became involved with Marxism. CCNY was tuition-free and admitted students who were otherwise excluded from mainstream and elite colleges. It afforded many children of immigrants the opportunity to receive a college education and a ticket that would ultimately open doors into American mainstream society. Many of the students attending CCNY were of Jewish background, often burning with ambition and social resentment towards not only the WASP establishment, but also the more integrated, upper class ‘German Jews’.<sup>66</sup> The only way out and up, they religiously believed, was education – much like Abraham Cahan’s protagonist in *The Rise of David Lewinsky*, who described CCNY as “the synagogue of my new life”. The college, he claimed, “appealed to me as a temple, as a House of Sanctity, as we call the ancient Temple of Jerusalem”.<sup>67</sup>

At the same time, the outsider status that characterised them translated into an underlying sense of elitism and snobbery, which would inform much of the work of the New York intellectuals and of future neoconservatives. This tenor found expression, for example, in their anti-Stalinist leftism, which Howe compared to being a member of a sect.<sup>68</sup> Interested in culture and the arts, they felt an air of superiority towards what they perceived as the vulgarity and pedestrian minds of their Stalinist co-students. According to Gertrude Himmelfarb, Irving Kristol’s wife whom he first met at a meeting of the Young People’s Socialist League (YPSL), she joined the Trotskyites at school because “the

---

<sup>65</sup> Howe, *A Margin of Hope*, 251.

<sup>66</sup> It is estimated that about 80 to 90 per cent of the student population at CCNY as well as Hunter College were Jewish during the 1920s.

<sup>67</sup> Abraham Cahan, *The Rise of David Lewinsky* (New York: Dover Publications, 2002), 117.

<sup>68</sup> Howe, *A Marging of Hope*, 36-60.

Trotskyites were the smartest people around”.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, she claimed, “The Stalinists were not intellectually serious”.<sup>70</sup> The theoretical discussions, central to Trotskyism, were what most appealed to her: “There was something Talmudic and playful about the whole thing, and that’s exactly the spirit in which I entered into it”.<sup>71</sup>

The theoretical debates were also what drew Irving Kristol to Trotskyism. Trotskyites, according to Howe, discussed politics “with an aura of certainty, quickness in referring to Marxist texts, a pride in factional strife, a system of relationships resembling the internal arrangements of a sect”.<sup>72</sup> According to Kristol’s son, William, founder and editor of the neoconservative publication *The Weekly Standard*, his father’s Marxism was never very serious, however, having always been “somewhat of a bourgeois”.<sup>73</sup> Kristol himself wrote: “Trotskyist or no, radical socialist or no, I was a bourgeois to the core”.<sup>74</sup>

A majority of American Jews tried to find a middle ground between extreme positions - defining the issue of ‘race’ in ways that were not too dissonant with American identity, while at the same time asserting a more pluralistic and tolerant vision of Americanism. Some of these efforts were vaguely influenced by the works of scholars such as Horace Kallen, Franz Boas, Julius Drachler or Isaac Berkson, who all had aimed at developing new conceptions of group difference since the 1910s.<sup>75</sup> Initially, their

---

<sup>69</sup> Diana Trilling, Oral History Interview with Gertrude Himmelfarb (Bea Kristol), February 29, 1976, 4, Diana Trilling Papers, 1921-1996, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New York, cited hereafter as DTP.

<sup>70</sup> Trilling, Oral History Interview with Gertrude Himmelfarb (Bea Kristol), February 29, 1976, 12-13, DTP.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 7, 8.

<sup>72</sup> Howe, *A Margin of Hope*, 33.

<sup>73</sup> William Kristol, telephone interview with author, August 15, 2008.

<sup>74</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 12.

<sup>75</sup> Kallen’s primary example in his study of American immigrant groups were Jews, about whom he wrote: “Of all group-conscious peoples they are the most group-conscious”. Horace M. Kallen, “Democracy versus the Melting Pot, A Study of American Nationality”, *The Nation*, February 18 and 25, 1915: <http://www.expo98.msu.edu/people/Kallen.htm> (accessed July 16, 2009). Reprinted in Horace M. Kallen, *Culture and Democracy in the United States* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1998); Julius Drachler, *Democracy and Assimilation: The Blending of Cultural Heritages in America* (New York:

arguments for an extension of pluralism among European immigrant groups were based, according to the dominant idiom of the time, on racial categories, which would shift to categories of culture and ethnicity in due course. Even though ideas of cultural and ethnic pluralism were not very influential before the Second World War, they eventually came to shape the basic conceptions of group life and offer the possibility of a more positive affirmation of Jewish identity in American society.<sup>76</sup>

The notion that Jews were a cultural rather than a racial group became popular in Jewish intellectual circles associated with the *Menorah Journal*.<sup>77</sup> One of its frequent contributors, Mordecai Kaplan, would go on to become a major advocate of the idea that being Jewish was more a cultural identity rather than a racial one. As the founder of the Reconstructionist movement, Kaplan described Judaism as an evolving religious civilisation, encompassing not only religious beliefs but also “history, literature, language, social organisation, folk sanctions, standards of conduct, social and spiritual ideals, and aesthetic values”.<sup>78</sup> Kaplan sought to adapt Jewish religion to fit into American society and held that both cultures were congruent, since both were basically democratic and Hebraic.

However, since most Americans still resisted pluralist conceptions of society in the 1930s and continued to understand Jewish distinctiveness as an obstacle to the maintenance of an allegedly homogenous white population, the decade was characterised more by uncertainty for American Jews with respect to their status in American society than by the

---

Macmillan, 1920); Isaac B. Berkson, *Theories of Americanization: A Critical Study, with Special Reference to the Jewish Group* (New York: Teachers College of Columbia University, 1920); Franz Boas, “Are the Jews a Race?” *World Tomorrow*, January 1923, 5-6.

<sup>76</sup> R. Fred Wacker, “Assimilation and Cultural Pluralism in American Social Thought”, *Phylon* 40, no. 4 (1979): 325-333; William Toll, “Horace Kallen: Pluralism and American Jewish Identity”, *American Jewish History* 85, no.1 (March 1997): 57-74.

<sup>77</sup> *The Menorah Journal* was founded in 1915 as a self-consciously Jewish journal. It was edited by Eliot E. Cohen from 1926 onwards.

<sup>78</sup> Mordecai M. Kaplan, *Judaism as a Civilization* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934), 178.

successful synthesis of Jewish and American identity. Moreover, even though the idea of Jews as a cultural group was popular with intellectuals during this period, it originally failed to convince the majority of ‘ordinary’ American Jews. According to Eric Goldstein, the question that preoccupied American Jews most during the 1930s was not so much “*whether* they were a distinct race” but rather “*how strenuously* to assert Jewish racial distinctiveness”.<sup>79</sup> It can be assumed that this was especially so because no other concept that the race concept seemed potent enough to defend against anti-Semitic charges of the time. Only when the dominant society moved away from ideas of a distinctive Jewish race, did it become possible for Jews to do so as well.

#### Franklin D. Roosevelt and the ‘Jew Deal’

While a majority of American Jews continued to understand themselves as a minority group denied ‘equal footing’ throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, developments within the national and international arena began to set the course for the fundamental changes in social status American Jewry would undergo during the later 1940s and 1950s – changes which would eventually lead to the development of new alternatives for defining collective Jewish American identity. One driving force, which over time came to redefine the relationship between American Jews and American society and culture, was the rise of Rooseveltian liberalism.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to the office of president in 1932 on a platform, which transformed American liberalism from an ideology of limited government and free-market economics to one, which was dominated by ideas of an interventionist and socially

---

<sup>79</sup> Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 185.

conscious federal government. Freedom within this framework came to connote stronger federal protections for civil liberties and greater economic security for the largest amount of people. This redistributive approach to wealth would eventually enable greater numbers of previously marginalised Americans to enjoy the benefits of modern economic and social progress.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, during Roosevelt's presidency the political system of the U.S. underwent a significant realignment, which turned the Democratic Party into a grand coalition party of farmers, industrial workers, reform-minded urban middle class, liberal intellectuals, African Americans, 'white ethnics', and Southerners.

According to Stephen Whitfield, the New Deal era was also the beginning of "the Jews' modern political style".<sup>81</sup> American Jews were amongst the minority groups Roosevelt reached out to and many of them became enthusiastic supporters of his interventionist liberalism and by extension the Democratic Party.<sup>82</sup> The fact that this alliance has lasted until this day has puzzled many contemporary commentators of Jewish political culture and is sometimes referred to as an anomaly, in light of the high levels of affluence enjoyed by large numbers of Jews.<sup>83</sup> The affection many American Jews developed for Roosevelt led New York Judge and Republican Jonah Goldstein to claim that

---

<sup>80</sup> Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York: Hartcourt, Brace and World, 1955).

<sup>81</sup> Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 93.

<sup>82</sup> The shift in party affiliation from the Republicans to the Democrats did not occur all at once, nor did it only affect Jews. In 1928, Jews cast 72 per cent of their votes for Democratic candidate Alfred E. Smith, and in 1932, when FDR was the Democratic candidate, the number rose to 82 per cent. The Jewish vote remained over 90 per cent Democratic until the presidential election in 1948. Feingold, *A Time for Searching*, 198; According to Lucy S. Dawidowicz, Al Smith "solidified the Jewish attachment to the Democratic party, but it was Franklin Delano Roosevelt who turned the Jews into Democratic fanatics". Lucy S. Dawidowicz, State of World Jewry Address 1984, December 2, 1984, 7, Box 68, Folder 8, Lucy Schildkret Dawidowicz Papers, 1938-1990, American Jewish Historical Society, New York, cited hereafter as LDP.

<sup>83</sup> Glazer, "The Anomalous Liberalism of American Jews", 133-143; Charles S. Liebman and Steven M. Cohen, "Jewish Liberalism Revisited", *Commentary*, November 1996, 51-53; Cohen and Liebman, "American Jewish Liberalism: Unraveling the Strands", 405-430; Geoffrey Brahm Levey, "The Liberalism of American Jews – Has It Been Explained?" *British Journal of Political Science* 26, no. 3 (July 1996): 396-401. One of the axioms of American political voting behaviour is that the higher the income, the bigger the margin for the Republican Party. A majority of Jews, however, don't seem to define their interests in class terms exclusively. For statistical information on Jewish liberalism see: Cohen, *The Dimensions of American Jewish Liberalism*.

American Jews have three worlds (*Yidn hobn drei velten*): *Di Velt* (this world), *Yene Velt* (the other world) and Roosevelt. Leading neoconservative Norman Podhoretz illustrated the deep admiration many Jews felt for FDR. Growing up in Brooklyn, New York, during the 1930s, he remembered that Roosevelt's "name in my own household was always spoken in a tone of hushed reverence and never without the title attached".<sup>84</sup>

Since FDR, Jews have consistently and in large numbers (on average 70 per cent) voted for Democratic candidates in national and to a somewhat lesser extent in regional and local elections. This lasting alliance has been explained in a number of ways. According to Stephen Whitfield, Jewish liberalism can only be understood by moving beyond material considerations and political convenience and taking into consideration the Jewish historical experience as well as the ethical dimension of politics. While vested interests played and continue to play an important role in Jewish political culture, issues of social justice and tolerance of difference also mark the Jewish approach to politics. Whitfield has shown that the historical record holds ample evidence that "Jews are more susceptible than other voters to a vision of human brotherhood, to ideologies and programs that can be packaged in ethical terms".<sup>85</sup>

Even though American Jews were on the whole somewhat less affected than other groups by the collapse of the international economic system, the depression era as well as Rooseveltian liberalism came to shape seminally their ideas about themselves and the U.S. because it marked the first time, that Jews as a group (and as individuals) were given a quantitatively and qualitatively significant part in American politics. Roosevelt's inclusive policy towards American Jews was path breaking in leading Jews into mainstream

---

<sup>84</sup> Podhoretz, *My Love Affair with America*; Norman Podhoretz, interview with author, New York, May 17, 2008.

<sup>85</sup> Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 87.

society.<sup>86</sup> Beyond matters of material interest, Roosevelt's liberalism also appealed to many Jews because of its social justice concerns and the greater tolerance for those previously excluded from mainstream American society. From Roosevelt onwards, to be "a good Jew" became equated for many with being "a liberal on political and social issues" and to be committed to "social equality". According to a poll taken by the Los Angeles Times in 1980, liberalism was for a great majority of American Jews "a major component of their understanding of what it mean to be a Jew".<sup>87</sup>

Not only did Roosevelt receive massive support from American Jews in the voting booth, but many of Roosevelt's closest advisors were Jews, such as future Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, labour leader Sidney Hillman, advisor and speechwriter Judge Samuel Rosenman, his legislative craftsman Benjamin Cohen and Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. Some of the newly created agencies, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Departments of Agriculture, Labor, and Interior employed Jews in leading positions. Hence it was during the New Deal era that many American Jews for the first time in their history received significant opportunities to work in the federal government.<sup>88</sup>

However, this reaching out to Jews (and other minorities) by FDR was not always appreciated by mainstream American society. Indeed, the fact that Jews figured prominently in the Roosevelt administration led some anti-Semites to refer to the New Deal as the "Jew Deal", an epithet that surfaced in 1936 and stuck. A pamphlet by Robert E.

---

<sup>86</sup> Edward S. Shapiro, *A Time for Healing: American Jewry Since World War II* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 220.

<sup>87</sup> Cohen, *The Dimensions of American Jewish Liberalism*, 2.

<sup>88</sup> Of Roosevelt's 197 judicial appointments, 52 were Catholics and 7 Jews, which approximated the percentage of Jewish appointments in the three previous Republican administrations. It is also estimated that about 4 per cent of the appointments to the newly created commissions and agencies went to Jews, which is slightly higher than their percentage in the general population. Henry L. Feingold, *A Time for Searching: Entering the Mainstream, 1920-1945* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 215.

Edmondson depicted Bernard Baruch, financier and presidential advisor, as the “unofficial president”, Felix Frankfurter as the “director of the New Deal”, and Louis Brandeis as the “father of the New Deal”, all of them members of what it alleged to be Roosevelt’s “supreme council”. Tales began to circulate that Roosevelt not only preferred appointing Jews to high positions, but also that he himself was a descendent of Dutch Jews by the name of Rosenvelt.<sup>89</sup>

Roosevelt’s opponents claimed the close relationship between Roosevelt’s administration and ‘the Jews’ of endangering the integrity of the government and the nation. In this context, Jews were considered not only to be the root cause of America’s and the world’s economic and social problems, but also responsible for the enactment and failings of New Deal legislation. Irrational fears that Jews were about to take over the U.S. and that Roosevelt was selling his country out to them was expressed in a letter addressed to the president in 1934 that claimed, “the Jews are responsible for the continued depression, as they are determined to starve the Christians into submission and slavery”. Realisation of this plan was under way, the author claimed, because Roosevelt had “over two hundred Jews, they say, in executive offices in Washington, and Jew bankers run the government and [Bernard] Baruch is the real President”.<sup>90</sup>

The economic deprivation and social dislocation introduced by the economic depression created the conditions in which anti-Semitism flourished. In a public opinion poll taken in 1938, about 50 per cent of respondents held some form of negative view of

---

<sup>89</sup> Benjamin Ginsberg, *The Fatal Embrace: Jews and the State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 112-113; Feingold, *A Time for Searching*, 216. Senator Theodore Bilbo and Congressman John Rankin regularly blamed “New York Jews” for the liberal social and racial policies of the New Deal. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness*, 191.

<sup>90</sup> Quoted in: Leonard Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 109. Original [Signature illegible] to FDR, October 21, 1934, OF76C, FDR Manuscripts, FDR Library, Hyde Park, New York.

Jews, and about 60 per cent agreed with the statement that Jews were by and large greedy, dishonest, and aggressive.<sup>91</sup> Anti-New Dealers and anti-Semites, such as Charles Coughlin, William D. Pelley, Gerald L.K. Smith and Gerald B. Winrod contributed their share of fear mongering as they instrumentalised anti-Jewish sentiment in order to undermine popular confidence in the government and its policies. By charging Roosevelt to be a puppet of a cabal of Jewish communists as well as Jewish bankers, his opponents sought to discredit his politics. These opponents warned that Jews were subversive elements, who, in pursuing their own interests, were threatening the established order of the American polity.<sup>92</sup>

Father Charles Coughlin, for example, was one of the more radical opponents of Roosevelt and did not, unlike many upper-class opponents of the administration, shy away from publicly espousing a virulent anti-Semitism. The Catholic radio priest was able to attract an audience of about 20 to 30 million listeners, blatantly blaming the economic suffering and social dislocation caused by the Great Depression on Jewish businessmen and bankers as well as Jewish Communists.<sup>93</sup> Additionally, about 100 anti-Semitic organisations, such as the Silver Shirts and the German American Bund, were founded between 1933 and 1941 and, according to a *Fortune* survey, roughly half a million Americans at least occasionally attended anti-Semitic rallies or meetings during this period.<sup>94</sup> Beyond rhetoric, which often declared open sympathy with the goals and methods

---

<sup>91</sup> Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 127.

<sup>92</sup> Leo P. Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983).

<sup>93</sup> For a revisionist study of Coughlin, which highlights the appeal of his Jeffersonian-like populism, see: Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin and the Great Depression* (New York: Random House, 1988).

<sup>94</sup> For more information on organised anti-Semitism in the U.S.: Donald Strong, *Organized Anti-Semitism in America: The Rise of Group Prejudice During the Decade 1930-1940* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1941); Leonard Dinnerstein, *Uneasy At Home: Anti-Semitism and the American Jewish Experience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Ginsberg, *The Fatal Embrace*, 117; Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 112.

of Nazi Germany, these organisations inspired gangs of rabble-rousers, to terrorise Jewish institutions, such as synagogues and cemeteries, businesses and people. The journalist Charles E. Silberman recalled, “brown-shirted members of the German-American Bund used to sell their virulently anti-Semitic newspaper” when he was coming of age in New York during the 1930s. Moreover, “the synagogue my family attended was frequently defaced with swastikas and crosses; an elementary school classmate...had a swastika cut into his hand with a penknife. These developments, he declared, turned being Jewish into “a source of anxiety and discomfort”.<sup>95</sup>

In addition to the antagonisms encountered at home, American Jews were unsure how to deal with the implications of the rise of the National Socialist Party in Germany and the succinct establishment of a totalitarian dictatorship whose central enemy was world Jewry - *das internationale Judentum*. Initially, a majority of American Jews tended to respond to a heightened anti-Semitic climate in the U.S. and in Europe with intensified expression of ‘racial’ pride. Others, however, driven by the fear that German-style anti-Jewish policies could take root in America, became increasingly concerned with the ultimate dangers implicit in pushing the racial definition of Jewishness too far. In response to these developments, many Jewish spokesmen started to call on American Jews to avoid any action that would intensify anti-Jewish sentiment.<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>95</sup> Silberman, *A Certain People*, 57.

<sup>96</sup> Dollinger, *Quest For Inclusion*, 45-49; Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue, 1938-1945* (Rutgers, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1970), 11-12; Irving Lehman, AJCongress emergency meeting, March 1933, <http://www.ajhs.org/scholarship/chapters/chapter.cfm?documentID=230> (accessed July 17, 2009); For studies dealing with American and American Jewish reactions to developments in Europe: David S. Wyman, *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis, 1938-1941* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1968); David S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews. America and the Holocaust, 1941-1945* (New York: Random House, 1984); Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue 1938-1945*; Henry L. Feingold, “Roosevelt and the Holocaust: Reflections on New Deal Humanitarianism”, *Judaism* 18, no .3 (Summer 1969): 259-276; Richard Breitman and Alan M. Kraut, *American Refugee Policy and European Jewry, 1933-1945* (Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1988); Deborah E. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of*

While FDR's inclusive liberalism, New Deal rhetoric and programmes sought to unite Americans behind their political leader and set out to promote a more inclusive nationalism, the inter-war era also made it clear to American Jews that even though they were formally becoming more accepted into mainstream society, they still remained not quite as equal as everyone else. When times got bad, the conclusion went, Jews still functioned as scapegoats upon which the anger and fears of others could be projected. Anti-Semitism in the U.S. had reached new heights during the 1930s and early 1940s. Yet, at the same time, it needs to be remembered that American anti-Semitism had to compete with a whole range of prejudices and was at no point part of the national policy agenda. Despite widespread antagonism towards Jews as a group, the large majority of them were well on their way into the centre of American society and continued to make economic, social and political headway.

Even more instrumental than New Deal liberalism in the process of moving Jews into the American mainstream was the experience of the Second World War and the Holocaust. Despite the fact that America's entrance into the war – which was almost unanimously supported by American Jews – was accompanied by a substantial amount of anti-Jewish rhetoric and sentiment, Roosevelt's more inclusive nationalism would eventually take hold on the national psyche. In addition, the tendency towards greater inclusiveness was accelerated by the swift recovery of the American economy once the U.S. had entered the war.

In order to promote ideas of diversity and unity at home, the Roosevelt administration launched a vigorous propaganda campaign that sought national openness by defining

---

*the Holocaust, 1933-1945* (New York: Free Press, 1986); Rafael Medoff, *The Deafening Silence: American Jewish Leaders and the Holocaust* (New York: Shapolsky, 1987).

American values, especially those of tolerance and equality, as the antithesis of Nazism. These policies, as well as the war experience itself, introduced widespread acceptance of the two ideological foundations on which the move towards greater inclusiveness of American Jews after the war would rest: the ideas of cultural (later ethnic) pluralism, as well as the construct of the 'Judeo-Christian' tradition, which replaced a narrowly defined 'Christian' Americanism with what Will Herberg referred to as the more inclusive "Protestant Catholic-Jew" model. In these terms, cultural (and later ethnic and racial) intolerance as well as religious bigotry were officially declared to be "un-American".<sup>97</sup>

#### The Impact of the Second World War and the Destruction of European Jewry on American Jews

In the aftermath of the Second World War, a majority of American Jews, perhaps for the first time in their history, came to believe that they had never come closer to full inclusion into the dominant society. This was especially the case in light of the near destruction of European Jewry. The relationship between their Jewish and American identities was, many Jews hoped, from now on to be one of symbiosis and no longer one of conflict and ambivalence.

On the eve of the American entrance into the Second World War in December 1941, however, even though American public opinion was generally pro-British and anti-German, few Americans were willing to intervene, and even less for the sake of European Jewry. The overall tone that had characterised Americans' relations with the world since the end of

---

<sup>97</sup> For the evolution of these ideas in American thought see Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Mark Silk, "Notes on the Judeo-Christian Tradition in America", *American Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 65-85; Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (New York: Doubleday, 1955).

the First World War had been one of disinterestedness and isolationism. In the late 1930s, isolationist organisations began to feed into this prevailing mood, often capitalising on anti-Semitism, as tensions between the U.S. States and Germany grew. Some Americans began to voice their concern that America was on the verge of being drawn into the war by a cabal of influential Jews.

Isolationists as well as pro-German forces used anti-Semitic rhetoric to discredit the administration's efforts to pursue a more activist and pro-British foreign policy and to boost American military preparedness. A common theme that united both pro-German and isolationist propaganda was the idea that Roosevelt's foreign policy was the work of influential Jews and was now being forced upon the nation against its will and against the national interest. In a speech given on September 16, 1941, entitled "Who Are the Agitators?", the leader of the America First Committee, Charles Lindbergh, accused Jews, the British and the Roosevelt administration of war mongering against the will and the interest of the American people.<sup>98</sup> He went on to state that the largest threat emanating from American Jews "lies in their large ownership and influence in our motion pictures, our press, our radio and our Government".<sup>99</sup>

According to Leonard Dinnerstein, anti-Semitism in the U.S. reached its "high tide" as the possibility of war increased and continued unabated as the U.S. finally entered the war on December 8, 1941. The need for unity and closeness in the face of so formidable an

---

<sup>98</sup> The America First Committee had been created in July 1940 to promote non-intervention. While the Committee did have a number of respectable leaders such as Robert Wood of Sears, Roebuck and Co., it was eventually taken over by Coughlinites and Nazi sympathisers. Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 129.

<sup>99</sup> "Civil Liberties: Jew Baiting", *Time*, September 22, 1941, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,795477,00.html> (accessed November 17, 2009). It is important to note, however, that the press almost uniformly condemned the speech and that Roosevelt labelled Lindbergh a fool and a traitor. Henry L. Feingold, "'It Can Happen Here': Antisemitism, American Jewry and the Reaction to the European Crisis, 1933-1940", Tel Aviv University Website, The Stephen Roth Institute, <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw2000-1/feingold.htm#end> (accessed August 19, 2008).

enemy as the Germans and the Japanese, further heightened popular intolerance towards “outsiders”.<sup>100</sup> American Jews therefore felt even more dependent upon Roosevelt, while his administration tried to avoid being too closely associated with Jews and often asked Jewish advisors during the war years not to emphasise their ethnic and religious identity. Additionally, the administration sought to distance itself from what could be seen as specifically ‘Jewish causes’, especially when it was approached by proposals on how to deal with the Jewish plight under Nazi rule.

The perceived need of the Roosevelt administration not to be too closely identified with what could be considered ‘Jewish interests’ was to a large extent directly influenced by the negative opinions of Jews that had been prevalent in public discourse throughout the New Deal era and before and after the U.S.’s entrance in the war. As demonstrated earlier, Jews were held responsible not only for the economic depression, but also for New Deal policies and now also for pushing the U.S. into war. In addition, Roosevelt’s primary war goal was to win the war as quickly as possible while retaining congressional support for the establishment of a United Nations organisation. Fear of losing popular consensus for his war- and post-war aims and upsetting the already fragile national sense of unity, led Roosevelt to embrace a rather passive approach towards the issue of rescuing European Jews.<sup>101</sup>

Even though polling methods were still relatively underdeveloped, surveys of the time continually revealed a widespread antipathy towards Jews. One poll taken in 1940 showed that nearly two-thirds of the respondents believed that Jews as a group had

---

<sup>100</sup> Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 128-149.

<sup>101</sup> Feingold, *A Time for Searching*, 250; For an overview of verbal protestations by the Roosevelt administration directed at the Nazi regime, as well as efforts to alleviate the suffering of those persecuted by Nazism, see Edward N. Saveth, “Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Jewish Crisis, 1933-1945”, in *American Jewish Yearbook*, ed. The American Jewish Committee (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1945-1946), 37-50.

“objectionable traits” and more than 50 per cent of Americans thought that German anti-Semitism stemmed either partially or wholly from the actions and behaviour of German Jews themselves. When asked in 1944 which nationality, religious or racial group was perceived as posing the biggest threat to Americans, 24 per cent of the respondents named Jews, 9 per cent the Japanese and 6 per cent the Germans. In a poll of 1945, 88 per cent of Americans claimed that they believed that Jews had too much power in the U.S. In addition, in the last two years of the war, Jewish leaders had to struggle with a public unwillingness to believe the reports of extermination camps that had been filtering out of Europe since August 1942.<sup>102</sup>

It is highly likely that the continued diatribes of such people as Father Coughlin, Gerald Winrod and William Pelley further fuelled the persistence of widespread anti-Jewish sentiment and consequently the reluctance of the government to help European Jewry. Even though the Roosevelt administration tried to avoid any direct association with Jewish interests, the urge for unity did force Roosevelt to take decisive action against individuals and groups, who were perceived to threaten the war effort by undermining national unity through racist rhetoric. Under the Espionage Act of 1917, many a hatemonger was forced to restrain his activities during wartime. Winrod and Pelley, for example, came under investigation by the FBI for sedition and undermining the war effort, and Pelley was sentenced to 15 years in prison.<sup>103</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup> Charles H. Stember, *Jews in the Mind of America* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), 128; Sarna, *American Judaism*, 261-262.

<sup>103</sup> The others did not fare any better in the long run. Coughlin's demagoguery was eventually challenged by more liberal voices in the Catholic hierarchy such as Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago. Fritz Kuhn was already indicted and imprisoned in 1940 as a result of the efforts of Rep. Samuel Dickstein, who represented an almost all Jewish district on New York's Lower East Side and was for a time chairman of the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee. Some of their work, however, was continued by Reverend Gerald K. Smith, former member of the Silver Shirts, who characterised B'nai B'rith's ADL as a "Gestapo

Given the magnitude of American anti-Semitism and nativism at the time, Jonathan Sarna claims that it is astonishing that U.S. did accept over 200,000 Jewish refugees, which is more than any other country took in.<sup>104</sup> Pressure from non-Jewish and Jewish sources eventually led Roosevelt to set up the War Refugee Board (WRB) in January 1944 by Executive Order 9417, in order to coordinate efforts to rescue European Jews. While most of the funds for the WRB came from the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, any mention of Jewish involvement was avoided for political reasons. It is estimated that the WRB played an important role in saving about 200,000 Jews. However, the extent to which its actions contributed to the survival of the persecuted remains unquantifiable. The problem with the WRB, according to David Wyman, was that it was not set up too late, but also that government agencies did not provide the cooperation legally required by Executive Order 9417.<sup>105</sup>

Moreover, American Jewish leaders were divided on how to proceed with respect to the persecution of European Jews. According to historian Gerald Sorin, the Jewish community “was rent by various strategies and ideologies and kinds of religious persuasion, as well as duplication and competition”.<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, by 1943 every major American Jewish organisation, except for the AJC and the Jewish Labor Committee, had united under the umbrella organisation of the American Jewish Conference to coordinate political and rescue activities and work for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

---

organisation” and would after the war come to oppose the “Jew infested” United Nations. Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 134.

<sup>104</sup> Congress was aware that, according to a 1938 survey, fewer than five per cent of Americans were willing to raise immigration quotas to accommodate refugees. Sarna, *American Judaism*, 260.

<sup>105</sup> Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews*, 209-287. For a critique of Wyman’s thesis that Roosevelt was indifferent to the plight of European Jews and that the U.S. were partially complicit in the Holocaust: Lucy S. Dawidowicz, “Could the U.S. Have Rescued the European Jews From Hitler?”, 1-26, Box 48, Folder 2, LDP.

<sup>106</sup> Sorin, *Tradition Transformed*, 190.

As a result of anti-bigotry and “call for unity “ campaigns by the government and Jewish organisations, as well as the experience of the war itself, the belief that anti-Semitism was no longer compatible with Americanism started to register in the national psyche towards the end of the war. As the shock about the Holocaust set in, Americans realised that National Socialism had de-legitimised any public expressions of anti-Semitism and introduced a change in attitudes towards Jews. Anti-Semitism became no longer acceptable in the public realm. Pronouncements of anti-Semitism, which in the first half of the 1940s were more virulent than at any previous time in American history, were by 1950 at an all-time low. Opinion polls of the time showed that anti-Semitism was receding from mainstream society and driven to the fringes. One year before the election of John F. Kennedy, for example, a poll revealed that more Americans claimed to be willing to vote for a Jewish president than for a Roman Catholic.<sup>107</sup> Simultaneously, pressured by the government, American universities began to repeal quotas for Jewish students, big corporations opened more employment opportunities for Jews, and residential areas started to drop restrictions against potential Jewish buyers.<sup>108</sup>

In this new climate, the traditional Jewish defensiveness was superseded by a more vigorous assertion of Jewish interests. The reluctance of Jews to draw particular attention to themselves, what Charles Silberman has called the era of *shah* [*be quiet*], came to an end.<sup>109</sup> In the post-war years, the national Jewish organisations heightened their campaigns of lobbying state and federal levels for anti-discriminatory legislation on behalf of minority groups, challenged discriminatory behaviour and legislation in court, and sponsored

---

<sup>107</sup> Stuart Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice: American Jews and the Fight for Civil Liberties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 115; Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, 17.

<sup>108</sup> Hasia R. Diner, *A New Promised Land: A History of Jews In America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 106-107.

<sup>109</sup> Silberman, *A Certain People*, 22, 57.

community programmes with other groups to work against racially and ethnically motivated prejudice.<sup>110</sup>

In doing so, these defence organisations, who now referred to themselves as community relations organisations - a shift in terminology which was in itself an expression of a new found confidence -, claimed that they were not only working on behalf of Jews but on behalf of all Americans. They propagated the idea that anti-Semitism and by extension all forms of racial, ethnic and religious prejudice were counterproductive to American democracy. As demonstrated by Stuart Svonkin, many American Jewish leaders used the intergroup relations movement in the 1940s and 1950s in order to reorganise itself in response to the seminal changes introduced by the Great Depression, the New Deal, the Second World War and the Holocaust. The fact, however, that they did not feel in a position to fight anti-Semitism for its own sake, but had to tie it to the struggle against other kinds of prejudice was a sign that the newfound confidence continued to be accompanied by a lingering sentiment of feeling “uneasy at home” in the immediate post-war years.<sup>111</sup>

The extermination of European Jewry had major consequences for American Jewry, not least because it resulted in relocating the demographic, cultural and intellectual centre of world Jewry from Europe to the U.S.<sup>112</sup> The feeling that Jewish life in America had to be reinvigorated in the aftermath of the Holocaust was widespread amongst American Jews. It was reflected, for instance, in the fact that synagogue membership jumped from about 20 per cent in 1930 to just under 60 per cent by 1960. Part of a larger revival of institutionalised religion in the context of the emerging fight against “godless”

---

<sup>110</sup> Edward S. Shapiro, *We Are Many: Reflections of American Jewish History and Identity* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2005), 39.

<sup>111</sup> Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 8.

<sup>112</sup> U.O. Schmelz, “The Demographic Impact of the Holocaust”, in *Terms of Survival: The Jewish World Since 1945*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005), 42-55.

communism, belonging to a synagogue became a means through which to express the desire to be part of a Jewish collective and offered avenues to engage in patterns of Jewish identification through communal association and activities with other Jews.<sup>113</sup>

Furthermore, the defeat of Nazism restored Jewish solidarity with America. This was, for example, the case for large numbers of Jewish soldiers who had fought in Europe. Over half a million Jews served in the U.S. armed forces during the war and for most of them it was a deeply transformative experience, characterised by an intense struggle both with their Jewish as well as American identities. Even though, as demonstrated by Deborah Dash Moore, Jewish servicemen and women were confronted with the same kind of prejudices in the military than Jews at home, many considered their participation in the war effort as an ethnic, religious as well as patriotic imperative. The war had merged the American and the Jewish fate in their eyes, as Nazi Germany posed an immense threat not only to world Jewry but also to the American way of life. Consequently, even as their experience empowered them as Jews, it also strengthened their identification with the democratic ideals of the American polity and made the belief that anti-Semitism was un-American more cogent than ever.<sup>114</sup>

The war and the Holocaust also impacted critically on the New York intellectuals, who before the war had felt estranged from and ambivalent about their American as well as their Jewish identities. Many of them had considered the war against Nazi Germany and Japan as an imperialist war, preferring to maintain a “third camp” position that continued to

---

<sup>113</sup> For more information on how the synagogue became a primary social centre for middle and upper-middle class Jews who moved to the suburbs see David Kaufman, *Shul with a Pool: The ‘Synagogue Center’ in American Jewish History* (Waltham, Ma: Brandeis University Press, 1999); Herbert J. Gans, “Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America”, *Making Sense of America: Sociological Analyses and Essays* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, 1999): 167-193.

<sup>114</sup> Deborah Dash Moore, *GI Jews: How World War II Changed a Generation* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2005); Dinnerstein, *Anti-Semitism in America*, 137-143.

hold out hope for the establishment of a socialist democratic alternative in the U.S. after the war. This led to much infighting between those New York intellectuals who came to support the war effort on behalf of the Allies after the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939 and the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, and those, such as Clement Greenberg and Dwight McDonald, who rejected any meaningful distinction between Roosevelt and Stalin, Churchill and Hitler as the war progressed. Yet, a majority of them, apart from Melvin Lasky and Sidney Hook, refrained from publicly voicing a sense of special responsibility towards the fate of European Jewry during the war. When the *Contemporary Jewish Record* held a symposium in 1944 that wanted to investigate how anti-Semitism had affected Jewish writers in the U.S., none of them expressed any “sense of urgency” with respect to the situation of European Jewry. According to Steven Whitfield, there did not seem any “sense of obligation” on behalf of these writers and intellectuals “to incorporate the experience of persecution and mass murder in their depiction of human actuality”.<sup>115</sup>

From the almost total absence of reference to what was happening to European Jews in the symposium, one was not able to grasp “how constant has been the pressure of the Holocaust, how forcefully it has exerted itself on the memory and imagination” of these intellectuals.<sup>116</sup> Only by how they remembered their reaction to the Holocaust retrospectively and by their radical change in posture at war’s end, can we deduce the magnitude of impact it had on their self-perception. For many of them, as for others amongst the Jewish leadership, the cataclysmic events of the Second World War had

---

<sup>115</sup> Stephen J. Whitfield, *Voices of Jacob, Hands of Esau: Jews in American Life and Thought* (Hamden, Ct.: Archon Books, 1984), 33.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

profound consequences and the near destruction of European Jewry became arguably “the touchstone of their identities as Jews”.<sup>117</sup>

According to New York intellectual Diana Trilling, they were “deradicalized by the war because they had to find their Jewish identities once more in relation to the whole new aspect of Zionism; there had to be a home for the Jews who had been made homeless by Hitler”.<sup>118</sup> The Holocaust, which according to Norman Podhoretz demonstrated once and for all “the inescapability of Jewishness”, forced them to reconsider their allegiances to both their Jewish as well as their American heritage and look for new ways in which to reconcile the two.<sup>119</sup> Alfred Kazin, who in the 1930s had proclaimed the revolt against Jewish chauvinism, described the Holocaust as the all-consuming event in his life, the memory of which “will haunt me to my last breath”.<sup>120</sup> Irving Howe referred to it as “the most terrible moment in human history” which drove him to engage in “timid reconsiderations of what it meant to be Jewish”.<sup>121</sup>

For these intellectuals, the war had diminished the perceived conflict between their identities as Americans and as Jews. It was now of utmost importance not only to fight anti-Semitism more decisively because it was no longer tolerable in light of the systematic slaughter of six million European Jews, but also to stimulate the development of a proud and lively Jewish community in the U.S. To these formerly alienated intellectuals, America now became central - not as a force of evil but as a force of good. With the beginning Cold War, many of these former Trotskyites would come to champion a hard-line

---

<sup>117</sup> Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 17.

<sup>118</sup> Diana Trilling, Oral History Interview Gertrude Himmelfarb (Bea Kristol), February 29, 1976, 21, Box 48, Folder 9, DTP.

<sup>119</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 118.

<sup>120</sup> Alfred Kazin, *New York Jew* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 26.

<sup>121</sup> Howe, *A Margin of Hope*, 253

anticommunism and bourgeois nationalism that aimed not simply at containing Soviet communism but also at the promotion of American power and values worldwide.

The central organ for this mission was to be *Commentary*, founded in 1945 under the auspices of the AJC, which wanted to refocus American Jews on their Jewish cultural and spiritual heritage, while simultaneously engaging in a process of harmonising Jewish and American values and culture.<sup>122</sup> Eliot Cohen, the first editor of *Commentary*, wanted to create a vibrant Jewish life in the U.S., which would symbiotically coexist alongside a highly affirmative identification with American society and culture.<sup>123</sup> “We have faith,” said Cohen, “that out of the opportunities of our experience here, there will evolve new patterns of living, new modes of thought, which will harmonise heritage and country into a true sense of at-home-ness in the modern world. Surely, we who have survived catastrophe, survive freedom too”.<sup>124</sup>

As American mainstream society became ever more receptive to and inclusive of Jews over the next two decades, the long-standing struggle for the right to be different as well as the right to be equal would again be tested. By the late 1960s a number of Jewish leaders sounded alarm that freedom had actually taken a toll on Jewishness, that the great inclusiveness experienced by American Jewry during its ‘Golden Age’, had begun to macerate collective and individual Jewish identities. As Stephen Whitfield pointed out, the ancient danger of persecution that had characterised Jewish existence and self-

---

<sup>122</sup> A number of former New York intellectuals did, however, not agree with *Commentary*’s celebration of the American status quo, such as Irving Howe. Howe would in the coming decades distance himself from the *Commentary* crowd, disturbed by “the eagerness of former radicals to join in the national mood of celebration.” Howe, *A Margin of Hope*, 214-216. In reaction to what he perceived as the conformism of the *Commentary* intellectuals he founded *Dissent* together with Lewis A. Coser in 1954. The magazine wanted to “dissent from the bleak atmosphere of conformism that pervades the political and intellectual life of the United States”. Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowack, *The Fifties: The Way We Were* (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 1977), 239.

<sup>123</sup> Eliot E. Cohen, “Age of Brass”, *The Menorah Journal*, October 1925, 447.

<sup>124</sup> Eliot E. Cohen, “An Act of Affirmation”, *Commentary*, November 1945, 2.

understanding for centuries was in post-Second World War America replaced by the problem of Jewish identity and continuity, not because of persecution but because of the imminent lack thereof.<sup>125</sup>

Ultimately, it can be concluded that it was not until the Allied victory introduced a new period of optimism and social stability in the U.S., that American Jews ceased to function as the symbol of social anxiety in the eyes of gentiles that they had been in the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s. After having experienced about four decades of uncertainty about their place in American society, Jews exalted at the possibility of integration offered by American society and many were now highly optimistic about an eventual unconditional entrance into mainstream society. However, it should also be kept in mind that even though Jews were now no longer considered as a distinctive, uncomfortable group and public talk of the “Jewish problem” receded, they were still expected to keep expressions of group difference to a level that was acceptable to dominant gentile society.

### Conclusion

As remaining exclusionary efforts and anti-Semitism waned over the next two decades, Jews were confronted with the challenge of assimilating into broader society while at the same time maintaining an ethno-religious distinctiveness. Historian Michael Staub has observed that during the 1950s Jews continued to be “subjected to profoundly mixed messages about how to behave and who to be. Fitting in among gentiles was important, but

---

<sup>125</sup> Whitfield, *Voices of Jacob, Hands of Esau*, 98.

so too was loyalty to the Jewish family and community”.<sup>126</sup> To a certain extent post-war Jewish identity seemed to be more uncertain and unstable than ever before. Intra-Jewish debates were dominated by questions such as: What does Jewishness and Judaism stand for? Should Jews identify with oppressed blacks or with the white majority? How should Jews position themselves on issues of social justice even as their socio-economic upward mobility increased? And finally, did the rising comfort and apparent security mean they had more to give or more to lose? Looming over all these debates was the lingering uncertainty as to whether anti-Semitism really was in permanent decline, as opinion polls seemed to suggest.

Many American Jews sought to solve the dilemma surrounding post-war Jewish identity by strengthening their commitment to liberal politics and social justice issues, such as the struggle for black civil rights. Simultaneously, however, doubts that Jews were neglecting to address concerns and issues specific to their own community began to appear. It was often felt that the undifferentiated embrace of post-war liberalism, which had brought Jews into the fold of the white power structure, also contributed to the dissolution of Jewish collective identity and distinctiveness. Constructing Jewish identity in terms of being an integral part of the white hegemony, it was felt, left them with a less functional Jewish identity. In the words of Seth Foreman, the close association between Jews and political liberalism led to “a collective Jewish identity crisis in post-war America”, because “Jews were so preoccupied with other people’s problems that they neglected their own”.<sup>127</sup>

---

<sup>126</sup> Michel E. Staub, *Torn At The Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 10.

<sup>127</sup> Seth Foreman, *Blacks in the Jewish Mind: A Crisis of Liberalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 200.

The emergence of what eventually came to be known as neoconservatism was directly related to the rising doubts within parts of the Jewish community about the idea that Jews were best served by the commitment to liberal politics. While it is generally assessed that the anti-progressive liberal critique of future neoconservatives was begun in the aftermath of the Six Day War in 1967, evidence of an emerging anti-progressive agenda amongst those who turned neoconservative can be observed in their work from the 1950s onwards. Future neoconservatives, such as Irving Kristol and Nathan Glazer, began to argue that a number of tendencies within liberalism warranted a serious reconsideration of the compatibility of Jewish interests with liberalism. They urged Jews to approach politics from a “Jewish perspective” and rid themselves of what they saw as self-destructive liberal altruisms. The time had come for Jews to look after their own interests, lest they run the risk of not surviving as a collective.

**Chapter 2**  
**‘Exile and Homecoming’:**  
***Commentary and the Renegotiation of***  
**Jewish American Identity,**  
**1945-1959**

~

Introduction

When Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were arrested in 1950, brought to trial in 1951 and eventually executed for conspiring to pass atomic secrets on to the Soviets in June 1953, Jewish leaders were alarmed by the potentially negative repercussions the case could have for Jews.<sup>128</sup> Major Jewish defence agencies such as the American Defense League (ADL) and the AJC had been battling the “the Jew-as-communist-canard” since the First World War.<sup>129</sup> With the onset of the Cold War, it seemed more vital than ever to dissociate Jews from communism in the public mind. According to historian Deborah Dash Moore, the Rosenberg case was crucially instrumental in making “opposition to communism a criterion” of whether one was part of the Jewish community or not.<sup>130</sup> Even though many Jewish leaders remained ever watchful of the potential threat emanating from certain extreme forms of anti-communist activity for American Jews, a majority believed,

---

<sup>128</sup> After the end of the Cold War, new sources have led to the emergence of a consensus amongst historians that at least Julius Rosenberg was in actuality guilty of espionage. It remains unclear, however, what exactly the nature of the secrets was that he passed on. Walter Schneir and Miriam Schneir, “Cryptic Answers”, *The Nation*, August 14-21, 1995.

<sup>129</sup> Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 114.

<sup>130</sup> Deborah Dash Moore, “Reconsidering the Rosenbergs: Symbol and Substance in Second-Generation American Jewish Consciousness”, *Journal of American Ethnic History* 8, no. 1 (Fall 1988): 26.

nevertheless, that liberal anti-communism could function as a vehicle for further integration.<sup>131</sup>

As opposed to the ambivalence felt within leading Jewish organisations about how to approach the anti-communist consensus, *Commentary* was one Jewish voice that had little qualms about subscribing to and emphatically supporting hard anti-communism. In relation to the majority of the Jewish establishment, *Commentary* and its writers positioned themselves further to the right on the issue of anti-communism. Kristol, for instance, taunted the relatively moderate AJC for being far too lenient on communists and communist sympathisers and for not being able to “make what I would have regarded...as the necessary distinctions within American liberalism, of what was worthy of support and what was not”. He, therefore, believed that the AJC’s “exaggerated liberalism” dangerously interfered with protecting American democracy and Jewish security therein.<sup>132</sup>

*Commentary* articles dealing with the Rosenberg case accused the couple and their supporters of abusing the legacy of the Holocaust. By implying anti-Semitic motifs on behalf of their accusers, the Rosenbergs, *Commentary* argued, were manipulating the Jewish heritage in order to divert from their ‘real’ identity as communists. Lucy Dawidowicz rejected appeals to rabbis and secular Jewish communal leaders on the

---

<sup>131</sup> Dollinger, *Quest For Inclusion*, 130. For more information on anti-communist activity of national Jewish organisations, see: Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 113-134; The ADL, for example, often considered to be a relatively conservative organisation in terms of politics, received much criticism from conservative and moderate Jews for its repeated critique of extreme forms of anti-communism. In 1951, for instance, Eugene Lyons of the *National Review* took up the fight with the ADL for its “vicious attack” against the American Jewish League Against Communism. Eugene Lyons, “Our New Privileged Class”, *American Legion Magazine*, September 1951, 37.

<sup>132</sup> “It [the AJC]... tended to get suckered by various liberal groups who were in effect pro-Communist and not anti-Communist.” Irving Kristol, Wiener Oral History Library, February 13, 1980, Tape 1, Transcript, 16.

Rosenbergs' behalf as insincere and part of a communist strategy to de-legitimise the case against them by linking it to anti-Semitism.<sup>133</sup>

The Holocaust rhetoric used by the Rosenbergs and the fact that Ethel Rosenberg likened the behaviour of Jewish leaders towards her and her husband to that of the *Judenräte* in war-torn Europe, was, according to Dawidowicz nothing but an attempt to “pick up sympathy and support from individual Jews who may be suckers for this particular bait”.<sup>134</sup> It constituted a communist propaganda effort, which wanted to convince the world that the U.S. was turning into Nazi Germany and “that the conviction of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg for espionage is a 1952 version of Reichstag fire, prelude to an American version of Auschwitz”.<sup>135</sup> Their agenda of “fabricating evidence of anti-Semitism” and equating anti-communism with anti-Semitism, she concluded, was dangerous and deceitful, since it ran the risk of making all Jews appear potentially guilty of communist sympathies.<sup>136</sup> The Rosenbergs, Robert Warshow in turn argued, were nothing but impostors who had taken on the role of victimised Jews that the communist propaganda machine had “demanded of them”.<sup>137</sup> Implying that the Rosenbergs were not to be considered as *real* Jews, *Commentary* began to drive home the message that being Jewish was no longer compatible with being a communist.

*Commentary*'s coverage of the Rosenberg trial neatly captures the main themes discussed in this chapter. While the distancing of New York intellectuals from their leftist past is familiarly located within the context of de-radicalisation and the emergence of

---

<sup>133</sup> Lucy S. Dawidowicz, “‘Anti-Semitism’ and the Rosenberg Case: The Latest Communist Propaganda Trap”, *Commentary*, July 1952, 41-45.

<sup>134</sup> Dawidowicz, “‘Anti-Semitism’ and the Rosenberg Case”, 44.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>136</sup> Lucy S. Dawidowicz, Reprint: “False Friends and Dangerous Defenders”, *The Reconstructions*, May 1, 1953, Box 8, Folder 13, LPD.

<sup>137</sup> Robert Warshow, “The ‘Idealism’ of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg: ‘The Kind of People We Are’”, *Commentary*, November 1953, 417.

fervent anti-communism amongst formerly Marxist intellectuals, this chapter expands this narrative by investigating the Jewish dimension of this turn. The double alienation of New York Jewish intellectuals gave way to a simultaneous rediscovery of their Americanness as well as their Jewishness during the 1950s. The process of enthusiastically reasserting both identities, was according to Alfred Kazin, “made slightly hysterical by the need to cast off Marxist ideology”, which was replaced with a hard liberal anti-communism by many and a stringent nationalism by some.<sup>138</sup> Early Holocaust consciousness and a specific understanding of the lessons of the Holocaust were central driving forces in developing a hard anti-communist rationale amongst *Commentary* writers.

The change in status of American Jews required rethinking the terms within which American Jewish identity was defined. This task led to highly divisive intra-communal debates. These debates revolved around issues such as how to ensure Jewish group survival and to tackle anti-Semitism, as well as which positions to take towards the conflict with the Soviet Union, anti-communism at home, matters of civil liberties and the budding civil rights movement. Overarching all these matters were questions pertaining to the meaning of American Jewish identity and which political stances would best express Jewish interests. Was the essence of modern Jewish identity to be found in a commitment to social justice activism and liberal politics or had this attachment, in light of the Holocaust and the perceived threat emanating from communism become an untenable position for Jews? Whatever the issues in question, Jews on all sides of the debate tended to accuse each other of being inadequately ‘Jewish’ for embracing one or another position.

---

<sup>138</sup> Alfred Kazin, “Introduction: The Jew as Modern American Writer”, in *The Commentary Reader: Two Decades of Articles and Stories*, ed. Norman Podhoretz (New York: Atheneum, 1966), xxii.

This chapter focuses on the ideological intra-communal arguments in relation to the significance of liberalism and examines specifically how issues were framed within the pages of *Commentary* magazine. Even though *Commentary* was a publication with a small circulation of only 20, 000 before the 1960s, it was also a community magazine, funded by the AJC, setting the agenda for discussing matters of importance to Jewish life at the time.<sup>139</sup> For Ruth Wisse, professor for Yiddish literature and second-generation neoconservative, for example, *Commentary* came to play a central role in shaping her growing up in a Zionist home in Montreal, Canada and influenced, as she claimed, her intellectual maturation, especially with respect to Jewish issues.<sup>140</sup>

By analysing *Commentary*'s positions on issues, such as the Cold War, anti-communism, and an emerging Holocaust consciousness, it is possible to isolate premature neoconservative themes and ideas, such as the development of a hyper nationalism based on a symbiotic relationship between American and Jewish identity and a fierce rejection of communism, as well as the beginning of anti-liberal rhetoric tied to a specific discourse about the Holocaust and its perceived lessons for the American scene. It is important to note here that even though not all of *Commentary* contributors discussed below would become neoconservatives in later years, they, nevertheless, all contributed in some way to its conservative turn.

---

<sup>139</sup> The first issue of *Commentary* sold only 4,341 copies. By 1950 its circulation reached 20,196 copies, while it was still losing \$104,000 a year. Bloom, *Prodigal Sons*, 161; Eliot Cohen, Interview in *Time*, January 29, 1951: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,821477,00.html> (accessed August 17, 2009).

<sup>140</sup> Ruth R. Wisse, "The Jewishness of *Commentary*", in '*Commentary*' in *American Life*, ed. Murray Friedman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), 61; Wisse, interview with author, April 11, 2008.

‘An Act of Faith in America’: The Birth of *Commentary* Magazine

As a result of profound shifts in attitudes introduced by the Second World War, the idea that American Jews belonged to a different racial group altogether quickly lost its appeal after 1945. As public expressions of anti-Semitism fell into disrepute in light of the Holocaust, Jews began moving into the centre of the white power structure in large numbers, even though some exclusionary pockets remained. As a result of the rapid inclusion, the organised Jewish community saw itself confronted with the task of developing new patterns of Jewish identification that would take into consideration the newly achieved status as insiders and yet enable Jews to remain a distinct collective.

The Holocaust and the resultant relocation of the demographic and cultural centre of world Jewry from Europe to the U.S. demanded of American Jewish leaders the rehabilitation of Holocaust survivors and the nurturing of the struggling Jewish community in Palestine. The post-Holocaust era introduced, what Bernard Rosenberg and Irving Howe referred to as a “schizoid” condition to American Jewish life: while Jews were becoming fully integrated and moving upward in great numbers, the extermination of six million Jews hung over them “with consequent feelings of guilt, fright, shame, and sentiments of apocalypse”.<sup>141</sup> Reconciling these two elements of American Jewish existence was the major task confronting Jews after the war. In order to avoid, what Rabbi Emil Fackenheim referred to as granting “Hitler yet other, posthumous victories”, American Jews sought to develop affirmative patterns of American and Jewish identification, which would ensure

---

<sup>141</sup> Bernard Rosenberg and Irving Howe, “Are American Jews Turning Toward the Right?”, in *The New Conservatives: A Critique from the Left*, eds. Lewis A. Coser and Irving Howe (New York: Quadrangle, 1977), 69.

integration into American society and collective Jewish survival.<sup>142</sup> The overall tendency amongst secular as well as religious leaders after the war was to approach Jewish identity more assertively and to be more appreciative of the precariousness of survival itself. While central themes of the Jewish Diaspora discourse of the past had often praised the virtue of powerlessness and the sanctity of the oppressed, the Second World War and the formation of Israel did much to mitigate Jewish averseness to martiality and militancy and many, such as budding neoconservatives, came to see powerlessness as a vice rather than a virtue.

However, the diversity of opinion and the ideological disagreements that had characterised American Jewish leadership before the Second World War would continue after the war and even grow stronger as Jewish society grew culturally and socio-economically more homogenous. While a majority of Jewish leaders continued to embrace some version of liberalism throughout the 1950s, a number of Jewish representatives began promoting an attenuated universalism while at the same time championing a more pluralist approach to American democracy. Within the anti-communist climate of the early Cold War, they came to believe that only a more particularistic approach to Jewish identity could safeguard collective survival.<sup>143</sup>

The changing status of American Jews introduced, according to Edward Shapiro, a redefinition of American Jewish identity revolving around political and social causes rather

---

<sup>142</sup> Rabbi Emil Fackenheim postulated a 614<sup>th</sup> commandment in reaction to Hitler's murder of six million Jews and months before the Six Day War: "If the 614<sup>th</sup> commandment is binding...then we are...commanded to survive as Jews, lest the Jewish people perish...To abandon any of these imperatives, in response to Hitler's victory at Auschwitz, would be to hand him yet other, posthumous victories." Emil L. Fackenheim, "Jewish Values in the Post-Holocaust Future: A Symposium", *Judaism* 16, no. 3 (Summer 1967): 272-273. In an interview with the author, Podhoretz claimed that he was the one "to coin the most famous sentence Emil Fackenheim ever wrote", Podhoretz, interview with author, May 17, 2008.

<sup>143</sup> Goren, *The Politics and Public Culture of American Jews*, 29.

than around purely cultural questions.<sup>144</sup> Jewish identity politics, which had been part of Jewish political culture since the 1920s, found further reinforcement in the post-war environment in which Horace Kallen's ideas of cultural pluralism became an integral part of the American society. One major agent in renegotiating Jewish identity around political and social causes was *Commentary* magazine, which according to Ruth Wisse "became the first Jewish magazine in history that speaks to power in the polity at large, while protecting maximally the interests of the Jews".<sup>145</sup>

*Commentary* was first published in November 1945 as a consciously Jewish magazine, but also dealing with matters of American and 'universal' concern. Combative in tone and mindset, *Commentary* wanted to address an eclectic range of topics, relating to domestic and foreign policy, American high and popular culture, as well as the realm of ideas and philosophy. Its target audience were not just intellectuals and/or Jews but the educated reader more generally. The title implied that it wanted to be a magazine of opinion and comment, contributing to shaping contemporary events and perceptions. Yet, as opposed to the little magazines, such as the *Masses*, *New Masses*, *the Nation*, *the New Republic* or *Partisan Review*, *Commentary* also signified a move away from the radicalism and of past decades towards more conformity with mainstream culture. According to Norman Podhoretz, the AJC aimed at creating "a kind of Jewish *Harper's*, only more scholarly".<sup>146</sup> The intention had been to create, in the words of Elliot Cohen, the first editor of *Commentary*, a publication, which restored "the intellectual dignity of Judaism".<sup>147</sup>

---

<sup>144</sup> Edward Shapiro claims that Jews were no longer seeing themselves as a distinct cultural entity as such but rather as an interest group with distinctive claims to defend. Shapiro, *A Time for Healing*, 195-228.

<sup>145</sup> Quoted in: Nathan Abrams, "A Significant Journal of Jewish Opinion?: The Jewishness of *Commentary* Magazine", *American Jewish Archives Journal*, LV, no. 1 (2003): 35; Also: Ruth R. Wisse, "The Maturing of *Commentary* and of the Jewish Intellectual", *Jewish Social Studies* 3, no. 2 (Winter 1997): 33.

<sup>146</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 128.

<sup>147</sup> Cohen, interview in *Time*, (accessed August 17, 2009).

*Commentary* wanted to be an agent that transformed formerly alienated Jewish intellectuals into productive members of the Jewish and the national community, while it pushed Jews towards the centre of American mainstream society. Its main message was that Jews were an integral part of American society and that Jewish security in America and around the world was intricately tied to the preservation of the American system. For Eliot Cohen the journal was “an act of faith” in a Jewish future in the United States. “With Europe devastated” he said, “there falls upon us in the United States a far greater share of responsibility for carrying forward, in a creative way, our common Jewish cultural and spiritual heritage”.<sup>148</sup>

The effort to push for greater inclusion of Jews into mainstream society was to be based on an affirmative identification with the American status quo, which in the early Cold War environment also meant a staunch rejection of communist ideology and politics, which characterised *Commentary* from its earliest beginnings. As a matter of fact, Cohen, who in later years became obsessed with anti-communism, once explained, “*Commentary* had been created by the American Jewish Committee to prove to the world that there were anti-Communist Jewish intellectuals”.<sup>149</sup>

Eliot Cohen, born in 1899 in Des Moines, Iowa, had come of age in Mobile Alabama, in a nominally Orthodox home, infused with a strong tendency towards secularism and a proclivity for English poetry and literature. Cohen was an intellectually precocious child, entering Yale at the age of fourteen where he excelled at his studies of English. He became President of the Menorah Society in his senior year. He broke off his graduate studies in English at Yale and became assistant editor for the *Menorah Journal*, one of the precursors

---

<sup>148</sup> Cohen, “An Act of Affirmation”, 1-3.

<sup>149</sup> Kristol, *Reflections of a Neoconservative*, 17.

of *Commentary*, in 1924, after he realised that his opportunities for an academic career were severely curtailed because of his Jewishness.<sup>150</sup> Like many other intellectuals, Cohen became active on the left after the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and the ensuing economic depression. As fellow New York intellectual Diana Trilling recalled, Cohen “had come to believe that capitalism had run its course and that Communism was the only answer to the crisis confronting the country”.<sup>151</sup> Like others, however, he also quickly developed a strong disinclination for organised Marxism and joined the anti-Stalinist Trotskyites.<sup>152</sup>

Growing up in the South differentiated him from most New York intellectuals who had primarily spent their lives in New York and Chicago, both cities with large Jewish populations and a vibrant Jewish life. Nathan Perlmutter, former director of the ADL, described being Jewish in New York as opposed to other places in the country as much less of a communal experience: “When all the world is Jewish, nobody is Jewish really...You’ve got to leave major metropolitan areas to fully understand what I mean about a sense of a Jewish community – of a ‘we’ and ‘they’ – in New York it’s all ‘we’”.<sup>153</sup>

The Jewish experience in the American South, especially in the Deep South, was on the whole much more homogeneous, at least outwardly, and characterised by a tendency to compartmentalise Jewish and American identities.<sup>154</sup> In opposition to his fellow ‘Commentarians’, this background put Cohen more positively in tune with his Jewishness

---

<sup>150</sup> *The Menorah Journal* was founded in 1915 by the Menorah Society, an association of intercollegiate clubs for Jewish college students, created by Horace Kallen in 1906 in response to social discrimination of Jews at Harvard. *The Menorah Journal* aimed to explore Jewish heritage and to demonstrate the respectability of Jewish culture. Nathan Abrams, ‘*Commentary*’ Magazine 1945-1959: “A Journal of Significant Thought and Opinion” (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2007), 4, 5.

<sup>151</sup> Diana Trilling, *The Beginning of the Journey: The Marriage of Diana and Lionel Trilling* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1993), 194.

<sup>152</sup> Abrams, ‘*Commentary*’ Magazine 1945-1959, 22-24. *Partisan Review*, created in 1934, broke with the Communist Party in 1937 and consecutively developed into a point of convergence for anti-Stalinist intellectuals who were primarily Trotskyites.

<sup>153</sup> Nathan Perlmutter, Wiener Oral History Library, March 27, 1980, Transcript, 15.

<sup>154</sup> For more information on strategies of compartmentalisation and coalescence in renegotiating Jewish and American identities, see: Fishman, *Jewish Life and American Culture*.

on the one hand and his Americaness on the other.<sup>155</sup> Lionel Trilling, who was very much influenced by Eliot Cohen, once said about Cohen that he was “proud of his knowledge of an American life that wasn’t easily available to young Jewish intellectuals”. After Cohen committed suicide in 1959, Trilling eulogised: “He taught the younger men around him that nothing in human life need to be alien to their thought, and nothing in American life”.<sup>156</sup>

In an article published in the *Menorah Journal* in 1922, Cohen spelled out his vision of what a Jewish magazine should do for Jews in America, which he would later set out to realise in *Commentary*. In this critique of American Jewish communal life of the 1920s as devoid of real content, he called for a “complete rehabilitation of the Jewish tradition and the most thoroughgoing reconstruction of Jewish intellectual values”.<sup>157</sup> The publication he had in mind would emphasise literature, criticism and the arts and encourage its readers to perceive themselves both as Jews and as citizens of the U.S. and the modern world. At the same time he wanted Jewish writers to write about their Jewishness and/or Judaism with the same worldliness and refinement with which they discussed highbrow culture and politics, thereby exploding Jewish stereotypes created by both Jews and gentiles alike. According to Trilling, the overarching aim was “to normalize” Jewish existence in America so that Jews could fully contribute to American society.<sup>158</sup>

In order to realise his vision, Cohen recruited and reared a long list of young writers, amongst them people such as Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, Daniel Bell and later Norman Podhoretz. Other original contributors to *Commentary* were the art critic Clement

---

<sup>155</sup> The term ‘Commentarians’ was first used by Nathan Abrams in his study of *Commentary* from 1945 to 1959. It connotes regular contributors and/or editors. Abrams, ‘*Commentary*’ Magazine, 1945-1959, xix.

<sup>156</sup> Lionel Trilling, “Young in the Thirties”, *Commentary*, May 1966, 45; Lionel Trilling, “On the Death of a Friend”, *Commentary*, February 1960, 93.

<sup>157</sup> Cohen, “The Age of Brass”, 425-47.

<sup>158</sup> Abrams, ‘*Commentary*’ Magazine 1945-1959, 14; Trilling, “Young in the Thirties”, 46.

Greenberg, social critic Robert Warshow and novelist Saul Bellow.<sup>159</sup> As shown, most of these intellectuals had been very ambivalent about their Jewish heritage throughout the 1930s and early 1940s. As aspiring public intellectuals and Marxists, they had preferred not to discuss it publicly, as they feared it would impact negatively on their intellectual credibility as well as associate them with what they perceived as a complacent bourgeoisie. In fact, most New York Jewish intellectuals denied that their Jewish ancestry had any significant influence on their thinking. If anything, they had experienced Jewishness as a limiting, keeping them from entering broader society and for a number of them, interfering with pursuing academic careers. Irving Howe said with respect to his Jewishness that he “felt no particular responsibility for its survival or renewal. It was simply there. While it would be shameful to deny its presence or seek to flee its stigma, my friends and I could hardly be said to have thought Jewishness could do much for us or we for it”.<sup>160</sup>

For many of these twice alienated intellectuals, the uncovering of their Jewishness paralleled their rediscovery of America. After the war, many of them understood that they could count themselves lucky to have been born in the United States. Howe gave expression to that sentiment when he wrote: “We knew but for an accident of geography we might also now be bars of soap”.<sup>161</sup> With Cohen, they wanted to lead the way in making Jews more at home in America as well as feel more positively about their Jewishness, in the process of which, they themselves overcame their self-imposed ‘homelessness’. They would quickly become buoyantly optimistic about the nation’s future, calling upon

---

<sup>159</sup> Throughout the 1950s, *Commentary* boasted an impressive array of returning contributors, such as Melvin Lasky, Sidney Hook, Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, Robert Bendiner, Clement Greenberg, Daniel Bell, Saul Bellow, Hannah Arendt, Alfred Kazin, Isaac Rosenfelt, Bernard Malamud, Irving Howe, Lionel Trilling, Philip Roth, Robert Warshow, Lucy Dawidowicz, Midge Decter, Gertude Himmelfarb, Milton Himmelfarb, Norman Podhoretz, Leslie Fiedler, and Norman Mailer.

<sup>160</sup> Howe, *A Margin of Hope*, 151.

<sup>161</sup> Howe, “The New York Intellectuals”, 43.

America “to reaffirm and restore the sense of sanctity of the human person and the rights of man”.<sup>162</sup>

*Commentary*’s effort to create a symbiosis of Americanism and Jewishness was to be achieved by dealing with issues of general, American and international concern on the same level as issues relating to Jewish literature, culture, religion and philosophy. At the same time, the publication presented itself as a sophisticated magazine intelligible to lay readers and intellectuals, Jewish and non-Jewish. The diversity of material and opinions covered by *Commentary* found reflection from the first issue onwards. Along with essays by historian Salo Baron on “The Spiritual Reconstruction of European Jewry” and Rabbi Franz Rosenzweig’s “On Being a Jewish Person”, the edition also features a report by George Orwell on the British General Elections, a piece on the state of theatre production by Louis Kronenberg, a short story by Paul Goodman, as well as book reviews by Mary McCarthy and Harold Rosenberg.

This diversity of subjects reflected what Alfred Kazin described as the realisation of the many-sided relatedness of Jewish existence after the Holocaust. It testified to the belief that it was no longer possible after the Holocaust to believe that Jewish survival and Jewish self-determination were not related to *everything* else in the world. Kazin stipulated that after 1945, the Jewish writer realised that the Holocaust “bound him more closely to every fundamental question of human nature and historic failure involved in Europe’s self-destruction”.<sup>163</sup>

In order to realise this eclectic analysis of issues, Cohen selected a varied group of editorialists and regular contributors, who were not just chosen for their editing and writing

---

<sup>162</sup> Cohen, “An Act of Affirmation”, 2.

<sup>163</sup> Kazin, “Introduction: The Jew as Modern American Writer”, xxii.

abilities, but also for their anti-Stalinist and pro-American credentials. According to Louis Harap, Cohen gathered around him the “most inclusive united front of the anti-progressive, anti-communist, anti-Soviet fractions of the “left” in this country”, people such as Sidney Hook, Robert Warshow, Kristol, Nathan Glazer, Phillip Rahv and Clement Greenberg. Kristol himself admitted that he and others “had been hired because of our views (including, of course, our political views) and talents were congenial to the sponsoring organisation”.<sup>164</sup>

Kristol began writing for *Commentary* while he was living in Cambridge, England from 1946 to 1947, where his wife Gertrude Himmelfarb was working on her doctoral thesis on Lord Acton. From 1947 to 1952 he was associate and later managing editor of the publication, while simultaneously functioning as executive director of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF), after which he went on to edit the British-based and CIA-funded *Encounter* with poet Stephen Spender from 1953 until 1958.<sup>165</sup> *Encounter* was created “to counteract, insofar as it was possible, the anti-American, pro-Soviet views of a large segment of the intellectual elites in the Western democracies and in the English-speaking Commonwealth”.<sup>166</sup> While Kristol described *Encounter*’s political vantage point as “right-wing Social Democratic”, he thought of himself as politically further to the right,

---

<sup>164</sup> Louis Harap, “X-Ray on *Commentary*”, *Jewish Life*, July 1947, 19-23; Kristol, *Reflections of a Neoconservative*, 17.

<sup>165</sup> The ACCF was an affiliate of the international Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF). It was created in response to a number of “peace conferences” held between 1947 and 1949, most famously the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York, which saw the gathering of about 800 prominent literary and artistic figures in March 1949. The ACCF sought to organise anti-communist intellectuals in order to counteract the Soviet cultural propaganda by sponsoring conferences and a number of magazines. Sidney Hook and the leader of the Socialist Party, Norman Thomas, also organised a counter-conference, denouncing Soviet manipulation of the arts and culture and the success this propaganda had with the American intelligentsia. Peter Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe* (New York: Free Press, 1989); Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999), 45-56; William Barrett, “Culture Conference at the Waldorf: The Artful Dove”, *Commentary*, May 1949, 487-493.

<sup>166</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 481.

expressing this attitude by “publishing a few articles by some of the younger, more gifted British Tories”. According to Peregrine Worsthorne, contributor to *Encounter*, it was not just Kristol’s intention to convince the left of the necessity to support U.S. cold war policy, but also those parts of the British Right, which traditionally had been characterised by anti-American prejudices.<sup>167</sup>

Kristol was born on January 22, 1920 into a nominally Orthodox family in Brooklyn. While his parents rarely attended synagogue, the household was kept strictly kosher. Kristol received a Jewish education by attending yeshiva two times a week and on Sundays, where he learned to read Hebrew and the Yiddish translations from Torah excerpts. Retrospectively, he described his attachment to Judaism and Jewishness during his youth as having been devoid of passion. While he never thought of himself as religious and took much more interest in the issues that were discussed in *The New Masses* than in issues concerning Jews and Israel, he later nevertheless described himself as having been “born theotropic”.<sup>168</sup>

Even as Trotskyite student at CCNY, he pursued his interest in religion and matters of spirituality, reading Plato, the King James Bible, Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich and Jacques Maritain. What interested him most when reading Christian theologians was that the fact that their thought was undergirded by the belief that “the human condition placed inherent limitations on human possibility”.<sup>169</sup> Only later, “after the war and after the holocaust”, did he develop an interest in Jewish thinkers, such as Martin Buber, Gershom Sholem and Franz Rosenzweig, because, as he said, the Holocaust had “touched my Jewish

---

<sup>167</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 48-482; Sir Peregrine Worsthorne, “Irving Kristol in London”, in *The Neoconservative Imagination: Essays in Honor of Irving Kristol*, eds. Christopher DeMuth and William Kristol (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1995), 31-32.

<sup>168</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 4.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

nerve”. Moreover, he explained, that it was “as a result of that experience, the war and the holocaust, that we began pushing for Jewish thinkers to write in *Commentary* and Jewish magazines”.<sup>170</sup>

What remained of his Trotskyite past, after his de-radicalisation, was his “training in polemics and sustained political analysis” and a harsh, all-or-nothing style of argumentation which characterised his work.<sup>171</sup> Joseph Epstein once described Kristol’s style as “supremely confident about subjects that are elsewhere held to be still in the flux of controversy, assuming always that anyone who thinks differently is perverse or inept”.<sup>172</sup> Kristol once claimed that he believed the continuities between Trotskyites and neoconservatives to lie in the fact that the latter “are the political intellectuals, and that’s what the Trotskyists were”.<sup>173</sup>

It also needs to be pointed out here that Kristol was always one step ahead of most of the other intellectuals in terms of his evolution towards conservatism. Even while he was still viewed as and referred to himself as a liberal, he was “something of a closet Tory”.<sup>174</sup> Not only was his conservatism more developed at an earlier stage, but he would ultimately move much further to the right than most of his fellow intellectuals. About himself, Kristol said: “Ever since I can remember, I’ve been a neo-something: a neo-Marxist, a neo-Trotskyist, a neo-liberal, a neo-conservative”.<sup>175</sup>

Much of Kristol’s conservatism emanated from his “deep distrust of...liberal democracy” and much of his critique of modern liberalism were already visible in the

---

<sup>170</sup> Kristol, Wiener Oral History Library, 6.

<sup>171</sup> Kristol cited in Blumenthal, *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment*, 141.

<sup>172</sup> Joseph Epstein, “The New Conservatives: Intellectuals in Retreat”, in *The New Conservatives: A Critique from the Left*, eds. Lewis A. Coser and Irving Howe (New York: Quandrangle, 1977), 22.

<sup>173</sup> Cited in Blumenthal, *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment*, 141.

<sup>174</sup> Epstein, “The New Conservatives: Intellectuals in Retreat”, 23.

<sup>175</sup> Interview with Irving Kristol in *Arguing the World*, PBS, 1998. Also see: Joseph Dorman, *Arguing the World: The New York Intellectuals in Their Own Words* (New York: Free Press, 2000).

1940s and 1950s.<sup>176</sup> In a 1948 review of Reconstructionist Rabbi Milton Steinberg's book *Basic Judaism*, Kristol, reflecting on the desire expressed by many young intellectuals like himself to rediscover their Jewish heritage, assailed Steinberg's extreme oversimplification of Judaism as devoid of sincere religious content. He believed that Steinberg's aim to adapt Judaism to 'Main Street' America "results in the perversion of the Jewish religion into a doctrine of social (and sociable) principles, the transformation of Messianism into a shallow, if sincere, humanitarianism".<sup>177</sup>

The review reflected Kristol's contempt for radical rationalism, an argument he made repeatedly throughout his career. He particularly attacked fellow Jews who tried to adapt Judaism to modernity. Paradoxically, even while Kristol came to defend religion as one of the great carriers of meaning in society, he remained a secular Jew all his life. The main problem of modernity, as Kristol understood it, was the fact that modern man had lost religion and that all efforts of accommodating religion to modernity were characterised by "superficiality, even vulgarity".<sup>178</sup>

During this time, Kristol also began to express his ambiguous view of the 'people', upon which his rejection of utopianism and his negative attitude towards participatory democracy hinged. Much of Kristol's writing was characterised by his sceptical approach to human nature. While he claimed admiration for 'the people' as "a repository of common sense", he continuously expressed concern about the masses' potential for uncontrolled and irrational expression of passion. The two years he spent in the U.S. army removed him from the New York microcosm and brought him into contact with average Americans. The

---

<sup>176</sup> Epstein, "The New Conservatives: Intellectuals in Retreat", 24.

<sup>177</sup> Irving Kristol, "How Basic is 'Basic Judaism'?": A Comfortable Religion for an Uncomfortable World", *Commentary*, January 1948, 32.

<sup>178</sup> Kristol, Wiener Oral History Library, 6; Kristol, "How Basic is 'Basic Judaism'", 32.

experience of war as well as the contact with ‘ordinary’ folk allegedly convinced Kristol that the construction of a utopian society based on socialist ideals was an undesirable enterprise: “The idea of building socialism with the common man who actually existed--as distinct from his idealized version--was sheer fantasy, and therefore the prospects for "democratic socialism" were nil. The army may have radicalized Norman Mailer; it successfully de-radicalized me. It caused me to cease being a socialist”.<sup>179</sup>

As associate editor at *Commentary*, a job that he took up immediately upon his return from Great Britain, Kristol was also reunited with his former CCNY friend Nathan Glazer. Together, Kristol and Glazer constituted what Kristol has referred to as the “Jewish” editors of *Commentary*, Glazer commenting on the secular life of the Jewish community and Kristol dealing with religious and philosophical matters.<sup>180</sup> Kristol described Glazer as “a sociologist who was sceptical of most of what then passed for sociology” – writing for “The Study of Man” department at *Commentary* “which summarized and criticized new trends in the social sciences”.<sup>181</sup>

Nathan Glazer had been born in February 25, 1923 and raised in the Bronx. He claimed that his parents raised him "socialist, but not too socialist; Orthodox, but not too Orthodox, friendly to Palestine, but not a Zionist; Yiddish-speaking, but not a Yiddishist”.<sup>182</sup> As student at CCNY, he edited the national newspaper of the Socialist-Zionist student group *Avukah Student Action*.<sup>183</sup> As doctoral candidate at Columbia

---

<sup>179</sup> Irving Kristol, “My Cold War”, *The National Interest*, Spring 1993: [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m2751/is\\_n31/ai\\_13991708/?tag=content;coll](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2751/is_n31/ai_13991708/?tag=content;coll) (accessed August 7, 2009).

<sup>180</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 17.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Nathan Glazer, “From Socialism to Sociology”, in *Authors of Their Own Lives: Intellectual Autobiographies of Twenty American Sociologists*, ed. Bennett M. Berger (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 192.

<sup>183</sup> Nathan Glazer, interview with author, Cambridge, Ma., April 9, 2008.

University (he received his Ph.D. in 1962), Glazer took particular interest in the opportunities social sciences offered to analyse social problems. He would later hold teaching positions at Berkeley and Harvard and write widely noted studies on race relations, ethnicity and urban sociology, such as *Beyond the Melting Pot*, in cooperation with Daniel Moynihan and the anti-affirmative action polemic *Affirmative Discrimination*.<sup>184</sup> A *Commentary* article of 1958 foreshadowed some of Glazer's interests and ideas. Dealing with the integrationist patterns of New York's Puerto Rican community, Glazer argued that Puerto Ricans were relying heavily on the facilities of the welfare state offered in order to 'solve' individual and community problems. By describing how people accommodate to welfare services, he implicitly criticised the welfare state for creating dependency, a rationale that would inform much of his later work. The sceptical approach towards social policy, and specifically towards the social programmes established by Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society, would become one of the main driving forces for the creation of *PI*, to which Glazer contributed seminally, later replacing Daniel Bell as co-editor.<sup>185</sup>

Daniel Bell, often referred to as a "sometime affiliate of the emerging neoconservative group", or one that "runs with the neoconservatives", was born in New York on May 10, 1919 as Daniel Bolotsky, the son of Polish Jewish immigrants.<sup>186</sup> He grew up speaking Yiddish as his first language and joined the YPSL in 1932 at age thirteen.

---

<sup>184</sup> Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians and Irish of New York City* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1963); Nathan Glazer, *Affirmative Discrimination: Ethnic Inequality and Public Policy* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1987); Glazer, *American Judaism*; Nathan Glazer, *Remembering the Answers: Essays on the American Student Revolt* (New York: Basic Books, 1970).

<sup>185</sup> Nathan Glazer, "New York's Puerto Ricans: Formation and Future of a New Community", *Commentary*, December 1958, 475.

<sup>186</sup> J. David Hoeveler, Jr. *Watch on the Right: Conservative Intellectuals in the Reagan Era* (Madison: University of Virginia, 1991), 85; Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 165.

Bell and Kristol first met at CCNY where they both belonged to the Alcove One group of anti-Stalinist Marxists. Bell later worked as managing editor for the *New Leader* and labour editor for *Fortune*. He received his Ph.D. degree from Columbia in 1960 where he subsequently taught sociology until he relocated to Harvard University in 1969. Bell never accepted the characterisation of himself as a neoconservative, so much so that, in the words of Podhoretz, when Bell is referred to as such, he “writes you an 8-page letter single spaced...to explain why he isn’t”.<sup>187</sup> Bell thought that the “designation is meaningless” – a shorthand which misrepresented the fact that his criticism tried to “transcend the received categories of liberalism, and seek to treat the dilemmas of contemporary society within a very different framework”.<sup>188</sup> He preferred to describe himself as “a socialist in economics, a liberal in politics and a conservative in culture”.<sup>189</sup>

And yet, there is some reason for the claim that he partially contributed, at least initially, to the formation of neoconservative thought. As observed by Steinfels, “Bell’s horizon is essentially one of danger, of potential decline and disruption”.<sup>190</sup> He was primarily concerned with the “fending off of social and political instability”, societal and institutional collapse which hovers over ‘post-industrial’ society. Ultimately, Bell believed, that “the essential questions are those of values”; that ideas of morality and ethos were the driving forces of history.<sup>191</sup> And according to Bell it was exactly the realm of culture and values that was most in trouble in modern society: “The real problem of modernity is the problem of belief...it is a spiritual crisis”.<sup>192</sup>

---

<sup>187</sup> Norman Podhoretz, Undated, Untitled document, Box 41, Folder Interviews and Speeches, NPP.

<sup>188</sup> Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), xi.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 169.

<sup>191</sup> Daniel Bell, *The Coming of the Post-Industrial Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 337.

<sup>192</sup> Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, 28.

Bell's self-proclaimed cultural conservatism therefore came to outweigh his economic socialism and his political liberalism. Contrary to neoconservatives, however, Bell's approach was less polemical and he did not make the allegedly 'inferior' motives of his opponents into a central element of his argument. His reluctance to engage in ideological mudslinging was also one reason why he left *PI* in 1973, even though, at the time it was said, according to Glazer, that Bell was leaving in order to work on other projects. Bell later confirmed that it was because he disagreed with Kristol's endorsement for Nixon and with the continued 'ideologisation' of *PI*, that he "resigned as co-editor, stating that I regarded friendship as more important than ideology".<sup>193</sup>

Finally, it was also during the 1950s, Norman Podhoretz, whose biography will be discussed in further detail in chapter 3, began to develop a number of themes, which would characterise his later work. One such theme was his defence of bourgeois society. Even though Podhoretz started out writing literary criticism, it was always characterised by a strong social and political dimension. From very early on Podhoretz' writings reflected little understanding for the philosophy of liberalism and the conception of human nature that it embodied. In a 1957 symposium by the *New Leader*, he evoked his characteristic mistrust of liberalism describing it as "a porous and self-destructive ideology", accusing liberals of being naïve and unable to "take a sufficiently complicated view of reality". Liberalism, he claimed, was "a conglomeration of attitudes suitable only to the naïve, the callow, and the rash: in short, the immature". The liberal *Weltanschauung* was, according

---

<sup>193</sup> Glazer, interview with author, April 9, 2008; Daniel Bell, ed. *The Radical Right* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 501; John Ehrman, "Commentary, *The Public Interest*, and the Problem of Jewish Conservatism", *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June-September 1999): 171.

to Podhoretz, a “dangerous philosophy for the leading nation in the West to entertain”.<sup>194</sup> It became Podhoretz’s mission to engage in a “demolition job” of American liberalism and related ideologies of the left.<sup>195</sup>

### ‘Is America Exile or Home?’: Pro-Americanism, Anti-Communism and the Legacy of the Holocaust

The patriotic sentiment that swept American society after the Second World War also affected the intellectual community. The former mouthpiece of marginalised Trotskyite intellectuals, *Partisan Review*, devoted three successive issues in 1952 to a symposium entitled “Our Country and Our Culture” where prominent intellectuals declared that it no longer felt alienated from American mass culture.<sup>196</sup> Luminaries such as Lionel Trilling, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jacques Barzun, Sidney Hook, Reinhold Niebuhr, Leslie Fiedler, and David Riesman voiced their newly arrived-at appreciation of the American system. They believed that their formerly ‘non-conformist’ stance had to be overcome in light of the Second World War and with the onset of the Cold War. Many of the contributors expressed regret for the positions they had embraced in the past and recognised that the threat posed by communism at home and abroad left them no choice but to reconsider previously held leftist beliefs about culture, politics and the role of intellectuals in society. Not everyone agreed with this new conformism however. Out of the 24 intellectuals writing

---

<sup>194</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Young Generation”, in *Doings and Undoings: The Fifties and After in American Writing*, Norman Podhoretz (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1965), 107.

<sup>195</sup> Epstein, “The New Conservatives: Intellectuals in Retreat”, 6; For an early critique of Beat and youth culture see, Norman Podhoretz, “The Know Nothing Bohemians”, in *The Norman Podhoretz Reader: A Selection of His Writings from the 1950s through the 1990*, ed. Thomas L. Jeffers (New York: Free Press, 2004), 38. Originally published in *Partisan Review*, Spring 1958, 305-318.

<sup>196</sup> “Our Country, Our Culture: A Symposium”, *Partisan Review*, May-June 1952; “Our Country, Our Culture: A Symposium”, *Partisan Review*, September - October 1952.

for the symposium, Irving Howe, Norman Mailer, and C. Wright Mills, while appreciative of the new inclusiveness they found within mainstream culture, disagreed with this new “Age of Conformity”, accusing intellectuals, especially *Commentary* intellectuals, of having “become apologist for middle-class values, middle-class culture”.<sup>197</sup>

New York intellectuals had always constituted a highly divisive conglomerate of people. The communist threat, however, introduced a further rift to the group, which would lead to fierce arguments amongst them over the next couple of decades. ‘Commentarians’ began to advocate a rigidly pro-American stance. They moved further away from leftist positions than other New York intellectuals. Moreover, ‘Commentarians’ believed that the war and the Holocaust demanded of them, in the words of Diana Trilling “to find their Jewish identities”.<sup>198</sup> The new home was found in an idealised conception of America in which Jews as Jews were to be fully integrated participants in the American polity.

During the 1950s, *Commentary* became, in the words of Michael Staub, “fairly obsessed with how to dramatise the synergy of Jewish and American values and traditions”, which it organised around the alleged abhorrence of both cultures for communism.<sup>199</sup> Jews, according to *Commentary*, embodied the most anti-communist ethnic group, whose religious and cultural traditions would strengthen the fabric of American democracy because they were so compatible with American values. Moreover, Jews were so supportive of democracy, because only democracies permitted them to live freely as Jews. Accordingly, *Commentary* claimed that American-style democracy was the only viable system to guarantee Jewish affluence and group survival. Simultaneously, treatment of its

---

<sup>197</sup> Irving Howe, “This Age of Conformity”, *Partisan Review*, January-February 1954, 18-19.

<sup>198</sup> Diana Trilling, Interview with Gertrude Himmelfarb (Bea Kristol), February 29, 1976, 21, Box 48, Folder 9, DTP.

<sup>199</sup> Staub, *Torn At the Roots*, 38.

Jews became a barometer by which *Commentary* measured American society's progressiveness and love for democracy. In his article, "Must the Jews Quit Europe?", Zachariah Schuster wrote that,

Historical evidence points unmistakably to the conclusion that wherever democracy rose and grew, Jewish emancipation rose and grew as an integral part of it. And, conversely, the decline of democracy in any country was either preceded or accompanied by an attack on the position of the Jews. No country has ever risen to more democratic and progressive levels while at the same time lowering the status of the Jews.<sup>200</sup>

Sidney Hook, pragmatist philosopher at New York University, who studied Marxism in Berlin and Moscow, propagated the idea that Jews made the best and most loyal Americans (and therefore anti-communists) precisely because Jews had experienced first hand what totalitarianism can lead to. The Holocaust, Hook argued, had taught them to staunchly defend American democracy against the excesses of totalitarianism in all its forms. In "Why Democracy is Better" he echoed the belief that not only was there no moral difference between the Soviet regime and Hitler, but that Soviet communism actually posed a much greater threat to American democracy.<sup>201</sup> This reasoning would gain great currency amongst neoconservatives in later years. The greatest danger for the American polity, he argued furthermore, did not emanate from the Soviet Union as such but from communists, fellow travellers and 'doughface' liberals within the United States:

---

<sup>200</sup> Zachariah Schuster, "Must the Jews Quit Europe? An Appraisal of Propaganda for Exodus", *Commentary*, December 1945, 10-11.

<sup>201</sup> By 1948, Harry Truman came to embrace the position that the Soviet rulers were worse than Hitler. Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1987), 157.

Whoever believed that Nazi expansionism constituted a threat to the survival of democratic institutions must conclude by the same logic and the same type of evidence that Soviet Communism represents today an even greater threat to our survival, because the potential opposition to totalitarianism is now much weaker in consequence of the war, and because the Soviet government commands a fifth column in democratic countries stronger than anything Hitler...ever imagined possible.<sup>202</sup>

Hook, who had been a lone Marxist with regular faculty appointment during the 1930s, came to believe that the ideal type of totalitarianism was Stalinism rather than National Socialism and by the early 1950s the concept came to encompass communism more generally. Hook warned earlier than his fellow New York intellectuals of the long-term threat that flowed from Soviet-style communism because, as opposed to fascism, it was more influential within intellectual and university circles.<sup>203</sup> His ideas played a central role in the right turn of neoconservatives.<sup>204</sup>

Born in 1902, raised in Williamsburg, Brooklyn and educated at CCNY and Columbia University, Hook spent all his life trying to reconcile his Jewish heritage with his American identity. The most important elements defining his Jewishness were not religion or Zionism, but democratic values. Hook believed that there was a symbiotic relationship between American Jewry and American democracy; Jewish identity, Hook contended, strengthened democracy and vice versa.<sup>205</sup> The essence of a Jewish-American symbiosis lay

---

<sup>202</sup> Sidney Hook, "Why Democracy is Better: The Three Pillars of Our Civic Heritage", *Commentary*, March 1948, 203-204.

<sup>203</sup> Sidney Hook, "The Tragedy of German Jewry", *New Leader*, November 26, 1938, 8.

<sup>204</sup> Sidney Hook, *Heresy Yes, Conspiracy No* (New York: The John Day Company, 1953). Hook wrote a number of works on Marxism, most seminally: *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx: A Revolutionary Interpretation* (New York: The John Day Company, 1933).

<sup>205</sup> Sidney Hook was a self-proclaimed atheist, an attitude that was strengthened when he became student of John Dewey at Columbia University. His anti-communism was therefore not guided by religion, as was the case with other hard anti-communists, such as William F. Buckley or Whittaker Chambers, but by his concern with democratic values. Sidney Hook, Wiener Oral History Library, October 25, 1988, Transcript, 58.

for Hook in the joint commitment to American democracy and to the traditions of social justice, cultural diversity and the scientific method. Furthermore, he believed that as long as American democracy was strong, anti-Semitism would have little appeal and success.<sup>206</sup>

Trying to prove that Jews were ‘good’ Americans, that they were “like other Americans, only more so”, went hand in hand with *Commentary*’s fight against anti-Semitism, which was intricately related to the effort of disassociating Jews from communism.<sup>207</sup> While *Commentary* agreed with other Jewish communal leaders that actual and potential anti-Semitism had to be confronted with fortitude and determination, it quickly disconnected the fight against anti-Semitism from the fight against other forms of bigotry – especially white racism - and began to address the issue almost exclusively in terms of its fight against communism.<sup>208</sup>

Throughout the 1950s, many Jewish communal organisations continued to avoid making anti-Semitism a subject of direct and open discussion because they feared that such an approach would give anti-Semites the publicity they desired and would moreover attract negative attention to Jews. Therefore, they continued to couch the fight against Judeophobia in terms of a universal struggle against prejudice. The main argument was that Jews would only be secure in a society where all forms of bigotry were removed. This, these organisations argued, was especially important in light of the ideological conflict between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. In order to keep the moral high ground, the U.S. had to live up to its self-projected image as the leader of the free world, by ridding itself of

---

<sup>206</sup> Sidney Hook, *Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the Twentieth Century* (New Yorker: Harper & Row, 1987).

<sup>207</sup> The sociologist Robert E. Park, founder of the “Chicago School” of urban sociology recommended that the study of American Jewish history even be part of the general curriculum in schools, as he considered Jews to be quintessentially American. Whitfield, *Voices of Jacob, Hands of Esau*, 99.

<sup>208</sup> Staub, *Torn At the Roots*, 36.

all forms of prejudice and discrimination. In this sense, the fight against anti-Semitism was presented as proof of their anti-communist patriotism.<sup>209</sup>

Yet, the analogies between Nazism, the Holocaust and white racism, which had been part of the repertoire of civil rights activist since the 1930s, disappeared relatively quickly as the Cold War intensified in the early 1950s only to re-emerge in public discourse in the later half of the 1950s in a somewhat altered form.<sup>210</sup> In *Commentary*, which previously had cited Holocaust lessons in support of civil rights, these parallels were almost completely superseded by analogies between Nazism and communism, by the early 1950s.<sup>211</sup> As shown below, *Commentary* not only began to downplay its support for black civil rights, but, as time progressed, it started to use Nazi and Holocaust analogies in order to discredit civil rights activists, especially those of Jewish descent, as well as African American efforts at integration.

It is generally assumed that the Holocaust and its lessons emerged as a central topic of debate and as a symbol for collective Jewish identity during the later part of the 1960s. According to Peter Novick, it was not until the late 1960s that Jewish community leaders and intellectuals began to publicly discuss and employ the symbol of the Holocaust in accordance with social and political agendas.<sup>212</sup> Yet, re-evaluating early neoconservatism

---

<sup>209</sup> Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*.

<sup>210</sup> Analogies between Jewish suffering and oppression of blacks in the United States had been core the “Double V” campaign of the African American press throughout the Second World War. Michael E. Staub, “‘Negroes are not Jews’: Race, Holocaust Consciousness, and the Rise of Neoconservatism’, *Radical History Review* 75, no. 3 (1999): 3-27.

<sup>211</sup> For example: Charles Abrams, “Homes for Aryans Only: The Restrictive Covenant Spreads Legal Racism in America”, *Commentary*, May 1947, 421-427; Felix S. Cohen, “Alaska’s Nuremberg Laws: Congress Sanctions Racial Discrimination”, *Commentary*, August 1948, 136-143; James A. Wechsler and Nancy F. Wechsler, “The Road Ahead for Civil Rights”, *Commentary*, October 1948, 297-304.

<sup>212</sup> Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999); See for instance: Silberman, *A Certain People*, 182-183; Gabriel Schoenfeld wrote in 1999 that up until 1960 the Holocaust “was shrouded in taboo and seldom discussed in public or print”. “Death Camps As Kitsch”, *The New York Times*, March 18, 1999: <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/03/18/opinion/death-camps-as-kitsch.html> (accessed August 9, 2009).

from a Jewish perspective demonstrates that the Holocaust was already much discussed and used in debates amongst Jewish communal leaders throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. Jeffrey Shandler, for example, has shown that the 1940s and 1950s not only saw Holocaust memorialisation by Holocaust survivors and individuals personally affected by it but also “the writing of the first hundreds of personal and communal memoirs, the establishment of the earliest memorials”. Additionally, the Holocaust was very much present on American television before the 1960s, in newsreels as well as in fictionalised form.<sup>213</sup>

Scrutinising early issues of *Commentary* contributes to a revision of traditional interpretations of when and how Holocaust consciousness, which was far from static, emerged and became a central topic in intra-communal debates. Moreover, it shows that the emergence of neoconservative thought was intricately connected to early forms of Holocaust consciousness. Far from being silent during the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, Jewish commentators of diverse politics used Holocaust analogies or invoked its purported lessons when debating domestic and international issues. While the Holocaust (in association with Israel) had not yet emerged as the official symbol of collective Jewish identity, the roots of this process nevertheless were located in discussions of the lessons of the Holocaust by Jewish leaders and intellectuals during the later 1940s and the 1950s. Even while there was a diversity of opinions about what the actual lessons of the Holocaust

---

<sup>213</sup> Jeffrey A. Shandler, *While America Watches: Televising the Holocaust* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 46-47; Jeffrey A. Shandler, “Aliens in the Wasteland: American Encounters with the Holocaust on 1960s Science Fiction Television”, in *The Americanization of the Holocaust*, ed. Hilene Flanzbaum (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 33-44; Michael L. Morgan, *Beyond Auschwitz: Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), here especially “Chapter One: The Holocaust and the Intellectuals of the Fifties and Sixties”, 9-27; Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 17; On the usage of early Holocaust analogies in the American context: Fermaglich, *American Dreams and Nazi Nightmares*. Fermaglich shows how the socio-scientific usage of Holocaust analogies by Stanley Elkins, Betty Friedan, Stanley Milgram and Robert Jay Lifton reflected a seminal trend during the 1950s and 1960s to use comparisons between the U.S. and Nazi Germany in order to address fears of alienation and conformity in modern mass society.

for the present were, everyone seemed to believe that there was a moral to be taken away from those disastrous events. According to Michael Staub, it was only during the later 1960s, when Holocaust memorialisation was becoming an official symbol of collective Jewish American identity that concerns with respect to the impropriety of certain types of lesson-making would be raised.<sup>214</sup>

Early intellectual discussions of the Holocaust within *Commentary* were framed to a large extent by Hannah Arendt's concept of totalitarianism and comparisons between communism and Nazism were pervasive.<sup>215</sup> Communists who claimed to be fighting for Jewish and African American civil rights, for example, were described persistently as impostors who were in reality, the claim went, no better than Nazis themselves. In the aftermath of the Peekskill riots, for example, in August 1949, at which a concert of the leftist singer Paul Robeson turned into a racist, anti-Semitic and anti-communist demonstration, James Rorty and Winifred Raushenbush, while condemning the mob violence which ensued at Peekskill, accused communist spokespersons of instrumentalising the riot in order to viciously create the impression that "Negroes, Jews and Communists are arrayed against the rest of the country". Yet, "That the Communists pose as the chief defenders of Jewish and Negro rights", they argued, "forms only a deceptive distinction between them and the Nazi agents".<sup>216</sup>

During the 1950s, *Commentary* played a central role in defining the parameters of the intra-communal discussions of the Holocaust in conjunction with the perceived necessity of defending American democracy against the communist threat. By discussing these matters,

---

<sup>214</sup> Staub, *Torn At the Roots*, 10.

<sup>215</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1951).

<sup>216</sup> James Rorty and Winifred Raushenbush, "The Lessons of the Peekskill Riots: What Happened And Why", *Commentary*, October 1950, 321, 320.

the magazine contributed eminently to the development of a Jewish anti-communist and pro-American rationale and early interpretations of the lessons of the Holocaust. Indeed, *Commentary*'s creation in itself was considered a direct answer to the murder of six million Jews. In the first issue, Cohen wrote: "As Jews we live with this fact: 4, 750, 000 of 6, 000, 000 Jews of Europe have been murdered. Not killed in battle, not massacred in hot blood, but slaughtered like cattle, subjected to every physical indignity – processed...At this juncture, in the midst of this turbulence and these whirlwinds, we light our candle, *Commentary*. Surely here is an act of faith".<sup>217</sup>

Hence, the near destruction of European Jewry and the Nazi killing machinery were discussed in almost every issue during the late 1940s and even throughout the 1950s. The traumatic events were debated from every possible angle, along with the conditions that had caused them, and how reoccurrence could be avoided. Cohen published "wide-ranging analyses of the Nazi era and its consequences for the post-Nazi world" and thereby framed, according to Dawidowicz, "more than any other medium...our contemporary outlook on Hitler's Germany".<sup>218</sup> Many of the pieces, such as "The Common Man and the Nazis" and "The Complex Behind Hitler's Anti-Semitism" tried to psychologically and sociologically understand National Socialism and the mechanics of extermination.<sup>219</sup> *Commentary* also

---

<sup>217</sup> Cohen, "An Act of Affirmation", 1-2.

<sup>218</sup> Lucy S. Dawidowicz Aborted, unfinished mass for *Commentary* Symposium, drafted August 4-6, 1985, 1, Box 49, Folder 7, LDP.

<sup>219</sup> For example: Salo Baron, "The Spiritual Reconstruction of European Jewry", *Commentary*, November 1945, 4-12; Martin Greenberg, "The Common Man and the Nazis", *Commentary*, December 1946, 501-506; Leo Srole, "Why DP's Can't Wait: Proposing an International Plan of Rescue", *Commentary*, January 1947, 13-24; Irving Kristol, "The Nature of Nazism", *Commentary*, September 1948, 271-282; Gertrud M. Kurth, "The Complex behind Hitler's Anti-Semitism: A Psychoanalytic Study in History", *Commentary*, January 1948, 77-82; Solomon F. Bloom, "The Dictator of the Lodz Ghetto: The Strange History of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski", *Commentary*, February 1949, 111-122; H.R. Trevor-Roper, "Is Hitler Really Dead?: A Historian Examines the Evidence", *Commentary*, February 1951, 120-130; Joseph Leftwich, "Songs of the Death Camps: A Selection with Commentary", *Commentary*, September 1951, 269-274; L. Poliakov, "The Mind of the Mass Murderer: The Nazi Executioners – and Those Who Stood By", *Commentary*, November 1951, 45-459; H.L. Trefousse, "German Historians' Verdict of Hitler: This Time No 'Stab-in-the-Back'",

became the first American magazine to print extracts from *The Diary of Anne Frank* in 1950.<sup>220</sup>

Since *Commentary* wanted to be a creative force in the wake of the devastation of European Jewry, it shifted its focus from discussing the Holocaust *per se* towards discussing how a future holocaust could be avoided and what its lessons for the present were. Articles that discussed communism at home and abroad repeatedly made use of Nazi/Holocaust imagery as a warning of what the totalitarian rationale of communism could lead to, thereby implying that any Jewish association with communism was disregarding the lessons of the Holocaust. *Commentary*, for example, tried to demonstrate that the Soviets were especially cruel towards Jews and that a new holocaust was in the making behind the Iron Curtain. In “Hungary's Jewry Faces Liquidation – Again the Concentration Camps”, former president of the Hungarian Independent Democratic party, Bela Fabian, cautioned American Jews that Stalin posed as much a threat to Central and Eastern European Jewry as did Hitler: “The parallel to the policy of Nazi extermination is almost complete: the only difference is the denial that “Jews as Jews” are being mistreated, and the fact that, at the end of the line, instead of the extermination camps of Auschwitz and Treblinka, there are the slave labor camps of Karaganda and Kolyma and the cotton fields of Tashkent and Alma-Ata”.<sup>221</sup> It was essential that American Jewry take notice of

---

*Commentary*, September 1953, 264-270; Hal Lehrman, “The New Germany and her Remaining Jews: A Reporter’s Notebook”, *Commentary*, December 1953, 513-524; Herbert Luethy, “The Wretched Little Demon That Was Hitler: He Possessed the ‘Mass Soul’ of the Third Reich”, *Commentary*, February 1954, 129-138; Theodore Frankl, “My Friend Paul: One Who Survived”, *Commentary*, February 1957, 147-160.

<sup>220</sup> “The Diary of Anne Frank: The Secret Heart Within the Secret Annex”, *Commentary*, May 1952, 419-432; “The Diary of Anne Frank II: First Love and Finis”, *Commentary*, June 1952, 529-544.

<sup>221</sup> Bela Fabian, “Hungary's Jewry Faces Liquidation: Against the Concentration Camps”, *Commentary*, October 1951, 334. Also see: George Lichtheim, “Will Soviet Anti-Semitism Teach the Lesson? For Most Britishers It Has”, *Commentary*, March 1953, 221-226; Peter Meyer, “Stalin Follows in Hitler’s Footsteps”, *Commentary*, January 1953, 1-18; Peter Meyer, “The Jewish Purge in the Satellite Countries: Behind the Communist Turn to Anti-Semitism”, *Commentary*, September 1952, 212-218.

the warnings this time around: “To the best of my powers I tried to communicate this message [of the threat posed to Hungarian Jews] to American Jews”. But just as in 1942, he cautioned, “these new reports were received with disbelief”.<sup>222</sup>

Irving Kristol drew parallels between communism with Nazism, implying that both end in mass murder, when reflecting on the trial of the State Department employee and Soviet spy Alger Hiss, who was convicted of perjury in 1950. “Many of us have known Communists, and most of them conveyed no impression of being conspirators”, he wrote, “But then, some of us have known Nazis too, and they conveyed no immediate association with gas chambers”.<sup>223</sup> Accusing liberals of being blue-eyed about communism, he wondered how they would react if Nazis were promoting their views freely. Leslie Fiedler added that the Hiss case had shown that liberals were “unwilling to leave the garden of...illusion” by refusing to condemn communist and alleged communists.<sup>224</sup> Both Fiedler and Kristol concluded that the issue at stake were not the civil liberties of communists but the deadly threat posed by domestic communism to American democracy. In the light of what Nazism had wrought, and because they believed communism to be equally dangerous, removing communists and communist sympathizers from their government jobs was entirely appropriate.<sup>225</sup>

In addition to the anti-communist rhetoric coupled with Holocaust/Nazi analogies, *Commentary* was beginning to take aim at liberals, who would soon become its preferred villains. Nor did it object to the curtailment of civil liberties in the fight against

---

<sup>222</sup> Fabian, “Hungary's Jewry Faces Liquidation”, 330.

<sup>223</sup> Irving Kristol, “Civil Liberties, 1952 – A Study in Confusion. Do We Defend Our Rights by Protecting Communists?”, *Commentary*, March 1952, 234-235.

<sup>224</sup> Leslie A. Fiedler, “Hiss, Chambers, and the Age of Innocence: Who Was Guilty – And of What?”, *Commentary*, August 1951, 119.

<sup>225</sup> Kristol, “Civil Liberties, 1952 – A Study in Confusion”; Fiedler, “Hiss, Chambers, and the Age of Innocence”.

communism. In this respect, liberal anti-communists who would turn neoconservative in the not too distant future differed from traditional anti-communist liberals: contrary to people such as Arthur M. Schlesinger and George Kennan, Irving Kristol, for example, perceived the main threat to American society not as coming from the Soviet Union but as emanating from communist sympathisers and especially from liberals who considered communism as part of the legitimate left. At the same time, *Commentary* did not just promote containment but also published articles, which called for “confrontation and liberation”.<sup>226</sup>

Moreover, incipient neoconservatives did not seem to regard McCarthy as much of a problem. At the height of McCarthyism, Kristol argued that understandably as liberals’ reactions to “the vulgar demagogue” McCarthy were, their “anti-anti-Communist” position, like the Popular Front coalition, reflected the fact that they considered communism “a political trend continuous with liberalism and democratic socialism” rather than as a clear enemy of the democratic left. Infamously, he went on to defend McCarthy, by claiming that at least Americans could be sure of McCarthy’s anti-communist credentials: “About the spokesmen for American liberalism they feel they know no such thing, and with some justification”.<sup>227</sup>

---

<sup>226</sup> Bogdan Radista, “Beyond Containment To Liberation: A Political Émigré Challenges Our Machiavellian Liberalism”, *Commentary*, September 1951, 226-231. Radista called on “American writers, thinkers, historians, and journalists who have the most thorough knowledge and understanding of Communism and its methods” to offer their services in the fight for ‘freedom’.

<sup>227</sup> Kristol, “‘Civil Liberties’ 1952”, 229. In response to Kristol’s article, Glazer wrote an article in which he reassured readers that ‘Commentarians’ were “on the right side when it came to Senator McCarthy”. “The Method of Senator McCarthy. Its Origins, Its Uses, and Its Prospects”, *Commentary*, March 1953, 244-256; Other diverging voices in *Commentary* were: Alan F. Westin, “Our Freedom – and the Rights of Communists: A Reply to Irving Kristol”, *Commentary*, July 1952, 33-40; Alan F. Westin, “Do Silent Witnesses Defend Civil Liberties?: The Course of ‘Profoundest Wisdom’” *Commentary*, June 1953, 537-546; James Rorty, “The Anti-Communism of Senator McCarty: It Slays More Friends than Foes”, *Commentary*, August 1953, 122-129; Alan F. Westin, “Winning the Fight Against McCarthy: The Need to Struggle on Two Fronts”, *Commentary*, July-August 1954, 10-15.

Kristol wrote the article, which contained elements of incipient neoconservative thought, in reaction to what he perceived as the “disingenuousness, the hypocrisy, even the intellectual cowardice” of liberals who considered communists as radical progressives. Written against the background of the Korean War, Kristol felt compelled to lash out at liberals whom he considered to be disloyal towards the U.S. during the conflict for allegedly defending the “civil liberties of American Communists, who openly supported the North Korean regime”.<sup>228</sup>

In a similar vein, Robert Bendiner had previously warned liberals against a “self-defeating tolerance” towards communism, only to defend proposed legislation against communist infiltration even if it compromised constitutional freedoms. Social stability was a precondition to liberty and therefore more important than individual freedom, an argument neoconservatives would make repeatedly in later years. The curbing of constitutional freedoms was necessary and legitimate, because the “obvious truth is that there can be no complete freedom short of anarchy”.<sup>229</sup> Liberals, so the argument went, blurred the differences between liberal democracy and totalitarian leftism and were too naïve to understand the “malign intentions” of communist ideology and practice.<sup>230</sup> They, therefore, were posing an even greater threat to the American polity, than actual communists were.

By 1949, *Commentary* was clearly in the hard anti-communist camp. While it contributed seminally to defining the liberal anti-communist consensus of the 1950s, it

---

<sup>228</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 19.

<sup>229</sup> Robert Bendiner, “Civil Liberties and the Communists”, *Commentary*, May 1948, 430-431. For another version of the same argument, also see Robert Bendiner, “Has Anti-Communism Wrecked Our Liberties?: The Liberals’ Role in the Fight Against Subversion”, *Commentary*, July 1951, 10-16; Other articles which defend the curtailment of civil liberties of communists: Sidney Hook, “Does the Smith Act Threaten Our Liberties?: American Law and the Communist Conspiracy”, *Commentary*, January 1953, 63-73.

<sup>230</sup> Nathan Glazer, “*Commentary* - The Early Years”, in ‘*Commentary*’ in *American Life*, ed. Murray Friedman (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005), 47.

positioned itself to the right of anti-communist liberalism. Moreover, it played an eminent role in developing a Jewish rationale for the embrace of Cold War patriotism and rejection of leftist solutions, wherein lay the seeds for the rightward drift of the journal, its editors and a number of its contributors. The initial driving force for this shift lay in the impact of the Second World War and the Holocaust had on these intellectuals. The Holocaust signified an *hour zero* for ‘Commentarians’, as it did for Jews worldwide. While the Holocaust had not yet taken on the official centrality for American Jewish identity, it nevertheless was central to the transformation of Jewish intellectuals’ thought, a number of whom would in later years become neoconservatives. As shown above, the near destruction of European Jewry functioned as a “negative creation myth”, a point of reference, from which they defined how to renegotiate their relationship with their Jewish heritage and their American identities.<sup>231</sup> Their ‘new’ identity was based on a symbiotic and assertive interaction between their Jewish and American identities. America was different and “good for the Jews” and it therefore had to be defended by every means possible.

#### ‘What Is Good for Israel is Good for America’: Israel and *Commentary* Magazine

Another incipient neoconservative theme that began to appear during the 1950s in the pages of *Commentary* and was intricately related to the enthusiastic affirmation of the American status quo and the emphatic rejection of communism as un-American and un-Jewish, was the development of a rationale for the defence of Israel in conjunction with an anti-communist, pro-American stance. Neoconservatism has become closely associated with

---

<sup>231</sup> Peter Novick, “Is the Holocaust An American Memory?” in Ernst Fraenkl Vorträge zur amerikanischen Politik, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft, Geschichte und Kultur, eds. Susanne Rohr and Sabine Sielke (Berlin, Germany: JFK Institut für Nordamerikastudien der Freie Universität Berlin, 2002), 6.

and sometimes even is reduced to a stringent pro-Zionist stance. Certain voices even contend, that neoconservatism exclusively represents Israeli interests at the expense of America.<sup>232</sup> Moreover, most studies assert that neoconservatism's Jewish dimension emerged as a reaction to the Israeli-Arab War of 1967.<sup>233</sup> These interpretations distort the reality.

While early neoconservatives, Jewish as well as non-Jewish, were indeed strong defenders of Israel and of the U.S.-Israeli special relationship, this defence was based on the belief that Israel was a strategic asset to the foreign policy of the U.S. in the Middle East. In this sense, Israel not only had political and strategic importance, but also was a cultural representative of Western and American ideals and values in a region characterised by lack thereof. The earliest version of the 'Israel-as-strategic-asset' argument can be found in *Commentary* during the 1950s. At that time, the journal still considered itself a non-Zionist publication and its contributors were more interested in the American scene than in Palestine/Israel. Moreover, according to Garry Dorrien, *Commentary*'s discussion of Israel was initially more "urbane, pluralistic, and generally moderate in its politics" and it was not until the later 1960s that its "approach to Israeli affairs" began to "flatten to a hard line".<sup>234</sup> Yet, a number of articles published in the 1950s argued that Israel was a politically vital ally with congruent interests in the fight for democratic pre-eminence in the Middle East. Within the context of developing its anti-communist, pro-American rationale, *Commentary*

---

<sup>232</sup> Sniegowski, *The Transparent Cabal*.

<sup>233</sup> Gerson, *The Neoconservative Vision*, 161-162; Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 184-186; Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism*, 124; Heilbrunn, *The Knew They Were Right*, 70.

<sup>234</sup> Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 185-186. Early coverage of Israeli affairs lacked the chauvinism, which would characterise much of *Commentary*'s coverage of the matter from the late 1960s onwards. An article by Amos Elon, published in the aftermath of the Six Day War, warned against outright annexation of the annexation of the conquered territories and called on settling the Palestinian refugee issue through the "generosity of wise victors", unless the window of opportunity would once again be disregarded. Amos Elon, "Letter from the Sinai Front", *Commentary*, August 1967, 68.

began to spell out the arguments, which would turn it into a resolute supporter of the Israeli state in later years and come to associate neoconservatism with a hard-line Zionist image.

The creation of Israel in 1948 and its repercussions for Jewish American self-perception led to divisive debates amongst Jewish intellectuals and community leaders. It became essential to define a legitimate Jewish American stance towards Israel that would allow for a close identification of American Jews with the new nation and yet not interfere with Jewish American identity.<sup>235</sup> For instance, the great majority of Jewish American leadership sternly rejected the central Zionist *dictum* of making *Aliyah*, i.e. the return to the holy land, for American Jews, claiming that their Zion was America. Even within the official Zionist organisations, such as the ZOA, Hadassah, and the Labour Zionists, pure Zionist ideology seldom amounted to more than lip service.<sup>236</sup>

While these discussions were part of Jewish intra-communal discourse during the 1940s and 1950s, it was not until the 1960s that Israel (together with the Holocaust) began to become an officially promoted symbol of collective Jewish American identity. According to Jonathan Sarna, the establishment of the state of Israel was ultimately sanctioned for American Jews not by “the declining state of the Jewish Diaspora but the memory of the Holocaust”.<sup>237</sup> Israel was intrinsically linked to the Holocaust in the mind of most American Jews, and both symbols “developed together...They incubated [during the 1950s], nourished by engaged subgroups like Holocaust survivors and Zionist activists, and reinforced by Jewish educators”.<sup>238</sup> Israel was in many ways seen as an answer to the

---

<sup>235</sup> Charles S. Liebman, *The Ambivalent American Jew: Politics, Religion and Family in American Jewish Life* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), vii.

<sup>236</sup> The ZOA was established in 1897 and is part of the World Zionist Organisation and espouses primarily political Zionism; Hadassah was founded in 1912 by Henrietta Szold as an American Zionists' Women's Organisation that dealt primarily with the establishment of a health and education system in Palestine.

<sup>237</sup> Sarna, *American Judaism*, 337.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 333.

Holocaust and the central theme that came to dominate organised American Jewish life during the 1960s was the “Holocaust and redemption” narrative – “the generative myth by which the generality of American Jews make sense of themselves”.<sup>239</sup>

*Commentary* was one of the incubators of this collective symbol and an eminent voice in the debates relative to the establishment of the Jewish state and its implications for American Jewry. While it contributed cardinally to making Israel - *in tandem* with Holocaust memorialisation - into a central pillar of organised communal life, it originally had mixed feelings towards the Jewish state, believing that it might interfere with its most cherished mission - the full inclusion of Jews into American society. However, the journal quickly developed a rationale with which it was possible to defend Israel as well as be stringently patriotic. During the 1950s, it began arguing that Israeli and American interests were congruent, describing Israel as a representative of American style democracy in the Middle East and an important ally in the fight against the Soviet Union and anti-democratic tendencies within the region more generally. As such, the support of Israel was not just a Jewish but also an American interest. This argument would form the basis for an eventually staunch Zionism that would come to characterise the journal in the late 1960s.

In the years from 1945 to 1948, *Commentary* published articles, which expressed hesitance with respect to the idea of a Jewish state.<sup>240</sup> It was not until the sixth issue that *Commentary* ran its first straightforward Zionist article entitled “No Hope But Exodus” by Shlomo Katz, in which he stipulated that mass emigration to Palestine was the only

---

<sup>239</sup> Jacob Neusner, *Stranger at Home: 'The Holocaust,' Zionism and American Judaism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 1.

<sup>240</sup> Shuster, “Must the Jews Quit Europe?”, 9-16; Israel Knox, “Is America Exile or Home?: We Must Begin to Build for Permanence”, *Commentary*, November 1946, 401-408; Hannah Arendt, “The Jewish State: Fifty Years After: Where Have Herzl’s Politics Led?” *Commentary*, May 1946, 1-8; Moshe Smelansky, “A Palestinian Warns Against Small States: Political Independence vs. National Independence”, *Commentary*, November 1946, 418-423; Franz Rosenzweig, “On Being a Jewish Person”, *Commentary*, November 1945, 71-78; Simon Dubnow, “A New Conception of Jewish History”, *Commentary*, March 1946, 72-79.

practical and moral solution for uprooted European Jewry.<sup>241</sup> And yet, *Commentary* remained ambivalent as to the prospects and nature of a Jewish state in Palestine. As Israel declared independence on May 14, 1948, Hannah Arendt, long active on behalf of Zionism and supporting the idea of a disarmed bi-national state, criticised that Jews everywhere had come to unanimously “believe in fighting at any price and feel that ‘going down’ is a sensible method of politics”.<sup>242</sup> She warned that the new Jewish state would face unbending Arab hostility and would be in a constant state of war.<sup>243</sup>

None of the central characters around *Commentary* were ardent Zionists initially. Eliot Cohen had grown up in an anti-Zionist family and was, according to Irving Kristol “much of a non-Zionist”, reflecting the AJC’s position. Cohen himself had long backed Judah L. Magnes’ the idea of a bi-national state before the founding of Israel. Kristol “never bought that” idea and supported the establishment of a homeland for Jews, but still did not consider himself a Zionist.<sup>244</sup> Nathan Glazer retrospectively also downplayed the extent of his Zionism at the time, claiming that he too supported the creation of a bi-national workers’ state.<sup>245</sup> Norman Podhoretz, while considering himself a Zionist by the 1950s, told Trilling after a visit to Israel in 1951, that he “felt more at home in Athens” describing the Israelis as “surly and boorish”.<sup>246</sup>

---

<sup>241</sup> Shlomo Katz, “No Hope But Exodus: Does History Spell the Doom of Western Jewry”, *Commentary*, April 1946, 14.

<sup>242</sup> Arendt had worked for years for *Youth Aliyah*, an organisation that helped young Jews emigrate to Palestine during and after the war. She had also agitated for the creation of a Jewish army during the war and recognition of the Jewish nation as a belligerent. Yet at the same time, she opposed Israel’s declaration of independence. Adam Kirsch, “Hannah Arendt’s Conflicted Zionism”, *The New York Sun*, March 21, 2007, <http://www.nysun.com/arts/arendts-conflicted-zionism/50903/> (accessed August 17, 2009).

<sup>243</sup> Hannah Arendt “To Save the Jewish Homeland – There Is Still Time”, *Commentary*, May 1948, 398-406.

<sup>244</sup> Kristol, Wiener Oral History Library, 15, 17.

<sup>245</sup> Glazer, interview with author, April 9, 2008.

<sup>246</sup> Letter from Norman Podhoretz to Lionel Trilling, November 23, 1951, Box 7, Folder 7, Series II.1, Lionel Trilling Papers, Columbia University Rare Books and Manuscript Library, New York, cited hereafter as LTP.

Nevertheless, early *Commentary* issues also expressed a sense of urgency when dealing with the volatile situation in Palestine and the condition of homelessness of European Jewry. Taken together these articles seemed to reflect the sentiment that the creation of a Jewish state was the most important matter on the American Jewish national agenda from 1945 to 1948, during which time, according to Arthur Hertzberg, “there was about Zionism the compelling atmosphere of a moral crusade in which all of world Jewry participated”.<sup>247</sup> In the words of Ruth Wisse, the “permanent sense of crisis” expressed by *Commentary* relative to the situation in Palestine and Europe after the Holocaust, “conveyed the need for extraordinary measures” in the early post-war years.<sup>248</sup> This sentiment was underscored by a wide range of articles on the Holocaust, the psychology of anti-Semitism and Nazism, the situation of Displaced Persons and the Jewish community in Palestine/Israel.<sup>249</sup>

Despite many concerns relative to a Jewish state, the vast coverage of the Holocaust, the dilemma of European Jewry and the situation in Palestine/Israel conveyed the message that the magazine came to support the newly founded state by the end of the 1940s, less for ideological reasons but because it had been convinced by the practical and moral urgency of the matter. Numerous articles on American and Israeli Jewry and the common Jewish heritage that linked both communities, also reflected an awareness of the historical

---

<sup>247</sup> Arthur Hertzberg, “American Zionism at an Impasse: A Movement in Search of a Program”, *Commentary*, October 1949, 341.

<sup>248</sup> Wisse, “The Jewishness of *Commentary*”, 56.

<sup>249</sup> Leon Dennen, “Arab Ferment and Power Politics: Pattern of Conflict in the Middle East”, *Commentary*, February 1946, 21-26; Robert Weltsch, “Crisis in Palestine: Before and After the Truman-Bevin Announcement”, *Commentary*, January 1946, 21-24; Meyer Levin, “Crisis in Palestine: The Battle of the Children”, *Commentary*, January 1946, 25-27; Shlomo Katz, “Understanding Jewish Resistance in Palestine: The Aims and Methods of Hagana”, *Commentary*, July 1946, 45-50; Richard H.S. Crossman, “Framework for the Jewish State: The New Boundaries of Zionist Aspirations”, *Commentary*, November 1947, 401-407; David Horowitz, “Founding of the New State: An Expert’s Estimate of the Tasks Ahead”, *Commentary*, February 1948, 97-103; Hal Lehrman, “What U.S. Support Means: Behind Washington’s New Decisiveness”, *Commentary*, June 1948, 485-492.

dimension of the new state and an underlying support for the idea of a culturally defined concept of Jewish peoplehood.<sup>250</sup> Moreover, according to David Horowitz, there was an awareness that the success of the new state depended to a large extent on the support American Jewry and other Jewish communities around the world: “Here is a challenge to all the creative forces of Palestine and of Jewry as a whole”.<sup>251</sup> Furthermore, the regular discussions of Yiddish, Hebrew and Jewish literature, and to a lesser extent of Jewish religious thought, communicated the newly found Jewish self-assertiveness, which accompanied the establishment of the new Jewish state. In accordance with Cohen’s original intent for the magazine, it had become a forum in which Jewish authors and ideas received equal analysis to gentile literature and thought.<sup>252</sup>

Nevertheless, as the Cold War ground on, *Commentary* was more concerned with developing hard anti-communist positions rather than a defence of Israel *per se*. The fact that anti-communist hysteria dominated the early 1950s and projected a demand of complete loyalty of its citizens, left little room for extensive exploration of ethnic divergence. The article “America Demands A Single Loyalty”, in which Dorothy Thompson claimed that Israeli ties conflicted with the full exercise of U.S. citizenship, reflected the atmosphere, which most surely contributed to the somewhat restrained

---

<sup>250</sup> Anonymous, “The Arabs’ Peculiar ‘Anti-Semitism’: An Old Hostility Takes A New Form”, *Commentary*, February 1949, 162-165; Hal Lehrman, “Gathering Storm of U.S. Israeli Relations: The Issues Behind the Conflict”, *Commentary*, October 1949, 317-328; Arthur Hertzberg, “American Zionism At An Impasse: A Movement in Search of a Program”, *Commentary*, October 1949, 340-345; Shlomo Riemer, “The Hard Road to Israeli Self-Dependence: Facing Up to the Grim Economic Realities”, *Commentary*, August 1953, 139-145. <sup>251</sup> Horowitz, “Founding of the New State”, 103.

<sup>252</sup> For example: Salomon Maimon, “A Rational Exposition of the Jewish Faith: The Spirit and the Role of the Talmud”, *Commentary*, May 1946, 72-78; Leo S. Baeck, “Why Jews in the World?: A Reaffirmation of Faith in Israel’s Destiny”, *Commentary*, June 1947, 501-507; Cecil Roth, “The Two Cradles of Jewish Liberty: The New World and the Mother Country”, *Commentary*, February 1954, 109-117; J.L. Talmon, “Uniqueness & Universality of Jewish History: A Midcentury Revaluation”, *Commentary*, July 1957, 1-14; Gershom Sholem, “Jewish Messianism and the Idea of Progress: Exile and Redemption in the Cabala”, *Commentary*, April 1958, 298-305; Hermann Cohen, “From the ‘Religion of Reason’”, *Commentary*, April 1958, 340-341.

embrace of Israel by *Commentary* during those years.<sup>253</sup> Yet, in his rebuttal “America Recognizes Diverse Loyalties”, Oscar Handlin claimed that it was the essence of American culture that “men are capable of expressing themselves, wherever they feel such need, through associations to which they are drawn by a common ancestry”.<sup>254</sup> Handlin argued, that American supporters of Israel were the most stringent proponents of American values and interests. It was on the background of these diverging interpretations of American pluralism that *Commentary* began to develop its rationale for supporting the Israeli state.

During the 1950s, the magazine published articles, which argued that Israel was an essential player in the struggle against Soviet expansionism in a strategically vital region. Accusing the Eisenhower administration of abetting the Arab states to the detriment of Israel, for instance with respect to arms sales, and of being made up of “A group of baffled men...frightened by the Communists” generally, these articles foreshadowed a standard neoconservative argument that American foreign policy in the Middle East was based on a paralysing and cowardly fear of Soviet power and preferred to cajole the Soviets and their proxies rather than asserting the responsibilities of world leadership.<sup>255</sup> The most critical positions relative to U.S. policies in the region were published during and after the Suez Canal crisis of 1956. The U.S., reluctant to identify unconditionally with former colonial

---

<sup>253</sup> Dorothy Thompson, “America Demands A Single Loyalty: The Perils of a ‘Favorite’ Foreign Nation”, *Commentary*, March 1950, 210-219.

<sup>254</sup> Oscar Handlin, “America Recognizes Diverse Loyalties: “External” Ties Are Not Necessarily Dangerous”, *Commentary*, March 1950, 223.

<sup>255</sup> Hal Lehrman, “Arms for Arabs – And What For Israel? Dilemmas in the Search for a Middle East Balance of Power”, *Commentary*, November 1954, 423-433; Hal Lehrman, “The Arabs, Israel, and Near East Defence: Our Government’s Still Unsettled Policy”, *Commentary*, December 1952, 563-74; Harold Lavine, “Mr. Eisenhower’s Far East Policy: The Prescription, As Before”, *Commentary*, May 1955, 415-420; One important influence in this respect was James Burnham, a Trotskyite intellectual turned conservative, who prefigured neoconservative ideas about the Soviet threat and American lack of political will to adequately confront the threat. Burnham argued that American foreign policy had to recognise the primacy of the ideological factor in dealing with the Soviet Union and that containment was nothing but “the bureaucratic verbalization of a policy of drift” which absolved the West from offensively confronting the Soviet Union. James Burnham, *Containment or Liberation? An Inquiry Into the Aims of United States Foreign Policy* (New York: John Day, 1953), pp. 42-43.

powers France and Britain, publicly opposed the use of force in the course of Egypt's move to nationalise the Suez Canal. Ultimately, the U.S., together with the Soviet Union, coerced Britain, France and Israel to withdraw from Egyptian territory and upheld the nationalisation of the Suez Canal.<sup>256</sup>

Contributions discussing the Suez Crisis expressed a deep concern that the Soviets were able to exploit the power vacuum in the Middle East, as former colonial powers Britain and France were receding, because of American political and military timidity.<sup>257</sup> The U.S.' "bowing and scraping" had led directly to Egypt's Premier Gamal Abdel Nasser "cockiness" towards the West and the threat of "losing the Middle East" to the Soviets, which would constitute an even greater menace to the continued existence of Israel's free society than autocratic and hostile Arab regimes, armed with Soviet weaponry.<sup>258</sup> Moreover, *Commentary* was concerned about the internal communist threat within Israel itself.<sup>259</sup> The only way to avoid the spread of communism in the Middle East and strengthening the Arabs in their belief that they could get away with a war of annihilation against Israel, *Commentary* argued, was by giving more diplomatic and especially military support to Israel and making it into a central strategic representative of U.S. power. Cautioning to stop the State Department's "policy of Arab appeasement", the underlying rationale for this supposed change of policy, it suggested, was the congruence of interests between Israel, the United States and the West generally.<sup>260</sup>

---

<sup>256</sup> Michael B. Oren, *Power, Faith and Fantasy: America in the Middle East 1776 to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2007), 514-516.

<sup>257</sup> Hal Lehrman, "The Crisis in the Middle East: Is An Arab-Israeli War Inevitable?" *Commentary*, March 1956, 210-221.

<sup>258</sup> Hal Lehrman, "Western Self-Interest and Israeli Self-Defence: They Coincide", *Commentary*, May 1956, 403.

<sup>259</sup> For concerns regarding communist influence within Israel: Mark Alexander, "Israel's Communists and Fellow-Travelers", *Commentary*, August 1952, 136-144.

<sup>260</sup> Lehrman, "Western Self-Interest and Israeli Self-Defence", 408.

Not only were Israel and the U.S. linked by a common interest in avoiding the spread of communism and the military armament of Arab nations who were hostile to Israel's existence, they were also culturally related, by the fact that Israel was a pioneer nation, surrounded by enemies, who rejected the liberal democratic system that had been implanted in their midst. According to historian Walter Laqueur, Israel functioned as a lightening rod for "Arab anti-Westernism" – diverting some of the "Arab resentment" from the West - and should therefore get adequate support from Western nations.<sup>261</sup> Much like a city upon a hill, the Israeli experiment of developing democracy in a hostile environment, had to be defended by American military and political might.<sup>262</sup>

Considering Israel as a representative of the free world, *Commentary* argued, that it was in the American interest to stop pandering to the Arab world and fortify Israel against communism. It was during the 1950s that 'Commentarians' began to interpret "the fierce assault on its [Israel's] legitimacy as part of the ideological offensive against the democratic world led and orchestrated by the Soviet Union", an argument, which would find further development over the next three decades.<sup>263</sup> Furthermore, Podhoretz, writing one year after the Suez Crisis, admonished fellow Jewish intellectuals for not standing up more firmly for Israel during the crisis. He assailed Jews for not voicing their support for Israel more categorically, claiming that Israel's continued existence was also in their interest, since their fates were inescapably linked. Finally, Israel, he exhorted, should be

---

<sup>261</sup> Walter Z. Laqueur, "How Real Is Arab Nationalism? Nasserism Paves the Way for Communism", *Commentary*, April 1957, 331; Walter Z. Laqueur, "The Moscow-Cairo Axis: Its Aim: To Drive the West Out", *Commentary*, May 1956, 409-417.

<sup>262</sup> G.F. Hudson, "America, Britain, and the Middle East: For A Policy of Strength", *Commentary*, June 1956, 516-521.

<sup>263</sup> Podhoretz, "Neoconservatism: A Eulogy", 22.

treated by the same standards as any other country, since “no apologies are required for asserting one’s right to existence...because this right is absolute”.<sup>264</sup>

### Conclusion

A close reading of early *Commentary* issues demonstrates that incipient neoconservative ideas and themes emerged at a much earlier date than generally assumed. Incipient neoconservatives’ euphoric embrace of the American status quo after 1945 led to the development of a hyper-nationalism in which American and Jewish identities were intertwined in a symbiotic relationship based on a allegedly fierce antipathy of both cultures for communism. In the process of developing its hard anti-communist stance, *Commentary* also began to expand its anti-liberal rationale, tied to a specific use of Holocaust analogies and its perceived lessons for the American scene, which, as David MacDonald has shown, would in later years become a central rhetorical characteristic of neoconservatism.<sup>265</sup> While communism was comparable to Nazism, liberals, so the argument of incipient neoconservatives went, were as guilty as ever for abetting those evils, unable to recognise the damage they were doing in the name of liberal values of tolerance and civil liberties. Liberals had not learned the lessons the Holocaust supposedly taught. Holocaust analogies accompanied incipient neoconservatives’ efforts to prove that Jews were ‘good’ Americans at every stage – refuting the widespread interpretation that the Holocaust was a taboo amongst American Jews up until the later half of the 1960s.

---

<sup>264</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Intellectuals and Jewish Fate”, *Midstream*, Winter 1957, 19.

<sup>265</sup> David B. MacDonald, *Thinking History, Fighting Evil: Neoconservatives and the Perils of Analogy in American Politics* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009).

Investigating early *Commentary* issues confirms Ruth Wisse's claim that "it was the Jewish component of *Commentary* that promoted neoconservatism (long) before the term came into use".<sup>266</sup> Studies, which consider the Jewish dimension of neoconservatism generally describe it as having been exclusively driven by the emergent Zionism of its adherents, especially after the Six Day War. While the perceived need to defend Israel was indeed important in early neoconservative thought, it nonetheless did not constitute a driving force in its emergence. Most early neoconservatives were initially more concerned with the American scene than Israel. As shown above, many of them had mixed feelings about the creation of a Jewish state - a condition reflected in the pages of *Commentary*. It was only in the context of its defence of American pre-eminence in the Middle East that the magazine began to develop a defence of the Israeli state as a strategic and ideological asset to U.S. foreign policy, defining Israel as an outpost of the West in a strategically vital region.

During the later 1940s and throughout the 1950s, Jewish intellectuals, working within the realm of *Commentary* focused primarily on defining a position for themselves as Jews and as intellectuals within American society. Driven by the desire to be fully included in dominant society and yet rediscover and uphold their Jewish particularity, they searched for ways in which to connect both components symbiotically. This was to be accomplished by embracing the American status quo and a fierce anti-communism, thereby proving that Jews were 'good' Americans. Holocaust analogies, as has been shown, accompanied this effort at every stage – a fact that refutes the myth that the Holocaust was a taboo issue amongst American Jews up until the later half of the 1960s.

---

<sup>266</sup> Wisse, "The Jewishness of *Commentary*", 67.

**Chapter 3**  
**“Liberal Judaism is a Contradiction in Terms”:**  
*Commentary* and  
**the Anti-Progressive Backlash,**  
**1960-1965**

~

Introduction

In February 1963, *Commentary* published “My Negro Problem – And Ours” by its new editor-in-chief Norman Podhoretz. The article was a barometer for the extent to which Podhoretz’s anti-progressivism had developed by the early 1960s. Its main target were “white middle class liberals” who supported racial integration. Framed by Podhoretz’s personal experience of an emotionally constrained boy, who was repeatedly harassed by “much bigger and stronger” black boys, Podhoretz’s story inversed the ‘blacks as victims-whites as oppressors’ pattern. Nevertheless, as the ‘good liberal’ he had become, Podhoretz claimed, he knew to control his “irrational fear of blacks” – and therefore had no choice but to support racial integration.<sup>267</sup>

Yet, the article made clear that he had serious doubts about integrationist liberalism. Expressing his disdain for white liberals because they allegedly “romanticise the Negroes and pander to them” out of guilt for past injustices, he accused them of letting “Negroes...blackmail them into adopting a double standard of moral judgment”.<sup>268</sup> The article introduced a rhetoric, which played on negative stereotypes of blacks as violent and uneducated and simultaneously denounced liberals for their alleged hypocrisy of supporting civil rights in words but not in deeds. Liberals, Podhoretz claimed, had realised that “their

---

<sup>267</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “My Negro Problem – and Ours”, *Commentary*, February 1963, 93-101.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

abstract commitment to the cause of Negro rights will not stand the test of a direct confrontation”.<sup>269</sup> The article reflected, according to Dorrien, Podhoretz’s belief that integrationist liberalism was but “the pathetic product of middle-class guilt”.<sup>270</sup>

While Podhoretz did not directly refer to Jewish pro-civil rights activists, he implicitly aimed at them, when he invoked the ovens of Auschwitz towards the end of the article in order to criticise black racial assertiveness. Carrying integrationist liberalism to extreme conclusion, he suggested that the only way the racial crisis could be overcome was by miscegenation at the end of which lay the dissolution of blacks as a distinct group. Further, he asked himself if survival as a distinct group really was desirable for black? While Jews had “good reason” to want to survive as a group, he claimed, blacks had no positive legacy worth preserving. For the African American, he claimed, “his past is a stigma, his color is a stigma and his future is the hope of erasing the stigma by making it disappear as a fact of consciousness”.<sup>271</sup> If blacks would disappear, he seemed to suggest, the memory of their persecution could also be erased.

Justine Wise Polier and Shad Polier of the progressive American Jewish Congress (AJCongress) expressed outrage at Podhoretz’s article by accusing him of lacking the necessary Jewish self-respect. They turned Podhoretz’s indictment of liberals’ alleged tendency towards self-deprecation against him and confirmed the Jewish commitment to black civil rights. Further, they claimed that it was precisely the heritage of Jewish commitment to the ideal of “human brotherhood” that had “made the survival of the Jewish people meaningful to Jews as men and to those lands in which the Jews had lived”. Podhoretz’s article, however, was nothing but a rejection of “the Jewish and American

---

<sup>269</sup> Podhoretz, “My Negro Problem – and Ours”, 98.

<sup>270</sup> Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 154.

<sup>271</sup> Podhoretz, “My Negro Problem – and Ours”, 101.

ideal” and an “admission of self-contempt”.<sup>272</sup> Did he, they speculated, feel so oppressed by his own Jewishness that he longed to be part of the powerful *goyim*?

Whether one agreed or disagreed with Podhoretz, he certainly touched a nerve. For the following three issues *Commentary* published numerous reactions from readers in the ‘Letters to the Editor’ section of the magazine, amongst them about a dozen which praised Podhoretz for his alleged intrepidity.<sup>273</sup> Moreover, the exchange between Podhoretz and the Poliers illustrates the intense nature of the arguments progressive liberal Jews and those who thought that liberalism was no longer a viable option for Jews engaged in by the early 1960s. As shown, the beginnings of these arguments reached back to the end of Second World War and would throughout the 1960s grow so intense that Orthodox Rabbi Yaakov Jacob came to describe intra-communal Jewish relations by 1968 as having taken on the nature of “a civil war”. He claimed that at the heart of this war lay the question of “who is more authentically Jewish”.<sup>274</sup>

While the 1960s were an economically prosperous decade, it was also a time when the anti-communist consensus collapsed and American society appeared dominated by extremes – it was, as if, in the words of Jonathan Sarna, “the middle dropped out”.<sup>275</sup> This tense period also contributed to a deepening sense of unease amongst American Jews, which found reflection in continued intra-communal debates about redrawing the boundaries of acceptable political behaviour along ideological lines. Especially the first half of the 1960s was a time of widespread uncertainty and internal strife within the organised American Jewish community. As this chapter demonstrates arguments centred on issues

---

<sup>272</sup> Justine Wise Polier and Shad Polier, “Fear Turned to Hatred”, *Congress Bi-Weekly*, February 18, 1963, 5-7.

<sup>273</sup> “Letters to the Editor”, *Commentary*, April 1963, 338-347; May 1963, 430-438; June 1963, 525-530.

<sup>274</sup> Yaakov Jacobs, “To Picket...Or to Pray?” *Jewish Observer*, April 1968, 3.

<sup>275</sup> Jonathan Sarna, interview with author, Waltham, Ma., April 10, 2008; Paul Krugman, *The Conscience of a Liberal* (New York: Norton & Norton, 2007).

such as how Jews as Jews and as Americans should position themselves relative to the civil rights movement, to integrationist measures in Northern schools and neighbourhoods, to a growing Holocaust consciousness and Jewish particularism, to the emerging student movement and the counterculture.

*Commentary* was one venue where the shift from concerns about Jewish integration to survivalist considerations, which came to characterise the agenda of a great majority within the organised Jewish community during the later half of the 1960s, was foreshadowed.<sup>276</sup> It was during the early 1960s that Jewish intellectuals, such as Irving Kristol, Norman Podhoretz, Nathan Glazer, and Daniel Bell, came to feel, in the words of Sidney Blumenthal, “more alienated [from developments on the American national stage] than ever”.<sup>277</sup> While most still considered themselves radicals of some sort, the emergence of the student movement and counterculture, coupled with the radicalisation of certain elements within the civil rights movement, seemed to them to spell the beginning of the decline of American civilisation.<sup>278</sup> Towards the end of the decade, many of them began to move to the right of the political spectrum.

In opposition to traditional narratives, this chapter shows that the anti-progressive backlash of future neoconservatives did not just emerge in reaction to developments of the later 1960s and especially to the Six-Day War in 1967. As previously shown, early neoconservative ideas arose during the 1950s and the Jewish dimension was not primarily

---

<sup>276</sup> For the shift of Jewish collective agenda for a majority of American Jews from integrationism to survivalism see: Steven M. Cohen and Leonard J. Fein, “From Integration to Survival: American Jewish Anxieties in Transition”, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 480 (July 1985): 75-88.

<sup>277</sup> Blumenthal, *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment*, 113.

<sup>278</sup> Gertrude Himmelfarb, *One Nation, Two Cultures* (New York: Random House, 1999). Richard Posner characterises the neoconservatives as ‘cultural pessimists’ or ‘declinists’. As such, Posner sees precursors of the neoconservative cultural critique in the puritan sermon type of jeremiads as well as in the critique of occidental culture and society by Oswald Spengler. Richard A. Posner, *Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2001).

related to Zionist concerns. Neoconservative ideas were elaborated further during the early 1960s and gave way to a broadly invested critique of the liberal establishment. The main concern of future neoconservatives was that developments within liberalism supposedly were threatening to undermine the social stability of American society, which they considered essential for the security of Jews. Yet, while many interpretations of neoconservatism contend that the right turn of liberal intellectuals emerged purely as reaction to transformations within liberalism, which is referred to as the ‘heroes’ paradigm, this chapter demonstrates that the neoconservative turn accelerated, as future neoconservatives began to accentuate more forcefully those elements in their thought that had been closer to conservatism than to liberalism all along.<sup>279</sup> It is impossible to single out one specific event that drove this shift during the early 1960s. However, by examining a multiplicity of variables it is possible to observe the emergence of a framework, however polymorphous and often contradictory, of core neoconservative thought.

In the process of turning towards the right, future neoconservatives began to promote the idea that a more conservative politics was the best way to ensure Jewish security and collective survival. Accordingly, Jews were an integral part of American society – who by virtue of its democratic political culture had offered Jews previously inexperienced safety and integration – and therefore it was of vital importance to defend American values and traditions from the “onslaught” of social and political movements that potentially sought to undermine the very foundations of American society. Podhoretz took the lead in pointing out the threat that emanated for Jews from America’s perceived cultural and moral

---

<sup>279</sup> Heilbrunn, *They Knew They Were Right*, 7.

deterioration, re-fashioning himself, in the eyes of fellow neoconservative Lucy Dawidowicz, into “the true defender of the Jews”.<sup>280</sup>

Norman Podhoretz: ‘The Meir Kahane of the Intellectuals’<sup>281</sup>

Norman Podhoretz was born on January 16, 1930 and grew up in a working-class family of Galician immigrants in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn. While his parents, nominally Orthodox, were highly selective about religious observation, they rejected both Reform as well as Conservative Judaism as not sufficiently Jewish. In high school, he was mentored by his English teacher Harriet Haft, who was “bent on civilizing” him and in the long run turn him into a “facsimile WASP”.<sup>282</sup> She also instilled in him a keen interest in literature, which in 1946 led him to Columbia University on a scholarship, where he studied under the accomplished literary critic and first generation New York intellectual, Lionel Trilling. At Columbia, Podhoretz felt like one of Stendhal’s “young man from the provinces”, intimidated by the WASP “preppy types”.<sup>283</sup> Meanwhile, he also worked studied for a degree in Hebrew Literature at the Seminary College of Jewish Studies, the academic division of the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Lionel Trilling, who was the first scholar of Jewish descent to be tenured in an English department at an elite American university, had flirted with communism, yet had never been a strong believer. He was deeply affected by the moral crisis of his friend Whittaker Chambers, a former Soviet spy, who broke with the Communist Party in 1938

---

<sup>280</sup> Letter from Dawidowicz addressed to Podhoretz, August 26, 1982, Box 78, Folder 3, LDP.

<sup>281</sup> In a letter addressed to *Commentary* magazine, a reader referred to him as ‘the Meir Kahane of the Intellectuals’ relative to his discussion of the threats that emanated for Jewish security from affirmative action. Podhoretz, Wiener Oral History Library, Transcript, 90.

<sup>282</sup> Podhoretz, *My Love Affair With America*, 44.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, 43; Podhoretz, interview with author, May 17, 2008.

and turned against the Soviet Union after the signing of the Stalin-Hitler Pact in 1939. Chambers' denunciation of alleged Soviet spies in the State Department led to the infamous Alger Hiss trial in 1948 that, in the words of Harold Rosenberg, marked "the initiation of militant anti-Communism, with the repentant ex-Communist in the vanguard".<sup>284</sup> Trilling was so disturbed by Chambers' remorse, that, in reaction, he wrote his only novel, entitled *The Middle of the Journey*, dealing with the bitter ideological disputes amongst the American intelligentsia, making the absence of integrity at the very heart of the debate into the central message of the story.<sup>285</sup>

While Podhoretz was one of Trilling's prize students and tried to emulate him in many ways, he would accuse him repeatedly of lacking the courage of his convictions in later years. Trilling, who coined the term "adversary culture" during the 1950s, became tormented by the belief that the anti-bourgeois values that he and other New York intellectuals had promoted in culture and politics during the 1930s and 1940s might under certain circumstances lead to the destruction of the very social order of which he was an integral part.<sup>286</sup> While Trilling was indeed critical of the various social and cultural movements that emerged during the 1960s, he, nevertheless, could not bring himself to denounce the "adversary culture" in the same terms that Podhoretz would do.<sup>287</sup>

With Trilling's help, Podhoretz was able to continue his literary studies at Clare College, Cambridge, England, after he graduated from Columbia in 1950. He began working on a doctoral thesis on the political novels of Benjamin Disraeli. At Cambridge he

---

<sup>284</sup> Harold Rosenberg, "The Trial and Eichmann", *Commentary*, November 1961, 371.

<sup>285</sup> Lionel Trilling, *The Middle of the Journey* (New York: New York Review of Books Classics Series, 2002); also: Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1952); Sam Tanenhaus, *An Un-American Life: The Case of Whittaker Chambers* (New York: Random House, 1998); Susan Jacoby, *Alger Hiss and the Battle for History* (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 2009).

<sup>286</sup> By "adversary culture", he referred the subversiveness of modern literature and the modern artists' opposition to bourgeois society. Lionel Trilling, *Beyond Culture* (New York: Viking Press, 1965).

<sup>287</sup> Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks*, 296-301.

studied under F.R. Leavis, a leading English literary critic who published an article by Podhoretz in *Criterion*.<sup>288</sup> With the “superego of a horse” already well developed during these years, Podhoretz dreamed of becoming a success story in the literary world. In a letter written to Trilling on June 6, 1951, Podhoretz said that he “had these visions of bursting upon the literary scene with something world shaking: I was going to make them sit up and take notice”.<sup>289</sup> He especially wanted to be noted by the New York intellectuals. Having visited the office of *Commentary* in the summer of 1952 and asked by Cohen to review Bernard Malamud’s *The Natural*, he returned to England with “my heart lusting for publication and for very little else”.<sup>290</sup> Feeling ill at ease in the academic world, he set out to follow “his desire to become a New York Intellectual”.<sup>291</sup> He, therefore, returned to the U.S. in 1953, aborting his university career. Yet, while he worked briefly for *Commentary*, he was drafted into the army at the end of 1953, and was stationed in Giessen, Germany. Upon his discharge at the end of 1955, he went back to work as assistant editor for *Commentary* magazine. His motivation for returning to the magazine, he retrospectively claimed, was that he wanted “to see my name in print, to be praised, and above all to attract attention”.<sup>292</sup>

By the time Podhoretz joined *Commentary* as a permanent member of staff, assistant editor Nathan Glazer had left to work at Anchor Books and Robert Warshow, whom Podhoretz felt close to when he had briefly worked for *Commentary* in 1953, had died of a heart attack aged 37. Since Eliot Cohen was suffering severely from depression, the

---

<sup>288</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “Liberals, Radicals, Conservatives: Who Are They?” S394, Host: William F. Buckley, Jr. Guest: Norman Podhoretz, taped November 29, 1979, Firing Line Collection, Box 175, Hoover Institution Archives, Transcript, 1.

<sup>289</sup> Norman Podhoretz letter to Lionel, June 6, 1951, Collection, Box 7, Folder 7, Series II.1., LTP.

<sup>290</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 103.

<sup>291</sup> Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 137.

<sup>292</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 146-147.

magazine was run by the art critic Clement Greenberg and his brother Martin Greenberg, with whom Podhoretz clashed continuously over issues pertaining to the agenda of the magazine.<sup>293</sup> In a letter written to Trilling, which is undated but which must be from the later half of the 1950s, he described the atmosphere at *Commentary* as having become so unbearable, riven by infighting and the “oppressive” antics of the Greenberg brothers, that he was planning to leave the journal: “Things have become almost intolerable for me here under les frères...The main thing is to get out of here before I develop an ulcer”.<sup>294</sup>

In the autobiography *Ex-Friends*, Podhoretz recounted that the main motivation for turning his back on *Commentary* in 1957 was a dispute between himself and the Greenberg brothers about an article by Hannah Arendt entitled “Reflections on Little Rock” in which she argued against federal efforts to desegregate Southern schools. Her argument was based on the distinction between public/political and social domain, attributing education to the social rather than the public/political sphere. Arendt argued that federal law should not prescribe the social dimension which criteria to use in selecting its members, thereby denying federal law power of intervention within the public school system. Moreover, she believed that other areas of society should have priority in the desegregation process, such as marriage laws of certain states for instance, since she considered those a more conspicuous transgressions against the U.S. constitution than school segregation.<sup>295</sup>

Furthermore, she objected to the political instrumentalisation of education and believed it irresponsible of adults to put the primary burden of federal desegregation policy in the South on children. While Podhoretz claimed to disagree with her opinion in the

---

<sup>293</sup> Kristol said about Clement Greenberg: “Clem...had a reputation as having a terrible temper, leading even to an occasional brawl, we saw none of that. Toward his younger colleagues he was always genial, if distant”. Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 16; Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 141.

<sup>294</sup> Letter on *Commentary* stationary dated July 13, Box 7, Folder 7, Series II.1., LTP.

<sup>295</sup> Hannah Arendt, “Reflections on Little Rock”, *Dissent*, Winter 1959, 45-56.

matter, he was impressed by “the originality of the argument”. Martin Greenberg, however, rejected its publication outright. He feared that “so politically heretical” a piece of writing on a touchy subject like school integration would lead to a curtailing of editorial independence by the AJC.<sup>296</sup> Podhoretz tried to negotiate conditions for publication for a couple of months, but Arendt eventually withdrew the article and it was published in *Dissent* magazine.<sup>297</sup>

This incident, in addition to a number of other quarrels, eventually persuaded Podhoretz to leave the magazine in order to work for Anchor Books and then for Random House for a short while, while free-lance writing for *Partisan Review*, the *New Yorker*, *The Reporter* (a magazine run by Irving Kristol after his return from working for *Encounter* in London, England), *Esquire*, the *New Leader*, and the *New Republic*. Podhoretz returned eventually to *Commentary* as editor-in-chief after Eliot Cohen committed suicide in 1959. The board of directors of the AJC had offered the editorship to Irving Kristol, Daniel Bell and Alfred Kazin, all of whom turned it down. Podhoretz was next in line. Pretending to be undecided at first, he accepted the offer eventually, becoming editor in chief of *Commentary* at age thirty. Since he believed that *Commentary* under Cohen had turned into “a true spokesman for the spirit of the fifties”, according to which “the United States of America...was the best society a human nature...was likely...to build”. Podhoretz’s intention “was to say goodbye to all that; the hard anti-Communism and to celebration, however quiet, of American virtue”.<sup>298</sup>

---

<sup>296</sup> Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends*, 139-151; The AJC was allied with the NAACP and had been helping to draft *amicus curiae* briefs for the Legal Defense Fund’s civil rights cases – Marianne Sanua, *Let Us Now Prove Strong: The American Jewish Committee, 1945-2006* (Waltham, Ma.: Brandeis University Press, 2007), 158-194.

<sup>297</sup> Arendt, “Reflections on Little Rock”, 45-56.

<sup>298</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 294-295.

In order to realise his aim, Podhoretz allegedly wanted to bring the magazine to the left, an assertion, which is questionable. He certainly did not turn his back on anti-communism and *Commentary* came to celebrate a mythologised conception of America even more than it had under Podhoretz's predecessor. Most importantly, Podhoretz succeeded in making the journal into an extension of himself. According to Lucy Dawidowicz, he "recreated Commentary" when he took over from Eliot Cohen: "You made it uniquely yours", transforming it into an "incalculable influence in shaping American public opinion and Jewish public opinion ... on the great issues of our time which affect us as Americans and as Jews".<sup>299</sup> Podhoretz himself seemed to agree. Relative to his influence on the magazine, he declared "There's a lot of me in almost everything that appears in this magazine".<sup>300</sup>

#### The 'New *Commentary*' : A Voice of Radicalism?

According to Podhoretz himself and the standard narrative of neoconservatism, he infused *Commentary* with a dose of leftist radicalism when he took over the magazine in 1960. He claimed that his aim "to turn *Commentary*, as I myself had been turning, in the same leftward direction" coexisted with the eagerness "to get the magazine talked about once again in as many circles as possible".<sup>301</sup> Overall, historians seem to take Podhoretz's own retrospective interpretation, which he refers to as his "aberrational period", at face value; referring to Podhoretz's "self-identification as a radical" or claiming that when "Podhoretz

---

<sup>299</sup> Lucy Dawidowicz letter to Norman Podhoretz January 15, 1985, Box 79, Folder 1, LDP.

<sup>300</sup> Podhoretz, Wiener Oral History Library, 148.

<sup>301</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 288, 286.

took over *Commentary*; he brought the magazine to the left”.<sup>302</sup> Yet this depiction distorts the picture. While it is true that Podhoretz opened the magazine to anarchist, progressive and democratic socialist voices, he simultaneously began to launch concerted attacks against progressive liberalism and specifically against progressive Jewish liberalism during the early 1960s.

His interest in radicalism has been explained by the fact that Podhoretz came to think that the Soviet threat to the “free world” had diminished after Stalin’s death and after Nikita Khrushchev’s de-Stalinisation speech of February 25, 1956, in which he denounced the personality cult created by Stalin and the Great Purges that murdered millions. Podhoretz, therefore, seemed to believe that intellectuals should focus their attention more closely on the home front and debate various reformist ideas that could strengthen American society and make it more resilient in its fight against the communist enemy. *Commentary* had become too predictable and rigid, in Podhoretz’s opinion, just as the intellectual discourse had during the latter half of the 1950s. It was his strategy, therefore, to infuse a “fresh look” at established ideas and contribute something new and preferably groundbreaking to the debate. His opening editorial claimed that the Cold War had transformed American society to the point that it had consecrated “all its energies to holding a defensive line not only against the very real threat of Soviet power but against the promise of our own future potentialities”.<sup>303</sup>

The first step towards rehabilitating “the long-dormant tradition of American social criticism” was, therefore, to publish excerpts of Paul Goodman’s study of juvenile delinquency entitled *Growing Up Absurd*. Goodman, himself an anarchist, had tried but

---

<sup>302</sup> Podhoretz, interview with author, May 17, 2008; Ehrman, “*Commentary*, *The Public Interest*, and the Problem of Jewish Conservatism”, 159-181.

<sup>303</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Issue”, *Commentary*, February 1960, 184.

failed to get a contract with 19 different publishers. With the help of Podhoretz and Jason Epstein it was eventually brought out in book form with Random House. The publication of the articles based on *Growing Up Absurd* achieved the result that Podhoretz's had hoped for: "they put the "new *Commentary* on the map".<sup>304</sup> About Goodman's utopianism Podhoretz wrote: "I regard it as a virtue rather than a fault that his articles are 'utopian' and cannot easily be translated into a program to put before the electorate".<sup>305</sup> He further argued that it was the role of intellectuals "not to offer programs but to serve ideals...to speak unashamedly and passionately not on behalf of what man happens at the moment to be, but on behalf of what he has within him to become".<sup>306</sup>

Podhoretz wanted to shake things up, to address issues that were not being addressed by politicians or the majority of intellectuals. And yet, at the same time, he continued to publish more moderate voices, even conservative ones. In fact, he seemed to be looking for a conservative radical critique of American society that could unify anti-communism in conjunction with social experimentation. Nathan Glazer described the radicalism that pervaded *Commentary* in those days as one that was very close to conservative ideas relative to an organically grown community characterised by solving problems on a localised and kinship level. According to Glazer, it was a radicalism defined by an attraction towards "the anti-bureaucratic, the small and the immediate".<sup>307</sup>

Therefore, while publishing Paul Goodman, Staughton Lynd, Michael Harrington, David Riesman and Malcolm Maccoby, he also gave voice to Theodore Draper and Richard Lowenthal, both of whom defended hard anti-communist positions based on their

---

<sup>304</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 297.

<sup>305</sup> Norman Podhoretz, "The Issue", *Commentary*, April 1960, 368.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, 368.

<sup>307</sup> Nathan Glazer, "On Being De-Radicalized", *Commentary*, October 1970, 74.

assessment that Khrushchev was the logical heir of Stalin. In July 1961, *Commentary* published Irving Kristol's counter-attack on Harvard professor H. Stuart Hughes' calls for unilateral disarmament.<sup>308</sup> He also published Lynd's revisionist perspective on the Cold War, which blamed U.S. actions for starting the conflict.<sup>309</sup> Other voices of radicalism that articulated their ideas in *Commentary* in the early 1960s were Norman Mailer, Norman O. Brown, and Herbert Marcuse; all of whom did not belong, according to Sidney Blumenthal, "in the Trilling tradition".<sup>310</sup> In a sense, Podhoretz's 'radicalism' also can be interpreted as an effort to antagonise Trilling and to disengage himself from Eliot Cohen's influence.

While radical cultural criticism seemed to attract Podhoretz in some way, it cannot be overlooked that he at no point questioned the fundamental tenets of American society and politics and did not advocate socialist ideology. The limits of his radicalism also were reflected, for example, by the fact that he chose not to publish an early version of the Port Huron manifesto, offered to him by Tom Hayden, because he allegedly considered it to be "intellectually shallow". He found the statement to be more conditional than principled, and he claimed retrospectively that he feared "that the type of humanism embodied in it carried the seeds of leftist authoritarianism".<sup>311</sup>

Since Podhoretz had missed out on the formative experience of the older members of the New York intellectuals with communism and the subsequent disenchantment with it, his alleged radical phase created an experience, which substituted the process of 'apostasy' from communism by his disillusionment with early 1960s radicalism.<sup>312</sup> The threat posed by communists and fellow travellers was superseded by that emanating from the New Left,

---

<sup>308</sup> H. Stuart Hughes, "The Strategy of Deterrence – A Dissenting Statement", *Commentary*, March 1961, 185-192; Irving Kristol and H. Stuart Hughes, "Deterrence", *Commentary*, July 1961, 64-67.

<sup>309</sup> Staughton Lynd, "How the Cold War Began", *Commentary*, November 1960, 379-389.

<sup>310</sup> Blumenthal, *The Rise of Counter-Establishment*, 123.

<sup>311</sup> Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks*, 316; Podhoretz, interview with author, May 17, 2008.

<sup>312</sup> Richard H. Crossman, ed. *The God That Failed* (London: Hamilton, 1950).

civil rights activists, student radicals, and later gay and women's rights activists for the American polity and for American Jews.

In the early 1960s Podhoretz also ran a number of articles dealing with the Vietnam War, often expressing a desire to help the South Vietnamese but at the same time conveying the message that military action would not be successful in freeing the South from the influence of the Vietcong. *Commentary* published a major exponent of *realpolitik*, Hans Morgenthau, who warned that military involvement in Vietnam was bound to be just as unsuccessful as in Korea and would almost certainly lead to more casualties than the Korean War. The only possible line of action, Morgenthau suggested, was to impose sanctions against North Vietnam.<sup>313</sup>

As the discussion of the Vietnam War in *Commentary* during the early 1960s indicates, most of the future neoconservatives supported unilateral immediate withdrawal. Irving Kristol was exceptional among 'Commentarians' in pleading for the American military to remain in Vietnam because he believed that pulling out equalled weakness in the face of the communist enemy. Most others, however, tried to publicly defend a moderate anti-war position throughout the early 1960s. Considering the war to be "morally and politically disastrous", Irving Howe and civil rights activist Bayard Rustin nevertheless believed that the burgeoning anti-Vietnam movement's "task is not to assign historical responsibility for the present disaster to one or another side".<sup>314</sup> Nathan Glazer agreed that

---

<sup>313</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, "Vietnam: Another Korea?" *Commentary*, May 1962, 369-374; Hans J. Morgenthau, "Asia: The American Algeria", *Commentary*, July 1961, 43-47; Hans J. Morgenthau, "The Impotence of American Power", *Commentary*, November 1963, 384-386.

<sup>314</sup> Irving Howe, ed., *Steady Work: Essays in Politics of Democratic Radicalism, 1953-1966* (New York: Harcourt, 1966), 95.

the Vietnam War was not the reflection of the debasement of American culture, but “the result of a series of monumental errors”.<sup>315</sup>

Therefore, while giving voice to radical authors and ideas, Podhoretz simultaneously continued to publish articles that took moderate or even conservative departures. That was also the case when it came to publishing a specifically Jewish perspective. From the start Podhoretz made room for articles that criticised progressive Jewish liberalism. Emil Fackenheim, a major influence on Podhoretz’s intellectual development, for example, condemned progressive Judaism for insisting that social justice was the essence of modern Jewish identity.<sup>316</sup> This kind of interpretation was not only false, Fackenheim claimed, but would eventually implode since “liberal Judaism is a contradiction in terms”. Jewish liberalism, he suggested, was highly problematic because it produced “broad-minded, pluralistic, and tolerant” young Jews who consequently were unable to articulate traditional Jewish values even when their lives depended on it. Liberalism, he concluded, induced a relativistic approach towards existential questions and would ultimately lead to the demise of Judaism.<sup>317</sup>

Milton Himmelfarb accused Jewish liberals of lacking the necessary self-respect, wondering, for example, how Jewish lawyers of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) could defend the constitutional right to free speech of George Lincoln Rockwell, the head of the American Nazi Party, when he was seeking admission from the New York mayoralty to speak publicly in the city. Disturbed, Himmelfarb asked: “what moral or

---

<sup>315</sup> Nathan Glazer, “The New Left and Its Limits”, *Commentary*, July 1968, 31-39.

<sup>316</sup> Podhoretz, interview with author, May 17, 2008.

<sup>317</sup> Emil L. Fackenheim, “The Dilemma of Liberal Judaism”, *Commentary*, October 1960, 301; Emil L. Fackenheim, “Apologia for a Confirmation Text”, *Commentary*, May 1961, 404; Emil L. Fackenheim, “Jewish Faith and the Holocaust: A Fragment”, *Commentary*, August 1968, 30-36.

professional obligation led Jewish lawyers to volunteer?”<sup>318</sup> Connecting the Rockwell case and Jewish reactions to it to the allegedly detached response of certain Jews towards the debate surrounding the Eichmann trial, which will be discussed below, he suggested that the liberalism of these people posed a threat to Jewish collective survival. Implying Jewish self-hate on behalf of the lawyers, he wrote: “Is it a simple failure of the imagination that is responsible? Is it repression, or distortion, or diversion of affect? Probably something more complex and obscure; and troubling”.<sup>319</sup>

In a similar vein, Podhoretz repeatedly accused Jewish liberals of being disrespectful of the Jewish heritage and the memory of the six million murdered European Jews. Progressive Jews, he claimed, were jeopardising collective Jewish survival, by supporting policies that were counterproductive to Jewish interests. Therefore, he exhorted, they were no better than the Nazis themselves, for “any Jew who indulges the inclination to forgive and forget is countering that dehumanization [of the Nazis] with a species of his own”.<sup>320</sup> According to Dawidowicz, it was during the early 1960s that she and others around *Commentary* began to realise that a “new anti-Semitism emanated” from the political left and that “Jews who preferred universalist causes to their own, whose self-hate exceeded their self-esteem, stayed with the Left”.<sup>321</sup>

---

<sup>318</sup> Milton Himmelfarb, “In the Community”, *Commentary*, August 1960, 158.

<sup>319</sup> Himmelfarb, “In the Community”, 158-159.

<sup>320</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Issue”, *Commentary*, May 1960, (a).

<sup>321</sup> Lucy S. Dawidowicz, “State of World Jewry Address 1984”, December 2, 1984, 12-13, Box 68, Folder 8, LDP.

‘A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance’: Hannah Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

The capture of Adolf Eichmann, former head of the Gestapo’s Jewish section, in May 1960 and his subsequent trial on Israeli soil, is generally assumed to have been the first step in eliciting “American Jews to face the historical legacy of the Holocaust”. While the Holocaust would not become a dominant symbol of collective American Jewish identity until the later 1960s, the Eichmann trial nevertheless contributed eminently to “a new understanding of the Holocaust and its relevance for American Jewish life” amongst Jewish communal leaders and Jewish intellectuals and generally considered as an “important milestone” in making the Holocaust central to Jewish life.<sup>322</sup>

At least for the duration of the trial, it moved discussion of the Holocaust centre-stage in Jewish and non-Jewish public discourse for the first time since the end of the war. The American Jewish Yearbook reported that thousands of articles, in the Jewish press and elsewhere, were published on Eichmann from his capture in May 1960 to his eventual execution in June 1962.<sup>323</sup> According to historian Hanna Yablonka, the trial of Eichmann set in motion “a process of seeing Israel no longer as an isolated entity but as the continuation of the Diaspora”.<sup>324</sup> While Israeli and Diaspora Jewry had hitherto been largely considered as two separate entities, the trial introduced a process of rethinking the ways in which six million murdered European Jews, Israel and Diaspora Jewry were linked with each other. Many American Jews began to emphasise more strongly the Jewish “cultural nationalism” concept, upheld for example by historian Salo Baron, which

---

<sup>322</sup> Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*, 186; Alvin H. Rosenfeld, ed., *Thinking About the Holocaust: After Half A Century* (Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1997), 79, 144.

<sup>323</sup> George Salomon, “America’s Response”, in *American Jewish Yearbook*, ed. The American Jewish Committee (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1962), 85.

<sup>324</sup> Hanna Yablonka, *The State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann* (New York: Schocken Books, 2004), 166.

stipulated an interconnectedness between Jewish constituencies the world over, which transcended geographical and temporal dispersion.<sup>325</sup>

Furthermore, in the words of the American Jewish Yearbook, “American Jews have been afflicted with a deep sense of guilt” for having survived and convinced to not have done enough to help European Jewry. Accordingly, the Eichmann trial was seen as instrumental in reawakening these “Long suppressed...guilt feelings”, eventually giving way to a process, by which memorialising the Holocaust and supporting Israeli statehood became central elements of Jewish American identity. According to Israeli journalist Tom Segev, trying Eichmann in front of Israeli jurisdiction was designed to “remind the countries of the world that the Holocaust obligated them to support the only Jewish state on earth”.<sup>326</sup>

The trial was of outmost importance for New York Jewish intellectuals and contributed to making the Holocaust even more central in their thinking than it already was.<sup>327</sup> The trial brought into focus questions relative to the tensions between American and Jewish identity – between a particularistic and universalistic approach to their existence. As part of a search for identity, they began reconnecting the ties of shared experience with fellow Jews and the Jewish past, something they had, as intellectuals with a claim to cosmopolitanism, long rejected. Reflecting on Jewish identity on the backdrop of the Eichmann trial, Daniel Bell, by then an associate professor of sociology at Columbia University, gave voice to the feelings experienced by many of his fellow intellectuals. He

---

<sup>325</sup> Salo A. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952).

<sup>326</sup> Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 327-328.

<sup>327</sup> According to Norman Podhoretz, the trial itself also raised differences between *Commentary* and its sponsor, the AJC. While *Commentary*’s main position was that Eichmann should be tried in Israel, the Committee, believed that Israel had violated international law by abducting Eichmann from Argentina and that he should be tried in front of an international court. Yet, according to Podhoretz, the organisation publicly “never took a clear position, they waffled”. Podhoretz, Wiener Oral History Library, 20-21.

argued that the existential impact of the Holocaust made him realise that he was part of a larger entity linked by historical memory. Bell realised, “that there are responsibilities of participation even when the community of which one is a part is a community woven by the thinning strands of memory”.<sup>328</sup>

Podhoretz has credited his awakening to Jewish issues in large part to the Eichmann trial and the national debate triggered by this event. He strongly defended the idea that it was Israel’s legitimate right to try Eichmann in its jurisdiction since the crimes committed by him were aimed mainly against the Jewish people. Historian Oscar Handlin’s disagreed and expressed concern about the ethical and moral implications of the trial. According to Handlin, “justice calls also for appropriate procedures that keep principle inviolate”. To him it was preferable not to try Eichmann for crimes specifically committed against Jews, but judge him in an international court for offenses committed against humanity. Handlin believed that Israel should not behave “like other nations” specifically because the essence of Jewishness lay in its differentiation; not in the sense that Jews were superior but in the sense that being a Jew meant the subjugation to universal ethical precepts and not to “the power of the sword”.<sup>329</sup>

Podhoretz, in return, claimed that people like Handlin, who argued against a particularistic approach to the trial because of allegiance to “higher principles”, were denying the uniqueness of Nazism and the Holocaust. Anyone who expected Israel to pass on the chance to try Eichmann was using a double standard to judge Israel’s actions and ultimately asking “Jews that they must justify their existence instead of taking it for granted

---

<sup>328</sup> Daniel Bell, “Reflections on Jewish Identity”, *Commentary*, June 1961, 478.

<sup>329</sup> Oscar Handlin, “Ethics & Eichmann”, *Commentary*, August 1960, 161-162.

that they have a simple right to exist”.<sup>330</sup> Finally, he contended that Jews, like Handlin, who were expecting the Israeli state “to act more nobly than all other nations” were not so much motivated by ideals of “transcendent moral obligations” rather than by “the psychology of defensiveness and self-hatred. Unfortunately, the evidence seems to me all too clearly in favour of the latter hypothesis”.<sup>331</sup>

The publication of Hannah Arendt’s report on the Eichmann Trial, first as serial in the *New Yorker* and in book form in 1963, caused another big stir amongst the New York intellectuals. *Eichmann in Jerusalem* went beyond the events in the court room, reflecting on the questions of Nazi guilt and raise the issue of Jewish complicity in the form of the Jewish councils, arguing against the perception that Eichmann and Nazis generally were larger-than-life villains, but rather average ‘banal’ people, caught in a system which was characterised by an inverted or perverted morality codex.<sup>332</sup>

New York Jewish intellectuals, like the great majority of Jewish communal leaders, reacted furiously - Irving Howe characterised the controversy as a “civil war” – focusing almost exclusively on the accusations against European Jewish leadership for complicity in Nazi crimes.<sup>333</sup> Despite the anger and the personal attacks directed at Arendt, Irving Howe retrospectively credited her analysis with awakening New York intellectuals to a “long-suppressed grief evoked by the Holocaust”, suggesting that it functioned as a release of suppressed feelings of guilt for having remained inactive during the war with respect to the

---

<sup>330</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Issue”, *Commentary*, July 1960, 92.

<sup>331</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Issue”, *Commentary*, August 1960, 184.

<sup>332</sup> Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (London: Penguin Classics, 2006).

<sup>333</sup> Howe, *A Margin of Hope*, 269-270.

fate of European Jews: “It was as if her views, which roused many of us to fury, enabled us to finally speak about the unspeakable”.<sup>334</sup>

As immediate reaction to the publication of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Howe organised a public forum sponsored by *Dissent* to discuss Arendt’s work, at which critics of Arendt’s piece far outweighed her supporters, one of which was former editor of *Partisan Review*, Dwight Macdonald. While most of the participants judged the concept of the ‘banality of evil’ dangerous, since it implied that the Nazis were somehow oblivious to what they were doing, many also were concerned about the repercussions allegations of Jewish ‘cooperation’ would have amongst non-Jews. According to Howe, Arendt’s analysis conveyed to “Hundreds of thousands of good middle-class Americans”, lacking additional contextual information, “that the Jewish leadership in Europe was...collaborationist” and had helped “the Nazis achieve their goal of racial genocide”. Lastly, he claimed, it projected the message “that if Jews had not ‘cooperated’... fewer than five to six million Jews would have been killed”.<sup>335</sup>

Like Howe, Podhoretz claimed that Arendt’s book and the reactions to it taught him something about his Jewishness. Feeling “profoundly disturbed” by *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Podhoretz wrote a fierce critique of Hannah Arendt’s ideas as well as her personal motifs. He accused her of implicitly questioning Jews’ continued right to exist as a distinct people, a question which, as shown, he himself had implied only a couple of months earlier, in “My Negro Problems and Ours”. In “Hannah Arendt on Eichmann: A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance”, Podhoretz set out to disprove what he considered, inaccurately, one of Arendt’s central claims: that Jewish cooperation with the Nazi

---

<sup>334</sup> Irving Howe, “Mid-Century Turning Point: An Intellectual Memoir”, *Midstream*, June-July 1975, 25.

<sup>335</sup> Irving Howe, “The New Yorker & Hannah Arendt”, *Commentary*, October 1963, 319.

oppressors, mainly in form of the *Judenräte*, had significantly contributed to determining the number of Jews that were killed by the Nazis.<sup>336</sup> By making such a claim, he argued, Arendt was implying that without Jewish help and organisation, “there would have been either complete chaos or an impossibly severe drain on German manpower”.<sup>337</sup> Ultimately this suggested that the Nazis were rational beings with whom it was possible to negotiate limits to their aims.

He went on to accuse Arendt of a double standard in judging Jews, making an “inordinate demand...on the Jews to be better than other people, to be braver, wiser, nobler, more dignified – or be damned”. This, he asserted, was a tendency, which was widespread amongst Jews and posed as much a threat to Jewish survival as the Nazis did: “The Nazis destroyed a third of the Jewish people. In the name of all that is humane, will the remnant never let up on itself?” The intensity and personal viciousness with which he leveled his criticism at Arendt, whose work he had previously much admired, can be read as partially reflective of Podhoretz’s personality.<sup>338</sup> He concluded his article by claiming that Arendt was representative “of the intellectual perversity that can result from the pursuit of brilliance by a mind infatuated with its own agility and bent on generating dazzle”.<sup>339</sup>

---

<sup>336</sup> For a different interpretation and an overview of the divisive debates which ensued amongst Jewish American intellectuals concerning Arendt’s book on Eichmann: Amos Elon, “The Excommunication of Hannah Arendt”, in *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, Hannah Arendt (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), vii-xxiii; Stephen J. Whitfield, “Hannah Arendt and the Banality of Evil”, *The History Teacher* 14, no. 4 (August 1981): 469-477.

<sup>337</sup> Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 117.

<sup>338</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “Hannah Arendt on Eichmann: A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance”, *Commentary*, September 1963, 208; Apart from *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, which had greatly impacted on him, Podhoretz also much appreciated Arendt’s *The Human Condition*, which he referred to as “a major work in every respect”. Letter from Norman Podhoretz to Hannah Arendt, September 8, 1958, Correspondence File, General, 1938-1976, n.d., Hannah Arendt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>339</sup> Podhoretz, “Hannah Arendt on Eichmann”, 206.

Arendt was so dismayed by Podhoretz's accusations that she would never write for *Commentary* again and distance herself from her relationship with Podhoretz.<sup>340</sup>

Even though, as shown above, Podhoretz had defended particularistic Jewish interests prior to the Eichmann controversy, the event alerted him even more to what he believed were "the dangerous implications of the notion that Jews in general and the Jewish state in particular were required to be morally superior to everyone else".<sup>341</sup> Consequently, Podhoretz's writings became infused with an uncritical defence of Israel in light of what he perceived as a double standard applied in judging the state's behaviour.

#### The Civil Rights Movement and *Commentary* Magazine

Another matter which contributed decisively to the birth of an incipient Jewish neoconservative agenda in the early 1960s, but whose impact has generally been overlooked in studies of the evolutionary history of neoconservatism, was that of racial integration. While Jews, mostly secular and Reform, were disproportionately represented in civil rights activities instead, there emerged ample evidence towards the beginning of the 1960s that northern Jewish communities became exceedingly resistant to the pace of integration. It was widely perceived that it was predominately Jewish schools and neighbourhoods, which were going to be the first targets of integrationist measures. Many, therefore, expressed concern with respect to the potentially corrosive effects of desegregation on 'their' schools and neighbourhoods, a fact which seems ironic, given that

---

<sup>340</sup> Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends*, 139-177.

<sup>341</sup> Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends*, 158.

Jews often were attached by white resisters to integration in the South for promoting race mixing.<sup>342</sup>

As a result of these developments, future neoconservatives began to argue that civil rights and liberal politics more generally were undermining the particularities of Jewish identity, because African Americans and their white liberal supporters were disputing “the right to maintain...subcommunities far more radically than any other group demand in American history”.<sup>343</sup> In this sense, emergent neoconservatism was part of a broader ‘white backlash’ in the North against racial integration that emerged in the early 1960s and would grow in intensity throughout the 1960s, as most visibly demonstrated during Martin Luther King’s “open housing” campaign in Chicago in 1966, which exemplified the extent of widespread opposition to residential integration amongst Northern whites.<sup>344</sup>

According to Michael Staub, debates about civil rights functioned as a foil within the Jewish community, which raised issues of Jewish collective survival and Jewish identity in the aftermath of the Holocaust. In alliance with or in opposition to black civil rights,

---

<sup>342</sup> Clive Webb, “A Tangled Web: Black Jewish Relations in the Twentieth-Century South”, Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg, eds. *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History* (Waltham, Ma.: Brandeis University Press, 2006), 192-209; also: Clive Webb, *Fight Against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights* (Athens: University Press of Georgia, 2001); Clive Webb, “Counterblast: How the Atlanta Temple Bombing Strengthened the Civil Rights Cause”, *Southern Spaces* (June 22, 2009), <http://www.southernspaces.org/contents/2009/webb/1b.htm> (accessed August 13, 2009).

<sup>343</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Effects of Emerging Urban-Suburban and Anti-Segregation Developments on Jewish Communal Service”, *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Fall 1964, 64.

<sup>344</sup> A poll showed that by 1966, 52 per cent of northern whites believed that the government was moving too fast on racial integration. Jill Quadagno, *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 30; see also: James Ralph, *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1993; for Jewish reactions to racial integration in the North: Jonathan Rieder, *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism* (Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press, 1987); Richard C. Hertz, “Rising Tide of Negro-Jewish Tensions”, *Ebony*, December 1964, 117-125; Shlomo Katz, ed., *Negro and Jew: An Encounter in America* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1967); “Backlash” scholars argue that race played a significant role in the political realignment of the American Right. Thomas Byrnes Edsall and Mary D. Edsall, *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights and Taxes on American Politics* (New York: Norton, 1991); Jim Sleeper, *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York* (New York: Norton, 1990).

American Jews tried to redefine themselves and their place in American society.<sup>345</sup> In discussing the civil rights issue, budding neoconservatives came out for defining Jewish identity in opposition to blacks and in narrow terms of Jewish collective survival. In order to dissociate Jews from civil rights activism and disavow Jewish progressives, future neoconservatives drew on existing ambivalent sentiments within the Jewish community towards blacks and towards Jewish radicals, which had already come into play, as shown above, within the context of anti-communism.<sup>346</sup>

Progressive Jewish leaders, such as Rabbis Joachim Prinz, Albert Vorspan, and Abraham J. Heschel, on the other hand, continued to argue that civil rights activism was based on Jewish religious and cultural traditions, according to which Jews were morally obliged to be righteous (*tzeddekah*) and to contribute to bettering the world (*tikkun olam*). From these axioms they deducted that Jews had to invest themselves on behalf of social justice issues, the most pressing of which was black civil rights. This approach defined social justice activism as emblematic of modern Jewish identity, not only in religious but also in ethnic terms. Drawing inspiration from prophetic Judaism, many progressive Jews saw the essence of their Jewish identity therefore realised by declaring their solidarity with integrationist activities of the civil rights movement.<sup>347</sup>

Moreover, they argued that the Holocaust demanded of Jews to be at the avant-garde of black civil rights because a social order based on racial segregation was “fascism in everything but name” and idleness on the part of Jews was as immoral as “nonresistance

---

<sup>345</sup> Staub, ““Negroes are not Jews”, 5.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.

<sup>347</sup> Fuchs, *The Political Behaviour of American Jews*; Fuchs, “American Jews and the Presidential Vote”, 385-401.

on the part of non-Jewish Germans to the Nazi genocide”.<sup>348</sup> Some of these “shared guilt” arguments, enunciated by northern Jewish leaders, were, however, insensitive towards the dangers that Jews were exposed to in the American South, where racists implied that Jews were behind the move towards de-segregation, which in a number of cases resulted in physical assaults on the lives of Jewish pro-integrationists.<sup>349</sup>

Opinions in *Commentary* dealing with the issue of the black freedom struggle ranged from moderate to outright reactionary. Like their progressive interlocutors, ‘Commentarians’ passionately appealed to Holocaust lessons as a reference point in order to underscore the moral righteousness of their case. They suggested repeatedly that Jewish leftists and especially civil rights activists were insensitive to their own histories as Jews, and most specifically to the history of Jewish victimisation under Nazism, endangering fellow Jews by associating them with civil rights in the mind of racists. Furthermore, they argued that efforts at integrating *de facto* segregated schools and neighbourhoods in the North undermined Jewish group cohesiveness.<sup>350</sup>

While many Jews and a number of Jewish defence organisations continued their engagement on behalf of civil rights – albeit in a more qualified manner at times when Jewish and African American interests appeared to clash - there was a rising tide of Jewish voices that counselled against too deep a Jewish commitment to the black freedom struggle. Even labour Zionist journals, such as *Midstream* and *Jewish Frontier* began to question the wisdom of civil rights activities and develop anti-progressive arguments. Marie Syrkin of

---

<sup>348</sup> Richard L. Rubenstein, “The Rabbis Visit Birmingham”, *The Reconstructions*, May 31, 1963, 9; also: Joachim Prinz, “America Must Not Remain Silent”, *Congress Bi-Weekly*, October 7, 1963; Nat Hentoff, *The New Equality* (New York: Viking Press, 1964); Staub, “Negroes are not Jews”, 8.

<sup>349</sup> Webb, *Fight Against Fear*.

<sup>350</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Negroes and Jews: The Challenge to Pluralism”, *Commentary*, December 1964, 29-34; Nathan Glazer and Norman Podhoretz. “Liberalism and the Negro: A Round-Table Discussion”, *Commentary*, March 1964, 25-42.

*Jewish Frontier*, for instance, stressed the fact that she belonged to a minority group for whom “a ghetto is not a metaphor”, while defending a certain degree of self-segregation on part of minority groups in order to uphold communal cohesiveness.<sup>351</sup> By 1967, Rabbi Richard Rubenstein, who had previously upheld the belief that because of the Holocaust Jews were held to work for racial equality, retreated on his former civil rights activism, because, in light of alleged rising anti-Semitism and black nationalism, the Jewish investment “for Negro emancipation had become untenable”.<sup>352</sup>

Concurrent with the shift towards an understanding of the Holocaust as a lesson for Jews to focus more on their own concerns rather than on those of others, *Commentary* began to accuse Jewish organisations, such as the AJC, the ADL and the AJCongress, which continued to be involved in civil rights activities, of no longer representing Jewish interests.<sup>353</sup> Milton Himmelfarb argued, for example, that even though the AJCongress continued to refer to itself as a Zionist organisation, it seemed more interested in civil rights activism than Zionism and that the feelings of ethnic and religious pride it articulated were “without content and in fact are more attached to civil-rights rhetoric than to Jewish religion, education, or culture”. It was no longer possible to tell, he rebuked, whether the AJCongress was “a Jewish organization with a civil-rights program or a civil-rights organization whose members are Jews”.<sup>354</sup>

---

<sup>351</sup> Marie Syrkin, “Can Minorities Oppose ‘De Facto’ Segregation?” *Jewish Frontier*, September 1964, 6.

<sup>352</sup> Richard L. Rubenstein, “Jews, Negroes, and the New Politics”, *The Reconstructions*, November 17, 1967, 12.

<sup>353</sup> Svonkin, *Jews Against Prejudice*; Dollinger, *Quest For Inclusion*; Gus J. Solomon, *The Jewish Role in the American Civil Rights Movements* (London: The World Jewish Congress, 1967); Cheryl Greenberg, “Negotiating Coalition: Black and Jewish Civil Rights Agencies in the Twentieth Century”, in *Struggles in the Promised Land: Towards a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States*, eds. Jack Saltzman and Cornel West (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 153-175.

<sup>354</sup> Himmelfarb, “In the Community”, 160.

While *Commentary* published a range of articles dealing positively with the civil rights movement during the 1950s and continued to voice general support for racial integration throughout the 1960s, it also began to resist the idea that modern Jewishness translated into social justice and civil rights activism. Dawidowicz, for example, not only denied that social justice activism had anything to do with the ethical teachings of Judaism, she also questioned that it was sincere. Challenging the core principles of prophetic Judaism, she asserted that Jews who justified their involvement in civil rights with reference to Jewish religious and cultural traditions, were in reality more concerned with Jewish self-defence than with the black freedom struggle. The Torah and the Prophets “merely serve to adorn the will to self-preservation”. Instead of ‘being good for the Jews’, however, Jewish civil rights activism, she concluded, was counter-productive and posed a serious threat to Jewish interests as it interfered with Jewish efforts to uphold communal tenaciousness and cohesiveness.<sup>355</sup>

Indeed, the main threat for Jews, which “Commentarians” perceived as arising from black demands for inclusion, was for the continued “ability to maintain communal cohesiveness”. Moreover, the rising number of assaults committed by African Americans against Jews in the context of race riots, as for example the looting of Jewish businesses in New York and Philadelphia in the summer of 1964, were no longer considered as “a special variant of anti-white feeling encouraged by the more direct and immediate contact that Negroes had with Jews than with other whites”, but as anti-Semitism, which was beginning to find reverberations amongst “a substantial part of the Negro leadership”.<sup>356</sup>

---

<sup>355</sup> Lucy S. Dawidowicz, “Middle-Class Judaism: A Case Study”, *Commentary*, June 1960, 501-502.

<sup>356</sup> Glazer, “Negroes and Jews”, 29.

Glazer argued that while a large majority of Jews had been living more comfortably in the U.S. since the end of the Second World War than at any previous time, this security was now being challenged by blacks who, supported by federal agencies, demanded entrance into schools, residential districts and employment that were predominately Jewish, thereby threatening the infrastructure around which distinctive Jewish subcultures had developed, which he considered essential for Jewish group survival. He claimed that the delicate balance between acculturation and distinctive collective identity that Jews had been able to strike throughout the last fifteen years, was now being eroded by black demands, which “focused exclusively on the absolute barriers that were once raised against him”. “Preferential treatment” for blacks endangered the social position of Jews, since “the accidents of history have put the Jew just ahead of the Negro, and just above him”, and therefore led ‘Jewish’ schools and neighbourhoods to be the first to be integrated.<sup>357</sup> The interests of ‘Jews as whites’, therefore, often clashed with those of African Americans, in some cases leading to racist accusations from both sides. Insinuating that African Americans were aiming at ‘total integration’, this push for inclusion would in the long run rewrite the ground rules that governed group life in American society to such an extent that “it will be hard to maintain any justification for Jewish exclusiveness and particularity in America”.<sup>358</sup>

Overstating the extent of African American desire for integration, Nathan Glazer’s articles on civil rights repeatedly made use of black and Jewish stereotypes, which at times exuded racism, in order to back up his argument. Citing Jewish financial and intellectual

---

<sup>357</sup> Glazer, “Negroes and Jews”, 30.

<sup>358</sup> Glazer, “Effects of Emerging Urban-Suburban and Anti-Segregation Developments on Jewish Communal Service”, 62-66; also: Nathan Glazer, “Is ‘Integration’ Possible in the New York Schools”, *Commentary*, September 1960, 185-193; Midge Decter, “The Negro & the New York Schools”, *Commentary*, September 1964, 25-34.

predilection – armed with an “ability to score the highest grades in examinations and to develop money-getting competence” - in comparison to blacks’ tendencies for violence, impatience, and limited intellectual skills, he depicted Jews as having moved up the social ladder according to the meritocratic principle, while “It is clear that one cannot say the same” about African Americans.<sup>359</sup> Therefore, measures of ‘preferential treatment’, which put African Americans in direct competition with Jews, would undermine “the system which has enabled Jews to dominate these institutions for decades”.<sup>360</sup> Glazer would repeatedly cite an idealised version of American society governed by a pure merit principle, ignoring the structural racism, which had excluded African Americans for centuries. Moreover, he did not acknowledge the fact that Jews, who had been excluded by quotas, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, had only been able to move up the social strata in large numbers only after these quotas had been removed.

Pro-active governmental programmes, such as busing, Glazer claimed, could not bring about black integration. Not only did these measures subvert the typically American principle of meritocratic advancement and an implicit respect for group boundaries, they were also too costly, ineffective and even counterproductive. Criticising the New York Board of Education’s policy of zoning and busing developed to integrate Puerto Rican and African American children, Glazer described these efforts as unrealistic because of the demographic realities. In addition, and even more importantly than devising official measures, issues such as “lower I.Q.’s, language difficulty, poor home environment” of African American and Puerto Rican children had to be taken into consideration when dealing with measures for improving racial minorities’ educational advancement, he

---

<sup>359</sup> Glazer, “Negroes and Jews”, 32

<sup>360</sup> Ibid., 31-32.

argued.<sup>361</sup> The solution in bringing about economic and social equality lay in strengthening local community institutions and organisations as well as the family, an issue, which, according to Daniel Bell, had long been “ignored by the Negro middle-class”.<sup>362</sup> Bell paternalistically counselled blacks to look to the Jewish communities for functioning examples of community organisation and patterns of integration.

Articles by future neoconservatives often pathologised black culture, accusing African Americans repeatedly of being indifferent to their own group, while in the same breath criticising them for reacting too violently and impatiently to the slow pace of change. In order to inoculate themselves from accusations of racism towards blacks, these articles, as Podhoretz’s “My Negro Problem and Ours”, pointed to the fact that their authors belonged to a minority group, which had experienced oppression and exclusion. Glazer, for example, claimed “The hatred of poor Negroes for Jews was not reciprocated by Jews”. The alleged antipathy of Jews for African Americans, he insisted, was purely “part of the standard Jewish ethnocentrism which excluded all outsiders”.<sup>363</sup>

Furthermore, incipient neoconservatives suggested that African Americans should learn from the Jewish experience. Irving Kristol, for example, endorsing accommodationism, praised ‘Uncle Tomism’ and called on white and black civil rights activists to be a little less demanding, showing his contempt for efforts to introduce examples of black defiance of white persecution into history books. He cynically referred to Jewish suffering under the Nazis in order to drive home his point that African Americans should develop more serenity in the face of oppression and learn from alleged Jewish

---

<sup>361</sup> Glazer, “Is ‘Integration’ Possible in the New York Schools?”, 187.

<sup>362</sup> Daniel Bell, “Plea for a ‘New Phase’ in Negro Leadership”, *New York Times Magazine*, May 31, 1964, 31.

<sup>363</sup> Glazer, “Negroes and Jews”, 29-30; also: Michael E. Staub, “Smart”, *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 24, no. 4 (2006): 4.

accommodationism: “so many people seem to think it less than human...for a man to go to his death calmly praying rather than kicking and cursing”.<sup>364</sup>

As African Americans became more impatient with the pace of progress, reflected in the growing popularity of black nationalist ideology and the rising number of race riots across the country towards the middle of the decade, future neoconservatives united in their opposition against it, which was paradoxical in many ways, since they themselves promoted a type of ethnocentrism. They were concerned most about the threat to social stability and what they saw as anti-Semitism promoted by black nationalist leaders. In February 1965, *Commentary* published an article by civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, who called for the abandonment of tactics of non-violent direct action. In order to successfully bring about social and economic equality, he stipulated, it was time to turn towards “radical programs for full employment, abolition of slums, the reconstruction of our educational system, new definitions of work and leisure”.<sup>365</sup> Podhoretz was attracted by Rustin’s willingness to abandon grass roots action on behalf of a strategy that worked from within the system, reflecting the growing concern with calls amongst a number of African American leaders for racial separatism and independence, supposedly accompanied by “the threat that they can burn the city down”.<sup>366</sup>

Black anti-Semitism was a central theme discussed in the pages of *Commentary* throughout the following years and will be analysed in more detail in the following chapter. Suffice it to say here that perceived black anti-Semitism was countered with Nazi and Holocaust analogies, as for instance Dawidowicz comparing the riots during the summer of

---

<sup>364</sup> Irving Kristol, “A Few Kind Words for Uncle Tom”, *Harper’s Magazine*, February 1965, 97.

<sup>365</sup> Bayard Rustin, “From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement”, *Commentary*, February 1965, 25-31.

<sup>366</sup> Nathan Glazer, “The Ghetto Crisis”, *Encounter*, November 1967, 15-16.

1966 to “pogroms” and “Black Power” to the *Schutzstaffel*’s “Black Shirts”.<sup>367</sup> At the same time, she denigrated Jewish liberals and radicals who denied the existence of black anti-Semitism, and even worse, made common cause with blacks, referring to them as “Jewish cheekturners” who were “chronically...embarrassed about being Jewish” and whose “denial of the existence of Negro anti-Semitism is a sort of wish-fulfilling denial of Jewish corporate existence.” According to Dawidowicz, the worst of all were those Jews who were actively engaged in Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and allied themselves with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), since they were “spitting in the wells from which they drank” and “providing their non-Jewish (Negro) comrades with the ideological rationalizations ... for anti-Semitism”.<sup>368</sup>

#### ‘The True Democrats are the Few’: Old versus New Radicals

The deep divisions that came to characterise 1960s American society began to appear on university campuses around the country in the early years of the decade. Students who had participated in the civil rights struggle, as for example the leader of the free speech movement, Mario Savio, felt inspired by its aims and tactics, and brought the endeavour to create a better society into the universities, which they saw as a reflection of a “corrupt and rotten” society.<sup>369</sup> Many of the New York intellectuals, such as Nathan Glazer, Seymour

---

<sup>367</sup> Lucy Dawidowicz contribution to Shlomo Katz, ed. *Negro and Jew: An Encounter in America* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), 18,17. The articles are reprinted from the December 1966 issue of *Midstream* magazine, appearing under the title “Negro-Jewish Relations in America: A Symposium”.

<sup>368</sup> Dawidowicz contribution to Katz, ed. *Negro and Jew*, 20.

<sup>369</sup> Glazer, *Remembering the Answers*, 128. For the interconnectedness between the student movement and the civil rights movement see Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 173-195.

Martin Lipset, Irving Howe, and Daniel Bell, had by then risen to prominent places within academia. Questioning the moral authority of university administrators and faculties, student radicals also challenged the tenured stations of those former radical leftists as being to some extent the consequence of privilege, rather than of merit. Coming of age in a time when ‘Jewish’ quotas still heavily curtailed the possibilities of an academic career for large numbers of Jews, many of the former radicals felt appalled by the new student radicalism and repositioned themselves in order to defend the academic status quo. The student movement was therefore one of the key developments that contributed to their neoconservative turn.

The first campus protest began at Berkeley in the autumn term of 1964 in form of the Berkeley free-speech movement. Emerging from a dispute between political student organisations and the university administration relative to the rules of political advocacy and organization on campus and supported by a diverse coalition of students, it soon turned into a protest, inspired by the civil rights movement’s goals and tactics of civil disobedience, led exclusively by left-wing student groups who expressed their discontent with American academia, mass society, race relations and foreign policy.<sup>370</sup>

Glazer, who was by then teaching at Berkeley, initially hoped to avoid taking sides in the burgeoning conflict and claimed that he was trying to uphold a moderate position, despite denying that there was a “free speech issue” at Berkeley in the first place.<sup>371</sup> As positions hardened, both Glazer and his fellow colleague at Berkeley, Seymour Martin Lipset, quickly found themselves aligned with the establishment forces. After a sit-in at Berkeley turned violent, Lipset, a former Trotskyite from CCNY and national chairman of

---

<sup>370</sup> Maurice Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer: The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

<sup>371</sup> Philip Selznick and Nathan Glazer, “Berkeley”, *Commentary*, March 1965, 80.

the YPSL, expressed considerable uneasiness at the introduction of civil disobedience tactics and the negative effects these tactics could have on the stability of other universities throughout the country: “universities are probably more vulnerable to civil disobedience tactics than any other institutions in this country because those in authority...are liberal. They are reluctant to see force invoked against their students regardless of what the students do”.<sup>372</sup> For Glazer, who still called himself a mild radical by the late 1950s, and other academics, such as Sidney Hook, Oscar Handlin, and Lewis Feuer, the first hand experience with the budding student movement, eventually resulted in their alliance with conservative academics, such as Milton Friedman, Will Herberg, and Ernest Van den Haag, with whom they would not have wanted to be associated only a decade earlier.<sup>373</sup>

Glazer, retrospectively describing his process of de-radicalisation, cited his experience of the Berkeley revolt as one determining factor. The lessons he learned from these events were similar to those he arrived at after working in the Housing and Home Finance Administration for the Kennedy Administration in 1961. These experiences, he later claimed, taught him to respect bureaucracies and realise that “the difficulty with radical ideas” was that they tended to ignore the complexity of interests involved in any given situation: “I learned in quite strictly conservative fashion, to develop a certain respect for what was”.<sup>374</sup>

While Glazer did not disagree with efforts to raise the educational quality at universities or even improve the conditions for political activism on campuses, he did not see these issues as the main objective of the free speech movement at Berkeley or any of

---

<sup>372</sup> Seymour M. Lipset and Paul Seabury, “Lessons of Berkeley”, *Reporter*, January 28, 1965, 36-40; see also: Seymour M. Lipset, *Rebellion in the University* (New York: Little, Brown & Company, 1971), xliii.

<sup>373</sup> Glazer, “On Being De-Radicalized”, 74; Sidney Hook, “Freedom to Learn But Not to Riot”, *New York Times Magazine*, January 3, 1965.

<sup>374</sup> Glazer, “On Being De-Radicalized”, 75.

the other student movement throughout the country that were still to follow.<sup>375</sup> He mistakenly believed that student activity had little to do with the desire to improve education or to realise demands for political activity and participation in campus politics. The dominant impetus of the Berkeley student revolt was, according to Glazer, “a passion for immediate action, for confrontation, for the humiliation of others, for the destruction of authority” and ultimately it aimed at demolishing the most important contribution universities made to society: “their ability to distance themselves from immediate crises, their concern with the heritage of culture and science, their encouragement of individuality and even eccentricity”.<sup>376</sup> Furthermore, it seemed to him that the student movement, as it developed over the next couple of years, considered “the university as a political recruiting ground, and then as an active participant in the political struggles of society”, rather than as a place dedicated to education and research.<sup>377</sup>

Beyond the critique of the student movement’s goals and tactics, Glazer, Lipset and Bell accused liberal academics of giving in to radical students too easily, raising what would become a classic neoconservative trope of ‘dough-face’ liberals, infused by a ‘culture of appeasement’, which rendered them unable to separate friend from foe, caving in as soon as they were challenged from the left. Future neoconservatives questioned the integrity of professors and administrators’ decisions, claiming that they preferred to concede to the demands of the radical students out of fear that the defence of existing institutions and academic traditions would be seen as ‘conservative’ or ‘right wing’. Accordingly, this led to a state of affairs in which rationality and sobriety were thrown overboard and the very foundations of university life were deeply shaken. Looking back,

---

<sup>375</sup> Glazer, *Remembering the Answers*, 100-112.

<sup>376</sup> Glazer, “On Being De-Radicalized”, 76.

<sup>377</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

Bell and Kristol wrote “The past five years have been, for American universities, the most dramatic in their history. The drama, indeed, is so flamboyant that sober contemplation is exceedingly difficult”.<sup>378</sup>

Incipient neoconservatives believed that the inability of liberals to defend liberalism against student radicals dealt a serious blow to the institution of the university. Professors’ surrendering to radicals, when they were supposed to give them moral and intellectual guidance, was ultimately a self-destructive development, which reflected what future neoconservatives perceived as a wider tendency of the liberal system to self-destruct from the inside out. The fact that the university as an institution seemed to be failing also reflected the defeat of traditional authorities on a much larger scale. Kristol described universities not just as being unable to educate students in the basic rules of political propriety, but as failing “to educate” at all, “since they have long since ceased trying to do so”.<sup>379</sup> The student movement and the budding anti-war movement were, according to Kristol, the result of the boredom and resentment felt by students and junior faculty members. He claimed that they were “conveniently at hand” outlets with which to agitate and counter these sentiments.<sup>380</sup> In the years following, Kristol continued to develop the anti-intellectual theme according to which liberal intellectuals, because of their inability to stand up against perceived enemies of liberalism, posed themselves a threat to the social stability of American society.

---

<sup>378</sup> Daniel Bell and Irving Kristol, eds. *Confrontation: The Student Rebellion and the University* (New York: Basic Books, 1969), vii.

<sup>379</sup> Kristol, *On the Democratic Idea in America*, 117; Nathan Glazer, “The Campus Crucible: Student Politics and the University”, in *The Essential Neoconservative Reader*, ed. Mark Gerson (Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1996), 59.

<sup>380</sup> Irving Kristol, “Letter from New York: Teaching In, Speaking Out: The Controversy over Viet Nam”, *Encounter*, August 1965, 68.

During the early 1960s, future neoconservatives came to believe that the main danger for liberalism emanated no longer from the political right, but from the political and cultural left - the student movement and emerging counterculture seemed to confirm this development. To Daniel Moynihan and Kristol the true ancestor of the 1960s student movement and the emerging New Left more generally was not the Old Left but the Old Right. Both political movements, they believed, were contemptuous of liberal democracy, capitalism and progress. Both had theocentric views of the world and wanted to organise society along those lines, based on similar critiques of modernity. According to Moynihan, those outraged youngsters, were like “Christians on the scene of the second-century Rome”.<sup>381</sup>

With the rise of student radicalism on university and college campuses, former radicals seemed to have overcome their own radical past and repositioned themselves in the status quo camp. The critique that “politics ought not to intrude on the campus” seemed out of place, if not hypocritical, coming from a group of former radicals, whose “real college education took place” outside of the class room, studying and debating Marxist theory.<sup>382</sup> Underlying their critique of these ‘forces of change’ was a certain extent of status anxiety as well as social resentment towards the children of privilege, they believed student radicals to be. Accordingly, what Richard Hofstadter referred to as ‘status politics’, offers a partial explanation for their reactions against the student movement.<sup>383</sup> In this sense, status politics was not only engaged in by individuals who wanted to improve their social status, but also,

---

<sup>381</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “Nirvana Now”, *The American Scholar*, Autumn 1967, 541.

<sup>382</sup> Kristol, *On the Democratic Idea in America*, 86; Irving Kristol, “Memoirs of a Trotskyist”, *New York Times Magazine*, January 23, 1977, 50-51, reprinted in Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 469-480.

<sup>383</sup> The concept of status politics had first been advanced by the historian Richard Hofstadter. Hofstadter distinguished status politics from interest and class politics, which referred to “the clash of material aims and needs among various groups and blocs”. Status politics meant “the clash of various projective rationalizations arising from status aspirations and other personal objectives”.

according to Seymour Martin Lipset, by those “already possessing status who feel that the rapid social change threatens their own claims to high social position”.<sup>384</sup> Furthermore, growing up on the margins of American society, they felt the need to strongly assert their commitment to the status quo and their American credentials, casting radical students’ demands as anti-, or un-American. Moreover, their critique of radical students was accompanied by contempt for what they saw as the spoiled children of the upper-middle class (and their liberal educators), who were now trying to undermine the very order that had provided them with the privilege to act against it in the first place. This attitude was given voice, for instance, by Moynihan who referred to student radicals as “rich college fucks” whose movement he saw as “a mindless assault on the civic and social order”.<sup>385</sup>

Yet, what future neoconservatives seemed to fear most about the student movement was their demand for greater participatory democracy at universities and within the American polity at large. The reactions of these former radicals to the new radicals’ demands for vertical and horizontal expansion of democracy reflected the qualified conception of democracy that also characterised the neoconservative project. It rested on an admiration for the common people on the one hand, while being ever mindful of the populace’s irrationality in times of upheaval on the other. This “democratic elitism” was characterised by the idea, that populist democracy and “too much mass political activism is a dangerous thing” because the polity is “best when it is not fully itself, when many do not

---

<sup>384</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset, “The Sources of the “Radical Right” – 1955”, in *The Radical Right*, ed. Daniel Bell (New York: Doubleday, 1971), 260.

<sup>385</sup> Moynihan made this comment in a conversation with Timothy Crouse in 1976. When Crouse told Moynihan that he was from “an upper middle class” background, Moynihan replied “A rich Harvard kid. Or as we used to say where I come from, a rich college fuck.” The belief that most students at American universities were from privileged backgrounds was a misperception. The majority of American students still came from working-class backgrounds and very often rejected the radicals’ goals and methods. In spring of 1969, for instance, counter-protesters attacked an SDS rally at Kent State University. Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 208.

participate, and most lack all passionate intensity. The true democrats are the few; upon them democracy rests”.<sup>386</sup>

The fear of mass political action and the student movement’s unabashed willingness to undermine the stability of the polity was perceived by future neoconservatives as a threat to the very system, which had enabled them to move into the centre of American society. Moreover, its destabilising effects also entailed negative consequences specifically for the Jewish position in American society. Budding neoconservatives argued that their concern for social stability, which underlay the rejection of demands for an extension of participatory democracy and the loosening of institutional and traditional constraints, was, to some extent, that it potentially led to uncontrolled and irrational expressions of “mob” passions, to which Jews had fallen victim many times over throughout their history. In response to the excessive emphasis of student radicals on civic disobedience, anti-authoritarianism and individual liberties, former radical intellectuals began to refer to traditions in Jewish culture and religion, which articulated the idea that the good society rested on a shared morality, which was ultimately enforced by the authority of the community. Daniel Bell described his “fear of mass action, a fear of passions let loose” as “a particularly Jewish fear...of what happens when man is let loose”. He said: “When man doesn’t have *halacha*, the law, he becomes *chia*, an animal”.<sup>387</sup> Radical Jewish students were therefore involved in the demise of the very system, which had been ‘good to the Jews’. According to Glazer, the attacks of the student movement - and the New Left more

---

<sup>386</sup> Lawrence B. Joseph, “Neoconservatism in Contemporary Political Science: Democratic Theory and the Party System”, *The Journal of Politics* 44, no. 4 (November 1982): 976; George Kateb, “On the Legitimation Crisis”, *Social Research*, 46, no. 4, Winter 1979, 701.

<sup>387</sup> Nathaniel Liebowitz, *Daniel Bell and the Agony of Modern Liberalism* (Westport, Ct: Greenwood Press, 1985), 70. Russell Kirk, intellectual of the conservative Right, claimed that one of the fundamental tenets of conservative thought was that “tradition and sound prejudice provide checks upon man’s anarchic impulses” Russell Kirk, *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Santayana* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1953), 18.

generally - on the bourgeois democratic order meant, “the Jews, the most middle-class of all, are going to be placed at the head the column marked for liquidation”.<sup>388</sup>

The arguments relative to the student movement foreshadowed positions taken by neoconservatives with respect to debates about the impact of affirmative action, political correctness, and multiculturalism in future years. According to future neoconservatives, the student revolt on American campuses of the 1960s introduced a climate to academia in which those who dissented from the alleged radical and/or liberal ‘orthodoxies’ were condemned as fascists and racists, accusations neoconservatives levelled in turn against student radicals and their supporters within faculties. Incipient neoconservatives believed that the student movement’s - and by extension the New Left’s – alleged contempt for ‘ordinary’ Americans was undergirded by incipiently totalitarian conceptions of society and politics. Writing about Jewish involvement in the New Left, Glazer remarked “the New Left likes final victories and final solutions”.<sup>389</sup> Arthur Schlesinger once described the New Left and neoconservatives as “mirror images” (referring here to their ideas about foreign policy) of each other in terms of their “sentimental conception...that the duty of the state...is to subordinate interests to ideals”.<sup>390</sup> This also holds true in terms of the populist elitism and the absolutism with which neoconservatives and student radicals defended their respective positions. Moreover, as with the New Left, neoconservatism’s “most debilitating intellectual weakness...is its lack of respect for its political opponents”.<sup>391</sup>

---

<sup>388</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Blacks, Jews and the Intellectuals”, *Commentary*, April 1969, 36.

<sup>389</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Jewish Interests and the New Left”, *Midstream*, January 1971, 34.

<sup>390</sup> Arthur Schlesinger, “Make War Not It”, *Harper’s Magazine*, March 1982, 71-73.

<sup>391</sup> Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 76.

## Conclusion

In 1963, Glazer and Moynihan published their sociological study *Beyond the Melting Pot*, which discussed the role of ethnicity in American society. They claimed that primordial ties of race, ethnicity and religion were more relevant to Americans and for the functioning of American society than had previously been assumed by liberalism.<sup>392</sup> In many ways, their book presaged the advent of the ethnic revival of the 1970s and the emergence of multiculturalism during the 1980s and 1990s. The study signalled that the consensus approach, which had been the idealised guideline for American society since the Second World War, began to give way to a more fragmented and particularistic *Zeitgeist* as the 1960s unfolded.

The drive towards re-ethnicisation was the main motivational factor for future Jewish neoconservatives in revising their attitudes towards progressive liberalism, a process that would eventually lead them to embrace ever more anti-progressive stances by the end of the 1960s. Their transformed self-understanding as Jews forcefully shaped the outlook with which they approached issues, such as the civil rights struggle, the beginnings of the student movement and the emergence of the counterculture. They questioned the extent to which liberal politics and ideas were still compatible with Jewish identity. In the process of negotiating these issues from a narrowly defined Jewish perspective, a number of intellectuals, such as Podhoretz, Dawidowicz, Decter, Kristol and Glazer, began to move to the right.

---

<sup>392</sup> Glazer and Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot*.

Throughout the later part of the 1960s, the development of the neoconservative critique of progressive liberalism accelerated. *Commentary* was joined by *PI*, which would soon become the other seminal neoconservative mouthpiece. *PI*'s dissemination of its critique of social policy, and especially welfare programmes, was underscored by a broad critique of American culture, society and the liberal elite. Throughout the later 1960s, what had begun as a disjointed criticism of the New Left, grew into a full-scale effort to discredit interventionist liberalism, the New Left and the counterculture. This movement cumulated in an unsuccessful effort by old style liberals, such as Kristol, Glazer and Podhoretz, to regain the Democratic Party from the usurpation of New Left forces.

**Chapter 4**  
**‘A Crisis in Values’**  
***The Public Interest* and**  
**the Limits of Liberalism, 1965-1972**

~

Introduction

Norman Podhoretz once claimed that while *Commentary* had “tangible influence”, its most important contribution was “to affect the ideological atmosphere” and thereby “alter the terms of the debate”.<sup>393</sup> The formation of *PI* was to have a similar effect. While Kristol and Bell created the quarterly with the aim of analysing social policy from a non-ideological perspective, it can be assumed that its influence, while difficult to measure, lay in the realm of shaping ideological discourse. A journal of relatively narrow range, its target audience was not, like *Commentary*’s, the educated lay reader, but rather “opinion molders” and “the governing classes”.<sup>394</sup> In order to give their enterprise credibility in the burgeoning world of policy analysis of the 1960s, Bell and Kristol infused the journal with a detached and scholarly style, discussing issues in extensive, outwardly balanced, often dull and statistically encumbered articles. Moreover, the aloofness projected by *PI* found reflection in the fact that, unlike *Commentary*, it did not feature letters from readers. *PI*’s early circulation numbers stood at 2,000 to 3,000 and remained low throughout its 40 years’ existence, following the Kristol’s motto that even “With a circulation of a few hundred, you could change the world”.<sup>395</sup>

---

<sup>393</sup> Cited in Blumenthal, *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment*, 121.

<sup>394</sup> George H. Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement In America Since 1945* (Wilmington, De.: ISI Books, 2008), 517.

<sup>395</sup> By 1999, they stood at under 6,000. Ehrman, “*Commentary*, the *Public Interest*, and the Problem of Jewish Conservatism”, 170. According to Friedman, the journal had 15, 000 subscribers at the start of the 1980s. Friedman, *The Rise of the Neoconservatives*, 119; Cited in: Dorman, *Arguing the World*, 158.

This chapter investigates the role of *PI* in the emergence of early neoconservative ideas as well as its contribution to the rise of modern American conservatism. Even though *PI* was not created with the intention of making it into an agent for a new politics, it nevertheless came to propose a version of neoconservatism, which revolved around the practical and moral implications of governmental activism within the social realm. Throughout the 1960s, future neoconservatives remained reluctant to associate with the burgeoning New Right, as embodied by William F. Buckley's *National Review* or Barry Goldwater. Yet, the analysis of *PI* in conjunction with *Commentary* shows that future neoconservatives were not an aberration within the broader conservative movement, as for instance claimed by Halper and Clarke or neoconservatives themselves.<sup>396</sup> While Kristol regarded Buckley's conservatism "as an eccentricity on the ideological landscape" considering its anti-New Deal approach "out of phase" during the 1950s and early 1960s, both sides became more accepting of each other by the early 1970s, leading Buckley to comment that Kristol was "writing more sense in *The Public Interest* these days than anybody I can think of".<sup>397</sup>

The creation of *PI* "is generally considered the beginning of neoconservatism".<sup>398</sup> A close reading of *Commentary* and *PI* shows, however, that neoconservative ideas were not just introduced into political discourse with the formation of *PI*. Rather, *PI* complemented *Commentary*, contributing "to advance the embryonic neoconservative movement" by developing many of the arguments, which had already begun to find expression during the

---

<sup>396</sup> Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*.

<sup>397</sup> Irving Kristol, "American Conservatism 1945-1995", *The Public Interest*, Fall 1995, 82; William F. Buckley, Jr. "Re Irving Kristol", *The Alternative*, June - September 1972, 8-9.

<sup>398</sup> Barry Gewen, "Irving Kristol, Godfather of Modern Conservatism, Dies at 89", *The New York Times*, September 18, 2009: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/19/us/politics/19kristol.html> (accessed September 19, 2009).

1950s and early 1960s.<sup>399</sup> Moreover, drawing on both *Commentary* and *PI* as the two central outlets for early neoconservatism, this chapter shows that it was from the outset much more than an exclusively social policy rationale, as for instance maintained by Glazer.<sup>400</sup> Such an analysis also underscores the breadth and the multi-levelled nature of the enterprise, as well as the fact that neoconservatism's original version was beset by contingencies and contradictions. Comparing neoconservative ideas as they were developed in *PI* and *Commentary* effectively adds weight to the claim that what has become known as neoconservatism was from the outset a polymorphous, idiosyncratic, and rather incoherent undertaking. This finding contravenes many of the traditional interpretations that often reduce early neoconservatism to a rationale geared either towards the analysis of foreign policy or domestic policy, and describe it as much more intellectually coherent than it actually was.<sup>401</sup>

The close analysis of *PI* and *Commentary* shows above all that neoconservatism was an ideologically driven enterprise from the start, despite claims to the contrary. *PI*'s editors alleged that their intention was to analyse social policy and specifically Great Society programmes from a non-ideological standpoint and yet it was Kristol's and Bell's ideological disillusionment with progressive liberalism that constituted the backdrop for the creation of *PI*. The desire to prove the limitations of social policy through empirical scholarship was therefore in itself a value-driven enterprise and was quickly superseded by

---

<sup>399</sup> Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution*, 116.

<sup>400</sup> According to Glazer, "foreign policy was no part of early neoconservatism". Glazer, interview with author, April 9, 2008; Muravchik approaches early neoconservatism from a purely domestic angle: Joshua Muravchik, interview with author, Washington, D.C., April 1, 2008.

<sup>401</sup> Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism* and Dorrien, *Imperial Dreams* focus almost exclusively on the foreign policy component of neoconservatism, while Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives* heavily draws on *The Public Interest* and the social policy element, only sporadically referring to *Commentary* and neoconservative ideas on foreign policy; Gerson, *The Neoconservative Vision* is an example of distortion of the complicated and contradictory evolutionary history of neoconservatism. Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution* hints at the complexity of early neoconservatism but does not convince in making the case.

an effort to convince readers that the Great Society had been bound to fail from its inception, since it promised too much, and employed political solutions for problems that were unsolvable by politics. Retrospectively, Glazer showed himself surprised at “how soon the simple notion that science and research could guide us in domestic social policy became complicated”.<sup>402</sup> Very quickly, the journal came to focus on the perceived cultural crisis, which, it suggested, was undergirded by an overexpansion of the federal prerogative and an excess of democracy, as the root causes for the problems ailing America. The search for solutions, it proposed, therefore, centred around a debate of social and cultural mores, rather than on economics and politics.

The centrepiece of both journals’ critique of progressive liberalism was the discussion of what neoconservatives referred to as the New Class – a concept with which, according to Michael Walzer, “neoconservatives give us the clearest sense of who they think they are and who they think their enemies are”.<sup>403</sup> The idea of the New Class, employed by neoconservatives, lacked precision and was used as a “half analytic concept, half polemical device”, often applied “to label whomever the neoconservatives don’t like”.<sup>404</sup> In the words of Kristol, the New Class “*are* the media – just as they *are* our educational system, our public health and welfare system, and much else”.<sup>405</sup> While the New Class spoke the language of progressive reform, it was “engaged in a class struggle with the business community for status and power” which it has placed “under the banner of ‘equality’”. Its perceived goal was to “reconstruct” American society “in some

---

<sup>402</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Neoconservative from the Start”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 2005, 13.

<sup>403</sup> Michael Walzer, “Nervous Liberals”, *The New York Review of Books*, October 11, 1979, 7-8; also see: David T. Bazelon, “The New Class”, *Commentary*, August 1996, 48-53; David T. Bazelon, *Power in America: The Politics of the New Class* (New York: American Library, 1967).

<sup>404</sup> Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 57.

<sup>405</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 207.

unspecific but radical way”. By the end of the 1970s, neoconservatives feared, that the New Class threatened to overtake the Democratic Party.<sup>406</sup>

The neoconservative assault on the New Class was cloaked in terms of a defence of democracy. Ironically, neoconservatives depicted themselves as ‘majoritarians’ defending the regular American against the elitist outlandishness and subversively un-American values of liberal establishment. As will be demonstrated, the main concern of *Commentary* and *PI* pundits throughout the 1960s was the “erosion of authority”, coupled with a deep distrust of the masses and a strong fear of participatory democracy. While using anti-elitist rhetoric in order to criticise New Class intellectuals’ striving for a greater egalitarianism, neoconservatives opposed more direct forms of mass participation in the political decision making process.<sup>407</sup>

*The Public Interest: ‘A Middle-Aged Magazine for Middle-Aged Readers’*

The year 1965 was the pivot of the decade. It saw the first ‘teach-in’ of the anti-war movement at the University of Michigan and the largest anti-war demonstration so far, with 20, 000 participants. The membership of the SDS rose to 15, 000 and when the U.S. dispatched 15, 000 marines to the Dominican Republic, it further convinced “antiwar circles that the U.S. government was bent on throwing its weight around”.<sup>408</sup> Moreover,

---

<sup>406</sup> Irving Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 170; Norman Podhoretz, “Between Nixon and the New Politics”, *Commentary*, September 1972, 8.

<sup>407</sup> Glazer, “Neoconservative from the Start”, 14.

<sup>408</sup> Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 179, 180. Isserman and Kazin claim that while the membership of the SDS was changing in nature by the mid-1960s, becoming more diverse and in many ways “impatient with radical doctrine, intensely moralistic...and immersed in what was just starting to be referred to as the ‘counterculture’”, it was also suggested by “chapter reports that...its members still thought of their role on campus more in terms of education than confrontation”.

1965 saw an escalation of the sustained bombing campaign of North Vietnam, as well as a massive build-up of American troops to 184, 300 by the end of the year. In March, the planned demonstration by 600 civil rights activists from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama against the denial of voting rights to blacks in the South turned bloody when state troopers tried to break up the protest violently. And in the summer of 1965, under the chants of “Burn, baby burn!” rioting youths of the black community of Watts in Los Angeles battled police forces, which left 34 people dead, a thousand injured, and four thousand in jail.<sup>409</sup>

At the same time, “big-government liberalism was in a triumphant mood”. Seemingly, “policy makers thought they had the power to cure social ills, from poverty to prejudice”, leading Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) to declare an “all-out war on human poverty and unemployment”, as part of a broader scheme - Great Society - to reform American society.<sup>410</sup> Bell and Kristol envisioned a journal, which would counterbalance the *Zeitgeist* of the 1960s. According to Kristol, the time had come for “someone...to continue talking modest sense, even if grandiose nonsense was temporarily so very popular”.<sup>411</sup> The “grandiose nonsense” mainly referred to the overly zealous spirit of reformism, which had gripped the liberal establishment and the anti-authoritarianism and hedonism promoted by the New Left and the counterculture. Supposedly, it was a spirit of “healthy skepticism” that gave birth to *PI*, a scepticism geared towards the feasibility of governmental intervention on behalf of social problems.<sup>412</sup> According to Wilson, *PI* united “people who thought it was hard, though not impossible, to make useful and important changes in public

---

<sup>409</sup> Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 131-149; Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 3.

<sup>410</sup> Micklethwait and Woolridge, *The Right Nation*, 63; President Lyndon B. Johnson Declares War On Poverty, 1964”, in *Major Problems in American History Since 1945*, eds. Robert Griffith and Paula Baker (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, Third Edition, 2007), 214.

<sup>411</sup> Kristol, “American Conservatism 1945-1995”, 85.

<sup>412</sup> Irving Kristol, “Scepticism, Meliorism, and *The Public Interest*”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1985, 32.

policy”.<sup>413</sup> Extremes, which appeared to govern the *Zeitgeist*, had to be countered by a good dose of common sense. Reality, however, looked somewhat differently.

In the editorial statement of the first issue, Bell and Kristol declared that *PI* should “help all of us, when we discuss issues of public policy, to know a little better what we are talking about”. It declared to be “animated by a bias against” all kinds of ideologies.<sup>414</sup> The intention of pragmatic, anti-utopian analysis also found reflection in the characterisation of *PI* as a “middle-aged magazine for middle-aged readers”. Bell and Kristol argued that, “young people tend to be enchanted by glittering generalities; older people are inclined to remember rather than to think”. Yet, it was “middle-aged people, seasoned by life but still open to the future” who appeared to them “to be the best of all political generations”.<sup>415</sup>

The journal’s title itself contradicted the desire to produce ideology-free analysis of social policy. Basing themselves on Walter Lippman’s definition of the public interest as “what men would choose if they saw clearly, thought rationally, acted disinterestedly and benevolently”, they were entering the realm of political philosophy and ideological speculation.<sup>416</sup> The fact that they made the concept of the public interest central to their enterprise reflects the centrality of ideology in the editors’ mindsets, since the notion of the public interest was in itself concerned with abstractions such as the nature of democracy and of government. The idea that there was a discernible public interest indeed flew in the face of contemporary pluralist ideas of political scientists that policy outcomes were the result of conflict between the private interest of individuals and groups.

---

<sup>413</sup> Wilson, “A Life in the Public Interest”, (accessed September 22, 2009).

<sup>414</sup> Irving Kristol and Daniel Bell, “What is the Public Interest?” *The Public Interest*, Fall 1965, 3.

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>416</sup> Cited in Kristol and Bell, “What is the Public Interest?”, 6.

Looking through the first issues of *PI*, the reader is struck by the underlying sentiment that something more than social science was needed in order for America to overcome its perceived cultural crisis. Moreover, it appears as if *PI* was specifically conceived as an outlet for critiquing Great Society programmes - and by extension government interventionism on behalf of social issues. It persistently warned of “the difficulty of reform and the dangers of bureaucratization”.<sup>417</sup> Even though Bell and Kristol declared that they wanted to steer clear of ideologies and “prefabrications”, because they “*preconceive* reality”, discussing social policy and the state of American society during the ideologically heated mid-1960s was almost impossible without resorting to the discussion of values, ideas and ideologies.<sup>418</sup> It is also telling that the large majority of articles in *PI*, while assuming a scholarly air, did not use footnotes. Rather than deliver hard facts to the reader, the journal was more about exposing ideas and presenting arguments for or against a certain policy.<sup>419</sup> In this sense, “the bias against all such prefabrications” can be regarded as a form of ideology in itself. Here it should be noted that Kristol’s disenchantment with the welfare system pre-dated the formation of *PI*, as for example shown in “Is the Welfare State Obsolete?”<sup>420</sup>

Podhoretz, who continued to develop his anti-New Left agenda in *Commentary*, on the other hand, objected outright to the notion that “ideology was dead and that all problems were therefore now technical” from the start.<sup>421</sup> He questioned the allegedly “pragmatist” approach with which *PI* intended to deal with social policy. He did not believe

---

<sup>417</sup> For example: James Q. Wilson, “The Bureaucracy Problem”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1967, 3-9; Alan Altshuler, “The Potential of ‘Trickle Down’”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 1969, 46-56; Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*, 518.

<sup>418</sup> Bell and Kristol, “What Is the Public Interest?”, 4.

<sup>419</sup> Nathan Glazer, “A Man Without Footnotes”, in *The Neoconservative Imagination*, eds. Christopher DeMuth and William Kristol (Washington, D.C.: The AEI Press, 1995), 7.

<sup>420</sup> Irving Kristol, “Is the Welfare State Obsolete?” *Harper’s Magazine*, June 1963, 39-43.

<sup>421</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 316.

that the time of ideological battles had come to an end or that intellectual discourse should limit itself to the laws of practicality in order to be influential. One issue that irritated him especially about *PI*'s 'detached' approach was that more value- and emotionally charged discussions, especially with respect to Jewish life, would find no room in the journal. By seeking to create an ideology-free discourse, Podhoretz suggested that Kristol and Bell had assimilated too much into the surrounding environment and thereby denying primordial ties. *PI*'s alleged rationale "seemed to me to resemble the idea of the radical assimilationists who thought the 'Jewish problem' could be solved by the disappearance of the Jews into the surrounding environment".<sup>422</sup> It is also interesting to note that Podhoretz never published in *PI*, while Bell, Glazer and Kristol continued to contribute to *Commentary*.

Even though *PI* would keep up its non-ethnic style, differences with respect to ideology were narrowed in favour of Podhoretz's stance as the 1960s progressed. Moreover, while Jewish concerns were addressed indirectly in discussing such issues as busing, affirmative action, and assimilation, the qualitative evaluation of *PI* has, nevertheless, revealed two instances where Jewish issues were discussed straightforwardly.<sup>423</sup> Dennis Prager's article, "Homosexuality, the Bible and Us – A Jewish Perspective" presented an argument against homosexuality – "a tragic burden" – on religiously inspired grounds. Opposing homosexuality was vital, Prager asserted, because

---

<sup>422</sup> Podhoretz, *Making It*, 316.

<sup>423</sup> The term affirmative action had been used first by the Kennedy administration and became established in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It came to stand for colour-blind principles in hiring. Nixon was the one to introduce the principle of setting aside a certain number of positions to be filled by minorities, thereby "turning the original definition of affirmative action on its head". Isserman and Kazin, *American Divided*, 284; Howard Husock, "Blacks, Jews and Neighborhood Change", *The Public Interest*, Spring 1992, 118-126; Robert A. Levine, "Assimilation: Past and Present", *The Public Interest*, Spring 2005, 93-108.

“At stake is our civilization”.<sup>424</sup> The other article, by David Brooks, discussed the growing centrality of religion in the neoconservative enterprise by the 1990s.<sup>425</sup> Tellingly, Brooks opened the article with an anecdote, which describes him as spontaneously replying to his rabbi, when asked what “being Jewish meant” to him, by citing the names “Kristol, Podhoretz, Trilling, Bellow”. He qualifies his reaction by adding: “a bunch of Jewish intellectuals around *Partisan Review*, *Commentary*, and *The Public Interest*”.<sup>426</sup>

The different approaches of Podhoretz and Kristol also shed some light on the contentions and competitiveness, which characterised their relationship. They both came to represent their own schools of thought within neoconservatism, and their fellow neoconservatives tended to either lean towards the one or the other. After one of his earliest encounters with Kristol, Podhoretz wrote to Trilling: “I...suspect that Irving may be one of those people who is (in your phrase) ‘lucky to the point of being unfortunate’”, concluding, “he seems to me a sort of warning for the future”.<sup>427</sup> The rift between the two really set in when Podhoretz, allegedly against the advice of Kristol, became editor-in-chief at *Commentary* and began publishing articles by Staughton Lynd and Paul Goodman. Podhoretz claimed that Kristol “began feeling less than comfortable with me”.<sup>428</sup> While differences attenuated in later years, they would nevertheless continue to compete with

---

<sup>424</sup> Dennis Prager, “Homosexuality, the Bible and Us – A Jewish Perspective”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1993, 73, 82.

<sup>425</sup> In *Faith or Fear: How Jews Can Survive in a Christian America* (New York: Free Press, 1997), second generation neoconservative, Elliot Abrams argued that ensuring Jewish survival depended not only on a political right turn of Jews, but more fundamentally on a return to religion; according to former editor of *Commentary*, Neal Kozodoy, the younger generation of neoconservatives, which rose to power during the 1990s, were much more frequently religiously affiliated than the older generation. Neal Kozodoy, interview with author, New York, May 8, 2008.

<sup>426</sup> David Brooks, “God and the Neocons”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1997, 95.

<sup>427</sup> Norman Podhoretz letter to Lionel Trilling, February 3, 1955, Series II, Box 7, Folder 7, LTP.

<sup>428</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “Following Irving”, in *The Neoconservative Imagination*, eds. Christopher DeMuth and William Kristol (Washington, D.C.: The AEI Press, 1995), 59.

each other for influence and prestige as leading figures within and outside the neoconservative community.<sup>429</sup>

*PI* never achieved the intended ideology-free approach. It is questionable to what extent it was even desired by the creators of the journal. From the outset, Bell and Kristol published a great many articles on the value dimension of the social and political questions. Apart from an article by Moynihan on “The Professionalization of Reform”, Glazer’s “The Paradoxes of American Poverty” and Bell’s “The Study of the Future”, the first edition contained an article by economist Robert Solow on the extent to which technological progress affected the workforce. The conservative Robert Nisbet considered the idea of the scientific elite and Daniel Greenberg questioned whether the “scientific technological elite” was turning into a “new priesthood”. Furthermore, it included an article by cultural historian, Jacques Barzun, in which he explored the pros and cons of public subsidies for art. Finally, it featured a discussion by Martin Diamond, a student of Leo Strauss, on how conservative and liberal interpretations of the U.S. Constitution translated into policies. Considering these titles and chosen topics, it becomes clear that *PI* was from the outset much more than just a forum for detached public policy analysis.<sup>430</sup>

One main objective of the journal was to review existing government policy critically and analyse social problems comprehensively, so that decision-makers could deal with social problems with less knock-on effects. The presumption was that many of the contemporary Great Society programmes had come about without much public discussion

---

<sup>429</sup> Irwin Stelzer, Interview with author, Washington, D.C., May 21, 2008.

<sup>430</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “The Professionalization of Reform”, 6-16; Daniel Bell, “The Study of the Future”, 119-130; Nathan Glazer, “The Paradoxes of American Poverty”, 71-81; Robert Nisbet, “The Permanent Professors: A Modest Proposal”, 37-50; Robert Solow “Technology and Unemployment”, 17-26; Robert Heilbroner, “Men and Machines in Perspective”, 27-36; Daniel S. Greenberg, “The Myth of the Scientific Elite”, 51-62; Jacques Barzun, “Art – by Act of Congress”, 63-70; Martin Diamond, “Conservatives, Liberals, and the Constitution”, 96-109.

of the issues involved. By the time all the facets of one or the other issue had been thought through, “an agency had been established, monies appropriated and people committed”. This condition was driven by what Moynihan termed “The Professionalization of Reform”. Thus, social reform had become the prerogative of specialists and “massive political support and intellectual leadership” were no longer behind many of the new reforms.<sup>431</sup> Thus, Moynihan reasoned, reform professionals, often driven by exaggerated confidence in the power of government, conceived complex social programmes in absence of deliberation of any major public interest.<sup>432</sup>

Moynihan’s analysis is somewhat ironical in as much as he was a “reform professional” himself. He had worked in the Labour Department under Kennedy, overseeing the composition of the so-called Moynihan Report, entitled “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action”, which based itself on studies of ghetto life by E. Franklin Frazier and Kenneth Clark. The Report developed the thesis that many problems of the urban black poor stemmed from the collapse of the black family unit. According to Isserman and Kazin, the report also strongly influenced Johnson’s address at Howard University in June 1965, which in many ways was “the most radical speech of his presidency”, where Johnson declared that the goal was not just “equality as a right and a theory”, but “equality as a fact”.<sup>433</sup>

Seemingly convinced that liberal reform was failing, Kristol and Bell, nevertheless, believed that government had a seminal role to play in organising society. It was their stated aim to influence the decision-making process in order to participate in the shaping of

---

<sup>431</sup> Moynihan, “The Professionalization of Reform”, 7.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid., 8. Moynihan had helped develop Johnson’s War on Poverty and moreover authored the Family Assistance Programme, by which the Nixon administration attempted to provide a guaranteed income in the place of welfare. By the end 1960s Moynihan was disappointed by the results some of the programmes he had been instrumental in developing.

<sup>433</sup> Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 208.

the polity. Not rejecting the principle of an interventionist government with respect to social and cultural issues, they nonetheless argued that too many policy makers, especially the social scientists amongst them, had given in to overly optimistic beliefs about the redemptive effects of government-led social reform. This, in turn, had led to the creation of programmes that were ineffective and very often counterproductive.<sup>434</sup> As a matter of fact, *PI* quickly came to focus on the negative impact of social reform, discussing what Max Weber had termed the unanticipated consequences of social action.

Yet, *PI* shied away from partisan politics, publishing a range of opinions about the failures and successes of government legislation until the early 1970s. For instance, in 1974, a special issue dealt cautiously with the lessons of the Great Society. Not produced by Bell and Kristol, but guest-edited by Eli Ginzberg and Robert M. Solow, it conceded that there were “many partial, but genuine successes” amongst Great Society programmes, and although, “some public programs simply don’t work or prove to be too costly ... there is nothing in the history of the 1960s to suggest that it is a law of nature that social legislation cannot deal effectively with social problems”.<sup>435</sup> Kristol, however, warning that New Left liberalism was taking over the Democratic Party, had written in 1966, “Though I approve, on the whole, of the various programs for the Great Society, I too am full of doubt about their potentialities for a good life in a good society”.<sup>436</sup>

A decade later, in tune with majority opinion, he discarded the Great Society as a complete failure, believing its measures had contributed to the abandonment of morality and an overall degeneration of social and cultural norms. Pointing out that while

---

<sup>434</sup> Ehrman, “*Commentary, The Public Interest and the Problem of Jewish Conservatism*”, 169. Daniel Moynihan once described the project with the words: “the best use of social science is to refute false social science.” Quoted in Kristol, “*American Conservatism 1945 -1995*”, 86.

<sup>435</sup> Eli Ginzberg and Robert M. Solow, “Some Lessons of the 1960s”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1974, 58.

<sup>436</sup> Irving Kristol, “New Right, New Left”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1966, 7.

neoconservatives were “not at all hostile to the idea of the welfare state”, he noted that they, nevertheless, did not agree with “the Great Society version of the welfare state”.<sup>437</sup> Thereby, Kristol and his colleagues disregarded the fact that, together with the high economic growth rate, the War on Poverty had succeeded in reducing poverty from 22 per cent to 13 per cent during the 1960s. In addition, historians assume that not enough funds were available in order for the Great Society to successfully meet its goals. Eric Foner, for example, claims that the Great Society, in tandem with the civil rights movement, was directly responsible for narrowing “the historic gap between whites and blacks in education, income, and access to skilled employment” by the 1990s.<sup>438</sup>

According to Glazer, the themes, which led to *PI* being labelled neoconservative, were present almost from the start. In addition to much analysis of welfare and education policies, *PI* dealt from the outset with the value implications of these and other issues, such as family stability, racial integration, censorship of pornography, science and technology, and the environment to name but a few.<sup>439</sup> The original intent of using social science to rectify complex social problems was superseded quickly by the belief that the issues ailing American society were brought about by a “deeper...cultural malaise”, and not always solvable by quick government interventionism.<sup>440</sup> The fact that *PI* published an article in 1970 defending the censorship of pornography and Kristol had done so in March of the same year by claiming that “if you care for the quality of life in our American democracy,

---

<sup>437</sup> Irving Kristol, “What Is A Neoconservative?” *Newsweek*, January 19, 1976, 87.

<sup>438</sup> Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty: An American History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 861.

<sup>439</sup> Edward C. Banfield, “A Welfare Crisis Without ‘Solutions’”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1969, 89-101; Nathan Glazer, “Beyond Income Maintenance: A Note on Welfare in New York City”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1969, 102-120; Milton Friedman, “A Free Market in Education” *The Public Interest*, Spring 1966, 107; Christopher Jencks, “Is the Public School Obsolete?”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1966, 18-27; Daniel P. Moynihan, “Equalizing Education: In Whose Benefit?” *The Public Interest*, Fall 1972, 69-89.

<sup>440</sup> What Moynihan described as “the best use of social science is to refute false social science” cited in: Kristol, “American Conservatism 1945-1995”, 86.

then you have to be for censorship”, signified the extent to which the journal’s editors had moved towards social and cultural conservatism.<sup>441</sup> In the early 1970s, Glazer claimed, *PI* pundits came to understand that realising a better society was “more dependent on a fund of traditional orientations, ‘values,’ or, if you will, ‘virtues,’ than any social science or ‘social engineering’ approach”.<sup>442</sup> According to Kristol, it was “the rise of the counterculture, with its messianic expectations and its apocalyptic fears” that brought about a shift towards discussing social and cultural issues more generally.<sup>443</sup>

This shift also was a consequence of examining the undesired repercussions of social policy. The ideas of social policy professionals were advanced based on the intended consequences of programmes. *PI* directed its attention, however, to the unintended effects of social action, such as the family breakdown allegedly encouraged by welfare programmes, specifically Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), homelessness fostered by federal rent control and problems supposedly created by government job programmes. Kristol claimed that he did not disagree with the high costs of welfare programmes *per se*, but rather with the “perverse consequences for the people they are supposed to benefit”. He believed that “the liberal-inspired welfare system” had led to the rise “of a growing and self-perpetuating ‘underclass’ that makes our cities close to uninhabitable”.<sup>444</sup> Further, he argued that liberal policies were responsible for “social

---

<sup>441</sup> Walter Berns, “Pornography and Democracy: The Case for Censorship”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1971, 3-24. Kristol, *On the Democratic Idea in America*, 43; Podhoretz came out in support of censorship of pornography in “Living with Free Speech”, *Commentary*, November 1972, 6-8.

<sup>442</sup> Glazer, “Neoconservative from the Start”, 13.

<sup>443</sup> Kristol, *Neoconservatism*, 31.

<sup>444</sup> Kristol, “A Conservative Welfare State”, in *Neoconservatism*, ed. Irwin Stelzer (London: Atlantic Books, 2004), 146. Alternatively the Marxian derived “Lumpenproletariat” was used to describe what neoconservatives term ‘the underclass’, see for example Aaron Wildavsky, “Government and the People”, *Commentary*, August 1973, 32. By referring to the “Lumpenproletariat” in *Das Kapital*, Karl Marx described “vagabonds, criminals, prostitutes”. Karl Marx, *Capital* Vol. 1 (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 797. Needless to say, these were not the great mass of people who are being helped by Great Society programmes, considering the fact that many of the funds were intended to ameliorate the life of middle class America.

pathologies”, such as “crime, juvenile delinquency, illegitimacy, drug addiction, and alcoholism”, as well as for “the destruction of a once functioning public school system”.<sup>445</sup> By pointing out the negative results, *PI* was highlighting the supposed limits and dysfunctionality of federal social policy. Many of these social programmes heightened the diagnosed cultural crisis of American society, it argued, by helping to undermine further traditional authorities and values, such as those of industriousness, individual responsibility, stable family structures, and fair-mindedness. This rationale reflected what social theorist Albert Hirschmann, in his analysis of conservative rhetoric, has referred to as the “jeopardy thesis” of conservative opposition to reform proposals, according to which social reform threatens to jeopardise traditional arrangements, such as family, ethnic ties and religious communities, while simultaneously heightening social problems.<sup>446</sup>

By the end of the decade, Peter Drucker argued that the social policies of the federal government exemplified how overextension of governmental power led to social injustice, loss of authority and ultimately to systemic instability. Even dismissing the achievements of the New Deal, which had so far been a central pillar of future neoconservatives’ universe, he claimed that government interventionism “over these past thirty to forty years” had been a failure; it had “proven itself capable of doing only two things with great effectiveness. It can wage war. And it can inflate the currency”.<sup>447</sup> According to Kristol, government intensified and entrenched the “crisis in values” of American society, which was “to be observed in many other Western nations as well”. It left people without

---

<sup>445</sup> Kristol, “A Conservative Welfare State”, 146.

<sup>446</sup> Albert O. Hirschmann, *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy* (Cambridge, Ma.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991).

<sup>447</sup> Peter F. Drucker, “The Sickness of Government”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1969, 7; Robert A. Nisbet, “Twilight of Authority”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1969, 3-9.

guidance, as “they don’t know where to turn for answers they could accept as authoritative”.<sup>448</sup>

The tenth anniversary issue of *PI* entitled *The American Commonwealth – 1975* analysed the American polity from the perspective of governmental overload, featuring contributions by *PI* regulars Robert Nisbet, Samuel P. Huntington, James Q. Wilson, Martin Diamond, Aaron Wildavsky, Seymour Martin Lipset, and Moynihan. Wilson, for example, scrutinised the explosion of an activist centralised bureaucracy in response to the exaggerated demands made on government, whereas Glazer claimed that a similar activism had gripped the judiciary. The overall tone of the volume alarmingly pointed to the threats posed by unrestrained federal interventionism to the freedom of the individual.<sup>449</sup>

Governmental overextension was, according to *PI*, the result of the promises to erase poverty and racial discrimination. Government had raised the expectation of American citizens too much and failed to deliver. In turn, this had led to disillusionment amongst the American people and consequently accelerated the declining legitimacy of governmental authority.<sup>450</sup> The promises of a “new equality” - promoted by the New Class - led people to make unreasonable demands on government, which it could not deliver. “The revolution of equality”, Glazer observed, rendered people “ever more sensitive to smaller and smaller degrees of inequality”.<sup>451</sup> Bell further claimed that, “As disparities have decreased...the expectations of equality have increased even faster...a phenomenon now commonly known as the ‘Tocqueville effect’”.<sup>452</sup> In these terms, it was “The revolution of

---

<sup>448</sup> Kristol, “New Right, New Left”, 6.

<sup>449</sup> James Q. Wilson, “The Rise of the Bureaucratic State”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1975, 77-103; Nathan Glazer, “Towards an Imperial Judiciary” *The Public Interest*, Fall 1975, 104-123.

<sup>450</sup> Drucker, “The Sickness of Government”, 3-23.

<sup>451</sup> Nathan Glazer, “The Limits of Social Policy”, *Commentary* September 1971, 53.

<sup>452</sup> De Tocqueville observed: “One must not blind oneself to the fact that democratic institutions promote to a very high degree the feeling of envy in the human heart, not so much because they offer each citizen ways of

rising expectations”, set in motion under Kennedy and Johnson, which was, in Bell’s words, intricately intertwined with “the revolution of rising *ressentiment*”.<sup>453</sup> The more equal society became, they argued, the more its members began to develop social resentment and envy towards each other, which in turn, led to social instability.

The diagnosis of governmental overload implied that political practices needed a radical overhaul. Governmental activism had to be curtailed; demands and desires by the populace tempered. This implied that neoconservatives came to agree with conservative ideas of the inevitability of social inequality. As a matter of fact, Kristol came to argue that “A Just and legitimate society is one in which inequalities...are generally perceived by the citizenry as necessary for the common good”.<sup>454</sup> Curbing the growing demand for equality was, therefore, in the common interest. Exaggerating the extent to which Americans wanted “all at once to boot”, Kristol claimed, that “the revolution of rising expectations” had taken on “such grotesque dimensions that men take it as an insult when they are asked to be reasonable in their desires and their demands”. Revealing his deep distrust in human nature, Kristol claimed that the result of this “excess of equality” was that democracy, or “self-government”, was “inexorably being eroded in favor of self-seeking, self-indulgence, and just plain aggressive selfishness”.<sup>455</sup>

In its critique of the “new equality”, *PI*, like *Commentary*, also included its principled opposition to policies such as busing and later affirmative action. While Glazer answered his question “Is Busing Necessary?” in the negative in *Commentary*, David Armor, writing in *PI*, suggested that busing in 1972 could no longer be justified because it

---

being equal to each other but because these ways continuously prove inadequate for those who use them. Democratic institutions awaken and flatter the passion of equality without every being bale to satisfy it entirely”. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 130.

<sup>453</sup> Daniel Bell, “On Meritocracy and Equality”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1972, 64.

<sup>454</sup> Irving Kristol, “About Equality”, *Commentary*, November 1972, 42.

<sup>455</sup> Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 60; Kristol, *On the Democratic Idea in America*, 26, 27.

had failed to meet its goals.<sup>456</sup> As shown above, court-ordered busing was a crucial issue around which the conservative grass-roots movement rallied. ‘Ordinary’ Americans perceived it to be unfair, because their children were forced to travel “across town in order to achieve racially balanced schools”. Furthermore, it struck them as hypocritical, because the liberal establishment, which according to conservative pundits was behind these policies, was able to send their own children to private or suburban schools. Both *Commentary* and *PI* supported the sentiment against busing and other pro-active integrationist measures as a legitimate concern and claimed furthermore that it had nothing to do with white racism. Wilson, for example, while agreeing that “Prejudice exists”, defended inner-city whites from the charges of racism, arguing that white anger at the blacks and white flight “was not primarily” motivated by “anti-Negro feelings”, but based on a concern about “standards of right and seemly conduct in the public places”, i.e. crime and violence, which he believed was mainly “the result of growing pride and assertiveness” as promoted by ideas of Black Power.<sup>457</sup> Historian Kevin Kruse, however, has demonstrated that issues of racism, often covert and indirect, were indeed the prime determinant in the white flight phenomenon.<sup>458</sup>

In general, budding neoconservatives cautioned that mobilising the urban poor through community action programmes, in order to redistribute social and economic power would prove to be counter-productive.<sup>459</sup> In their eyes, the approach that more direct action

---

<sup>456</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Is Busing Necessary?” *Commentary*, March 1972, 39-52; David J. Armor, “The Evidence on Busing”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1972, 90-126; Thomas F. Pettigrew, et al., “Busing: A Review of ‘The Evidence’”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1973, 88-118; David J. Armor, “The Double Double Standard: A Reply” *The Public Interest*, Winter 1973, 119-132.

<sup>457</sup> James Q. Wilson, “The Urban Unease: Community vs. City”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1968, 31, 26, 27, 38.

<sup>458</sup> Kevin Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

<sup>459</sup> Daniel P. Moynihan, “What is ‘Community Action’”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1966, 3-8.

would lead to more equality was promoted by members within the liberal establishment – or the New Class - who mostly came from upper-middle class backgrounds, had graduated from elite universities, and had become “dazzled by trendy sociological theories...that ‘empowering the poor’ would so uplift the spirits...that the long, slow, traditional climb up the ladder of economic mobility could be circumvented”.<sup>460</sup> This tendency of “liberal egalitarianism” had to be fought, because “if it is permitted to gather momentum”, it would “surely destroy the liberal society”.<sup>461</sup>

The renunciation of a more pro-active approach to social issues arose partially from the specific class sense of many early neoconservatives. Some, like Bell and Kristol, came from working class to lower middle-class backgrounds – even though the extent of poverty in which they grew up is, according to Godfrey Hodgson, often exaggerated in neoconservative mythology.<sup>462</sup> They subscribed to the idea that it was hard work and education that continued to be the only effective ways out of poverty. The conviction that they had lifted themselves ‘by their bootstraps’ and expected others to do the same was pervasive and would continue to characterise neoconservative opposition to government policies such as busing and affirmative action in both *Commentary* and *PI* throughout the 1970s. While not disputing that they had risen through hard work, their demand for others to follow them by example had a somewhat hypocritical sound to it in light of the fact that many of them had received a basic tuition-free college education at CCNY. Moreover, it was the drive towards greater inclusivity and egalitarianism introduced by Rooseveltian liberalism that had allowed many of the early neoconservatives to take up privileged

---

<sup>460</sup> Kristol, “Skepticism, Meliorism, and *The Public Interest*”, 33-34.

<sup>461</sup> Irving Kristol, “Thoughts on Equality and Egalitarianism”, Colin D. Campbell, ed. *Income Redistribution* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1977), 41- 42.

<sup>462</sup> Godfrey Hodgson, conversation with author, Oxford, April 25, 2007.

positions in American society. Lastly, their reduction of the Great Society programmes to the War on Poverty overlooked the fact that Johnson's interventionism "was designed primarily to benefit the middle class" through channelling funds into the newly created programmes, such as Medicare for the elderly, as well as into education and urban development.<sup>463</sup> Recipients of Great Society funds were in great majority not part of a degenerate "underclass", as neoconservatives seemed to suggest.

The liberal intellectual elite, the alleged motive power behind the push for greater equality, was according to Kristol, "only the latest expression of a subversive discontent with which intellectuals have gnawed at the legitimacy of government for two millennia".<sup>464</sup> Criticism of the liberal intellectual elite, which supposedly was in firm possession of the political establishment, abounded in both *Commentary* and *PI* during the later 1960s and continued even as liberalism lost out during the 1970s. An exaggerated understanding of their own role in societal organisation governed the importance incipient neoconservative thought placed on intellectuals. Accordingly, intellectual expertise was not only relevant to policy making, intellectuals were also the guardians of society's symbols and values. Hence, they were considered the "keepers of its memories, and...shapers of general ideas" – in short, "the principal suppliers and endorsers of the symbols of legitimacy".<sup>465</sup> Hence, in the eyes of budding neoconservatives, intellectuals were a singularly important component in the constitution and the cohesiveness of society, "crucial...in defining the moral quality of our society".<sup>466</sup>

---

<sup>463</sup> Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 203.

<sup>464</sup> Cited in Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 241.

<sup>465</sup> Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 6; Irving Kristol, "The Troublesome Intellectuals", *The Public Interest*, Winter 1966, 6.

<sup>466</sup> Kristol, "The Troublesome Intellectuals", 6.

Therefore, while much of the neoconservative critique of liberalism was infused with anti-intellectual rhetoric, it did not consider intellectuals *per se* to be the problem. Rather, a certain kind of intellectual was causing trouble, namely the liberal, and especially the radical, kind. Kristol, for example, welcomed the belated “incorporation of the intellectual into American public life” as a result of the Second World War. Yet, he warned of a specific type of intellectual, those who “express decided views” on “all sorts of...matters on which...they are inadequately informed”.<sup>467</sup> Presuming that he himself was informed, Kristol believed that not the experts were troublesome but those who got involved in issues they knew nothing of. Those intellectuals active in teach-ins against the war, for instance, were, following Kristol, “junior in rank...usually in professions that have precious little to do with Viet Nam”.<sup>468</sup> Their lack of expertise was compensated by ideological fervour, by which these intellectuals tried to gain power. One of the inconsistencies of neoconservatism revealed itself in this type of condescending attack on the alleged elitism and ignorance of other intellectuals, which neoconservatives countered with their own brand of elitism. Moreover, one cannot help but recognise certain similarities between the intellectuals described by neoconservatives and neoconservatives themselves.

Finally, something needs to be said about the ‘absence’ of foreign policy in the pages of *PI*. Neoconservatives and scholars alike have claimed that early neoconservatism as developed in *PI* had nothing to do with foreign policy, a rather puzzling circumstance considering the fact that neoconservatism has become almost exclusively associated with foreign affairs. Moreover, neoconservatives such as Glazer contend that *PI* was able “to

---

<sup>467</sup> Kristol, “The Troublesome Intellectuals”, 6.

<sup>468</sup> Kristol, “Letter from New York: Teaching In, Speaking Out”, 69.

eschew the entire field of foreign affairs”.<sup>469</sup> It was indeed the intention of Bell and Kristol to forego the discussion of foreign affairs in order to focus exclusively on domestic issues. At the time the journal was established, the Vietnam War was the most crucial matter on the foreign policy agenda of the country. And since *PI* pundits “had a wide spectrum of opinion on the issue”, the editors-in-chief decided, in the words of Kristol that they “did not want any of the space in our modest-sized quarterly to be swallowed up by Vietnam. The simplest solution was to ban foreign affairs and foreign policy from our pages”.<sup>470</sup>

This, however, was only partially the case. In discussing social and cultural problems that ailed American society, it was unavoidable that the analysis of foreign affairs would enter into the picture. As a matter of fact, while Vietnam was never discussed *per se* in the pages of the journal, it was mentioned regularly, as for instance in comparison with the crisis at home or within the context of discussing domestic issues. Moreover, investigating *PI*'s early concerns demonstrates that even though foreign affairs were not its main focus, they were “never far off the radar screen”.<sup>471</sup> For instance, in the first two years, foreign policy entered the pages of *PI* directly on two occasions. Once in a section discussing the question of “Reforming the Draft” - which featured arguments for and against a national service system - and in an article by Moynihan entitled “Crisis of Confidence”, in which he drew a direct analogy between the debacle in Vietnam and the perceived failure of the War on Poverty. Moreover, in the winter 1968 issue, Robert Giplin analysed the technology gap between Western Europe and the U.S., the brain drain of scientists and engineers from Europe to the U.S. and the implications this had for

---

<sup>469</sup> Glazer, “Neoconservative from the Start”, 17.

<sup>470</sup> Irving Kristol, “Forty Good Years”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 2005, 7.

<sup>471</sup> Matthew Continetti, “Two, Three, Many Neoconservatives: Forty Years of The Public Interest”, *The Weekly Standard*, December 18, 2006.

transatlantic relations. The following year, *PI* published an article by Zbigniew Brzezinski, director of the Trilateral Commission and future National Security Advisor of the Carter administration, on the “Purpose and Planning in Foreign Policy”.<sup>472</sup>

Furthermore, many of the typical *PI* topics, such as the “crisis in values”, the welfare state, the student movement, the New Left and so on, all had their international components as well as implications for foreign affairs. A number of articles compared the differing welfare systems or the respective economic systems in articles such as “The British Debate the Welfare State”, ““Third Worlds’ Abroad and at Home” “Whatever Happened to British Planning?”, “Sweden: Some Unanswered Questions”, “What Welfare Crisis? A Comparison Among the United States, Britain, and Sweden”, or “Japan’s Galbraithian Economy”. A special issue entitled “The Universities” dealt with the student movement in a global context in articles such as “French Students: A Letter from Nanterre-La-Folie”, “Germany: Radicals and Reformers”, or “Democracy and the English University”.<sup>473</sup>

In response to a conference on “*The Public Interest* and the Making of American Public Policy: 1965-2005”, Kristol elaborated on the interdependency of foreign and domestic policy in the pages of the journal by explaining that one central intent had been to

---

<sup>472</sup> Eli Ginzberg, “The Case for a Lottery” *The Public Interest*, Fall 1966, 83-90; Morris Janowitz, “The Case for a National Service System”, Fall 1966, 90-110; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “A Crisis of Confidence?” *The Public Interest*, Spring 1967, 3-10; Robert Gilpin, “European Disunion and the Technology Gap”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1968, 43-54; Zbigniew Brzezinski, “Purpose and Planning in Foreign Policy”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1969, 52-73.

<sup>473</sup> Timothy Raison, “The British Debate the Welfare State”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1965, 110-118; Norman MacRae, “Whatever Happened to British Planning?”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1970, 140-148; Michael Crozier, “French Students: A Letter from Nanterre-La-Folie”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1968, 151-159; Renate Mayntz, “Germany: Radicals and Reformers”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1968, 160-172; Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter, ““Third Worlds’ Abroad and at Home”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1969, 88-107; Martin Bronfenbrenner, “Japan’s Galbraithian Economy”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1970, 149-157; Eli Ginzberg, “Sweden: Some Unanswered Questions”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1970, 158-166; William Letwin, “Democracy and the English University”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1968, 139-150; Martin Rein and Hugh Heelo, “What Welfare Crisis?: A Comparison Among the United States, Britain, and Sweden”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1973, 61-83.

define an American welfare state and social policy, compatible with the editors' vision of the U.S. as a global power. During the inception of the magazine, Kristol said, "there was clearly a growing American opinion that believed a European type welfare state was the correct and inevitable model for the United States." Conversely, he claimed, the right rejected the very idea of the welfare state and saw itself as the harbourers of "a radical individualist ethos". Bell and Kristol, however, were looking for a model of "a welfare state that could be reconciled with a world role for the United States?" In Kristol's view, there was such an option. *PI*'s "work in economic and social policy" was therefore closely tied to realising "our national destiny as a world power".<sup>474</sup> Significantly, Kristol founded *PI*'s foreign policy counterpart, *The National Interest* in 1985, which quickly became the conservative pendant to the more liberal *Foreign Affairs*.

Even though much of the literature has often tried to reduce early neoconservatism to a social policy rationale, it becomes clear upon evaluation of *PI* in conjunction with *Commentary* that the domestic and international spheres were inextricably interconnected in the emerging neoconservative outlook. According to its vision, the U.S. needed a morally and culturally stable society, guided by an ideologically robust intellectual elite, in order to cope with internal and international threats to its system. Yet, neoconservatives diagnosed an insecure, guilt-ridden society with an intelligentsia who despised the liberal bourgeois ethos on which American society was founded and a people, who, without proper guidance by its intellectuals, was "confused and insecure at the lack of clear meaning in its order".<sup>475</sup> Glazer remarked, for instance, that "the breakdown of traditional modes of behaviour is the chief cause of our social problems" and believed that "some important part

---

<sup>474</sup> Kristol cited in: Continetti, "Two, Three, Many Neoconservatives: Forty Years of The Public Interest", (accessed September 16, 2009).

<sup>475</sup> Kristol, "About Equality", 45.

of the solution to our social problems lies in...traditional restraint”.<sup>476</sup> Neoconservatives, therefore, came to see themselves as the defenders of ‘true’ American values and as the interpreters of the people’s needs and desires. It was in this sense, that the intellectuals of the New Class – who had deepened and perpetuated the “crisis in values” - became neoconservatives’ prime opponents, whose influence had to be thwarted in order to preserve the liberal bourgeois order.

### The Defence of the Bourgeois Populist Order against Countercultural Millenarians

To counter the “millenarian, utopian forces” that allegedly had gained prevalence in the liberal arena during the 1960s, Kristol promoted an approach, which he believed rooted in orthodox - rabbinic traditions of Western philosophical thought, according to which the potential for human transformation was finite and only to be achieved gradually.<sup>477</sup> Accordingly, human nature, imperfect and selfish, had to be contained by strong social institutions and a set of powerful moral values. According to Kristol, the modern, secular agents of these orthodox-rabbinic traditions were the Anglo-Scottish Enlightenment philosophers and their American revolutionary followers. Romanticising America’s founding generation, Kristol claimed that they had been aware “that republican self-government could not exist if humanity did not possess...the traditional ‘republican virtues’ of self-control, self-reliance, and a disinterested concern of the public good”.<sup>478</sup> The supposedly realistic temperament that drove the formative process of republican democratic theory and practice was, in Kristol’s view, the defining variable in making the American

---

<sup>476</sup> Glazer, “The Limits of Social Policy”, 54.

<sup>477</sup> James Nuechterlein, “Neoconservatism & Irving Kristol”, *Commentary*, August 1984, 43.

<sup>478</sup> Irving Kristol, et al. *The American Revolution: Three Views* (New York: American Brands, Inc., 1975), 29.

Revolution into a successful enterprise, as opposed to the allegedly failed French Revolution, which ultimately ended in tyranny and anarchy.<sup>479</sup>

Kristol applied this highly generalised framework to the analysis of contemporary American society and, by extension, the Western world. Accordingly, the two contending forces within Western societies were the prophetic, millenarian, and perfectionist on the one hand and the rabbinic, meliorative, and practical ones on the other. “For nearly two millennia”, the prophetic forces, however, had the upper hand and had been dismantling Western society, undermining its traditional moral and political values. The crisis of legitimacy that Kristol and his fellow neoconservatives came to diagnose during the 1960s, was brought about by what they considered as the self-destructive forces inherent in Western political and philosophical thought, and more specifically liberalism. The alleged constant drive towards ever greater equality had eroded the bourgeois order, which had kept the excessive selfish individualism of capitalism in check by counter-balancing its drive towards self-interested and hedonistic pursuits with the internalised restraints of self-control, self-discipline and delayed gratification.

The estrangement of capitalism from its original moral codex – which Bell referred to as “The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism”, became in Kristol and Bell’s minds the main problem for American society in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the citizen had been replaced by the de-spiritualised consumer; the bourgeois ethic had been replaced by an all-pervasive consumer ethic. In a special *PI* issue entitled “Capitalism Today”, both Bell and Kristol expressed their concern that “a proudly decadent younger generation and

---

<sup>479</sup> Ideas of the French Revolution as a failed revolution were not new in American thought. Woodrow Wilson, whose Wilsonianism is often said to inform neoconservative foreign policy, believed that the French revolution was a failure. In later years, however, he credited it with doing away with the old regime and making way for the eventual rise of new and free institutions on the European continent. See Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 130.

an adversarial intellectual culture” were spending the remaining moral capital of Western societies.<sup>480</sup> Towards the early 1970s, Kristol began to concentrate most of his energies on cultural commentary and, together with Michael Novak, on developing a defence of corporate capitalism from attacks by critics on the right and on the left. Both pundits saw no alternative to the capitalist system, which they considered the precondition for a society based on political liberty. According to Kristol, “Never in human history has one seen a society of political liberty that was not based on a free economic system...Never, never, never. No exceptions”.<sup>481</sup>

However, Kristol initially advocated a qualified free market defence. In his critique of both capitalism and socialism entitled *Two Cheers for Capitalism*, Kristol argued that while he appreciated the underlying values that had been conducive to the evolvement of the capitalist system, such as hard work, thrift, frugality, moderation, and self-discipline, these values were now receding and all that was left was unrestrained profit motive.<sup>482</sup> He believed that capitalism had become estranged from the moral system that once legitimated. The internalised self-discipline and delayed gratification that had marked the bourgeois personality had been replaced by a culture that was ruled by boundless material acquisition. This libertarian ethic of the business culture in capitalist America enabled it, for example, to make a profit by selling the counterculture. Hence, in “Capitalism, Socialism and Nihilism”, Kristol criticised capitalists for promoting “the ethos of the New Left for only one reason: they cannot think of any reason why they should not. For them, it is ‘business

---

<sup>480</sup> David Skinner, “Farewell to *The Public Interest*”, *Weekly Standard*, April 25, 2005; Irving Kristol, “‘When Virtue Loses All Her Loveliness’ – Some Reflections on Capitalism”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1970, 4-15; Daniel Bell, “The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1970, 16-43.

<sup>481</sup> Irving Kristol, “Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy: A Symposium”, *Commentary*, April 1978, 53-54.

<sup>482</sup> Irving Kristol, *Two Cheers for Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

as usual”.”<sup>483</sup> Therefore, “the idea of bourgeois virtue...has been replaced by the idea of individual liberty”, according to which rationale everything was allowed.<sup>484</sup> When Kristol became a *WSJ* editorialist in 1972, he began to castigate the business establishment for the wasteful salaries paid to its leadership, deceptive and corrupt business practices, and for seemingly failing to enforce a code of ethics.

According to Kristol, one of the main threats emanating from the New Left was that it tried “to fill the spiritual vacuum at the center of our free and capitalist society” that was left by the disintegration of bourgeois morality with its alternative, anti-capitalist visions.<sup>485</sup> The capitalist system, therefore, needed to be re-infused with traditional bourgeois values of self-control and a responsible business culture. Moreover, capitalists needed intellectuals, which would make their case in terms of ideology. Kristol suggested, for example, that corporations “give support to those elements of the New Class – and they exist, if not in large numbers – which do believe in the preservation of a strong private sector”.<sup>486</sup> During the later half of the 1970s, Kristol began promoting “supply side economics”, the conservative alternative to Keynesianism. In 1975, *PI* published the “The Mundell-Laffer Hypothesis – A New View of the World Economy” by economist Jude Wanniski, which was the beginning of *PI*’s promotion of supply side economics, a central rationale, which would inform Ronald Reagan’s economic policy during the 1980s. According to the hypothesis developed by Wanniski, Arthur Laffer and Robert Mundell, the best way to cultivate economic productivity and revenue was by cutting taxes and government spending and let the market do the work. Kristol also financed Wanniski’s *The*

---

<sup>483</sup> Irving Kristol, “Capitalism, Socialism, Nihilism”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 1973, 13.

<sup>484</sup> Kristol, “Capitalism, Socialism, Nihilism”, 13.

<sup>485</sup> Irving Kristol, “The Old Politics, the New Politics, and the New New Politics”, *New York Times Magazine*, November 24, 1968, 177.

<sup>486</sup> Kristol, *Two Cheers for Capitalism*, 145.

*Way the World Works*, through funds he obtained from the Smith Richardson Foundation. Moreover, Kristol helped Wanniski to acquire a fellowship at the American Enterprise Institute.<sup>487</sup>

Towards the late 1960s, Kristol, Bell, Glazer and Podhoretz began to heighten their warnings that alienation from the bourgeois value system was far more pervasive than previously assumed and that it did not just affect the liberal elite. It was a spirit, they claimed, which came “to permeate our college-educated upper middle classes” and since “our society is breeding more and more “intellectuals” and fewer common men and women”, it was producing more citizens who were out of touch with fundamental American values.<sup>488</sup> The central agent of this subversive attitude, they believed were New Class intellectuals, who also had prepared the ground for the countercultural movement of the 1960s and legitimated its alleged anti-bourgeois, anti-authoritarian, and anti-American sentiments.

Yet, in their assessment of the connection between intellectuals and the counterculture, budding neoconservatives distorted the support the counterculture had amongst the American intellectuals, especially amongst academics. As shown by Charles Kadushin’s study of American intellectuals, for example, academics disapproved in great majority of the student movement. Out of 22 professors he questioned with respect to the counterculture, 6 supported it in a qualified way. A study by Seymour Martin Lipset and Everett Carl Ladd Jr., which based itself on the Carnegie Commission’s Survey of Student and Faculty opinion from 1969, moreover demonstrated that university professors were on the whole a lot more moderate with respect to contemporary issues than budding

---

<sup>487</sup> Kristol, “Forty Good Years”, 9; Jude Wanniski, “The Mundel Laffer Hypothesis - A New View of the World Economy Part II”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 1975, 31-52; Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 102.

<sup>488</sup> Kristol, “About Equality”, 42, 44.

neoconservatives made them out to be. Moreover, opinions towards the counterculture amongst elite intellectuals were on average more ambivalent than neoconservative interpretations allowed for.<sup>489</sup>

Nevertheless, Kristol, contemptuous of the perceived ‘radical chic’ of leftist intellectuals, accused intellectuals of the New Class as elitist in “their contempt...for bourgeois civilization”. They did not feel alienated from American society for its “material inequalities”, Kristol claimed, but simply because they rejected “the ethos of bourgeois society”.<sup>490</sup> He claimed that the majority of Americans did not share the New Class agenda, ‘a fact’ neoconservatives argued they understood. Therefore, they, rather than New Class intellectuals, were the defenders of the ‘real’ America. Liberal intellectuals’ supposed concern with egalitarianism and statistical equality was a perversion of real liberalism, one that was being forced onto common Americans by courts and government bureaucracies against their will. Using a vocabulary, which evoked the trope of anti-Semitic denigration of supposed subversive Jewish influence on government, Kristol alleged that behind the concern with equality lay a “a hidden agenda” – in reality New Class intellectuals wanted to move the nation away from “that modified version of capitalism we call ‘the welfare state’ toward an economic system so stringently regulated in detail as to fulfil many of the traditional anticapitalist aspirations of the Left”.<sup>491</sup> Therefore, he pointed out, “it is the self-imposed assignment of neoconservatism to explain to the American people why they are right, and to the intellectuals why they are wrong”.<sup>492</sup>

---

<sup>489</sup> Charles Kadushin, *The American Intellectual Elite* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2006), 282; Everett Carl Ladd, Jr. and Seymour Martin Lipset, *The Divided Academy: Professors and Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975).

<sup>490</sup> Kristol, “About Equality”, 44, 45.

<sup>491</sup> Kristol, *Two Cheers for Capitalism*, 14.

<sup>492</sup> Kristol, “Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy”, 54; Kristol, *Reflections of a Neoconservative*, xiv-xv.

Kristol contended, “the masses of people tend to be more ‘reasonable’...in their political judgments and political expectations than are our intellectuals”; they are “less consumed with egalitarian bitterness or envy than are college professors or affluent journalists”.<sup>493</sup> Yet, as adumbrated above, much of neoconservative writing also testified to a rather suspicious attitude towards ‘the masses’ and an elitism of its own. Neoconservative scepticism towards greater egalitarianism and participatory democracy was constantly undergirded by a fear of the masses “out of control”. They expressed dismay at what they saw as the spreading of rampant individualism, in which self-realisation appeared to be the prevailing mood and violent activism was turned into a mode of politics. Kristol, moreover, repeatedly uttered his discontent at the populist nature of American mainstream society when he, for example, said, “I do not think that the United States is an altogether admirable place...I think its society is vulgar, debased, and crassly materialistic”. Moreover, he claimed, “I think the United States has lost its sense of moral purpose and is fast losing its authentic religious values”.<sup>494</sup>

This was a situation, which, he believed, was further entrenched by New Left liberalism and the counterculture, which, according to Podhoretz, were “all part of a single movement expressing a single impulse and tending toward a single overriding goal”.<sup>495</sup> Therefore, the New Left and the counterculture triggered in many of budding neoconservatives a desire to protect what they believed were values of elementary order, academic freedom, professional standards, and basic human civility. According to Adam Wolfson, editor of *PI* from 1994 to 2005, “Neoconservatism...came into its own in reaction

---

<sup>493</sup> Kristol, “About Equality”, 42, 44.

<sup>494</sup> Irving Kristol, interview with Robert Glasgow, *Psychology Today*, February 7, 1974, 80, cited in: Hoeveler, *Watch on the Right*, 86.

<sup>495</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “Intellectuals at War”, *Commentary*, October 1972, 8.

to the left's nihilistic revolt against conventional morality and religion".<sup>496</sup> Moreover, what shocked most into moving towards the right was the perceived anti-Americanism of the New Left and the counterculture. Jeane Kirkpatrick, political scientist at Georgetown University and future advisor of the Reagan presidency, explained that she was not so much alienated by the fact that the anti-war movement rejected the war, but rather by the fact that it portrayed the U.S. as "immoral – a 'sick society' guilty of racism, imperialism, and murder of Third World people in Vietnam". Because "Neoconservatives were not fundamentally alienated from American life and society", it was this "wholesale assault on the legitimacy of American society", which "became the foundation of the opposing neoconservative position".<sup>497</sup> This perceived "wholesale assault" on America and its underlying values also continued to be *Commentary's* major concern during the later 1960s, which came to promote a full-blown attack on the New Class, New Left and the counterculture from a specifically Jewish perspective.

#### *Commentary*, the Spectre of Anti-Semitism and Jewish Radicals

*Commentary's* discerned need to defend the existing liberal-bourgeois order was driven by the urge to guard Jewish existence therein. In addition to the perceived anti-Americanism of the left, future neoconservatives distanced themselves further from liberalism because of the alleged anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism that, they believed, began emanating from the New Left and African American leaders in the time leading up to and after the Six Day War in 1967. After the United Nations had withdrawn all peace-keeping units from key points in

---

<sup>496</sup> Adam Wolfson, "Conservatives and Neoconservatives", in *Neoconservatism*, ed. Irwin Stelzer (London: Atlantic Books, 2004), 225.

<sup>497</sup> Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Neoconservatism as a Response to the Counter-Culture", in *Neoconservatism*, ed. Irwin Stelzer (London: Atlantic Books, 2004), 239.

Egyptian-ruled Gaza and Sinai, Egypt stationed 1,000 tanks and 100,000 troops on the Israeli border, closed the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli ships and the Arab media had begun beating the drum for Israel's destruction, Israel, fearing a comprehensive attack from Egypt, Syria and Jordan, under the aegis of the Soviet Union, launched a series of pre-emptive air strikes against its hostile Arab neighbours in June 1967.<sup>498</sup> Acquiring the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem in a campaign attesting to "brilliant planning and execution", Israel emerged as the foremost military power in the Middle East. The victory "refuted the notion, common after 1956, that the Jewish state could not defeat Arabs without Western allies".<sup>499</sup>

The Six Day War is generally described as a cataclysmic event for American Jewry, opening the door to a new sense of Jewish pride, and awakening them to Israel and the Holocaust as important markers of American Jewish identity. Cohen and Fein, for example, claimed that while "the weeks before the war had reminded Jews of Jewish vulnerability, the week of the war provided them, for the first time, the experience of Jewish triumph".<sup>500</sup> According to Silberman, the Six Day War replaced efforts by American Jews "to persuade themselves...that they were just like everybody else" with a renewed self-assertiveness and desire for distinctiveness.<sup>501</sup>

Whether the impact of the Six Day War on moving American Jews away from universalism towards particularism was as wholesale and categorical as is often alleged, is questionable and often seems to be exaggerated. It has been demonstrated previously, that the Holocaust and its perceived lessons already had been important issues, and very

---

<sup>498</sup> Arthur Goldschmidt, Jr. and Lawrence Davidson, *A Concise History of the Middle East* (Oxford: Westview Press, 2006), 329-334.

<sup>499</sup> "Terrible Swift Sword", *Newsweek*, June 19, 1967, 24; Goldschmidt, Jr. and Davidson, *A Concise History of the Middle East*, 329.

<sup>500</sup> Cohen and Fein, "From Integration to Survival: American Jewish Anxieties in Transition", 81.

<sup>501</sup> Silberman, *A Certain People*, 201.

conflicting ones at that, amongst American Jews during the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, the defence of and the push towards greater Jewish particularism, as shown, had begun during the early 1960s. The impact of the Six Day War was, according to Michael Staub, not so much to bring these issues to the fore, but rather to consolidate them and to render arguments surrounding Jewish assertiveness and survival even more combative than they already were.<sup>502</sup>

For the formative development of neoconservatism, the war was relevant in the sense that, in its aftermath, neoconservatives felt even more compelled to accelerate their critique of the New Left, the counterculture and Jewish radicals. The interpretation that the events surrounding the war constituted the main push for neoconservatives' right turn, however, oversimplifies the complexity of the ideological shift.<sup>503</sup> The shock and awe engendered by the war certainly constituted an important impetus in the consolidation process of neoconservatism. Nevertheless, as shown, the Jewish dimension of neoconservatism was present long before the Six Day War, contrary to what many analysts of neoconservatism, as for instance Dorrien or Kevin Phillips, have claimed.<sup>504</sup>

The Six Day War contributed to a rising sentiment of doom and gloom about the future of American Jewry in the pages of *Commentary*. While most scholars highlight the positive sense of empowerment the war aroused amongst most Jews, *Commentary* became more pessimistic with respect to the Jewish future after 1967. According to Lucy Dawidowicz, American Jews experienced the Six Day War as “a trauma, perhaps best diagnosed as a reliving of the Holocaust in an eerie awareness of once again being put to

---

<sup>502</sup> Staub, *Torn at the Roots*, 131.

<sup>503</sup> According to Heilbrunn, the Six Day War “gave the first real impetus to the birth of the modern neoconservative movement”. Heilbrunn, *They Knew They Were Right*, 83.

<sup>504</sup> Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 184-192; Kevin Phillips, “The Hype That Roared”, *Politics Today*, May-June 1979, 54-58.

the ultimate test”.<sup>505</sup> Podhoretz argued similarly that the Six Day War raised the spectre of “a second Holocaust”, in that “For the second time in this century...a major community of Jews was being threatened with annihilation...while the world, as it seemed, stood complacently by”. Podhoretz drew the conclusion that American Jews had come to believe that “if Israel were destroyed...the Jews of America would be next”.<sup>506</sup> Moreover, he was convinced that “the new sense of Jewish vulnerability”, which arose during the war, outweighed the sense of triumph and strength Jews felt in light of the successful Israeli operation.<sup>507</sup> In light of the criticism of Israeli action, Podhoretz believed that “the taboo against open expression of anti-Semitism was broken in America” during and after the Six Day War, and that therefore, the “Golden Age of Jewish security” had come to and end. In the aftermath of the war, Dawidowicz expressed her concern that “we are entering a new cycle of antisemitism”.<sup>508</sup> Milton Himmelfarb alleged that, the impact of the war on American Jewry was “a kind of education in reality”. Intertwining America’s and Israel’s destinies, he claimed, “that one reason why we’re more sensible Americans is that Israel has helped us become more sensible generally”.<sup>509</sup>

In the aftermath of the war, Podhoretz and other *Commentary* contributors exaggerated the extent to which the radical left and black leadership instrumentalised anti-Semitic sentiment. It is not an overstatement to say that the magazine became obsessed with uncovering anti-Semitism, using the accusation of anti-Semitism all too lightly. While there were indeed instances of overt anti-Semitism on the left and amongst a number of

---

<sup>505</sup> Lucy S. Dawidowicz, “The Arab-Israel War of 1967”, in *American Jewish Yearbook*, ed. The American Jewish Committee (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1968), 203.

<sup>506</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “A Certain Anxiety”, *Commentary*, August 1971, 4.

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>508</sup> Podhoretz, “A Certain Anxiety”, 8; Podhoretz, “Is It Good for the Jews?” 14; Lucy S. Dawidowicz, Letter to Prof. Gavin I. Langmuir, October 16, 1968, 3, Box 77, Folder 11, LDP.

<sup>509</sup> Milton Himmelfarb, Wiener Oral History Library, July 29, 1981, Transcript, 60-61.

<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*

African Americans, these usages were, nevertheless, found on the fringes of both movements and did not constitute the rule. As a matter of fact, Martin Luther King, Jr., the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League continued to support Israel and speak out against instances of anti-Semitism much more frequently and firmly than white non-Jewish leaders and/or spokespeople of the right.<sup>510</sup>

Moreover, Israel's existential struggle gained much sympathy amongst a great majority of Americans during the Six Day War, a sentiment, which, as shown by Melani McAllister, would continue to grow and not diminish after 1967. At one political rally for instance, 200 pro-Arab protesters were pitted against 20, 000 Israel supporters. The media was mostly sympathetically concerned with Israel in the lead-up, during and after the war. Israel's deployment of military force appeared to many Americans, suffering from the Vietnam failure, a model for the U.S. in terms of how military prowess should be explored efficiently.<sup>511</sup> Additionally, it is questionable to what extent criticism of Israel – which the New Left raised under the banner of anti-colonialism and Third World ideology - automatically constituted a challenge to Israel's existence or even a cover up for anti-Semitism. According to Podhoretz, however, “‘anti-Zionism’ was the order of the day” in the New Left, which, to him, generally translated directly into anti-Semitism, because, he claimed, leftists seemingly could only “tolerate Jews only as victims, not as victors”.<sup>512</sup>

Yet, McAllister demonstrates how Israel became an “icon of positive militarism” in the later half of the 1960s and even more so after the Vietnam War had ended. In light of

---

<sup>510</sup> Nancy MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 216.

<sup>511</sup> Melani McAllister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East Since 1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 155-197.

<sup>512</sup> Podhoretz, “A Certain Anxiety”, 6.

the Vietnam syndrome - “the conservative reinterpretation that viewed the American defeat in Vietnam as a failure of political will” - many Americans, especially conservatives, came to consider Israel “as an example of the positive use of force”, as well as mobilisation of political will. Moreover, defence planners came to believe that Israel “could serve American interests...and back U.S. political and military goals”, a line which *Commentary* had propagated since the 1950s.<sup>513</sup> As such, Kevin Phillip’s assertion that neoconservatives’ excessive focus on Israel would interfere with their capacity of fitting into the larger conservative movement was unfounded.<sup>514</sup> Effectively, Israel came to play an important factor in allying various factions of the emerging New Right, and especially so, when evangelicals emerged as a crucial constituent of the movement. These conservatives admired Israel not only for its military power and perceived moral superiority in the fight against “Arab terrorists”, but also, following evangelical prophetic theology, as an instrument in God’s plan.<sup>515</sup> Accordingly, Israel would be the setting for the Second Coming of the Messiah. Before the millennium of peace could be established, however, all Jews had to reunite in the Promised Land and the Second Temple. Finally, Jews would, in the words of New Right pundit Ann Coulter, become “perfected”, i.e. Christianised.<sup>516</sup>

Hence, towards the end of the 1970s, neoconservatives came to ally themselves, even if uncomfortably, with the Christian Right and repeatedly tried to justify the alliance to fellow Jews, who in great majority continued to identify as liberals and remained especially wary of Christian evangelicals. Kristol, for example, argued that there was no

---

<sup>513</sup> McAllister, *Epic Encounters*, 159, 196.

<sup>514</sup> Phillips, “The Hype That Roared”, 54-58.

<sup>515</sup> The “bible” of fundamentalist interpretations of the relationship between biblical prophecies and contemporary events was Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 1970), which became a bestseller during the 1970s.

<sup>516</sup> Ann Coulter on “The Big Idea” CNBC (October 8, 2007): <http://mediamatters.org/research/200710100008> (accessed September 30, 2009).

reason for American Jews to fear the Christian Right, because their support for Israel “mattered more than evangelicals’ position on other issues”.<sup>517</sup> As shown below, neoconservatives repeatedly defended their alliance with the Christian Right repeatedly in the future and tried to deflect accusations that they were associating themselves with anti-Semites.<sup>518</sup>

While coverage of Israeli affairs and anti-Semitism had received relatively sophisticated and even balanced treatment before and during the war, *Commentary*’s position relative to these issues would harden into an excessive Jewish chauvinism in its wake, as it began to equate almost all criticism of Israel with anti-Zionism, which in turn, it claimed, more often than not, became a stand-in for anti-Semitism. While anti-Zionism was to a small extent infused with anti-Jewish sentiment, equating almost all criticism with anti-Zionism or even anti-Semitism categorically excluded any rational discussion of the issues involved. Throughout the following decades, Podhoretz – self-elected representative of the putative Jewish interest - continued his accusatory laments on the subject of anti-Zionism *qua* anti-Semitism in articles with titles such as “The Abandonment of Israel”, “J’Accuse”, or “The Hate that Dare Not Speak Its Name”.<sup>519</sup>

Yet, it has to be pointed out that a great many Jews, even members of the New Left, were shocked at what they considered as a revival of political anti-Semitism on the left and specifically amongst African Americans. Even some of those who did not initially believe that they should reconsider participation in the New Left, felt as if they were “being forced out of the movement” because of the pre-eminent notion amongst New Leftists that Israel

---

<sup>517</sup> Irving Kristol, “The Political Dilemma of American Jews”, *Commentary*, July 1984, 23-29.

<sup>518</sup> For example Podhoretz’s defence of Pat Robertson against charges of anti-Semitism: Norman Podhoretz, “In the Matter of Pat Robertson”, *Commentary*, August 1995, 27-32.

<sup>519</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Abandonment of Israel”, *Commentary*, July 1976, 23-31; Norman Podhoretz, “J’Accuse”, *Commentary*, September 1982, 21-31; Norman Podhoretz, “The Hate That Dare Not Speak Its Name”, *Commentary*, November 1986, 21-32.

was an “‘imperialist’ or neo-imperialist instrument”.<sup>520</sup> According to Martin Peretz, former New Leftist, editor of *The New Republic* until 2002 and a hawk on foreign policy issues, the ‘debacle’ of the National Conference for New Politics in August of 1967 – at which the black caucus had demanded amongst other things to be given a 50 per cent convention vote and to condemn “the imperialistic Zionist war” - was the “final factor in confirming to me that with...the New Left I had not very much in common, and so I found myself really trying to define an independent position”.<sup>521</sup>

Later, Peretz held Jewish members of the New Left partly responsible for the malaise the U.S. found itself in by the end of the 1960s. He claimed that he had great difficulty relating to broader American culture after the anti-war movement had imploded, coming to understand that, even though not a neoconservative himself, “some of those Commentary and public-interest types are right, much as it pains me to concede it, that...Jewish liberals and...Jewish radicals, are a part of the reason that American self-confidence has been so much undermined and that the American military moves rather more hesitantly than it would have”.<sup>522</sup>

Adding to the discord that had set in between African Americans and Jews after the Six Day War was the Ocean Hill-Brownsville school crisis of 1968, which was emblematic of the tensions that had developed between Jews and African Americans. It pitted a predominately white and Jewish teachers’ union against mainly African American students and parents requesting more control over their children’s education. This translated into a new Ocean Hill-Brownsville school authority transferring numerous white teachers out to other districts. Fearing that community control would break union power, the United

---

<sup>520</sup> Martin Peretz, “The American Left and Israel”, *Commentary*, November 1967, 27.

<sup>521</sup> Martin Peretz, Wiener Oral History Library, December 13, 1973, Transcript, 2.

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

Federation of Teachers, mostly with Jewish membership, went on strike. Consecutively, both sides battled each other with emotional ferocity and defamations, which many observers interpreted as racist and anti-Semitic. Yet, the charges of racism and anti-Semitism obscured the core issue: the desire on behalf of African Americans to be included into a market predominately dominated by Jews. The main issues, which continued to tear at the black-Jewish coalition, were school integration, public subsidies for private schools and affirmative action. In the aftermath of Ocean Hill-Brownsville, many Jews felt betrayed and victimised by a coalition of liberal / black leadership. Neoconservatives stoked the flames by claiming that since some liberal and African American leaders had turned anti-Semitism into “a fashionable item in the American public arena”, American Jews should begin to turn inward and once more ask “a question which has only been asked jokingly for a number of decades: ‘Is it good for the Jews?’”<sup>523</sup>

Apart from African American leaders, the main villains in the alleged re-emergence of anti-Semitism were in *Commentary*’s eyes Jewish radicals. Jews who continued to ally with the New Left, it claimed, had not learned from the Jewish past and wanted to “emulate WASP style”, rejecting their Jewishness.<sup>524</sup> Its fierce attacks on Jewish leftists completely disregarded the deep divisions within the Jewish radical community. According to Michael Staub, even after the Six Day War, there was “an internally diverse” Jewish radical movement. The events of the war, in combination with the self-assertiveness of the Black Power movement, was for example influential in the creation of the *havurah* movement, which sought to fuse Jewish particularism / survivalism with universal principles of the left. While some radicals rejected this approach and continued to promote a more universalist

---

<sup>523</sup> Earl Raab, “The Black Revolution & the Jewish Question”, *Commentary*, January 1969): 32.

<sup>524</sup> Leslie A. Fiedler contribution to Katz, ed. *Negro and Jew*, 29-40.

framework, many “attacked their elders precisely for being too assimilated to mainstream American culture”.<sup>525</sup>

Many of these critical voices were involved with radical Zionist ideas, which linked tactics and sometimes goals of black militancy and the anti-war movement to a reinvigoration of Jewish education, the defence of the rights of Soviet Jewry and even Israel. According to Itzhak Epstein, a founding member of the Jewish Liberation Project, it was the aim of radical Zionism to “create a radical national consciousness” and “avoid becoming pawns of the white power structure”.<sup>526</sup> Jews for Urban Justice rejected what they saw as the widespread acceptance amongst members of the Jewish establishment “of the worst principles of the Pharaohs – racism, their domination, cutthroat competition, exploitation – as their own”. These Jewish leaders were in the eyes of Michael Tabor undermining the “struggle for Jewish survival”.<sup>527</sup> According to David Biale, former leader of the Radical Jewish Union at Berkeley and now professor of Jewish history at Berkeley, it was indeed the intention of Jewish radicals to develop their criticism of American society from a specifically Jewish and anti-establishment perspective, an undertaking, which was characterised by much diversity and competition.<sup>528</sup>

Such subtleties, however, escaped the anti-progressive critics at *Commentary* who, with their alarmist and exaggerated rhetoric contributed to firing black-Jewish tensions by drawing on racist stereotypes of blacks as culturally and socially underdeveloped. Moreover, being radical seemed to be incompatible in their minds with being Jewish. Depicting Jewish radicals as traitors of their own people and self-hating Jews, they claimed

---

<sup>525</sup> Staub, “Negroes are not Jews”, 18.

<sup>526</sup> Itzhak Epstein, “American Jewry: On the Barricades or on the Fence?” *Jewish Liberation Journal*, May 1969, 6.

<sup>527</sup> Michael Tabor, “The Jewish Youth Scene”, *Jewish Currents*, October 1970, 18.

<sup>528</sup> David Biale, email correspondence with author, November 30, 2009.

that the situation of African Americans had by then little to do with white racism and was more the result “of inadequate development of various skills and abilities within the Negro population...and of certain cultural features”.<sup>529</sup> Moreover, according to Milton Himmelfarb, Jewish radicals were the most “anti-Jewish” Jews in history.<sup>530</sup> Glazer continued to draw analogies between Jewish radicals and Nazis, insisting that it was the “Jewish intelligentsia” who “abetted and assisted and advised...the expansion and inflammation of anti-Semitism among blacks” and rationalized the violence that had gripped the country.<sup>531</sup> Glazer, comparing the Black Panthers to Nazis, simultaneously ridiculed Jewish radicals who continued to be involved in black civil rights as self-destructive: “All they can do is give the blacks guns, and allow themselves to become the first victims”.<sup>532</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset argued that “familiar forms of Jewish self-hatred, of so-called ‘Jewish anti-Semitism’” amongst Jewish leftists, were an outgrowth of the fact that these Jews generally had grown up in overly assimilated families. He concluded that Jewish self-hatred was “becoming a major problem for the American Jewish community”.<sup>533</sup> According to Podhoretz, “Jews should recognize the ideology of the radical Left for what it is: an enemy of liberal values and a threat to the Jewish position”.<sup>534</sup>

Towards the end of the 1960s, *Commentary* amplified its campaign to detach Jews from the progressive liberalism and radicalism. According to Earl Raab, “the political liberalism which opened the world to the Jews two centuries ago, has run its course for the Jews in America”. He counselled that the Jewish community, therefore, should abandon

---

<sup>529</sup> Glazer, “Blacks, Jews and the Intellectuals”, 39.

<sup>530</sup> Milton Himmelfarb, “Is American Jewry in Crisis?” *Commentary*, March 1969, 39.

<sup>531</sup> Glazer, “Blacks, Jews and the Intellectuals”, 35.

<sup>532</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>533</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset, “‘The Socialism of Fools’: The Left, the Jews and Israel”, *Encounter*, December 1969, 32-33.

<sup>534</sup> Podhoretz, “A Certain Anxiety”, 10.

“the various forms of self-destructive innocence in which it has been caught and which are so deadly to its identity, to its meaning, and indeed to its very existence”. Conservatism, not liberalism, should guide Jews in the opening of a new political frontier in Jewish American history.<sup>535</sup>

‘Come Home Democrats’: The Coalition for a Democratic Majority and Democrats for Nixon

The social upheavals of the 1960s and the Vietnam War shattered the New Deal coalition and the liberal consensus of the early Cold War years. The decade had seemingly ushered in a new domestic and international order. At the opening of the 1970s, many Americans were fed up with liberal reformism, riots, social disorder and the counterculture. This mood was reflected in the voter realignment of the 1972 presidential election, which had already been clearly visible in 1968. New conservative constituencies emerged in the South, and the Southwest, as well as amongst Catholics and evangelical Protestants.<sup>536</sup> These voters felt unsettled by the perceived intrusion of the Warren Supreme Court into their lives and the social instability of the 1960s, they blamed on the civil rights movement, the New Left and the counterculture. Many felt threatened by what ‘Nixonites’ caricatured as ‘McGovernite’ liberalism, favouring “amnesty, acid, and abortion”; a New Politics, which advocated big government, wealth redistributing in favour of the needy and minorities,

---

<sup>535</sup> Earl Raab, “The Deadly Innocences of American Jews”, *Commentary*, December 1970, 34.

<sup>536</sup> While evangelical Christians began flocking to the Republican Party, it was not until after 1976 that they became an important constituent to it. In 1976, a majority of evangelicals still supported the Democratic candidate Jimmy Carter, an evangelical Christian himself. Micklethwait and Wooldridge, *The Right Nation*, 83.

cultural and social permissiveness and scepticism towards traditional values and American power.<sup>537</sup>

In addition, the 1972 election also saw, for the first time since FDR, a relatively significant, if temporary, shift of Jewish voters towards the Republican Party, ironic in light of the Nixon's antipathy for Jews. Since the New Deal, Jewish voters had consistently given between 75 and 90 per cent of their vote to Democratic presidential candidates. During the 1972 election this number sank to under 70 per cent. According to Podhoretz, some Jews turned away from the Democratic Party not because of affirmative action and Israel *per se*, but because they felt uneasy with, "the entire New Politics Movement", which they perceived as "an assault on the values of the center, the values of...middle class life". Since the majority of American Jews were "loyal to those values", they felt alienated by McGovern.<sup>538</sup> Given the centrality of liberalism for the self-understanding of a large number of Jews, the relative reduction of Jewish support for the Democratic Party led to heated debates about Jews turning towards the Republicans. Many denied this was the case, seeing the shift in the "Jewish vote" as merely "reflective of the shift of the American vote" and that Jews, like other groups voted their self-interest, which "on most issues coincides with larger groups of Americans".<sup>539</sup>

Budding neoconservatives also began to defect from the Democratic Party in 1972. Many of these disgruntled liberals believed that the Democratic Party had given in to forces

---

<sup>537</sup> This quote originally stems from an interview conservative pundit Robert Novak led with a then unnamed Democratic senator. On April 27, 1972 Novak reported in a column that the senator had said of McGovern: "The people don't know McGovern is for amnesty, abortion and legalization of pot. Once middle America - Catholic middle America, in particular - finds this out, he's dead." The label stuck and McGovern became known as the candidate of "amnesty, abortion and acid". On July 15, 2007, Novak disclosed on *Meet the Press* that the unnamed senator was Thomas Eagleton, who would eventually become McGovern's running mate.

<sup>538</sup> NBC Today Show, Interview with Norman Podhoretz on "The Jewish Vote", 10/5/1972, 1-2, Box 3, Interviews & Speeches, 1962-1979, NPP.

<sup>539</sup> Benjamin J. Wattenberg, Wiener Oral History Library, August 11, 1974, Transcript, 31, 36.

of perceived anti-Americanism, anti-Semitism, neo-isolationism and cultural radicalism when McGovern won the presidential nomination. According to Kirkpatrick, the McGovern campaign “adopted as its own a revisionist interpretation of the post-1945 period. In that revisionist view...the United States had major responsibility for the Cold War and Soviet expansion”.<sup>540</sup> Hook alarmingly denounced McGovern in the Socialist Party newspaper *New America* as an appeaser whose “foreign policy smells of ‘the spirit of Munich’”, signalling the Socialist Party’s opposition to the New Politics as elitist, anti-labour and neo-isolationist.<sup>541</sup> A ‘dovish’ approach towards U.S. might would ultimately also mean less support for Israel. McGovern, furthermore, seemed committed to support “quotas” in favour of previously excluded minorities, which according to Glazer, automatically seemed to spell “a restriction on the opportunities of Jews”.<sup>542</sup>

Milton Himmelfarb claimed that American Jews had developed a Wiggish temperament after the War of 1967. Even if they were not becoming more conservative, then at least they were becoming more “natural”, by which he meant that they were becoming more self-assertive with respect to particularly Jewish interests.<sup>543</sup> A lot of projections that Jews were overall becoming more conservative had more to do with wishful thinking, however, than with actual reality. A great majority of Jews continued to identify their interests with liberal values and politics, even if more moderately so than in the past. From the early 1970s onwards, a number of neoconservatives repeatedly expressed the hope that the large majority of Jews, which kept voting for Democratic candidates

---

<sup>540</sup> Kirkpatrick, “Neoconservatism as a Response to the Counter-Culture”, 240.

<sup>541</sup> Sidney Hook, “An Open Letter to George McGovern”, *New America*, September 30, 1972, 4-5. The Socialist Party and the YPSL regrouped as Social Democrats U.S.A. in the aftermath of the McGovern campaign and worked closely with the Coalition for a Democratic Majority.

<sup>542</sup> Nathan Glazer and Milton Himmelfarb, “McGovern and the Jews: A Debate,” *Commentary*, September 1972, 43.

<sup>543</sup> Milton Himmelfarb, “In The Light of Israel’s Victory”, *Commentary*, October 1967, 54-55.

would eventually realise their mistake and heed neoconservatives' calls to join them in their shift to the right. Just as *PI* maintained that it understood what the putative public interest was, so did *Commentary* claim that it knew what was 'good for the Jews', arguing that "Jews must once again begin to look at proposals and policies from the point of view of the Jewish interest" and vote accordingly.<sup>544</sup> That most did not, led to much frustration and incomprehension amongst neoconservatives.<sup>545</sup>

Yet, even if neoconservatives voted Republican for the first time in 1972, this move did not come easily for most. According to Podhoretz, he voted for Nixon, "my first Republican vote ever – because he seemed to me the lesser of two evils".<sup>546</sup> To Kristol, joining the Republican Party felt "as foreign to me as attending a Catholic Mass".<sup>547</sup> Nevertheless, it was his hope that Jewish intellectuals might give American conservatism and the Republican Party "an intellectual vigor and cultural buoyancy it has sadly lacked until now".<sup>548</sup> Yet, most abstained from joining the Republican Party permanently, preferring to remain above party politics throughout the 1970s.

Others voted for McGovern, but half-heartedly, such as Nathan Glazer. He believed that, even though the willingness of the U.S. to go to war for Israel or any other ally, had markedly been reduced because of Vietnam, support for Israel, nevertheless, would remain an important pillar of U.S. foreign policy, whoever would take over the U.S. leadership. Unlike Kristol and Podhoretz, Glazer agreed with McGovern's plan to reduce military

---

<sup>544</sup> Podhoretz, "Is It Good for the Jews?", 7-14; Kristol, "The Political Dilemma of American Jews", 23-29; Irving Kristol, "Liberalism and American Jews", *Commentary*, October 1988, 19-23; Irving Kristol, "On the Political Stupidity of the Jews", *Azure*, Autumn 1999, [www.jewishagency.org/.../English/.../8-kristol.html.htm](http://www.jewishagency.org/.../English/.../8-kristol.html.htm) (accessed September 27, 2009).

<sup>545</sup> Norman Podhoretz, *Why Are Jews Liberals?* (New York: Doubleday, 2009).

<sup>546</sup> Podhoretz, *My Love Affair with America*, 180.

<sup>547</sup> "Godfather of Neoconservatism Dies", *BBC News online*, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/8264260.stm> (accessed September 19, 2009).

<sup>548</sup> Irving Kristol, "Why Jews Turn Conservative," *Wall Street Journal*, September 14, 1972, 18.

spending and U.S. presence in the world, because he believed that military engagement in Western Europe was no longer necessary and the American military activities in Asia had been a disaster.<sup>549</sup> There were others, who were moving away from the left, yet remained unwilling to vote for a Republican candidate. They would, as in the case of Peretz, also support McGovern despite the fact that they personally disapproved of him. Peretz claimed he voted for McGovern “out of a sense of obligation to the liberal body politic with tremendous resentment and...with a sense of contempt for him”.<sup>550</sup>

The fact that neoconservatives had not yet given up completely on the Democratic Party as the best vehicle for their ideas was signified also by the fact that after Nixon was elected to the White House, a number of them, in coalition with academics, politicians and labour leaders, announced the formation of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM) in *The New York Times* on December 7, 1972. The CDM was, in the words of Sara Diamond, “the first organized network of neoconservatives and their allies since the dissolution of the Congress for Cultural Freedom”.<sup>551</sup> Under the headline “Come Home Democrats” – in allusion to McGovern’s campaign slogan “Come Home America” – they announced that McGovern’s defeat had been a clear rejection of his politics by average Americans because it was “unrepresentative of traditional Democratic principles” and that it was time the Democratic Party remember its tradition and take heed of “the wishes and hopes of a majority of the American people”. CDM had about 70 sponsors, including Podhoretz, Bell, Glazer, Lipset, Michael Novak, Richard Pipes, Paul Seabury, Albert Shanker, Ben Wattenberg, Bayard Rustin, Max Kampelman, Jeane Kirkpatrick and Midge

---

<sup>549</sup> Glazer and Himmelfarb, “McGovern and the Jews: A Debate”, 43-47. In May 1971 *Commentary* published an article in which Glazer called for the immediate withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam: Nathan Glazer, “Vietnam: The Case for Immediate Withdrawal”, *Commentary*, May 1971, 33-37.

<sup>550</sup> Peretz, Wiener Oral History Library, 12.

<sup>551</sup> Sara Diamond, *Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1995), 193.

Decter. It rallied conservative Democrats who favoured ‘peace through strength’ and rejected the politics of those, who were supposedly hostile to ‘ordinary’, working-class Americans and had “sneered at the greatness of America”.<sup>552</sup>

### Conclusion

Michael Harrington coined the term neoconservatism in 1973, in reference to a number of his fellow intellectuals from the anti-communist left who had deserted liberalism because of the perceived failures of the welfare state. According to Harrington, these failures were the driving force behind “the rise of neoconservative thought in the seventies”.<sup>553</sup> While the article correctly pointed to the centrality of social policy in the emergence of neoconservatism, it simultaneously misrepresented it. The analysis of *PI*, in combination with *Commentary*, demonstrates the extent to which early neoconservatism was more polymorphous, multi-levelled and incoherent than is usually assumed by critics and defenders alike. Moreover, *PI* was much more than just a social policy journal, but an ideologically driven enterprise from the start, refuting popular interpretations, according to which neoconservatism began as a ‘meliorist’ approach shifting towards an ideological outlook only towards the later 1970s. *PI*’s focus on domestic issues was part of a much broader rationale, which sought to develop ideas for a “welfare state consistent with the basic moral principles of our civilization and the basic political principles of our nation”.<sup>554</sup>

Contending that a majority of Americans – the ‘real’ Americans – did not support Great Society liberalism, incipient neoconservatives began to frame those who promoted

---

<sup>552</sup> “Come Home Democrats”, *The New York Times*, December 7, 1972, 14; “Come Home Democrats”, *The Washington Post*, December 7, 1972, A6.

<sup>553</sup> Michael Harrington, “The Welfare State and Its Neoconservative Critics”, *Dissent*, Fall 1973, 435-454.

<sup>554</sup> Kristol, “A Conservative Welfare State”, 145.

the new liberalism as elitist – reflected by the concept of the New Class. Neoconservatives in turn, presented themselves as self-styled populist majoritarians, whose objective was to defend ‘real’ America against a ‘perverted’ egalitarianism and anti-Americanism of New Class intellectuals. While Kristol acknowledged that neoconservatives were “part of the same New Class” and they, like the New Class sought political power, neoconservatives remained true to the real liberalism and American values, while the New Class used liberalism just as “a vehicle for gaining power for themselves” on the backs of ‘ordinary’ Americans.<sup>555</sup> In light of what has been demonstrated, this claim was indeed absurd because neoconservatives were a minority voice without any grassroots support and therefore very different from the actual populist majoritarians of the burgeoning New Right.

Even though the literature generally reduces neoconservatism either to a public policy or a foreign policy rationale, contiguous evaluation of both *Commentary* and *PI* demonstrates that the domestic and international spheres were interdependent for budding neoconservatives. *PI* was driven by a desire to define a vision of an American welfare state compatible with neoconservative’s vision of the U.S. as a powerful global player. Accordingly, the U.S. needed a healthy and morally armed society, in order to fulfil its supposed destiny of national greatness. Kristol concluded “Imperial powers need social equilibrium at home if they are to act effectively in the world”.<sup>556</sup> Neoconservatives believed it to be their vocation to re-infuse the American people and leadership with confidence in the nation’s morality and purpose and to shed the self-doubt and self-loathing that was introduced into the American psyche by the liberal establishment.

---

<sup>555</sup> Irving Kristol, interview with Gary Dorrien, March 21, 1990, cited in: Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 102.

<sup>556</sup> Kristol, *On the Democratic Idea in America*, 87.

Lastly, another layer of complexity is added to the emergence of neoconservatism by *Commentary*'s continued critique of liberalism. *Commentary* articulated the frontal assault on the new liberalism in a much more straightforward, unpretentious manner than *PI*. It also directly voiced the Jewish dimension of the neoconservative critique of liberalism, by which it came to define itself as the self-chosen representative of what it believed constituted Jewish interests. Part of this process, as shown and as will be demonstrated in further detail below, was an effort to 'ex-communicate' those Jews who did not agree with *Commentary*'s vision what being Jewish had come to signify by the later 1960s. As *Commentary* and *PI* redefined what it meant to be a 'real' American, *Commentary* defined the parameters what it meant to be a 'real' Jew. In this endeavour, both *PI* and *Commentary* were often much closer to the conservative mainstream than has often been claimed. Moreover, for all of neoconservatives' emphasis on ethnic distinctiveness, their criticism of liberalism was articulated from the vantage point of establishment privilege.

**Chapter 5**  
**‘Come On In, the Water’s Fine’:**  
**Towards a Consolidation of**  
**the Neoconservative Critique, 1972-1980**



Introduction

At the turn of the decade, neoconservatism burst onto the national stage. Robert Bartley of *WSJ* acknowledged Podhoretz as “a pro-American type of intellectual” and neoconservatives for “starting to speak up, to launch vigorous counterattacks on the chic radicalism, to debunk the debunkers”.<sup>557</sup> According to Bartley, they addressed timely questions, such as the “collapse of values. The place of tradition in a time of change...The place of an intellectual elite in a nation where...only eleven percent of adults have completed four years in college”.<sup>558</sup>

In 1976, Anthony Lewis drew attention to the emerging alliance between the defence establishment and a number of policy intellectuals who were “strong supporters of Israel” and staunch proponents of “larger U.S. defense budgets”. Lewis identified these intellectuals as a number of writers around *Commentary*, with close ties to Senators Henry M. Jackson of Washington and Daniel Moynihan of New York.<sup>559</sup> A year later, Terence Smith partially credited *Commentary* and *PI* pundits for the success of the burgeoning New Right and its effective appropriation of leftist tactics. He described them as proponents of

---

<sup>557</sup> Robert L. Bartley, “A Most Improbable ‘Conservative’”, *Wall Street Journal*, November 10, 1970, 18; For comments from the left see Louis Harap, “*Commentary* Moves to the Right”, *Jewish Currents*, December 1971, 4-9; Merle Miller, “Why Norman and Jason Aren’t Talking” *The New York Times*, March 26, 1972, 34-35.

<sup>558</sup> Robert L. Bartley, “Irving Kristol and Friends”, *The Wall Street Journal*, May 3, 1972, 20.

<sup>559</sup> Anthony Lewis, “The Brooding Hawks”, *The New York Times*, February 10, 1977, 68-72.

the free market, opponents of affirmative action and agitators against the latent anti-Semitism that supposedly was rearing its ugly head on the left.<sup>560</sup>

This chapter examines how neoconservatives “joined the ranks”, albeit uncomfortably and hesitantly, of the emerging New Right, which, in the words of Sara Diamond, brought together the “fusionist triad of moral traditionalism, economic libertarianism, and militarist anti-communism”.<sup>561</sup> These new conservatives differed from the old conservatives mainly in the sense that, despite of their anti-government rhetoric, they were less concerned with the size, scope, or intrusiveness of government than with the purposes of governmental activism. In the words of Alan Brinkley, their main intent was to use government to cleanse “American culture and politics of what they consider its relativistic, anti-traditional character”.<sup>562</sup> In this context, neoconservatives slowly came to realise that their conceptions of the good society – which were dependent on a highly interventionist government - could possibly find a place within the new conservatism. Yet, throughout the 1970s, they continued to vacillate between the Democratic and the Republican parties – between revisionist liberalism and new conservatism. Their migration into the New Right would only be sealed with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980.

As the pace with which former leftist intellectuals were moving to the right accelerated, *National Review* conservatives began to take notice of them, even though they feared that neoconservative ideas might be “insufficiently rooted in serious political realities, in general principle, or coherent intellectual tradition”.<sup>563</sup> James Burnham, a former Marxist turned conservative, suggested that neoconservatives were in a “transitional

---

<sup>560</sup> Terence Smith, “Opinion in U.S. Swinging to Right, Pollsters and Politicians Believe”, *The New York Times*, December 4, 1977, 76.

<sup>561</sup> Nash, “Joining the Ranks”, 151-173; Diamond, *Roads to Dominion*, 179.

<sup>562</sup> Alan Brinkley, “The Problem of American Conservatism”, *American Historical Review* 99, no. 2 (April 1994): 423.

<sup>563</sup> William F. Buckley, “Split in the Family?” *National Review*, December 15, 1970, 1335.

stage”, but that their ideology would eventually “develop further into a more integral outlook” of the right, even if not into conventional conservatism.<sup>564</sup> William Buckley applauded *Commentary*’s articles on “Revolutionism and the Jews”, which electrified him because of their “explicit disavowal of Jewish participation” in the New Left and the counterculture and because they condemned “Jewish support for revolutionary groups...as ‘Jewish antisemitism’”. He claimed that these articles said, “about the Jewish intellectual establishment in America what no non-Jew could say without being thought prejudiced”. Encouraging neoconservatives to take the final leap and positively embrace conservatism, Buckley reassuringly summoned them to “Come on in, the Water’s Fine”.<sup>565</sup>

By 1970, both New Right conservatives and neoconservatives were plagued by severe doubts about the moral fabric of American society and about the effectiveness of American power. Neoconservatives and the New Right conservatives of *National Review* contributed to channelling popular conservatism’s traditional resentment of big business towards an allegedly intrusive and oppressive federal government and liberal ‘establishment’. Successfully redefining the enemy of the American people as the New Class/liberal ‘establishment’ was, according to Christopher Lasch, one of the neoconservatives’ crucial contribution to the rise of the New Right.<sup>566</sup> Neoconservatives also shared with New Right conservatives the belief that modern American society, under the aegis of New Left liberalism, had come to overemphasise individual rights and freedoms at the expense of communal moral standards and traditional values. Together with

---

<sup>564</sup> James Burnham, “Selective, Yes. Humanism, Maybe”, *National Review*, May 12, 1972, 516.

<sup>565</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Revolutionism and the Jews: The Role of the Intellectuals”, *Commentary*, February 1971, 55-61; Walter Z. Laqueur, “Revolutionism and the Jews: New York and Jerusalem”, *Commentary*, February 1971, 38-46; Robert Alter, “Revolutionism and the Jews: Appropriating the Religious Tradition”, *Commentary*, February 1971, 47-54; Norman Podhoretz, “The Tribe of the Wicked Son”, *Commentary*, February 1971, 6-10; William F. Buckley, “Come On In, the Water’s Fine”, *National Review*, March 9, 1971, 249-250.

<sup>566</sup> Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven*, 512.

traditional conservatives, neoconservatives began to call for “a relegitimation of traditional centers of authority” and “a refurbishment of American nationalism”.<sup>567</sup>

While neoconservatives played an important role in the success of the New Right indeed, it needs to be pointed out that claims, according to which neoconservatives were the major force in rendering New Right conservatism socially acceptable, exaggerate their influence. By 1970, when neoconservatives were still vacillating in a ‘neither-here-nor-there’ position, New Right conservatism already had begun entering the mainstream. For example, the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), a conservative youth organisation founded in 1960 with fewer than a hundred members, was, with a membership of 50,000 “the largest non-party political organization in the country” by 1970.<sup>568</sup> In the same year, *National Review* celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with more than 100, 000 subscribers. The early 1970s also saw the publication of a number of anthologies on conservative thought.<sup>569</sup>

Moreover, even though neoconservatives claimed to know what was best for the grassroots base, they did not interact with those important elements of the emerging conservative movement, but preferred to focus on the upper echelon of society. Neoconservatives’ allegation that they were majoritarians who spoke on behalf of ‘common’ Americans appears irrational and if not hypocritical on account of the fact that they acted from within the realms of established privilege and, unlike the real majoritarians

---

<sup>567</sup> Brinkley, “The Problem of American Conservatism”, 422.

<sup>568</sup> “YAF 10”, *New Guard*, September 1970, 7.

<sup>569</sup> William F. Buckley Jr., ed., *American Conservative Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970); Robert L. Schuettinger, ed., *The Conservative Tradition in European Thought: An Anthology* (New York: Putnam, 1970); Peter P. Witonski, ed., *The Wisdom of Conservatism* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1970); David Brudnoy, ed., *The Conservative Alternative* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1973); Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*, 526.

of the New Right, had no connection at all with the bedrock of the movement.<sup>570</sup> Extending their power beyond the world of essay- and article writing, organising conferences and giving speeches, neoconservatives busied themselves building strategic alliances with think tanks, the corporate world, conservative academics, political advisors and politicians themselves.

During the 1970s neoconservatives also began to speak more with one voice. While they continued to hold highly individualistic views and contend with each other, the main protagonists, Podhoretz and Kristol, nevertheless, began to draw closer to each other, illustrated, for example, by the fact that Kristol wrote again more frequently for *Commentary* during the 1970s and the 1980s. In the public mind, they would become so closely identified with each other that they seemed to merge into one person. Buckley, in one famous example, ended a conversation with Podhoretz on *Firing Line* with the words: “Thank you very much, Mr. Irving Podhoretz”.<sup>571</sup>

#### ‘Into the Right’: Neoconservative Institution- and Coalition Building

Since neoconservatives’ “small numbers precluded their becoming major players in electoral politics” they began creating a network of “ties with national security elites” and corporate business, which sought to pour money into business-friendly “think tanks, university programs, and journals”, all of which were places “most hospitable to

---

<sup>570</sup> Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

<sup>571</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “In Search of Anti-Semitism”, S0948, Host: William F. Buckley, Jr., Guest: Norman Podhoretz, taped November 4, 1992, *Firing Line* Collection, Box 76, Hoover Institution Archives, Transcript, p. 11.

neoconservative intellectuals”.<sup>572</sup> By positioning themselves strategically “in the marketplace of ideas”, neoconservatives consolidated their ideas and joined forces with equal-minded pundits of the New Right.<sup>573</sup>

In the early 1970s William Baroody, Sr., head of the AEI and former advisor in Barry Goldwater’s presidential campaign, became aware of the pundits around *PI* and *Commentary*. In order to challenge the influence of liberal institutions, such as the Brookings Institute, he began recruiting corporate support and new minds, as for instance the libertarian economist Milton Friedman and neoconservatives, such as Kristol, Ben Wattenberg, Michael Novak and Jeane Kirkpatrick. The AEI became one of the first conservative think tanks to propagate ‘fusionist’ conservatism, with a main focus on free market ideology. Throughout the 1970s, the AEI was joined by other think tanks and foundations, such as the Harry and Lynde Bradley Foundation, the John M. Olin Foundation, the Heritage Foundation, the Hoover Institute, the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, the Cato Institute, and the Ethics and Public Policy Centre.<sup>574</sup>

Moreover, Kristol’s diatribes against the New Class, the tendency of business to sell out to it and his plea for a reinvigorated capitalist culture had come to the attention of William E. Simon, who had served as Secretary of the Treasury under Nixon and looked to fund “intellectual refuges for the non-egalitarian scholars and writers in our society who today work largely alone in the face of overwhelming indifference and hostility”. He believed that these “non-egalitarian” intellectuals “must be given grants, grants and more

---

<sup>572</sup> Diamond, *Roads to Dominion*, 198.

<sup>573</sup> Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 12.

<sup>574</sup> MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 240.

grants in exchange for books, books and more books”, in order to counteract “the despotic aspects of egalitarianism” and promote “the struggle for individual liberty”.<sup>575</sup>

Together, Kristol and Simon founded the Institute for Educational Affairs, which sought to spread conservative ideas, especially relative to market liberalisation, on college campuses, sponsoring for example a network of conservative newspapers at colleges and universities, amongst others the *Dartmouth Review*. Its donations mainly came from foundations such as John M. Olin Foundation, the Scaife Family Trusts, the JM Foundation, the Smith-Richardson Foundation, as well as big business, such as Coca-Cola, Dow Chemical, Ford Motor, and General Electric to name but a few. Kristol also mobilised grants for the formation of *This World* (later renamed *First Things*), edited by Richard Neuhaus, which dealt with the role of religion in society. In the 1980s Kristol was able to secure funding from the Olin Foundation in order to create the foreign policy journal *The National Interest*. In all these activities, Kristol stood out for his supreme networking and sourcing talents.<sup>576</sup>

Meanwhile, Kristol continued his campaign to reform the ethics of American business and develop an ideological defence of the capitalist system against perceived efforts of the New Left to discredit it. Since he believed that the New Left was trying to bring an end to “the sovereignty over our civilization of the common man”, its primary aim was to bring about “the death of the “economic man”, because “it is in the marketplace that this sovereignty is most firmly established”.<sup>577</sup> In his desire to reappraise the capitalist system, Kristol came to the attention of Robert Bartley, who had taken a liking to *PI*. In a 1972 article, entitled “Irving Kristol and Friends”, Bartley pointed out that “a new group of

---

<sup>575</sup> William E. Simon, *A Time For Truth* (New York: Reader’s Digest Press, 1978), 231, 227.

<sup>576</sup> Diamond, *Roads to Dominion*, 198-200.

<sup>577</sup> Kristol, “Capitalism, Socialism, and Nihilism”, 9.

thinkers had emerged who were making an original contribution” to American conservatism.<sup>578</sup> The same year, Kristol began writing a monthly column for the *WSJ*. In the late 1960s, Kristol had also taken up the post as Henry Luce Professor of Urban Values at the New York University, which he secured with Sidney Hook’s support. This was certainly an interesting development in light of Kristol’s seemingly low esteem of students and academia more generally.

While Kristol joined a monthly lunch group with Buckley, which called itself “the Boys Club”, Podhoretz began corresponding with Buckley in early 1972 and invited him to participate at a *Commentary* symposium in 1973, which Buckley was unable to attend, however, due to illness.<sup>579</sup> These were signs that both sides, who until recently had been relatively suspicious of each other, were discovering common ground and were willing to exchange ideas. Yet, neoconservatives also continued to aspire reviving the Vital Centre, which had collapsed over the Vietnam War.<sup>580</sup> In the past, *Commentary* had denounced *National Review* on several occasions. In 1953, Dwight McDonald referred to *National Review* writers as “Scrambled Eggheads on the Right” and Richard Rovere described Goldwater/Buckley style conservatism as devoid of “any ideas that can be given institutional form” and driven by the axiom that “politics can offer nothing in the way of amelioration”. Moreover, Rovere accused both Goldwater and Buckley of promoting an ideology, which “denies history’s relevance to itself” and was “almost nothing but insults to the intelligence”.<sup>581</sup>

---

<sup>578</sup> Bartley, “Irving Kristol and Friends”, 20-28; Irving Kristol, “Robert L. Bartley, 1937-2003”, *The Weekly Standard*, December 22, 2003: <http://www.aei.org/article/19627> (accessed May 13, 2009); Israel Shenker, “Ideological Labels Changing Along With the Label-Makers”, *The New York Times*, November 12, 1970, 45.

<sup>579</sup> MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 196.

<sup>580</sup> Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks*, 356; Podhoretz, interview with author, May 17, 2008.

<sup>581</sup> Dwight McDonald, “Scrambled Eggheads on the Right”, *Commentary*, April 1956, 367-373; Richard H. Rovere, “The Conservative Mindlessness”, *Commentary*, March 1965, 38-42.

Neoconservatives had been uneasy with conservatism's historical connection to anti-Semitism, its perceived unsophisticated nature and anti-intellectualism, its rejection of universal suffrage and civil rights, its hostility to labour unions and New Deal type welfare, and its association with devotees to pre-modern ascriptive social hierarchies, such as Richard Weaver.<sup>582</sup> Neoconservatives did not yearn to revive medieval Christendom or the pseudo-feudalism of the Old South. Yet, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Buckley engaged in conscious efforts to disassociate himself and his magazine from these tendencies and the 'lunatic fringe' - one reason why an alliance between neoconservatives and *National Review* conservatives became possible in the first place.<sup>583</sup> Nevertheless, throughout the 1970s, neoconservatives continued to view these "ideological conservatives" as unsophisticated, since they were, in the words of Midge Decter, "with a few exceptions still sulking in their cultural tents".<sup>584</sup> Yet, by the beginning of the 1970s, an alliance between neoconservatives and *National Review* conservatives began to seem preferable to one with liberals who appeared to be speaking a different language altogether.

Throughout the 1970s, therefore, both sides began to approximate each other, as neoconservatives realised that their chances of re-capturing the Democratic Party and resuscitating Cold War liberalism of the 1950s with old allies were fading. Moreover, for *National Review* conservatives, the neoconservatives had the advantage that, as former leftists, they "knew their enemy intimately".<sup>585</sup> In addition, as well-established members of the intellectual elite, they could reach out to people who had previously been inaccessible

---

<sup>582</sup> Buckley supported Southern segregationists, claiming that Southern whites were right to reject integration because blacks were culturally and politically still inferior to them. After some conservatives objected, Buckley suggested instead that both uneducated whites and blacks should be denied the vote. He later revised his position on segregation. "Why the South Must Prevail", *National Review*, August 24, 1957, 148-149.

<sup>583</sup> Podhoretz, "Neoconservatism: A Eulogy", 21.

<sup>584</sup> Midge Decter, "Socialism's Nine Lives", *Commentary*, June 2002, 30.

<sup>585</sup> Nash, "Joining the Ranks", 158.

to intellectually marginalised conservatives. A number of traditionalist conservatives, however, had been and continued to be highly suspicious of neoconservatives, because of their past alliance with radicalism and liberalism and their affinity for Wilsonian-style democracy promotion. These conservatives were generally described as the heirs of the anti-statist, non-interventionist Taft-wing of American conservatism and the tradition of Midwestern isolationism and Southern Agrarianism.<sup>586</sup>

Russell Kirk, the leading traditionalist intellectual and author of *The Conservative Mind*, described neoconservatives as a “little sect” who were unable to grasp “the human condition”, doubtful of the “accumulated wisdom of our civilisation” and prone “to engage in ideological sloganeering”, which Kirk equated with “the death of political imagination”.<sup>587</sup> The most inflammatory accusation, which traditionalist conservatives would level repeatedly throughout the next decades, was that neoconservatives were unconcerned with the American interest. A regular GOP contender for the presidential nomination, Patrick Buchanan, claimed that neoconservatives, in reference to the Iraq War, “seek to ensnare our country in a series of wars that are not in America’s interests”.<sup>588</sup> Paul Gottfried believed that they were unreconstructed social democrats, who were “with the Left even if their expense accounts come from the right”.<sup>589</sup> Buchanan, who, in competition with neoconservatives for America’s conservative heritage, was categorised as paleo-conservative during the latter 1980s, referred to neoconservatives as “ideological vagrants” and “boat-people from the McGovern revolution” and expressed his discontent at the

---

<sup>586</sup> Brian Patrick Mitchell, *Eight Ways to Run the Country: A New and Revealing Look at the Left and the Right* (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007), 89-90.

<sup>587</sup> Russell Kirk, *The Politics of Prudence* (Bryn Mawr, Pa.: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1993): 187.

<sup>588</sup> Ibid., 180; Patrick J. Buchanan, “Whose War?” *American Conservative*, May 24, 2002: <http://www.amconmag.com/article/2003/mar/24/00007/> (accessed October 15, 2009).

<sup>589</sup> Paul Gottfried, “Notes on Neoconservatism”, *World and I*, September 1986, 576.

amount of power they had allegedly harnessed within the conservative movement by the 1990s.<sup>590</sup>

Neoconservatives themselves, however, claimed to uphold the common sense of ‘ordinary’ Americans against what they described as an elitist, un-American, liberal minority that allegedly had usurped American cultural, educational, and political life. They suggested that it was their mission to dismantle “the typical New York Jewish view of the world, that people who weren’t from New York and Jewish were unfortunate” because “they ate Wonderbread and mayonnaise and had boring existences”.<sup>591</sup> This claim sat awkwardly with the neoconservatives’ own elitist positions and views, as well as with the fact that they were self-professed public intellectuals, most of whom were of Jewish background, wanting to represent a constituency, which was primarily working to middle-class, from the heartland of America, where devout interpretations of Christianity and a deeply rooted anti-intellectualism were pervasive. It is also in this sense, that neoconservatives continued to constitute an ‘outsider’ element within the New Right.

Yet, neoconservatives embraced a rhetoric which asserted that they knew how to defend the hard-working, community-minded suburbanites, which David Brooks referred to as “the ubermoms, the workaholic corporate types” from the dominant liberal elite.<sup>592</sup> Their romanticised image depicted ‘average’ Americans as a “transcendent nation infused with everyday utopianism”, which believed that there continued to be a morally defined

---

<sup>590</sup> Kirk, *The Politics of Prudence*, 180; Patrick J. Buchanan, “Whose War?” (accessed October 15, 2009).

<sup>591</sup> Kristol, interview with author, August 15, 2008; cited in: James Atlas, “The Counter Counterculture”, *The New York Times*, February 12, 1995, <http://www.nytimes.com/1995/02/12/magazine/the-counter-counterculture.htm> (accessed November 8, 2009).

<sup>592</sup> David Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There* (New York: Touchstone, 2000).

common good beyond purely individual interests.<sup>593</sup> Drawing on ideas of ‘mediated democracy’ which according to the neoconservative interpretation had been articulated originally by the founding fathers of the American experiment, they claimed that while liberal intellectuals felt alienated from American values and the American way of life, the majority of Americans did not and nor did neoconservatives.<sup>594</sup>

Indeed, many neoconservative ideas were not running counter to the emerging “silent majority” mainstream, as has so often been maintained by traditional interpretations of neoconservatism and even neoconservatives themselves.<sup>595</sup> According to Thomas Frank, neoconservatism was an integral part of a New Right politics of “backlash”, whose “basic premise”, following Kevin Phillips, “is that culture outweighs economics as a matter of public concern”. Frank, however, exaggerated the extent to which it was neoconservatism, which introduced this rationale into New Right thought.<sup>596</sup> Nevertheless, the stress that neoconservatives placed on ideology and culture provided them with cogent resources in their ascendancy to power and allowed them to fit in with larger tendencies within the conservative intellectual arena.

Phillips, the mastermind behind Nixon’s “southern strategy”, referred to neoconservatives as “distressed ex-liberal Democrats” and doubted that they would be able to gain real political power, because of the weight they were giving to Israeli security questions. Phillips’ reduction of neoconservatism to an excessive concern with Israel was not only a severe misperception of neoconservative ideas, but their successful rise during

---

<sup>593</sup> David Brooks, *On Paradise Drive: How We Live Now (And Always Have) In the Future Tense* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 267.

<sup>594</sup> Michael C. Williams, *Culture and Security: Symbolic Power and the Politics of International Security* (London: Routledge, 2007), 111.

<sup>595</sup> Nash, “Joining the Ranks”, 155.

<sup>596</sup> Thomas Frank, *What’s Wrong With America?: The Resistible Rise of the American Right* (London: Secker and Warburg, 2004), 6.

the 1970s and 1980s also showed that concern for Israel was more widespread amongst the American public than Phillips had expected.<sup>597</sup> While Israel was relatively irrelevant to Americans during the 1950s and early 1960s, by the end of the 1970s that circumstance had undergone profound change. Yet, it was indeed a specific conception of Jewish interests – but not exclusively in terms of Israeli security – which deeply impacted on the rightward trajectory of Jewish neoconservatives.<sup>598</sup>

According to Phillips, the populist conservatism of the New Right reflected the anger and expectations of ‘ordinary’ Americans, who sought to defend their lifestyle against perceived encroachments of the liberal ‘establishment’. Phillips predicted that urban Catholics, blue-colour suburbanites, the ‘sun belt’ and ‘Bible belt’ states of the South and the Southwest, as well as residents of the rural North would flock to the Republican Party and come to constitute the emerging Republican majority. These were not the paranoid eccentrics consensus historian Richard Hofstadter had written about, but the “silent majority” of the American people, Goldwater’s “forgotten Americans”.<sup>599</sup> In opposition to the populist, ‘anti-establishment’ conservatism of the Republican Party, Phillips assumed that the Democratic Party would come to represent the liberal ‘establishment’: the media, universities, the Supreme Court, Episcopalians and those who benefited from “institutionalized welfare liberalism”.<sup>600</sup>

Ben Wattenberg, former speechwriter for LBJ and budding neoconservative, together with Richard Scammon, political scientist and elections analyst, agreed with

---

<sup>597</sup> Phillips, “The Hype That Roared”, 54-58.

<sup>598</sup> Podhoretz, “A Certain Anxiety”, 4-10.

<sup>599</sup> Richard Hofstadter, “The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt – 1954”, in *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 41-65; Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Majority* (New York: Basic Books, 1970).

<sup>600</sup> Kevin Phillips, *Post-Conservative America: People, Politics and Ideology in a Time of Crisis* (New York: Vintage, 1982); Kevin Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority* (New York: Doubleday, 1970).

Phillips' assessment that social rather than economic issues had come to determine electoral politics by the late 1960s. Nevertheless, holding out hope to recapture the Democratic Party, they did not believe that Americans were by majority conservative or Republican, but rather, they claimed, most Americans were "centrists" - like neoconservatives themselves. In order for the Democratic Party to regain pre-eminence, Scammon and Wattenberg advised, it should not shy away from social issues, such as law and order, crime, drugs, pornography, sexual permissiveness, riots, and anti-social behaviour. These issues were not shorthand for racism, they argued, but legitimate concerns and if the Democrats were to further ignore these matters, Phillip's prediction of a Republican majority would indeed come true.<sup>601</sup>

Jerome Himmelstein's top-down history of modern American conservatism credited effective "resource mobilisation" by conservative leaders with the successful rise of the New Right. These conservatives, claimed Himmelstein, built a broad conservative coalition by combining militant anti-communism, and libertarian and normative elements of conservatism into an ecumenical ideology. To reach out to the electorate, they re-fashioned an eclectically informed conservative ideology, fed by of a conservative populist language, which drew on the image of neither being complete outsiders nor insiders to the halls of power. While correctly pointing to the successful coalition building strategy, Himmelstein neglects to consider seriously the relevance of the populist idiom in the rise of the New Right.<sup>602</sup>

---

<sup>601</sup> Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg, *The Real Majority: An Extraordinary Examination of the American Electorate* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1970); Podhoretz similarly claimed that voters were not loyal to either one party "but to the center". NBC Today Show, "The Jewish Vote", Interview with Norman Podhoretz, November 5, 1972, Transcript, 4, NPP.

<sup>602</sup> Jerome L. Himmelstein, *To The Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

In *The Populist Persuasion*, Michael Kazin showed how populism began to shift from the political left to the right during the 1940s; around the same time neoconservatives began their long journey to the right. Traditionally, the populist style was the purview of reform and radical movements, such as the Populists, the Progressives, or the Prohibitionists. Populist language, which, according to Kazin, described “ordinary people as a noble assemblage not bound narrowly by class” and considered “elite opponents as self-serving and undemocratic”, out to “pollute any segment of society they could grasp”, was transformed not to promote social change but to stall and reverse it.<sup>603</sup>

American populism always claimed to defend the rights and the life-style of the virtuous people against the perversions and exploitations of the elite, which was at one point in history a “pro-British cabal of merchants, landholders and conservative clerics”, at another “the ‘money power’ directed by well-born cosmopolitans”.<sup>604</sup> For neoconservatives and the New Right, it was the New Class, or the liberal establishment – represented for example by the McGovernites, who, according to Podhoretz, refused “to take the popular will seriously” and disdained “the majority of the American people, for their sensibilities, for their political values, for their sense of themselves as a nation”.<sup>605</sup>

What Kazin referred to as the “irony of populism” becomes most visible when considering the populist rhetoric of neoconservative intellectuals: here is a group of “eloquent men who stand above the crowd” and who articulate “the connections between anonymous people and mistrusts the palaver of elites”.<sup>606</sup> In order to fight what neoconservatives considered “the democratic totalitarianism” of the New Class, they,

---

<sup>603</sup> Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, 1, 16

<sup>604</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>605</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “What the Voters Sensed”, *Commentary*, January 1973, 6.

<sup>606</sup> Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, 24.

defined themselves as “a lonely band of truth tellers”, who wanted to “define, refine and represent” what Kristol refers to as the “bourgeois populism” of “the American people”.<sup>607</sup> Since neoconservatives were suspicious of unmediated mass democracy, their role would be to filter and guide the inchoate grievances and desires of the people.

### ‘Reverse Discrimination’: The Neoconservative Case Against Affirmative Action

The neoconservative critique of affirmative action was one major issue, which moved neoconservatives closer to the conservative mainstream and through which they contributed seminally to attracting popular support for the New Right. While neoconservatives were critical of affirmative action as a whole, most of their initial disapproval was concentrated on affirmative action in academia, an area which, according to Alan Brinkley, “remained wedded to patriarchal notions of learning and to rigid codes of conduct” throughout the 1960s.<sup>608</sup> Nancy MacLean demonstrates how universities continued to acquiesce to the long established “old-boy system”, according to which jobs were advocated and allocated in an exclusivist and closed manner, resulting in an excess of white male employees in relation to extremely low numbers of female and minority candidates, especially in the higher echelons of the hierarchy. Many leading graduate and professional schools, for example, blatantly discriminated against women by either excluding them entirely or only accepting limited contingents. By the early 1970s, through the advocacy of female activists of the Women’s Equity Action League (WEAL) and the National Organisation for Women (NOW), the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) began to put pressure on

---

<sup>607</sup> Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven*, 511; Kristol, *Reflections of a Neoconservative*, xiv; Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 40.

<sup>608</sup> Alan Brinkley, *Liberalism and Its Discontents* (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 223.

leading universities, confronting them with losing federal contracts, if they did not develop measures to render their establishments more inclusive to women and other minorities.<sup>609</sup>

Neoconservatives were amongst the most outspoken opponents of these pro-active compensatory efforts and their case against them, according to Glazer, was representative of early neoconservative thought.<sup>610</sup> In the neoconservative imagination these measures exemplified how an exaggerated pursuit of equality led not only to an excessive and tyrannical growth of government bureaucracies, but also attenuated traditional and established values and institutions. Both *PI* and *Commentary* grappled extensively with the ideological and practical implications of affirmative action for the American polity. As in the case of such matters as busing and Great Society-type welfarism, neoconservatives claimed that their position best captured the inchoate sentiments of the majority of Americans. Moreover, neoconservatives contended to embody the putative Jewish interest. Drawing heavily on images of Jewish victimisation, they argued that affirmative action was emblematic of how liberalism was creating a climate and policies, which were harmful to Jews. In the process of de-legitimising affirmative action, they fell back on identity politics and consolidated their “zero sum groupthink” strategy.<sup>611</sup>

The neoconservative case against affirmative action was preconditioned on a distinctive conception of the civil rights movement and the American liberal tradition. Neoconservatives argued that civil rights had shifted markedly by the early 1970s, replacing principles of equal opportunity and colour-blindness by race- and gender-conscious efforts allegedly intended to achieve equality of results. This was to be realised

---

<sup>609</sup> MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 187, 190. Even though, by 1970, 49 per cent of college-aged females were enrolled at colleges and universities – compared to 55 per cent of college-aged males, “their numbers steadily decreased as one moved up the status hierarchy”.

<sup>610</sup> Glazer, interview with author, April 9, 2008.

<sup>611</sup> MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 198.

by the enactment of what neoconservatives referred to as government-sanctioned “quotas” in hiring and admissions, in order to signify the alleged illegality and immorality of proactive integrationist efforts.<sup>612</sup> This constituted, they claimed, a breach of cherished American individualism, colour-blind equality, and the merit principle. Since affirmative action allegedly sought to uplift previously excluded minorities on the backs of white males, neoconservatives defined it as a form of “reverse discrimination” or “discrimination to fight discrimination”.<sup>613</sup>

Neoconservatives contended that affirmative action was a deviation from traditional liberalism and civil rights and “if requirements of statistical representation were to become a permanent part of American law and public policy” this tradition would be broken.<sup>614</sup> According to Daniel Bell, it was “an entirely new principle of rights”, one which subjected the essentially liberal tradition of “professional qualification or individual achievement ... to the new ascriptive principle of corporate identity”.<sup>615</sup> The neoconservative approach to racial discrimination drew heavily on ideas articulated by Theodore Adorno’s *The Authoritarian Personality*, which cast racism almost exclusively in psychological terms, minimising the relevance of socio-structural variables of racism.<sup>616</sup>

Neoconservatives’ claim that the removal of formal barriers to integration and the enforcement of anti-discriminatory laws were sufficient to bring about change for racial

---

<sup>612</sup> Nathan Glazer, “On “Opening Up” the Suburbs”, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1974, 93.

<sup>613</sup> Jerome L. Himmelstein, “‘Reverse Discrimination’ and ‘The Rape of Progress’ – Neo-Conservatives on Affirmative Action and Nuclear Power”, Center for Research and Social Organization, Working Paper 222 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1980): 11; Podhoretz, “Liberals, Radicals, Conservatives: Who Are They?”, Transcript, 15.

<sup>614</sup> Glazer, *Affirmative Discrimination*, 168-169.

<sup>615</sup> Bell, “On Meritocracy and Equality”, 37.

<sup>616</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, et al. *The Authoritarian Personality: Studies in Prejudice* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993). The study was sponsored by the AJC in 1950 as part of the *Studies in Prejudice* series, which seminally shaped the way in which Jewish agencies came to understand race and racism and subsequently affected their civil rights policies.

minorities was based on the experience of white European immigrants and blatantly disregarded the different nature of black history in the U.S. According to Matthew Jacobson, neoconservatives ignored the fact that white ethnics' integration was "part of a broader pattern of racialized, structural power relations" in which whites, even 'white ethnics', were over generations treated preferentially to blacks.<sup>617</sup> In order to overcome the legacy of slavery, disenfranchisement, and legislated inferior education and employment, something more than just the elimination of barriers to competition was needed, namely a substantial alteration of the power structure of American society. Neoconservatives' claim that affirmative action was a fundamental break with traditional liberal and civil rights principles of fair play and meritocracy, therefore, reflected a mythologised interpretation of these traditions and an unwillingness to concede the lasting implications of structural racism and sexism. Glazer, according to Earl Shorris "the chief neoconservative theoretician in the fight against affirmative action", presented this 'Eurocentric', romanticised narrative of American history in his monographic analysis of affirmative action, called *Affirmative Discrimination*.<sup>618</sup> Accordingly, he did not consider white racism as central to the American experience, nor did he treat it as particularly disruptive of the 'ethnic pattern' – which he described as the dominant paradigm of American history.<sup>619</sup>

In "A Certain Anxiety", Podhoretz considered affirmative action as the most pressing reflection of the anti-Jewish atmosphere, which, he believed, had come to grip the country during the 1960s. He declared that with affirmative action, the "merit system" under which "Jews had prospered" was substituted "by a system of proportional representation according to race and ethnic origin". Disregarding two centuries of racial,

---

<sup>617</sup> Jacobson, *Roots Too*, 180.

<sup>618</sup> Earl Shorris, *Jews Without Mercy: A Lament* (New York: Anchor Press, 1982), 10.

<sup>619</sup> Glazer, *Affirmative Discrimination*.

gender, religious and ethnic discrimination, Podhoretz claimed that the “merit system” had “treated all persons on the basis of their merits as individuals regardless of “race, color, creed, or place of origin””. Since Jews constituted “a mere 3 per cent of the population”, the replacement of the merit system by one of statistically defined preferential treatment “in the name of justice to blacks” meant “discriminatory measures were to be instituted once more against Jews”.<sup>620</sup>

In 1972, Podhoretz continued his groupthink tirade against the supposedly discriminatory nature of affirmative action in particular and liberalism in general by confronting the readers of *Commentary* with the historically charged question “Is It Good For the Jews?” Claiming that Jews specifically would lose out as a result of affirmative action, he approximated the effects of these policies to those of the old quota system, which sought to curb Jewish presence at universities and in specific employment sectors. Despite the fact that Jews effectively were not in direct competition with African Americans, he asserted that the introduction of affirmative action measures were a signal that the “positively congenial” atmosphere, which had dominated the American Jewish experience since 1945 had ended. Earl Raab claimed that a society based on “ascriptive” principles was ultimately “a spiritually and politically closed society; as such it is not the kind of society in which Jews can find justice or can easily or comfortably live”.<sup>621</sup> They repeated their charge that anti-Jewish sentiment was on the rise and found expression in the “idea of proportional representation”, which was never a goal of affirmative action, but which, according to neoconservative argumentation, guided these policies. Even though, Podhoretz

---

<sup>620</sup> Podhoretz, “A Certain Anxiety”, 8; for similar argument also see Earl Raab, “Quotas by Any Other Name”, *Commentary*, January 1972, 41-45; Paul Seabury, “The Idea of Merit”, *Commentary*, December 1972, 41-45.

<sup>621</sup> Raab, “Quotas by Any Other Name”, 45.

conceded, victimisation of Jews was in all likelihood not the primary intention of those who conceived of affirmative action, he implied acerbically that “in a climate in which Jews are commonly said to be overrepresented...the idea of putting the Jews in their place is considered by some a welcome bonus”.<sup>622</sup>

In their agitated critique of affirmative action, neoconservatives fell back on exaggerated analogies of the Jewish history of oppression and images of ‘Jews as victims’ in order to legitimise their resistance to inclusionary policies and simultaneously avoid comparisons with racially motivated anti-integrationists. Glazer even referred to affirmative action as a “reverse Nurembergism” or “benign Nuremberg laws”, drawing an analogy to the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, which outlawed Jews from the German polity.<sup>623</sup> Comparing the U.S. government to the Nazis was clearly absurd, especially given its policies to promote equality of opportunity for minorities. While criticising the group-centrist attitude that lay behind affirmative action, Podhoretz argued that Jews should be afforded the same opportunity to engage in self-interested politics to advance their own social ideals. Considering himself the guardian of old-style liberalism and of the Jewish interest, Podhoretz claimed that the Jewish interest lay in the preservation of ‘true’ liberal values of meritocracy and equality of opportunity. He mandated Jews to revive, once again, the question “Is it good for the Jews? And act on the answers”. Unless, he cautioned ominously, “they may wake up one day to find themselves diminished, degraded, discriminated against, and alone”.<sup>624</sup>

Milton Himmelfarb had made a similar point about pro-active integrationist measures within the educational realm three years earlier. “Quotas”, which aimed at

---

<sup>622</sup> Podhoretz, “Is It Good For the Jews?”, 12.

<sup>623</sup> Nathan Glazer, “Why Bakke Won’t End Reverse Discrimination”, *Commentary*, September 1978, 40.

<sup>624</sup> Podhoretz, “Is It Good For The Jews?”, 14.

diversifying education, he claimed, “send a shiver down Jewish backs”, not only because of historical experience, but also because, he believed, American Jews were the ones to suffer most from the effort to achieve proportional parity at universities. Indeed, 85 per cent of college-aged Jews attended university and 47 per cent went on to graduate or professional schools. Moreover, academia, as MacLean pointed out, had been historically “a haven for Jewish men in the gentile-dominated economy”.<sup>625</sup>

However, proponents of affirmative action countered that the potential disadvantage white males, including white Jewish males, would encounter under affirmative action measures would not so much constitute a breach of their meritocratic rights but rather, in the words of the ACLU, a denial of “their expectations”, which were “grounded in discriminatory practices” in the first place. Interestingly enough, as pointed out by MacLean, no one had ever even bothered to gather statistical data relative to the impact of affirmative action on Jews. The only evidence used in making the case against affirmative action was anecdotal.<sup>626</sup> It is, therefore, questionable to what extent Jewish opponents of affirmative action sincerely believed their own claims that the policies would harm Jews as seriously as they predicted. As Glazer later admitted, “affirmative action did not turn out to be that great a threat to Jews”. Quite to the contrary, it had indeed benefited Jewish women who made up a large part of Jewish university attendees, many of whom had been unable to enter academic careers because the “old boys system”.<sup>627</sup> Indeed, Glazer would reverse his attitude towards affirmative action eventually and come to accept it as an important

---

<sup>625</sup> Himmelfarb, “Is American Jewry in Crisis?”, 33-42; MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 199.

<sup>626</sup> Equality Committee of the ACLU, November 29, 1972 cited in MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 205, 218.

<sup>627</sup> Nathan Glazer, “On Jewish Forebodings”, *Commentary*, August 1985, 34.

mechanism in diversifying education.<sup>628</sup> Yet, most neoconservatives continued to look upon affirmative action negatively. Nevertheless, the fact that they lost interest in opposing it seems to suggest that the issue had never been as vital as their rhetoric made it out to be. As time progressed another set of concerns had superseded affirmative action, which was, according to Muravchik, no longer “a hot issue” by the 1980s.<sup>629</sup>

Meanwhile, neoconservatives not only argued that affirmative action impacted negatively on Jewish Americans in particular and Americans in general, but also on African Americans. Despite the fact that liberals and civil rights leaders “claimed that blacks are in fact worse off now than they were ten years ago”, African Americans, neoconservatives argued, had made “enormous progress...in the past decade” and were “now moving into the middle class in unprecedented numbers”.<sup>630</sup> According to the African American economist Thomas Sowell, the underlying message of affirmative action was “that minorities are losers who will never have anything unless someone gives it to them”. The goal-oriented nature of affirmative action, he claimed, ignored “the fact that the ultimate results are in the minds and the hearts of human beings”. Moreover, the perception that minorities did not rightfully deserve what was given to them by affirmative action could provoke “intergroup resentments” and social conflict. It was therefore important, Sowell urged, not “to let emotionally combustible materials accumulate from ill-conceived social experiments”.<sup>631</sup>

---

<sup>628</sup> James Traub, “Nathan Glazer Changes His Mind, Again”, *The New York Times*, June 28, 1998: <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/06/28/magazine/nathan-glazer-changes-his-mind-again.html> (accessed October 23, 2009); Daniel Treiman, “Former Foe of Affirmative Action Backs Policy in Michigan Case”, *The Jewish Daily Forward*, June 13, 2003: <http://www.forward.com/articles/7440/> (accessed November 13, 2009).

<sup>629</sup> Muravchik, interview with author, April 1, 2008.

<sup>630</sup> Ben Wattenberg and Richard M. Scammon, “Black Progress and Liberal Rhetoric”, *Commentary*, April 1973, 42, 41; Also see Thomas Sowell, “Patterns of Black Excellence”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 1976, 27-58; Thomas Sowell, “Black Excellence – The Case of Dunbar High School”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 1974, 3-22.

<sup>631</sup> Thomas Sowell, “Are Quotas Good for Blacks?”, *Commentary*, June 1978, 43.

Basing their claims on mere anecdotal evidence and speculation, neoconservatives suggested that affirmative action stigmatised its recipients because they might be perceived as being given a 'free ride' despite the alleged fact that they did not have the necessary skills to perform adequately. Repeating this claim incessantly, neoconservatives contributed to spreading the popular myth that affirmative action would bring people into positions for which they were not qualified. Moreover, Bell speculated, "quotas and preferential hiring mean that standards are bent and broken".<sup>632</sup> Indeed, the impact of affirmative action on "standards of excellence" was of great concern to neoconservatives and other opponents of affirmative action. In "The Idea of Merit", Paul Seabury, reiterated the claim that affirmative action would replace the meritocratic principle which should govern the selection process in education and the workplace with one that "advances and rewards...according to status, preferment or chance".<sup>633</sup> Earl Raab argued that under the new, allegedly un-meritocratic regime, positions were allocated according to minority group membership. Consequently, Bell contended, affirmative action implied that "minority persons are less qualified and could not compete with others, even if given a sufficient margin". He wondered about the consequences this condition had "on the self-esteem of a person hired on "second-class" grounds?"<sup>634</sup>

Finally, neoconservatives criticised affirmative action for leading to a tyranny by massive governmental bureaucracies imposing enormous amounts of paper work on employers and educators and thereby further centralising power.<sup>635</sup> The villains who brought affirmative action unto American society were, how could it be otherwise,

---

<sup>632</sup> Bell, "On Meritocracy and Equality", 37.

<sup>633</sup> Seabury, "The Idea of Merit", 41.

<sup>634</sup> Bell, "On Meritocracy and Equality", 37; for a similar argument see Raab, "Quotas by Any Other Name", 41-45.

<sup>635</sup> Sowell, "Are Quotas Good for Blacks?", 43.

members of the New Class - “foundation executives, university presidents, bureaucrats, and publicists”.<sup>636</sup> According to Sowell, “the beneficiaries” of affirmative action were “bureaucrats” who, through affirmative action policies, acquired “power, appropriations, and publicity”. The machinery set in motion by affirmative action had led, according to Sowell, to the creation of “an administrative empire serving itself in the name of serving the disadvantaged”.<sup>637</sup> Glazer blamed affirmative action on liberal politicians and bureaucrats, who used these policies as a means to avoid solving the real problems of African Americans, some of which, he maintained, were cultural, but were no longer politically correct to discuss by the mid-1970s.<sup>638</sup>

According to Micklethwait and Wooldridge, Jewish neoconservatives were especially distraught at affirmative action within the academic realm, because universities were “the institutions which had lifted them out of the ghetto”.<sup>639</sup> This is somewhat of a simplification. As shown, most of the elder neoconservatives had received a basic college education at CCNY, which they attended presumably because it was expense and quota free. Others, like Podhoretz, were able to gain admission to more prestigious universities under ceiling quotas for Jews, which in Podhoretz’s case was 17 per cent.<sup>640</sup> Most of the neoconservatives, who eventually made a career in academia, did so, however, only on the backdrop of liberal inclusionary measures, such as the GI Bill, which began to open up the world of college and university education to large numbers of people after the Second World War. As such, they had benefitted from pro-active, federally mandated measures, which aimed to give greater number of people better access to higher education. To deny

---

<sup>636</sup> Joseph Adelson, “Living With Quotas”, *Commentary*, May 1978, 27.

<sup>637</sup> Thomas Sowell, “Affirmative Action Reconsidered”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1976, 64-65.

<sup>638</sup> Glazer, *Affirmative Discrimination*.

<sup>639</sup> Micklethwait and Wooldridge, *Right Nation*, 72.

<sup>640</sup> Podhoretz, interview with author, May 17, 2008.

similar mechanisms to include still excluded minority groups was, if anything, hypocritical. Finally, the strategy of equating affirmative action with anti-Semitic ‘quotas’, which had historically been employed to explicitly exclude rather than include, was not only absurd but also rendered reasoned debate of the issues almost impossible.

If the primary reason for their concern with affirmative action was neoconservatives’ strong appreciation of universities as facilitators of upward mobility, then they should have supported rather than opposed measures aimed at opening up universities and jobs to previously excluded minorities, especially since many of those uplifted by affirmative action measures were Jewish. Yet, since these Jews were female, neoconservatives did not seem to consider their advancement as relevant. As a matter of fact, as MacLean pointed out, the studies of pervasive gender discrimination, prepared by WEAL and NOW, “failed to register as significant” with neoconservatives and other Jewish community leaders. Calls by a group of women within the AJC, for example, to “not refer only to Jewish men” when the effects of affirmative action on Jews were discussed, were ignored.<sup>641</sup> Yet, Podhoretz firmly insisted that “women are not a minority”, because they were numerically equal to men.<sup>642</sup>

Hence, neoconservatives were primarily concerned with the racial rather than the gender component of affirmative action. It exacerbated tensions between the African American and Jewish communities, which as shown, had been growing throughout the 1960s. In the early 1960s, neoconservatives already voiced criticism of collectively defined “preferential treatment” of African Americans in matters of employment, an allegedly “radically new strategy” of integration which diverted from the traditional, liberal strategy

---

<sup>641</sup> Lillian Alexander to Bertram Gold, April 14, 1972, cited in MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 192.

<sup>642</sup> Podhoretz, “Liberals, Radicals, Conservatives: Who Are They?”, 14.

of removing barriers to individual mobility. As shown, Glazer articulated fears that a more pro-active civil rights strategy would deny Jews the possibility to maintain exclusive arrangements, and thereby undermine Jewish group cohesiveness.<sup>643</sup> Jews should therefore reject this ‘new’ strategy and continue to hold on to the ‘real’ liberal approach to integration, which was based on individual rights and colour-blindness.

In making their case, neoconservatives led the way in moving the majority opinion of the organised Jewish community in their direction on the issue of affirmative action – a situation which not only dumbfounded African American civil rights leaders and feminists, but also many Jews who continued to support pro-active measures to overcome structural discrimination and identify with liberal and radical causes generally.<sup>644</sup> Apart from creating conflict between Jewish organisations and their constituencies, the opposition of some national Jewish organisations to affirmative action also introduced major tensions to the Jewish-African American alliance, which looked back on a long history of sustained and concerted efforts to fight discrimination in all its forms. The major national Jewish organisations, especially the AJC and the AJCongress, who had previously used the Jewish status of a historically oppressed group in order to counteract all forms of exclusion, were now reversing course – using a history of oppression to distance themselves from civil rights.

While most organisations were inwardly ridden with disagreements about how to proceed on the matter, they, at least outwardly, agreed with neoconservative pundits that policies of preferential treatment contradicted basic democratic principles. Nevertheless,

---

<sup>643</sup> Podhoretz and Glazer, “Liberalism and the Negro”, 25-42; Glazer, “Negroes and Jews”, 29-34.

<sup>644</sup> Nevertheless members of Jewish organisations continued to civil rights activists and feminists in their work for affirmative action. Moreover, as demonstrated by MacLean, the Jewish community was never as united on the issue of affirmative action as neoconservatives asserted. MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 217, 221.

there were differences even between these organisations with respect to their attitudes towards affirmative action. The ADL took the hard-line stance that rejected any kind of pro-active effort to redress the racial and gender imbalance. Former national director of the ADL, Nathan Perlmutter, explained: “once the state establishes racial criteria as a basis for either favouring you or punishing you, you are toying with the very fabric of our democracy”.<sup>645</sup> The AJC, on the other hand, supported “affirmative action outreach and training but opposed any racial preference in hiring and admissions”. Nevertheless, all major national Jewish organisations supported the so-called Hoffman letter by the AJC, addressed to both Nixon and McGovern in August 1972. It pleaded with both presidential candidates to “reject categorically the use of quotas and proportional representation”.<sup>646</sup>

The fact that the criticism of inclusionary measures was coming from Jewish defence agencies who had been traditionally at the forefront of the fight for civil liberties and civil rights seriously split the black-Jewish alliance and contributed, in the long run, to a right-ward shift of the American electorate. Developing a language which “argued cogently against affirmative action in the name of civil rights”, neoconservatives were able not only to reach Jews, but also other white voters who did not want to be associated with crass racism and segregationism, but nevertheless felt that resource redistribution by government and court sanction was going too far.<sup>647</sup> Defenders of the racial status quo learned from the neoconservative case against affirmative action that the best way to protect their privilege was by packaging it in an ideology of formal equality and colour-blindness.

---

<sup>645</sup> Nathan Perlmutter, Wiener Oral History Library, 12.

<sup>646</sup> Cited in MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 186.

<sup>647</sup> MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 224.

‘Who Is Kosher and Who Is *Treif*’: Israel, Anti-Semitism and Jewish Radicals

Throughout the 1970s, neoconservatives warned that enthusiasm for Israel amongst American Jews and the American public generally was waning, even though Israel and public Holocaust memorialisation came to take on a greater role in American life in general and in American Jewish life in particular. Neoconservatives believed that the left had turned against its traditional alliance with Israel and that moderate voices within the African American community began embracing black nationalist views, which branded Israel as a “First World” white oppressor of the indigenous “Third World” peoples of the Middle East.<sup>648</sup> Moreover, they continued to fear that the residue of the counterculture and the New Left still threatened the bourgeois democratic order, because “by some miracle of communication”, they continued, according to Podhoretz, to exert “a kind of tyrannical power over the minds of many people”.<sup>649</sup>

While neoconservatives had initially hoped to develop patterns of Jewish identification that were liberal and simultaneously ethnic-national, they began to move closer towards Jean Améry’s extreme survivalist position during the early 1960s, according to which Jews were under attack and resistance was the only authentic answer.<sup>650</sup> In 1975, Conservative Rabbi Harold Schulweis complained about the emerging “new Jewish right,” represented by people such as Seymour Siegel, Michael Wyschogrod, Nathan Glazer and Milton Himmelfarb who argued for a priority of Jewish self-interest over universal liberalism. Schulweis observed that the political repositioning – taking place in less

---

<sup>648</sup> Glazer, “Blacks, Jews and Intellectuals”, 33-39; Raab, “The Black Revolution and the Jewish Question”, 23-33; see also: Leonard Fein, “Liberalism and American Jews”, *Midstream*, October 1973, 12-18; Ben Halpern, “The Jewish Liberal Mind”, *Midstream*, January 1971, 32-49.

<sup>649</sup> Podhoretz, “Liberals, Radicals, Conservatives: Who Are They?”, 2.

<sup>650</sup> Nathan Glazer, “The Crisis of American Jewry”, *Midstream*, November 1970, 3-11.

extreme form amongst many American Jews - was guided by the Holocaust, which in light of the Six Day War and the Yom Kippur War, consolidated a redefinition of Jewish identity in post-1960s America.<sup>651</sup> Glazer agreed that it was “the growing emotional response” to the Holocaust, in combination with black nationalist and New Left criticism of Israel, which brought about the shift away from liberalism.<sup>652</sup>

Throughout the early 1970s, the threat emanating from a perceived revival of anti-Semitic tendencies and the alleged abandonment of Israel received primary attention on *Commentary*'s agenda. More than ever before did Podhoretz try to convey the message that Israel's security was intrinsically tied to that of the U.S. A morally, politically and militarily weak America, which turned in on itself, would not be able to guarantee Israel's continued existence. A neo-isolationist approach to American power, seemingly gaining hold of large parts of the country in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, constituted “a direct threat to the security of Israel” - just as domestic policies, inspired by the new liberalism, imperilled American Jews.<sup>653</sup>

According to Jacob Heilbrunn, the moralist fervour of neoconservatism stemmed from the desire to make the U.S. into a bulwark against another Holocaust.<sup>654</sup> This might be partially true. Neoconservatives certainly seemed haunted by the memory of the Holocaust. However, the carelessness and disproportionality with which neoconservatives came to use Holocaust analogies and continuously insinuated that a genocidal threat emanated from the left for Israel and for American Jews, leaves one wondering to what extent these analogies

---

<sup>651</sup> Harold Schulweis, “The New Jewish Right”, *Moment*, May-June 1975, 55-61.

<sup>652</sup> Glazer, *American Judaism*, 171.

<sup>653</sup> Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks*, 336.

<sup>654</sup> Heilbrunn, *They Knew They Were Right*, 243.

and alarmist warnings constituted part of a rhetorical strategy with which neoconservatives sought to justify their break with liberalism and induce American Jews to do the same.

Hook's comment that he could "conceive of a holocaust in the United States and I think the Farrakhans are capable of carrying it out", for example, revealed the extent to which neoconservatives operated within the context of paranoia and utter disregard of factual evidence.<sup>655</sup> Opinion polls had repeatedly shown that anti-Semitism had been at an all-time low in the U.S. since the late 1950s. Oscar Cohen, ADL research director, claimed in 1972 that "the Jewish position in this country has probably never been as secure as it is nor has there ever been less prejudice". Neoconservatives' own Milton Himmelfarb wrote a decade later "When one looks at the modern history of anti-Semitism here and now, one is struck precisely by the minor position it now has".<sup>656</sup> Moreover, Hook singled out the most extreme example, the eccentric Louis Farrakhan, in order to make a general statement about the level of danger to Jews in American society, thereby ignoring the facts that Hitler had come to power with widespread backing amongst Germans and that the successful implementation of the final solution had not been the work of a few lunatics, but had been possible because of the massive support it received from 'ordinary' people, as demonstrated, for example, by Christopher Browning.<sup>657</sup>

In perceiving the making of another Holocaust around every corner, neoconservatives, who prided themselves on being intellectuals, came across as irrational and paranoid. They seemingly believed that if they repeatedly told American Jews that their "sense of security" was seriously upset by the left and that they were experiencing "a sense

---

<sup>655</sup> Sidney Hook, Wiener Oral History Library, October 25, 1988, Transcript, 68, 70.

<sup>656</sup> Oscar Cohen and Milton Himmelfarb cited in: Dinnerstein, *Anti-Semitism in America*, 229.

<sup>657</sup> Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (London: Penguin Books, 2001).

of unexpected impotence in America”, they eventually would come to accept that the greatest threat to their future was no longer “the seepage of assimilation but the growing inhospitality of the American political environment...part and parcel of the general crisis of liberalism”.<sup>658</sup>

Yet many Jewish voices continued to disagree with conceiving Jewishness through the prism of the Holocaust and victimhood. For many, the Holocaust and Israel were less important than it was often made out to be by Jewish leadership circles. Conservative Rabbi Arthur Green, for instance, conceded that while the Holocaust and Israel were “the backdrop events of all our lives”, more relevant to his understanding of Jewishness were developments that took place at home during the 1960s, such as the civil rights movement, black nationalism and the counterculture.<sup>659</sup> In 1968, Green had helped found the *Havurat Shalom* project, which continues its work to this day. *Havurat Shalom* integrated Jewish religious and cultural traditions with progressive egalitarian ideals. It was conceived as “an egalitarian Jewish community...where women and men come to pray and learn; explore, celebrate and grapple with Jewish tradition; work for social justice; and discuss a variety of Jewish concerns”.<sup>660</sup>

These were some of the alternative voices Jewish neoconservatives had little understanding for. Since neoconservatives believed Jews to be under attack, they came to brand as traitors anyone who conceded to the perceived enemies of Israel and Jews. Throughout the 1970s, Jewish neoconservatives, led by Podhoretz, heightened their efforts to “excommunicate” those Jews who did not follow their prescriptions of what Jewishness represented. In communion with the larger Jewish establishment, neoconservatives led the

---

<sup>658</sup> Raab, “The Deadly Innocences of American Jews”, 31-32.

<sup>659</sup> Arthur Green, “The Response Symposium”, *Response*, Winter 1970-71, 41-43.

<sup>660</sup> “Welcome to Havurat Shalom”, <http://www.thehav.org/> (accessed October 14, 2009).

way in excoriating radical Jews as illegitimate, inauthentic, traitorous, indeed as anti-Jewish, even anti-Semitic.<sup>661</sup> They repeatedly accused leftist Jews of having contributed seminally to spreading its “tyrannical power”, whose spirit, according to Glazer, ran counter to everything the American Jewish experience stood for, because the New Left targeted “All the roles Jews play” in American society. The New Left was critical of “private business...lawyers, stockbrokers, accountants, etc. – in which Jews are prominent”.<sup>662</sup> Moreover, some New Left - inspired policies, such as affirmative action, targeted Jews specifically, they claimed. Jews who made common cause with these forces were to no longer to be regarded as ‘real’ Jews.

The highlight of neoconservatives’ vehement critique of Jewish radicalism came in 1971, when Podhoretz ran a series of three articles entitled “Revolutionism and the Jews”. One of them, by Walter Laqueur derided Jewish leftists, such as Jews for Urban Justice as “immature, irresponsible...restless, neurotic, faddish” and blamed Jewish radicalism on the fact that these Jews were “far removed from Judaism”, i.e. over-assimilated, which only could be undone by “a catastrophe of the magnitude of Nazism”.<sup>663</sup> One is left questioning to what extent the continuous forebodings of another Holocaust were supposed to reverse the alleged over-assimilation of American Jews.

Similarly, Glazer, aligning himself with “those of us concerned with Jewish interests”, invoked Nazism in his condemnation of Jewish radicals. In his argument, which

---

<sup>661</sup> Podhoretz, “Liberals, Radicals, Conservatives: Who Are They?”, 2.

<sup>662</sup> Glazer, “Jewish Interests and the New Left”, 35.

<sup>663</sup> Activists previously involved with CORE, SNCC, and SDS founded Jews for Urban Justice in 1967. They refused to decide between universalist or particularist approaches to Jewish identity, but rather sought to develop a new approach, which bridged this dichotomy. Jews for Urban Justice were dismayed at the superficiality of modern Jewish life and wanted to return to the tradition of prophetic Judaism. It is interesting to note that many of its members came from diverse Jewish backgrounds; some were Zionists, others were of Hasidic, Orthodox, and Conservatives orientation. All felt that organised Judaism was de-spiritualised and apolitical; Laqueur, “Revolutionism and the Jews: New York and Jerusalem”, 44, 45.

he would make repeatedly, he explained that the association of Jewish intellectuals with the anti-war movement in particular and radical activism in general, posed a threat to all Jews. Fearing a “potential backlash” from ‘ordinary’ Americans, he drew a “parallel between Weimar and America”. He warned that something akin to the “stab-in-the-back-myth” could emerge in Middle America, which could hold Jews responsible for the social disarray the country was in, much like the Nazis successfully blamed “the moral ‘degeneration’ of Germany on the influence of the Jews”. Glazer abstrusely claimed that Jews could potentially be blamed for the antiwar movement, the prevalence of pornography and marijuana, the loosening of sexual mores, antiauthoritarian behaviour and so forth. It was, therefore, a matter of survival that Jews dissociate themselves from the left. He agreed with Laqueur that Jewish radicals suffered from “classic Jewish self-hatred...hatred of...the qualities Jews have come to stand for: rationality, moderation, balance, tolerance”.<sup>664</sup> None of these “qualities”, however, informed neoconservatives’ critique of Jewish radicals – another example of the fact that neoconservatives seldom practiced what they preached.

Podhoretz in turn charged Rabbi Balfour Brickner, a self-defined Zionist and leftist, critical of Israeli military action, of being “guilty of the sin of anti-Semitism” for participating in a Freedom Seder, organised by Jews for Urban Justice in 1969 and 1970. The Haggadah, *A Freedom Seder: A New Haggadah for Passover*, used at the Seder and written by Arthur Waskow, incorporated black liberation concerns and social justice issues and the Passover celebrations were attended by an interracial group of participants. Podhoretz considered Waskow’s Haggadah “a contribution to the literature of Jewish anti-

---

<sup>664</sup> Glazer, “Revolutionism and the Jews: The Role of Intellectuals”, 55-61.

Semitism”.<sup>665</sup> According to Waskow, his aim had been to re-create “the liturgy in ways that asserted the liberation of the Jewish people alongside the liberation of the other peoples – not theirs against ours, or ours as against theirs”.<sup>666</sup>

Robert Alter, a professor of Hebrew and comparative literature at Berkeley, criticised Jewish radicals for referring to Jewish religious tradition in support of their politics. He likened the efforts of radical Jewish activism, such as the National Jewish Organization Project, Urban Jews for Justice, and the Jewish Liberation Project, to create more authentic patterns of Jewish identity based on Jewish tradition and political engagement on behalf of social justice concerns as “political rape of a religious tradition”. Appalled at what he considered Arthur Waskow’s “self-effacement before black militancy”, he described *The Freedom Seder* as an “instance of the tyranny of politics over religion”. He referred to it as “a document of self-loathing and self-abasement masquerading as an expression of self-affirmation”.<sup>667</sup> Yet, Alter was not a neoconservative and agreed to meet with a group of activists around the Berkeley based *The Jewish Radical* after appearance of the article. According to David Biale, a member of the group, Alter admitted, after debating with them that he might have been “overly critical of the Jewish New Left”. Nevertheless, his article contributed to the neoconservative agenda against Jewish radicalism.<sup>668</sup>

---

<sup>665</sup> Glazer, “Revolutionism and the Jews: The Role of Intellectuals”, 55-61; Podhoretz, “The Tribe of the Wicked Son”, 10.

<sup>666</sup> The Haggadah made reference to Hebrew prophets alongside Thomas Jefferson, Nat Turner, Henry David Thoreau and Eldridge Cleaver. Arthur Waskow, “A Radical Haggadah for Passover”, *Ramparts*, April 1969, 19-20.

<sup>667</sup> Alter, “Revolutionism and the Jews: Appropriating the Religious Tradition”, 47-53.

<sup>668</sup> David Biale, email correspondence with the author, November 27, 2009.

In Podhoretz's eyes, Brickner belonged "to the tribe of the wicked son" whose "wickedness consists of his having removed himself from the community".<sup>669</sup> Brickner, a member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, responded in kind. In his letter to the editor, Brickner claimed that "Love of Israel...never did, and must not now, demand slavish silence". The anti-Jewish Jews, he retorted, were those who had the audacity to think that they could "judge who among their fellow Jews is "kosher" and who is "*treif*" – who falls within the pale and who has strayed beyond the *Commentary* line – who should be tolerated and who should be wiped out". He accused Podhoretz of engaging in a "pseudo-Jewish McCarthyism" – a new anti-Jewishness "masking in the guise of Jewish affirmation". Brickner, considering himself a Jewish survivalist, warned that "If Jewish survival in America depends upon...those...who display little if any real awareness of the more complex tensions and balances that Judaism contains at its deeper levels, then we are indeed in great trouble!"<sup>670</sup>

Another example of how neoconservatives, in tandem with the broader organised Jewish community, tried to de-legitimise alternative approaches to Jewish identity was the case of Breira: A Project of Concern in Diaspora-Israel Relations. It was founded after the Yom Kippur War in 1973 in order to counteract the increasing ideological polarisation amongst American Jews and the hardening attitude amongst Jewish leaders. Breira publicly called on Israel "to make territorial concessions" and "to recognise the legitimacy of the national aspirations of the Palestinians". Moreover, it denounced "those pressures in American Jewish Life which make open discussion...of vital issues virtually synonymous

---

<sup>669</sup> Podhoretz, "The Tribe of the Wicked Son", 10.

<sup>670</sup> Balfour Brickner, "Letter to the Editor", *Commentary*, June 1971:

<https://www.commentarymagazine.com/printarticle.cfm/jewish-radicalism-in-america-12612> (accessed October 10, 2009).

with heresy”.<sup>671</sup> Breira initially was able to recruit supporters from a wide variety of backgrounds, amongst them about one hundred Reform and Conservative Rabbis. Other seminal Jewish representatives were Steven M. Cohen, Paul Cowan, Arthur Green and Irving Howe. After generating fierce debates on the limits of dissent in Jewish communal life, Breira shut its doors in 1977. As Michael Staub pointed out, it is one of multiple Jewish radical projects, which have been ignored systematically in mainstream histories of American Jewish Life since 1945.<sup>672</sup>

For some time, however, Breira was able to build an intergenerational coalition, which brought together Zionist, non-Zionist, religious and secular Jews and even momentarily attracted sympathy from Nathan Glazer, Charles S. Liebman, Michael Wyschogrod and Jacob Neusner. Initially, many within the organised Jewish community believed that Breira was raising important, even if uncomfortable, issues. It was when Breira’s activities were beginning to receive widespread national attention in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* during 1976 – undermining what Rabbi Bernard Mehlman referred to as the “standard operating procedure” of Jewish communal affairs of “not washing one’s dirty laundry in public” - that criticism of Breira from Jewish communal spokespersons began to pour out.<sup>673</sup>

In April 1977 *Commentary* laid its eyes on Breira. Echoing Podhoretz, Joseph Shattan exaggeratedly claimed that since “the political fortunes of the state of Israel have reached perhaps an all-time low” since the Yom Kippur War and Israel was “increasingly isolated in the world as a whole, shunned even by many of its former friends and treated as a pariah by the community of nations”, organisations like Breira were irresponsible and

---

<sup>671</sup> Quoted in: Staub, *Torn At the Roots*, 281.

<sup>672</sup> Staub, *Torn At the Roots*, 281.

<sup>673</sup> Bernard H. Mehlman, “Letter to the Editor”, *Jewish Week*, May 30, 1968, 4.

constituted a Jewish pro-PLO front. He explained the fact that so many “well-meaning” Jewish leaders had been attracted to Breira by claiming that they had grown weary “of having to uphold Israel’s cause when the cause has gone out of odor”. Maybe, he speculated, they were driven by the desire, “to be for once, on the side their government may be leaning toward”, disregarding the fact that the U.S. government had been more supportive of Israel since 1967 than ever before.<sup>674</sup>

### ‘The Culture of Appeasement’: A Resurgence of ‘the Spirit of Munich’

Following the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the 1975 defeat of the U.S. in Vietnam, neoconservatives instrumentalised the threat of Soviet conventional and nuclear superiority in order “to consolidate their position” within the conservative movement.<sup>675</sup> Castigating neo-isolationist liberal foreign policy as much as they criticised the alleged amorality of Nixon-Kissinger style *realpolitik*, neoconservatives believed that both approaches had contributed seminally to the decay of American national confidence and power. *Realpolitik*, detached from fundamental American values, lacked a clear moral vision of the national interest and, therefore, exacerbated the crisis of authority. Nixon and Kissinger, they argued, had drained the Republican Party of ideological convictions and the absence of moral considerations relative to foreign policy ultimately deprived the government of the means with which to mobilise fundamental values and legitimise its policies.<sup>676</sup>

---

<sup>674</sup> Joseph Shattan, “Why Breira?” *Commentary*, April 1977, 60-65; McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 157.

<sup>675</sup> Andrew Kopkind, “The Return of Cold War Liberalism”, *The Nation*, April 23, 1983, 509.

<sup>676</sup> Williams, *Culture and Security*; Theodore Draper, “Appeasement and Détente”, *Commentary*, February 1976, 27-38.

Liberal foreign policy, on the other hand, reduced notions of good and evil to individual preferences and viewed government as a vehicle for the pursuit of individual and sectional interest. While engaging in intense social engineering, liberal policy undermined any viable conception of the common good. Neoconservatives believed that the new liberalism led to a relativistic political culture, which denied that there were any meaningful collective values to guide the American polity. This approach had severe implications for domestic as well as foreign policy, in which the purpose and meaning of the nation were under constant scrutiny, leading ultimately to an outlook where cynicism and guilt-ridden self-doubt reigned supreme.<sup>677</sup>

Neoconservatives wanted to restore confidence in American moral superiority. Support for what neoconservatives perceived as a typically American foreign policy, therefore, was considered as part of the larger struggle for America itself. Yet, Dorrien's claim that neoconservatives moved into the Republican Party on account of their 1970s foreign policy rationale is incorrect.<sup>678</sup> As shown, neoconservatives continued to vacillate between the Democratic and the Republican Party throughout the 1970s and many of them claim to this day that party politics is not what neoconservatism is about.<sup>679</sup> However, many neoconservatives also came to understand throughout the 1970s that the revival of American confidence and power would stand a greater chance in alliance with the right rather than the left. Moreover, with respect to foreign policy, neoconservative ideas were more in tune with those of the emerging New Right than with liberal politics. Moreover, according to Michael Hunt, the desire for "a restored sense of national pride and the desire to reaffirm old verities" was also widespread amongst the American public. By the end of

---

<sup>677</sup> Williams, *Culture and Security*, 112-15.

<sup>678</sup> Dorrien, *Imperial Designs*, 9.

<sup>679</sup> Podhoretz, interview with author, May 17, 2008.

the 1970s the country was gripped by “nostalgia for an earlier era”, Hunt claimed, which had allegedly consisted of “national omnipotence, clear-cut moral issues, and national unity”.<sup>680</sup>

This was the ideological context in which neoconservatives re-sparked their campaign against world communism in the middle of the 1970s. In “The West in Retreat”, Walter Laqueur forwarded the neoconservative sense that the world was closing in on the West and specifically the U.S. He claimed that the crisis of U.S. foreign policy in the aftermath of Vietnam had sapped America’s will power to lead. Détente, he suggested, was partially responsible for this failure of will, as well as revisionist historians who blamed the Cold War on America’s imperialist desires.<sup>681</sup> In the same vein, Podhoretz argued in “Making the World Safe for Communism” that a new wave of isolationist attitudes, visible across party lines, but most seminally with liberals, had taken hold of the country. While liberals, Podhoretz argued, had historically always been bolder in advocating the use of force than conservatives, Vietnam had introduced serious doubts with respect to the global role of the U.S. As a result, both liberals and conservatives began to move towards ideas of political and military isolationism. He concluded by asking rhetorically: “Have we lost the will to defend the free world...against the spread of Communism?”<sup>682</sup>

In typical neoconservative fashion, Podhoretz compared the diagnosed “culture of appeasement” that allegedly pervaded American society and leadership with that of the British and French in their confrontation of Nazi expansionism during the 1930s. Podhoretz was “struck...by certain resemblances between the United States today and Great Britain in

---

<sup>680</sup> Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 188-189.

<sup>681</sup> Walter Z. Laqueur, “The West In Retreat”, *Commentary*, August 1975, 44-52; Bayard Rustin and Carl Gershman, “Africa, Soviet Imperialism and the Retreat of American Power”, *Commentary*, October 1977, 35-43; Carl Gershman, “After the Dominoes Fell”, *Commentary*, May 1978, 47-54.

<sup>682</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “Making the World Safe For Communism”, *Commentary*, April 1976, 41.

the years after the first world war”, as for instance with respect to widespread “hostility to one’s own country and ... derision of the idea that it stands for anything worth defending”.<sup>683</sup> Rather than pointing the finger towards the New Class, Podhoretz specifically accused homosexual artists and writers for this condition, and along the way resorted to crude homophobic stereotypes, a move which brought him another step closer to other New Right pundits. “Anyone familiar with homosexual apologetics in America today will recognize”, that as homosexual intellectuals, such as W.H. Auden and Wilfred Owen, had preyed on war weary Britons in the aftermath of the First World War, homosexual artist and writers, especially literary types such as Alan Ginsberg, James Baldwin, and Gore Vidal, were now contributing in the same way to spreading “the antidemocratic pacifism” and feminisation of the American spirit, which undermined America’s will to burden the responsibilities of world power.<sup>684</sup>

According to this rationale, the homosexual intelligentsia not only undermined militarism, because it killed “helpless, good-looking boys”, but also generally agitated against bourgeois society, from which they felt alienated because of their sexual orientation, which signified not just a rejection of paternal responsibility but also a general refusal to take charge of “the destiny of society as a whole”.<sup>685</sup> Homosexuals’ “contempt for middle-class life or indeed any kind of heterosexual adult life” had begun to pervade society at large, by inculcating the liberal establishment with “pacifism...hostility to one’s own country and its putatively middle-class way of life”.<sup>686</sup> Should this new “culture of

---

<sup>683</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Culture of Appeasement”, *Harper’s Magazine*, October 1977, 29.

<sup>684</sup> *Ibid.*, 30, 31.

<sup>685</sup> *Ibid.*, 31; Other articles which blamed the alleged effeminacy of American society on homosexuals and dealt in crude anti-homosexual stereotypes were written mainly by Podhoretz’s wife, Midge Decter: “Homosexuality and the Schools”, *Commentary*, March 1993, 19-24; “The Boys on the Beach”, *Commentary*, September 1980, 35-48; “What Are Little Boys Made Of?” *Commentary*, December 1998, 27-33.

<sup>686</sup> Podhoretz, “The Culture of Appeasement”, 29.

appeasement” win out amongst American people, Podhoretz warned, “the United States will celebrate its two-hundredth birthday by betraying the heritage of liberty”.<sup>687</sup>

Another danger emanating from this neo-isolationist spirit – reminiscent of Munich 1938 - he cautioned, was, that the U.S. might abandon the defence of Israel as it had abandoned Vietnam. He believed that signs for this potential abandonment had begun to appear in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War, which shattered the myth of the invincibility of Israel, introduced by the Six Day War, “shared by supporters and enemies of the Jewish state” alike.<sup>688</sup> The Yom Kippur War was, in the words of Israeli historian Benny Morris, “a stinging slap in the face” for Israel.<sup>689</sup> It had brought the U.S. to full nuclear alert and was followed by the OPEC oil embargo against nations perceived as supporters of the Israeli state. Podhoretz feared that U.S. support for Israel would wane, or at least become increasingly “evenhanded” in its approach to the Israeli-Arab conflict, because America wanted to insure access to Arab oil and avoid tensions with the Soviet Union in the Middle East. This new stance would inevitably lead to pressure Israel “to make territorial and eventually other concessions involving the PLO”.<sup>690</sup>

*Commentary*, therefore, continued to promote the idea that a strong Israel was crucial to the United States in its battle against Soviet power in the Middle East. In “The American Stake in Israel”, former Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Eugene V. Rostow, elaborated on the Cold War context of the ongoing conflict between Arabs and Israeli. He interpreted the Yom Kippur War as a successful effort on behalf of the Soviet

---

<sup>687</sup> Podhoretz, “Making the World Safe For Communism”, 41; Norman Podhoretz, “America Now: A Failure of Nerve? – A Symposium”, *Commentary*, July 1975, 16-87.

<sup>688</sup> Goldschmidt Jr. and Davidson, *A Concise History of the Middle East*, 329.

<sup>689</sup> Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999* (New York: Knopf, 1999), 437.

<sup>690</sup> Podhoretz, “The Abandonment of Israel”, 25; Robert W. Tucker, “Oil and American Power”, *Commentary*, January 1977, 29-36; Earl Raab, “Is Israel Losing Popular Support? The Evidence of the Polls”, *Commentary*, January 1974, 26-29.

Union to upset the balance of power in the region and create division amongst Western Allies, especially in light of the détenteist rapprochement between China and the U.S. He blamed the U.S. for wavering and inconsistent policy towards Arab nations and for contributing to “fortify and perpetuate the Arab ties to the Soviet Union”. Because of the strategic importance of the region to the West only a strong and secure Israel could ensure the U.S.’ national interest. The destruction of Israel, Rostow concluded, “could spell the end not only of the Atlantic alliance, but of liberal civilization as we know it”.<sup>691</sup>

Neoconservatives found an ally against détente and dovish foreign policy in Daniel Moynihan. While Moynihan was beginning to distance himself from neoconservatives in the domestic realm, he continued to be virulently anti-communist and anti-détentist.<sup>692</sup> Part of the neoconservative revival of hard anti-communism and their move towards a unilateralist interventionism was the systematic attack on multilateral bodies and specifically the U.N as an inept chatterbox, which offered a platform for expressions of anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism.

Shortly before Moynihan was appointed as U.S. representative to the U.N. in 1975, he would begin with the development of a neoconservative critique the U.N. In “The United States in Opposition”, he argued that a tyrannical “new majority” had emerged at the U.N, constituted of an alliance between the Soviet Union and new national entities, which had emerged from the disintegration of the British Empire and were highly

---

<sup>691</sup> Eugene V. Rostow, “The American Stake in Israel”, *Commentary*, April 1977, 46.

<sup>692</sup> Glazer implied that Moynihan did not so much distance himself from neoconservatives because he disagreed with them but because of his political ambitions. For instance, since he wanted to run for Senator of New York, Moynihan could not oppose affirmative action, even though he seemed to very much agree with the neoconservative case against those measures. Glazer, interview with author, April 9, 2008. Moynihan later distanced himself from neoconservatives over foreign policy, as he felt that by the mid-1980s, neoconservatives were becoming too ideological in the fight against the Soviet Union.

vulnerable to the totalitarian, anti-American rationale of Soviet communism.<sup>693</sup> These countries had come to dominate the U.N. body, Moynihan claimed, and reflected “the emergence of a world order dominated arithmetically by the countries of the Third World”, which the U.S. – allegedly driven by guilt towards developing nations - needed to oppose instead of cowardly standing by. He admonished that it was time “we ceased to apologize for an imperfect democracy” and refrain from further engaging in “patterns of appeasement”.<sup>694</sup>

At the U.N., Moynihan waged a battle against what he believed was the U.N. offering a forum in which authoritarian and totalitarian leaders, to the detriment of the West, the U.S. and Israel, were perverting the language of human rights. Non-democratic countries were appropriating the long established technique of the Soviet Union of identifying its enemies with fascism and racism. Moynihan sent out a warning that this type of manipulation of the language of human rights was being used as a weapon against the U.S., Israel and the West in general.<sup>695</sup> Believing that the U.N. had been usurped by communist-led instrumentalisation of anti-Western sentiments amongst Third World representatives, his most memorable intervention at the U.N. council came when he denounced the U.N. General Assembly for adopting Resolution 3379, which equated Zionism with racism, by a vote of 72 to 35 (with 31 abstentions) in November 1975, earning him much support from the American Jewish community and Americans generally in his bid for the Democratic senatorial nomination in New York in 1976.<sup>696</sup>

---

<sup>693</sup> Allegedly, it was Kissinger, after having read the article, who suggested Moynihan to Gerald Ford as candidate for U.S. representation to the U.N. Heilbrunn, *The Knew They Were Right*, 140.

<sup>694</sup> Daniel P. Moynihan, “The United States in Opposition”, *Commentary*, March 1975, 31-44.

<sup>695</sup> Daniel P. Moynihan, “The Politics of Human Rights”, *Commentary*, August 1977, 19-26.

<sup>696</sup> Moynihan, “The United States in Opposition”, 31-44; According to John Ehrman the Zionism is racism resolution was very unpopular in the U.S. and Moynihan’s contributions to the U.N. made him into much loved figure amongst Americans. Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism*, 87.

As informal consultant to Moynihan's candidacy, Podhoretz pointed out that Moynihan's forceful defence of Israel during the "Zionism is Racism" debates had to be considered more of an "aberration", rather than an "accurate barometer of American attitudes toward Israel in general".<sup>697</sup> He counselled to raise the issue that support for Israel had weakened drastically, even in "circles, which proclaim their support for Israel...but which consistently refuse to support the policies...that make it possible", as, for instance, the case with Moynihan's opponent Bella Abzug.<sup>698</sup> Throughout the 1970s Podhoretz admonished American Jews for their unwillingness to support policies that increased the military budget, while expecting the U.S. to stand up for Israel. According to Edward Luttwak there was a "huge and increasingly notorious contradiction at the very core of mainstream American Jewish political attitudes", putting the blame specifically on Jewish liberals, who "instead of showing greater understanding of the importance of adequate defenses...are still pressing for cuts in the military budget".<sup>699</sup>

Another ally of neoconservatives throughout the 1970s was Henry Jackson, long-time Cold Warrior and opponent of pro-active civil rights measures such as busing and affirmative action. Jackson was convinced that the Soviet Union and world communism posed a direct and lethal threat to the United States and its allies and that the only way to deal with this threat was to confront communism with all means possible. Neoconservatives once more supported the standard-bearer of the 'take back the party' movement in his final effort to capture the Democratic presidential nomination in 1976. This support highlights the fact that neoconservatives were still uneasy with the Republican Party and had not

---

<sup>697</sup> Podhoretz, "The Abandonment of Israel", 23-31.

<sup>698</sup> Memorandum from Norman Podhoretz to Daniel P. Moynihan, August 3, 1976, 2, Box 2, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 1975-1976, n.d., NPP.

<sup>699</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, "The Defense Budget and Israel", *Commentary*, February 1975, 27-37.

completely given up on the Democratic Party just yet. Jackson was also a devoted advocate of the state of Israel. According to Benjamin Wattenberg, adviser to Jackson, he appealed to many of the neoconservatives not simply because he supported Israel, but because “he was for a broader role of America around the world...he wasn’t as awe-consumed by the agony of post-Vietnam”. Moreover, “Jackson’s pro-Israeliness was part and parcel of a world view”, according to which “Israel is not only [dependent] on America but on a strong America”.<sup>700</sup> Throughout his career, Jackson championed Israel and Jewish interests. In 1974, he sponsored the Jackson-Vanik Amendment of 1974, which has often been described as a neoconservative success in undermining the alleged amorality of détente. The amendment aimed at limiting trade with communist countries that restricted freedom of emigration and other human rights. It was a direct response to the Soviet Union's “diploma taxes” levied on Jewish and non-Jewish intellectuals who sought emigration.<sup>701</sup>

The later half of the 1970s also saw the formation of the Committee on the Present Danger (CPD), which allied CDM members with a number of national security veterans and anti-communist labour leaders. The CPD became an important “locus of convergence of the traditional right and neoconservatives”, seeking to “resurrect a militarized doctrine of containment as the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy”.<sup>702</sup> It included such figures as Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle, Max Kampelman, Saul Bellow, Richard Pipes, Eugene Rostow, Paul Nitze, Dean Rusk and Charles Tyroler II. The core neoconservative members included Glazer, Podhoretz, Lipset, Decter, and Jeane Kirkpatrick. According to Jerry

---

<sup>700</sup> Wattenberg, Wiener Oral History Library, 4-6.

<sup>701</sup> “Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Council on Foreign Relations”, [http://www.cfr.org/publication/18844/jacksonvanik\\_amendment.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/18844/jacksonvanik_amendment.html) (accessed January 5, 2010).

<sup>702</sup> Heilbrunn, *They Knew They Were Right*, 147; Jerry W. Sanders, *Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), 8.

Sanders, the CPD was like Reagan's future "shadow cabinet", as over 50 of its members would go on to hold positions within his administration.<sup>703</sup>

When Carter took office, the CDM together with the CPD handed him a list of 60 'specialists', including Glazer, Kirkpatrick, Kampelman, and Perle, whom they expected to receive appointments to his administration. Despite high hopes, none were selected.<sup>704</sup> Neoconservatives felt "completely frozen out" and claimed that the Carter administration was "a New Left administration".<sup>705</sup> As a result, CDM started a campaign to delegitimise Carter's appointment of Paul Warnke, whom neoconservatives considered to be an establishment liberal, as head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency for his alleged opposition to strategic superiority and for his position as former McGovern advisor.

While Carter aimed at steering clear of détente and making human rights central to his dealings with other countries, neoconservatives, nevertheless, disliked his approach. Neoconservatives accused Carter of failing to understand the Soviet threat. Comparing the Soviet Union to Nazi Germany, the CPD argued that negotiating arms limitations with the Soviet Union would be just as unavailing and dangerous, as it had been with efforts to reign in Hitler through diplomatic efforts in the 1930s: "The SALT I arms limitation agreement have had no visible effect...on the Soviet buildup". The only outcome of negotiations had been "to restrain the United States in the development of those weapons in which it enjoys advantage".<sup>706</sup>

Richard Pipes, Professor of Russian History and former chairman of 'Team B'—which had been commissioned in 1976 to prepare an independent, i.e. non-CIA, estimate of

---

<sup>703</sup> Sanders, *Peddlers of Crisis*, 150-160. Podhoretz was mentioned for the post as head of the U.S. Information Agency, but did not receive it.

<sup>704</sup> Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind*, 170.

<sup>705</sup> Elliott Abrams cited in Blumenthal, *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment*, 128.

<sup>706</sup> Charles Tyroler, ed. *Alerting America: The Papers of the Committee for the Present Danger* (New York: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984), 13.

Soviet military strength - articulated a similar rationale when he concluded in *Commentary* that the Soviet Union was preparing to fight and win a nuclear war. He believed that efforts at arms control were futile, unless the nature of the Soviet regime changed, of which there was little hope. Convinced that the Soviet Union did not subscribe to the concept of 'mutually assured destruction' (MAD) and was redesigning its military forces for offensive purposes, in order to extend Soviet rule "as far as their ideological and imperial ambitions, and the absence of effective resistance, will carry them".<sup>707</sup> Pipes was determined not only to bury détente and the SALT process, but also to convince decision-makers to invest in a military build-up.<sup>708</sup>

Neoconservatives came to believe that Carter's foreign policy style was even worse than Nixon's détente, as they accused him of alienating long-time allied nations, such as Nicaragua, Chile and Iran, by holding them accountable for breaching human rights, while not using the same standard in measuring the behaviour of 'enemy nations', such as the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia and China. Moreover, his efforts to relax relations with the Soviets and further SALT II negotiations created an alliance between the CDM and the conservative Coalition for Peace Through Strength and the American Conservative Union. Together they tried to turn public opinion against SALT II talks through speeches and a letter campaign.<sup>709</sup>

However, a number of neoconservatives also began arguing for a foreign policy style, which like détente set aside values in order to achieve objectives. Anticipating Jeane Kirkpatrick's "Dictatorships and Double Standards" of 1979, which allegedly procured

---

<sup>707</sup> Kopkind, "The Return of Cold War Liberalism", 509.

<sup>708</sup> Richard Pipes, "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Win and Fight a Nuclear War", *Commentary*, July 1977, 26-31.

<sup>709</sup> "Anti-SALT Lobbyists Outspend Pros 15 to 1", *Christian Science Monitor*, March 23, 1979, 1-7.

Kirkpatrick the position of U.S. ambassador to the U.N. under Reagan, Glazer claimed that while it was a vital for the U.S. to take values into consideration when formulating its positions in foreign affairs, it also needed to take into consideration the fundamental difference between “run-of-the-mill authoritarian regimes and military dictatorships” and “Communist governments”, in the sense that control in communist, i.e. totalitarian, countries was more thorough and permanent than in authoritarian, non-communist regimes and therefore less likely to undergo systemic change in the long run.<sup>710</sup>

Kirkpatrick, in turn, incriminated Carter’s foreign policy for engaging “actively in the toppling of non-Communist autocracies while remaining passive in the face of Communist expansion”. Furthermore, she argued, that the principles of self-determination and non-intervention were selectively applied to communist and rightist nations to the detriment of the American interest. Not only did the Carter administration engage in a double standard in applying its “human rights policy”, it also acted against the American national interest by being soft on communist regimes, while bringing about regime change in states that had been relatively pro-American.<sup>711</sup>

The 1970s were the decade when neoconservatives began converging with New Right conservatives on issues such as racial integration, overblown welfare and governmental activism on behalf of racial minorities and the underprivileged, and the perceived moral decline of American society. At the same time, neoconservatives and New Right conservatives grew together over concern relative to the nature and the global role of American power and their belief that the Soviet Union was as bent on spreading communist hegemony as ever before. The U.S.’ weakness, supposedly introduced by coward and

---

<sup>710</sup> Nathan Glazer, “American Values and American Foreign Policy”, *Commentary*, July 1976, 33-34.

<sup>711</sup> Jeane Kirkpatrick, “Dictatorships and Double Standards”, *Commentary*, November 1979, 34-45.

fearful policies of détente and neo-isolationism, had allowed the Soviets to gain conventional and nuclear superiority, which were threatening American livelihood and dominance. These were concerns, which would occupy a large part of the neoconservative agenda throughout the 1980s and bring them ever closer to the right.<sup>712</sup>

### Conclusion

According to former neoconservative Francis Fukuyama, most accounts presume that neoconservatism “was an alien spore that drifted in from outer space and infected the American body politic”.<sup>713</sup> However, neoconservatism was not an aberration in the wider context of American political culture and intellectual history. It was part, for example, of an important tradition of anti-statist and anti-progressive intellectuals as identified for example by Christopher Lasch in *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics*.<sup>714</sup> Moreover, neoconservatives contributed to the rise of the New Right by connecting their fight against liberalism to popular traditions, as for example, ideas of republican virtue or even liberalism itself. According to Alan Brinkley, modern American conservatism “rested on a philosophical foundation not readily distinguishable from the liberal tradition”. This was reflected by the fact that “the defense of liberty, the preservation of individual freedom” was as cardinal to modern American conservatism “as it has been to American liberalism”.<sup>715</sup>

---

<sup>712</sup> Walter Laqueur, “What We Know About the Soviet Union”, *Commentary*, February 1983, 13-21; Robert Jastrow, “Why Strategic Superiority Matters”, *Commentary*, March 1983, 27-32; Norman Podhoretz, “Appeasement by Any Other Name”, *Commentary*, July 1983, 25-38.

<sup>713</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *After the Neocons: America At the Crossroads*, (London: Profile Books, 2006), 13.

<sup>714</sup> Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven*.

<sup>715</sup> Brinkley, “The Problem of American Conservatism”, 415.

Moreover, modern conservatism and neoconservatism as expressions of a desire to thwart or even reverse progress, relied on a number of antecedents, most of which had, however, been relatively ineffective, unorganised and beset by negative attitudes towards the future of the nation. Modern American conservatism was able to draw on them, while developing an intellectually effective ideology and rhetoric, which was forward looking and designed to inspire confidence in the nation, rather than undermine it. Their ability to locate their critique within a continuity of American traditions of liberalism, republicanism and conservatism discredited those, who considered conservatism and by extension neoconservatism, as “pseudo-conservatism”, “a very special minority point of view” and claimed that America “never had a real conservative tradition”.<sup>716</sup>

Neoconservatives, drawing on specific interpretations of the liberal tradition as well as conservatism, played a crucial role in the fashioning modern conservative ideology. Their efforts to uphold what they perceived as ‘real’ American liberalism, rooted in classical 19<sup>th</sup> century liberalism, were therefore emblematic of how the New Right co-opted ideas of republican virtue and individual liberty and responsibility. Neoconservatives’ critique of affirmative action proved a case in point. According to MacLean, neoconservatives’ co-opting of the liberal and civil rights tradition as an expression of individual freedom, formal equality and meritocracy was “critical in winning sizable numbers of white working people to the right” on the issue of pro-active integrationism, who felt otherwise uncomfortable with the traditionally conservative rationale of anti-

---

<sup>716</sup> Richard Hofstadter, “A Long View: Goldwater in History”, *New York Review of Books*, October 8, 1964, 17-20; Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), for example argues that republicanism was influential well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and not as often alleged co-opted by liberalism during the 19<sup>th</sup> century; Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America*.

integrationism based on ideas of states' rights, racial inferiority and an exclusivist rationale.<sup>717</sup>

Neoconservatives' backgrounds in lower middle-class and often immigrant communities, contrary to Buckley's Catholic, upper-middle class heritage, allowed them to appeal to average white Americans "not in class terms, but in ethno-religious terms" whereby they developed "a new kind of right-wing populist identity", which was able to compete successfully with leftist identity politics.<sup>718</sup> By bringing to conservatism "an ethnic memory of the ghetto", neoconservatives were a driving force in fashioning a conservative ideology, which spoke not only to particularly Jewish concerns, but more generally to other white ethnics who had previously felt unrepresented by a traditionally exclusivist conservatism.<sup>719</sup> Lastly, they prepared the way for the rise of "multicultural conservatives" or "conservatives of color", such as Thomas Sowell, Clarence Thomas, Glenn Loury, Alan Keyes, Dinesh D'Souza and Linda Chavez.<sup>720</sup> Hence, even if neoconservatives were a minimal voice, which fit in awkwardly with the entirety of the conservative movement at times, they were nevertheless relatively influential, especially in light of their small numbers.

---

<sup>717</sup> MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 243.

<sup>718</sup> Ibid.

<sup>719</sup> Jacobson, *Roots Too*, 182.

<sup>720</sup> Ibid., 183; MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough*, 241; Angela Dillard, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner Now? Multicultural Conservatism in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

**Conclusion:  
‘Outsiders Still’:  
Neoconservatives,  
American Jews and the  
New Right**



A number of neoconservatives had held out hope throughout the 1970s that they could recover the Democratic Party. When their last remaining luminary, Daniel P. Moynihan, by now Senator of New York, decided not to take up the challenge against Carter in 1979, neoconservatives rallied to the candidacy Ronald Reagan, whose idealised celebration of America and fervent anti-communism approximated their own. Neoconservatives realised, in Podhoretz’s words that “one ought to join the side one was now on instead of engaging in a futile attempt to change the side one used to be on”.<sup>721</sup>

With Reagan’s election, neoconservatives’ lingering inhibitions to embrace the New Right all but disappeared. According to George Nash, neoconservatism lost its “abstract and reflexive commitment to the welfare state” during the early 1980s.<sup>722</sup> Most neoconservatives also came to reject the remaining resistance to the label “neoconservative”. A number of them attained positions in the Reagan administration. Kirkpatrick, for example, took the post of U.S. representative to the U.N., Eliot Abrams, the husband of Podhoretz’s stepdaughter, became Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs and Richard Perle Assistant Secretary of Defence. Other neoconservatives to work for the Reagan administration were Paul Wolfowitz, Max

---

<sup>721</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Riddle of Reagan”, *Weekly Standard*, November 9, 1998, 22-24; Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends*, 100.

<sup>722</sup> Cited in Nash, “Joining the Ranks”, 160-161.

Kampelman, Richard Pipes, and William Kristol. Initially, Podhoretz was mentioned for a post in the U.S. Information Agency, which he failed to get in the end.<sup>723</sup>

*The Present Danger* was Podhoretz's contribution to Reagan's campaign in which he diagnosed that the U.S. was entering a "new era" characterised by "the Finlandization of America", which found expression in "the political and economic subordination of the United States to superior Soviet power".<sup>724</sup> He claimed that the U.S.'s political will to resist "Finlandization" was undermined by what he perceived as "the culture of appeasement", a product of "the radical movement of the sixties" which, even though it was no longer, continued to live through "its ideas", which Podhoretz believed, were "not only not dead but more entrenched in a bowdlerized form than they ever were in the past, all over the liberal culture".<sup>725</sup> With the election of Reagan, Podhoretz exulted that it was a "truly historic opportunity" for the Republican Party to "reverse the decline of American power".<sup>726</sup>

According to George Nash, "The Reagan years were *Commentary*'s moment in the sun".<sup>727</sup> Murray Friedman has claimed, "*Commentary* became the White House's favourite political journal".<sup>728</sup> Moreover, Reagan has often been described as the neoconservatives' favourite president and is revered and mythologised by neoconservatives to this day.<sup>729</sup> These interpretations, however, exaggerate the extent of *Commentary*'s influence and disregard the fact that during Reagan's presidency neoconservatives were often vexed, especially with respect to his foreign policy. Early into Reagan's presidency, Podhoretz

---

<sup>723</sup> Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution*, 153.

<sup>724</sup> Norman Podhoretz, *The Present Danger* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980), 12.

<sup>725</sup> Cited in: Blumenthal, *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment*, 129.

<sup>726</sup> Norman Podhoretz, "The New American Majority", *Commentary*, January 1981, 19-28.

<sup>727</sup> Nash, "Joining the Ranks", 160.

<sup>728</sup> Friedman, *The Neoconservative Revolution*, 152.

<sup>729</sup> *Ibid.*, 137-160.

began “attacking Ronald Reagan from the right!”<sup>730</sup> Robert Tucker referred to Reagan’s foreign policy as “Carterism Without Carter”.<sup>731</sup> In the same vein, after only a year into the presidency, Podhoretz began to claim that the Reagan administration’s record with respect to foreign policy did “not differ...significantly from the pattern of the last two administrations” apart from the fact that it “is spending a lot of money on arms”. For a while, there was talk about Kirkpatrick resigning from the administration out of discontent with Reagan’s performance.<sup>732</sup>

Throughout the 1980s, *Commentary* continuously warned of the great danger emanating from alleged Soviet strategic superiority for the U.S. and for the American way of life. To approach the Soviet Union as just another competing superpower, with whom deals could be struck, was suicidal, because, Podhoretz argued, the regime was “hostile in its very nature to us and trying to extend its rule and its political culture over a wider and wider area of the world”.<sup>733</sup> Podhoretz’s early frustration with Reagan’s foreign policy hardened into something close to contempt during Reagan’s second term. Comparing Reagan’s foreign policy to Nixon’s or to Carter’s foreign policy, Podhoretz published articles with such titles as “Reagan: A Case of Mistaken Identity”, “How Reagan Succeeds as a Carter Clone” and “What If Reagan Were President?” The fact that Reagan laid the groundwork for a substantial arms agreement (START) with the Soviet Union, convinced

---

<sup>730</sup> Speaking on President Reagan’s Foreign Policy, the First Year Before National Fellows Dinner at Faculty Club, Stanford, February 8, 1982, 1, Box 4, Folder Interview and Speeches, January to November 1982, NPP.

<sup>731</sup> Robert Tucker, “The Middle East: Carterism Without Carter?”, *Commentary*, September 1981, 27-36.

<sup>732</sup> The Macneil-Lehrer Report, January 22, 1982, Transcript, 4, Box 4, Interviews and Speeches, January to November 1982, NPP.

<sup>733</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “The Future Danger”, *Commentary*, April, 1981, 39.

Podhoretz that “the culture of appeasement” also had won over Ronald Reagan and his administration of Cold Warriors.<sup>734</sup>

Another preferred topic of *Commentary* throughout the 1980s dealt with the dangers regional and superpower conflicts posed to Israel, on the one hand, and the pervasiveness of anti-Semitism in anti-Zionist garb in the U.S. and around the world on the other. Podhoretz reiterated incessantly that, “the single greatest interest of the American Jewish community...is the security of Israel”.<sup>735</sup> Podhoretz’s crusade against the alleged pervasiveness of anti-Semitism in the form of anti-Zionism grew louder and more exaggerated throughout the 1980s. In his infamous article “J’Accuse”, which caused a storm in the intellectual world, he took on the alleged “explosion of invective against Israel” set in motion by Israel’s incursion into Lebanon in 1982. After a pro-forma declaration that not all critics of Israeli policy were anti-Semitic, he went on to crudely vent his anger at critical voices from the “more respectable quarters” of American society, such as Anthony Lewis of the *New York Times* and Richard Cohen and Alfred Friendly of the *Washington Post* for criticising Israel’s invasion into Lebanon.<sup>736</sup>

Meanwhile *PI* continued its promotion of supply side economics and its critique of excessive bureaucratisation, issues of diversity, welfare, affirmative action, the ‘underclass’, crime, multiculturalism and the state of education generally.<sup>737</sup> Moreover it

---

<sup>734</sup> Norman Podhoretz, “How Reagan Succeeds As A Carter Clone”, *New York Post*, October 7, 1986; “Reagan: A Case of Mistaken Identity”, *New York Post*, August 6, 1985; “What If Reagan Were President?” *New York Post*, April 29, 1986.

<sup>735</sup> Norman Podhoretz, ETERNAL LIGHT, NBC Radio, October 5, 1980, Interview Transcript, 9, Box 4, Interviews and Speeches, December 1980-1981, NPP.

<sup>736</sup> Podhoretz, “J’Accuse”, 21, 22, 31.

<sup>737</sup> Irving Kristol, “Ideology and Supply-Side Economics”, *Commentary*, April 1981, 48-54; Peter F. Drucker, “What is ‘Business Ethics’?”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 1981, 18-36; William Kristol, “Defending Democratic Capitalism”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1982, 102-108; Paul C. Vitz, “Religion and Traditional Values in Public School Textbooks”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1986, 70-90; James Q. Wilson, “Crime and American Culture”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1983, 22-49; Nathan Glazer, “The Affirmative Action Stalemate”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1988, 99-114.

continued to elaborate on the perceived cultural causes as primary generator of social problems. In “No, Welfare Isn’t the Problem” Charles Murray alleged that while the welfare system encouraged abuse and led to changes of individual behaviour and community values, it was not the welfare system as such that was the problem but rather the entire environment young poor people grew up in, which had supposedly undergone profound change since the 1960s. The reforms of the 1960s shared the assumption that people were not in control of their own behaviour and should therefore not be held responsible. This approach together with the loosening of moral authority led to a situation, which had profoundly negative consequences on the character formation of the young poor who in turn ended up in welfare dependency more often than not.<sup>738</sup>

While both *Commentary* and *PI* are commonly referred to as “influential or important” journals, their impact on the national scene and on the conservative movement was never as pronounced as these assessments contend. Even though *Commentary* and *PI* had a certain amount of influence during the 1970s and 1980s, especially in relation to their small numbers and with respect to shaping specific debates, their “ability to see their ideas translated into action” has often been exaggerated. *Commentary* certainly influenced the discourse within the Jewish as well as the wider American community, in terms of issues such as early Holocaust consciousness, affirmative action and busing and the relation between American Jews, the U.S. and Israel, while *PI* can be assumed to have contributed significantly to discussions about supply-side economics, welfare, crime and so forth. But, like *PI*, *Commentary* remained a publication of relatively low circulation, which was standing at 25, 000 by the late 1990s. Moreover, *Commentary*’s tone was at times near-

---

<sup>738</sup> Charles A. Murray, “No, Welfare Is Not Really The Problem”, *The Public Interest*, Summer 1986, 3-11; Mary Jo Bane, “Is Welfare Replacing the Family”, *The Public Interest*, Winter 1983, 91-101; Charles A. Murray, “Does Welfare Bring More Babies”, *The Public Interest*, Spring 1994, 17-30.

hysterical, as for instance with respect to anti-Semitism and the extent of Soviet power during the 1980s. This overly emotional approach led to a number of severe misjudgments and the articulation of outmoded opinions. In January 2006, *Commentary* separated from the patronage of the AJC, a move which was initiated by *Commentary*, with the hope “to court new and larger donors”.<sup>739</sup> While still in print, it nevertheless has been struggling financially for the last couple of years. It can be assumed that the influence of *PI*, with a circulation of under 6, 000 by the late 1990s, in absolute terms, was even smaller than *Commentary*’s. Elitist and highly idiosyncratic in nature and content, it never sought to appeal to large numbers of people and therefore remained relatively obscure throughout its 40-year existence. In Spring 2005 it was phased out.<sup>740</sup>

Moreover, despite claims that neoconservatism dissolved into the larger conservative movement during the 1980s, neoconservatives consciously remained a fairly cohesive and distinct group. While many of their ideas were in tune with the New Right, neoconservatives, nevertheless, continued to stand out within the broader conservative arena. This was best symbolised by the continued clashes between so-called paleoconservatives and neoconservatives throughout the 1980s and 1990s about the question of who was most “genuinely American and genuinely conservative”.<sup>741</sup> Many more traditional conservatives continued to consider neoconservatives as un-conservative. Russell Kirk, for example, believed that neoconservatives continued to be liberals and modernists who aimed at introducing “a world of uniformity and dull standardization,

---

<sup>739</sup> Gabrielle Brickner, “*Commentary*, American Jewish Committee Separate”, *The New York Sun*, December 21, 2006, <http://www.nysun.com/new-york/commentary-american-jewish-committee-separate/45574/> (accessed January 4, 2010).

<sup>740</sup> Ehrman, “*Commentary*, the *Public Interest*, and the Problem of Jewish Conservatism”, 174, 168, 170.

<sup>741</sup> Dan Himmelfarb, “Conservative Splits”, *Commentary*, May 1988, 54-58.

Americanized, industrialized, democratized, logical, boring”.<sup>742</sup> It appears that many conservatives did only momentarily buy into the highly contradictory nature of neoconservative ideology. Moreover, neoconservatives’ elitist and sectarian approach never sat well with a movement that was so heavily defined by grass roots activism and concerns – despite their efforts to present themselves as populist majoritarians. Finally, the fact that many neoconservatives were Jewish made them always fit somewhat uneasily with a movement that was strongly shaped by Christian fundamentalism.

In this respect, neoconservatives’ willingness to defend the Christian Right against accusations from fellow American Jews appeared almost outlandish. In response to a 1994 report of the ADL, for example, which claimed that the Christian Right was spreading “a rhetoric of fear, suspicion and even hatred”, Midge Decter rallied 75 Jewish leaders to accuse the ADL of “defamation” and “bigotry” in a full-page *New York Times* advert. Decter was adamant that “Judaism is not, as the ADL seems to suggest, coexistent with liberalism” but rather with conservatism. Moreover, she later claimed, the Religious Right was essential in countering the influence of such movements, as the one “advocating a woman’s right not to be a woman”, or the movement “for homosexuals to be considered merely heterosexuals with a somewhat different erotic taste”, or finally, “the movement to dehumanize blacks by exempting them from ordinary moral demands”.<sup>743</sup>

A majority of American Jews disagreed with neoconservatives, however. In *Jews Without Mercy: A Lament*, Earl Shorris denied that neoconservatives’ were speaking for other American Jews. In their demand to redefine what it meant to be Jewish in politically

---

<sup>742</sup> Kirk, *The Politics of Prudence*, 187.

<sup>743</sup> David Cantor, *The Religious Right: The Assault on Tolerance and Pluralism in America* (New York: Anti-Defamation League (New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1994); Peter Steinfelds, “Beliefs”, *The New York Times*, July 23, 1994; Midge Decter, “The ADL vs. the Religious Right”, *Commentary*, September 1994, 45-47.

and culturally conservative terms, they were rejecting “much, perhaps most of what has defined us since our historical beginning”. Neoconservatives, he contended, had turned against these principles because they felt that “Jews, and therefore Jewish ethics and culture, were vulgar”. To Shorris, neoconservatives had resigned their Jewishness.<sup>744</sup> Others lamented that *Commentary* had become the house organ for the Jewish establishment and sold out moral commitment and social justice action for crass economic and political gains.<sup>745</sup>

Most of the “converts” neoconservatives made were indeed to be found within the establishment. According to historian Karla Goldman, the neoconservative logic of retreating from the promotion of a progressive liberal agenda came to strongly define “Jewish communal outlooks and agendas” after the 1970s, and does so to this day.<sup>746</sup> The reasons why a majority of American Jews rejected the neoconservative logic are only understood by considering a number of variables. Firstly, American Jews constitute a highly educated and secularised group within American society. According to Steven Cohen, “Jewishness takes precedence over Judaism” for a majority of American Jews. In his study, Cohen found that in comparison to “almost half the non-Jews” to whom “religion was ‘very important’”, only “a quarter of the Jews made a similar claim”.<sup>747</sup>

The presence of retrograde and religiously fundamentalist elements such as Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority and Pat Robertson’s Christian Coalition within the New Right certainly played an important role in the continued Jewish aversion towards the Republican Party. Furthermore, the fact that a majority of Jews rejected an alliance with these elements

---

<sup>744</sup> Shorris, *Jews Without Mercy*, 17.

<sup>745</sup> Avishai, “Breaking Faith”, 236-256.

<sup>746</sup> Karla Goldman, email correspondence with author, August 10, 2009.

<sup>747</sup> Cohen, *Dimensions of American Jewish Liberalism*, 32.

for the sake of Israel tells us two things: firstly, a majority of American Jews did not perceive the situation as dire enough to engage in such alliance and seemingly disagreed with Nathan Perlmutter's bellicose logic that "If the Messiah comes, on that very day we'll consider our options. Meanwhile praise the Lord and pass the ammunition".<sup>748</sup> Secondly, it shows that Israel was less central to the lives of American Jews as often alleged by neoconservatives and other Jewish representatives who promoted an alliance with Christian fundamentalists within the context of Israeli security and survival.<sup>749</sup>

Many American Jews grappled with the implication for Jewish self-definition of full inclusion into mainstream society after 1945. Being considered as "insiders" was in many ways as if Jews had become *goyim*, which seemed irreconcilable with a historical memory of exclusion and oppression that played such an important role in defining Jewish self-perception throughout Diasporic history.<sup>750</sup> Yet only a very small minority of American Jews concluded from these developments that one way to offset the implications of such a contradictory condition was to turn towards social and political conservatism. As a matter of fact, most American Jews seemed to agree with Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, who, while dismayed at what seemed to him as "the betrayal of Israel" by many liberals after 1967, "refused to believe that Jews could find dependable allies in that part of American society that had almost always excluded them and held them in social contempt".<sup>751</sup>

Like Hertzberg, a majority of Jews continued to believe that their interests and values as Jews and as Americans were best guarded by liberal – even if moderately liberal –

---

<sup>748</sup> Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 104.

<sup>749</sup> In the 2008 Annual Survey of American Jewish Opinion by the AJC, Israel comes out as one of the issue areas, Jews consider least important to be discussed during the presidential election of 2008. <http://www.ajc.org/site/c.ijlTl2PHKoG/b.4540689/> (accessed November 9, 2009).

<sup>750</sup> The plural *goyim* is employed in the Old Testament to signify the nations of the world. Over time, the singular *goy* was used to designate a non-Jew.

<sup>751</sup> Arthur Hertzberg, *A Jew in America: My Life and a People's Struggle for Identity* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2002), 284-285.

politics. They did not feel represented by conservatism or the Republican Party. According to Raab, one reason why a majority of Jews did not feel at home with the GOP was moreover the peculiar “history of the Republican party itself” – one, which they associated with “nativist and anti-immigrant” policies, isolationism and anti-Semitism. In Raab’s words, the “Jewish electorate appears to have a long memory for such things”.<sup>752</sup>

Yet, the continued attachment of large numbers of American Jews to the Democratic Party cannot be explained by the inadequacy of the Republican Party and conservatism alone. It also feeds off the perception that Jewish interests and values are best served by liberal and Democratic politics. In his most recent autobiographical polemic, *Why Are Jews Liberals?* a pseudo-study of why a large majority of American Jews, despite “a radically new set of circumstances”, continues to self-identify as liberal, Podhoretz vents his frustration at “the stubborn Jewish refusal to rethink the old political pieties”.<sup>753</sup> Describing Jewish commitment to the values of the Enlightenment as “partaking of the pathological”, he wrongly diagnoses an excessive liberalism.<sup>754</sup> American Jews are indeed on average twice as likely to support liberal positions on social and civil liberties issues such as legalising marijuana, gun control, pre-marital sex, gay rights and legalisation of gay marriage, abortion, euthanasia and suicide, separation of church and state, and women’s rights than most non-Jews with similar socioeconomic backgrounds.<sup>755</sup>

However, on average American Jews subscribe to a moderate, middle-of-the-road liberalism. According to an AJC opinion poll of 2008, which questioned respondents as to their political identification with respect to the presidential elections, 44 per cent defined

---

<sup>752</sup> Earl Raab, “Are American Jews Still Liberal?”, *Commentary*, February 1996, 44.

<sup>753</sup> Podhoretz, *Why Are Jews Liberals?*, 273, 262-263.

<sup>754</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>755</sup> Cohen, *The Dimensions of Jewish Liberalism*, 25, 35; Raab, “Are American Jews Still Liberal?” 44.

themselves as liberal, 30 per cent as moderate or middle-of-the-road, while 24 per cent claimed to be conservative. Of those who described themselves as liberal 5 per cent claimed to be extremely liberal, 28 per cent liberal and 11 per cent slightly liberal. Of those who characterised their political attitudes as conservative, 10 per cent said they were slightly conservative, 12 per cent referred to themselves as conservative and 2 per cent as extremely conservative. Of most interest are certainly those who find themselves to be middle-of-the-road. These moderates sway, according to Earl Raab, either towards liberal or conservative positions, depending on the issues involved. Generally, however, it can be said that American Jews are on average more liberal than non-Jews, except for law and order issues, the death penalty and affirmative action, where Jews on average tend to agree with non-Jews of similar socio-economic background.<sup>756</sup>

While Podhoretz takes into account the various explanations offered to make sense of the phenomenon of Jewish liberalism, his attempt to rationalise the liberal commitment as “a religion in its own right” can be read more as an insult than an actual honest effort to explain it. He implies that those who continue voting for Democratic candidates, which at the last presidential election were 78 per cent of American Jews, are somehow irrational and utterly disconnected from reality. By describing Jewish liberalism in pseudo-religious terms and trying to show that there is something pathological about the continued Jewish support for the Democrats, he avoids grappling with the fact that a majority of American Jews, at least on the national stage, feel that the Democratic Party best represents their values and interests both as Americans and as Jews. Hence, his book does not contribute

---

<sup>756</sup> Raab, “Are American Jews Still Liberal?”, 43; Cohen, *The Dimensions of Jewish Liberalism*, 25; American Jewish Committee, 2008 Annual Survey of American Jewish Opinion, <http://www.ajc.org/site/c.ijIT12PHKoG/b.4540689/> (accessed November 4, 2009).

anything to explaining why Jews continue to identify with liberalism, but rather gives further insight into how central to Podhoretz's thought is his contempt for the Jewish left.

Jewish liberalism can only be explained by taking into consideration a plurality of factors. Jewish voters base their decisions on what Peter Medding terms micro-political (Israel, anti-Semitism, religious freedom, economic issues) and macro-political interests (such as the nature of governmental structure and social organisation), which in turn guarantee micro-political interests.<sup>757</sup> Political decisions are made therefore not only on the basis of hard interest, but also take into considerations ethical ideals. The latter, as Stephen Whitfield shows, played an important role in the formation of Jewish political culture. Not only are Jews twice as likely as other Americans to vote, their political behaviour also continues to be informed by the Jewish history of oppression and discrimination and the values that have developed out of this experience. According to Whitfield, the "precariousness of centuries in exile" has led to an approach characterised by "the ideals of temperance and moderation, scorning both instinctual repressiveness and excess".<sup>758</sup>

Moreover, many American Jews do indeed understand, even if often diffusely so, the attachment to progressive causes as an expression of Jewish religious precepts and cultural values - the question whether this is actually the case or not is rather pointless - of importance is that it is perceived as such. Co-editor of *Dissent*, Michael Walzer, for example, believes that the characteristics, which inform liberalism, are similar to those that define the modern Jewish mindset. Both are in essence "skeptical, questioning, inconclusive". Walzer claims that liberalism speaks to the Jewish need for an open society,

---

<sup>757</sup> Peter Y. Medding, "Towards A General Theory of Jewish Political Interests and Behaviour", Paper delivered at the Fifth International Seminar of Bar Ilan University's Institute for Judaism and Contemporary Thought (June 1975), 118-121.

<sup>758</sup> Whitfield, *American Space, Jewish Time*, 89, 93, 101.

and a politics guided by a central concern for civil liberties and pluralism. He is convinced that the liberal style of politics appeals to large numbers of Jews because it “guarantees the continuing openness necessary to arguments about—and now to differing versions of—a common Jewishness”.<sup>759</sup> While he agrees that vested interests matter, he also believes that “if we defend only Jewish interests and not Jewish values, if we lose the sense of ourselves as a historic community, a community of shared values, then we have lost too much”.<sup>760</sup> To liberal and radical Jews therefore, neoconservatives have reduced Jewish politics to a mere and narrow defence of the Jewish interest, in the process of which they sought to drown alternative definitions of Jewishness.

However, revisionist scholars have recently begun to investigate the Jewish conservative tradition in the U.S. As shown, American Jews only came to identify with liberal politics in overwhelming numbers during the late 1920s. Up until then American Jews were, in the words of Jonathan Sarna, “far from being united politically and cast votes on both sides of the most contested elections”.<sup>761</sup> In the 1916 presidential election, for example, 45 per cent of the Jewish vote went Republican candidate Charles Evans Hughes and 55 per cent to the Democrat Woodrow Wilson. In 1920, 43 per cent of Jews voted for Republican Warren G. Harding, only 19 per cent voted for the Democratic candidate James M. Cox, and an impressive 38 per cent of the Jewish vote went to Eugene V. Debs who was running on the third party Socialist ticket.<sup>762</sup>

Beyond demonstrating that there exists a diversity of voices, Jonathan Sarna showed that there was a rich tradition of Jewish political conservatism not only in the U.S.,

---

<sup>759</sup> Michael Walzer, “Why Are Jews Liberal? (An Alternative to Norman Podhoretz)”, *Dissent*, October 26, 2009: <http://www.dissentmagazine.org/online.php?id=304> (accessed November 4, 2009).

<sup>760</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>761</sup> Sarna, “American Jewish Political Conservatism in Historical Perspective”, 119.

<sup>762</sup> The Jewish Vote in Presidential Elections: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/jewvote.html> (accessed November 10, 2009).

but also in Europe, one that drew on Jewish political thought, religious precepts and historical experience. As a people in exile, shunned by the host societies they lived in, the primary concern of Jews in pre-emancipatory times was social stability and integrity – they, therefore, in the words of Yosef Yerushalami “inevitably, yet unwillingly, allied themselves to the Crown as the best, and, ultimately, the only guarantor of stability and security”.<sup>763</sup> After Jews received citizenship and allowed full political participation, a majority allied themselves with the progressive, liberal forces, which were conducive to their well being, yet still cautious not to disturb the peace.<sup>764</sup> The conservative elements in America, while certainly not philo-Semitic, were generally more tolerant towards Jews than their European counterparts. Here, Jewish conservatism was represented, for example, by politicians such as Mordecai M. Noah of the Whig Party, who embraced the principles of states’ rights and a limited central government, while also advocating “order”, “discipline”, social stability and social control. While propagating religious tolerance, Noah nevertheless defended slavery and Southern Rights.<sup>765</sup> These were the historical and ideological predecessors of modern Jewish conservatives such as Frank Meyer and Willi S. Schlamm of *National Review* and neoconservatives, such as Norman Podhoretz and Irving Kristol.<sup>766</sup>

Despite the presence of a strong Jewish conservative tradition, to claim that conservative politics is more emblematic of Jewish values and traditions than political

---

<sup>763</sup> Yosef Hayim Yerushalami, cited in Sarna, “American Jewish Political Conservatism in Historical Perspective”, 115.

<sup>764</sup> Nevertheless, there are many examples throughout European history where Jews made common cause with conservative, even reactionary forces as was for instance the case of Max Naumann and the Verband Nationaldeutscher Juden (the League of German Nationalist Jews), who accused the majority of German Jews of being too unassimilated and for having failed to “embrace the Fatherland wholeheartedly”. The league was eventually dissolved by the Nazis. Donald L. Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), esp. Chapter 7.

<sup>765</sup> Sarna, “American Jewish Political Conservatism in Historical Perspective”, 121; Jonathan D. Sarna, *Jacksonian Jew: The Two Worlds of Mordecai Noah* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publisher, 1981).

<sup>766</sup> George H. Nash, “Forgotten Godfathers: Premature Jewish Conservatives and the Rise of *National Review*”, *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June-September 1999): 123-157.

liberalism is an equally reductionist approach to a diverse and complex tradition, which has seen many political systems come and go. In the words of Jürgen Habermas “all traditions are ambivalent” and history is littered with examples where religious and cultural traditions were if not instrumentalised then at least used to rationalise one or the other political position.<sup>767</sup> The approach, according to which Jewish political conservatism is more emblematic Jewish religious and cultural traditions than Jewish liberalism, presumes that one interpretation of Jewish identity is more relevant and ‘more Jewish’ than another. This argument is often supported by the claim that Orthodox Jews, who are allegedly closest to Jewish tradition and therefore supposedly ‘more Jewish’, tend to be politically conservative. While polls show, for example, that American Orthodox Jews who make up 10 per cent of the Jewish population in the U.S. voted 70 per cent Republican in 2004, it has to be pointed out that Orthodox Jewry remains a heavily understudied subject.<sup>768</sup> Moreover, American Orthodox Jews – themselves a highly diverse group - who are politically active are already far removed from Jewish religious tradition in its ‘purest’ form, since they busy themselves with worldly matters. In its ‘purest form’, Orthodoxy prescribes involvement only with the study of sacred texts; worldly matters are irrelevant to it. This is reflected, for instance, in the fact that Ultra Orthodox Jews reject the legitimacy

---

<sup>767</sup> Jürgen Habermas, cited in Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, 6.

<sup>768</sup> Nathan Diamant, “How the GOP Won the Orthodox Vote”, *The Jewish Daily Forward*, November 12, 2004: <http://www.forward.com/articles/4492/> (accessed November 10, 2009). While the context is somewhat different, a similar development is observable amongst the Jewish Orthodox population of the Belgian city of Antwerp, which is often referred to as the Jerusalem of the North, due to its large Jewish Orthodox population. Here the nationalist party, the Vlaams Bloc, has been able to capitalise on the conflicts between the Jewish and the Muslim populations. Debra Rubin, “Europe’s Right is Embracing Its Jews: Old Hatreds Fading as Nationalists Turn Anger on Muslims”, *New Jersey Jewish News*, March 31, 2009: <http://njewishnews.com/njjn.com/040209/njScholarEuropesRight.html> (accessed November 10, 2009).

of the state of Israel, since they believe that only God can re-establish the Jewish homeland, not mankind.<sup>769</sup>

Furthermore, Jewish religious and cultural traditions have always been highly diverse, a condition that intensified after Emancipation. According to Walzer, Jewish religious practice has always been characterised by a diversity of dissenting interpretations to Mosaic Law. While Jewish religious tradition is composed of “canonized and authoritative texts”, it is also characterised by an absence of “a single hierarchy of authoritative interpreters claiming to be God’s representatives”. Accordingly, divergent interpretations were always an important part of Jewish religious tradition, even if they “might not have equal legal standing”, they “might nonetheless achieve equal intellectual standing”.<sup>770</sup> This approach can be assumed to have contributed, however vaguely, to the development of Jewish denominationalism, different versions of Jewish identity and a diverse and highly argumentative political culture in modern times. To claim, therefore, that Jewish religious and cultural tradition “pre-determine” Jews to be politically conservative or politically liberal is not only the wrong question, but also reduces a rich and highly complex tradition of divergent voices to one singular interpretation. In modern times, and especially so in the U.S., the meaning of Jewishness has taken a large number of different forms, which find expression in a multiplicity of divergent political attitudes and activities.

The fact that a majority of American Jews identify as liberals, therefore, is not all that puzzling, nor is the presence of Jewish conservatives and neoconservatives. What demands further scrutiny, however, is how and why, in the words of the executive director

---

<sup>769</sup> Jeffrey S. Gurock, *Orthodox Jews In America* (Bloomington, In.: Bloomington University Press, 2009).

<sup>770</sup> Walzer, “Why Are Jews Liberal?” (accessed November 4, 2009).

of the recently founded PAC Jstreet, Jeremy Ben-Ami, “a small minority” of Jewish leaders and organisations was able “to high jack the debate” and take control, especially of “what it means to be pro-Israel” – and of defining the Jewish interest in general, creating the image that American Jews constitute a monolithic bloc who all agree with each other, when they so clearly do not.<sup>771</sup> Jack Wertheimer once described the organised American Jewish community as one that, in its desire for cohesion, “avoids debates over potentially divisive issues and marginalizes those who take exception”.<sup>772</sup> Part of the explanation for this condition certainly lies with the neoconservatives’ successful efforts to narrowly redefine the parameters of the debates over Jewish identity and interests within a survivalist paradigm, whereby they set standards for “who is kosher and who is *treif*”

---

<sup>771</sup> Michele Kelemen talking to Jeremy Ben Ami, “New PAC Rallies Pro-Israel Jews for Mideast Peace”, NPR, April 15, 2008, : <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89642157> (accessed November 4, 2009).

<sup>772</sup> Jack Wertheimer, “America’s Jews: Highly Fragmented, Insufficiently Disputatious”, in *The Fractious Nation? Unity and Division in Contemporary American Life*, eds. Jonathan Rieder and Stephen Steinlight (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 99.

## Bibliography



### Interviews / Correspondence

Norman Podhoretz, Interview by author, New York, May 17, 2008  
 Ruth R. Wisse, Interview by author, Cambridge, Ma., April 4, 2008  
 Joshua Muravchik, Interview by author, Washington, D.C., April 1, 2008  
 Neil Kozodoy, Interview by author, New York, May 8, 2008  
 William Kristol, Telephone interview by author, August 15, 2008  
 Nathan Glazer, Interview by author, Cambridge, Ma., April 9, 2008  
 Irwin Stelzer, Interview by author, Washington, D.C., May 21, 2008  
 Jonathan D. Sarna, Interview by author, Washington, D.C., April 10, 2008  
 Godfrey Hodgson, Conversation with author, Oxford, April 25, 2007  
 Karla Goldman, Email Correspondence, August 10, 2009  
 David Biale, Email Correspondence, November 29, 2009

### Archival Material

Hannah Arendt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Norman Podhoretz Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Lionel Trilling Papers, Columbia University Rare Books and Manuscript Library,  
 Columbia University, New York

Diana Trilling Papers, Columbia University Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Columbia  
 University, New York

William E. Wiener Oral History Library of the American Jewish Committee, Dorot Jewish  
 Division, New York Public Library, New York

Lucy Schildkret Dawidowicz Papers, 1938-1990, Center for Jewish Studies, American  
 Jewish Historical Society, New York

Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, California

American Jewish Yearbook, American Jewish Committee Online Archives

Commentary Articles

Abrams, Charles. "Homes for Aryans Only: The Restrictive Covenant Spreads Legal Racism in America", May 1947, 421-427.

Adelson, Joseph. "Living With Quotas", May 1978 23-29.

Alexander, Mark. "Israel's Communists and Fellow-Travelers", August 1952, 136-144.

Alter, Robert. "Revolutionism and the Jews: Appropriating the Religious Tradition", February 1971, 47-54.

Anonymous. "The Arabs' Peculiar 'Anti-Semitism': An Old Hostility Takes A New Form", February 1949, 162-165.

Arendt, Hannah. "The Jewish State: Fifty Years After: Where Have Herzl's Politics Led?", May 1946, 1-8.

\_\_\_\_\_. "To Save the Jewish Homeland – There Is Still Time", May 1948, 398-406.

Baeck, Leo S. "Why Jews in the World?: A Reaffirmation of Faith in Israel's Destiny", June 1947, 501-507.

Baron, Salo. "The Spiritual Reconstruction of European Jewry", November 1945, 4-12.

Barrett, William. "Culture Conference at the Waldorf: The Artful Dove", May 1949, 487-493.

Bazelon, David T. "The New Class", August 1966, 48-53.

Bell, Daniel. "Reflections on Jewish Identity", June 1961, 471-478.

Bendiner, Robert. "Civil Liberties and the Communists", May 1948, 430-431.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Has Anti-Communism Wrecked Our Liberties?: The Liberals' Role in the Fight Against Subversion", July 1951, 10-16.

Bloom, Solomon F. "The Dictator of the Lodz Ghetto: The Strange History of Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski", February 1949, 111-122.

Brickner, Balfour. "Letter to the Editor", June 1971.

Cohen, Eliot E. "An Act of Affirmation", November 1945, 1-3.

Cohen, Felix S. "Alaska's Nuremberg Laws: Congress Sanctions Racial Discrimination", August 1948, 136-143.

Cohen, Hermann. "From the 'Religion of Reason'", April 1958, 340-341.

Cohen, Steven M. "Jewish Liberalism Revisited", November 1996, 51-53.

Crossman, Richard H.S. "Framework for the Jewish State: The New Boundaries of Zionist Aspirations", November 1947, 401-407.

Dawidowicz, Lucy S. "'Anti-Semitism' and the Rosenberg Case: The Latest Communist Propaganda Trap", July 1952, 41-45.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Middle-Class Judaism: A Case Study", June 1960, 492-503.

Decter, Midge. "The Negro & the New York Schools", September 1964, 25-34.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Boys on the Beach", September 1980, 35-48.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Homosexuality and the Schools", March 1993, 19-24.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The ADL vs. the Religious Right", September 1994, 45-47.

\_\_\_\_\_. "What Are Little Boys Made Of?" December 1998, 27-33.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Socialism's Nine Lives", June 2002, 28-33.

Dennen, Leon. "Arab Ferment and Power Politics: Pattern of Conflict in the Middle East", February 1946, 21-26.

Draper, Theodore. "Appeasement and Détente", February 1976, 27-38.

Dubnow, Simon. "A New Conception of Jewish History", March 1946, 72-79.

Elon, Amos. "Letter from the Sinai Front", August 1967, 60-68.

Fabian, Bela. "Hungary's Jewry Faces Liquidation: Against the Concentration Camps", October 1951, 330-335.

Fackenheim, Emil L. "The Dilemma of Liberal Judaism", October 1960, 301-310.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Apologia for a Confirmation Text", May 1961, 401-410.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Jewish Faith and the Holocaust: A Fragment", August 1968, 30-36.

Fiedler, Leslie A. "Hiss, Chambers, and the Age of Innocence: Who Was Guilty – And of What?", August 1951, 109-119.

Frankl, Theodore. "My Friend Paul: One Who Survived", February 1957, 147-160.

Gershman, Carl. "Africa, Soviet Imperialism and the Retreat of American Power", October 1977, 35-43.

\_\_\_\_. "After the Dominoes Fell", May 1978, 47-54.

Glazer, Nathan. "The Method of Senator McCarthy. Its Origins, Its Uses, and Its Prospects", March 1953, 244-256.

\_\_\_\_. "New York's Puerto Ricans: Formation and Future of a New Community", December 1958, 469-478.

\_\_\_\_. "Is 'Integration' Possible in the New York Schools", September 1960, 185-193.

\_\_\_\_. "Liberalism and the Negro: A Round-Table Discussion", March 1964, 25-42.

\_\_\_\_. "Negroes and Jews: The Challenge to Pluralism", December 1964, 29-34.

\_\_\_\_. "Berkeley", March 1965, 80-85.

\_\_\_\_. "The New Left and Its Limits", July 1968, 31-39.

\_\_\_\_. "Blacks, Jews and the Intellectuals", April 1969, 33-39.

\_\_\_\_. "On Being De-Radicalized", October 1970, 74-80.

\_\_\_\_. "Revolutionism and the Jews: The Role of the Intellectuals", February 1971, 55-61.

\_\_\_\_. "Vietnam: The Case for Immediate Withdrawal", May 1971, 33-37.

\_\_\_\_. "The Limits of Social Policy", September 1971, 51-58.

\_\_\_\_. Glazer, "Is Busing Necessary?", March 1972, 39-52.

\_\_\_\_. "McGovern and the Jews: A Debate," September 1972, 43-51.

\_\_\_\_. "American Values and American Foreign Policy", July 1976, 33-34.

\_\_\_\_. "Why Bakke Won't End Reverse Discrimination", September 1978, 36-41.

\_\_\_\_. "On Jewish Forebodings", August 1985, 32-36.

Greenberg, Martin. "The Common Man and the Nazis", December 1946, 501-506.

Handlin, Oscar. "America Recognizes Diverse Loyalties: 'External' Ties Are Not Necessarily Dangerous", (March 1950): 220-226.

\_\_\_\_. "Ethics & Eichmann", August 1960, 161-163.

Hertzberg, Arthur. "American Zionism at an Impasse: A Movement in Search of a Program", October 1949, 340-345.

Himmelfarb, Milton. "In the Community", August 1960, 157-159.

\_\_\_\_. "In The Light of Israel's Victory", October 1967, 53-61.

\_\_\_\_. "Is American Jewry in Crisis?", March 1969, 33-42.

\_\_\_\_. "McGovern and the Jews: A Debate," September 1972, 43-51.

Himmelfarb, Dan. "Conservative Splits", May 1988, 54-58.

Hook, Sidney. "Why Democracy is Better: The Three Pillars of Our Civic Heritage", March 1948, 195-204.

\_\_\_\_. "Does the Smith Act Threaten Our Liberties?: American Law and the Communist Conspiracy", January 1953, 63-73.

Horowitz, David. "Founding of the New State: An Expert's Estimate of the Tasks Ahead", February 1948, 97-103.

Howe, Irving. "*The New Yorker* & Hannah Arendt", October 1963, 318-319.

\_\_\_\_. "The New York Intellectuals: A Chronicle and a Critique", October 1986, 29-51.

Hudson, G.F. "America, Britain, and the Middle East: For A Policy of Strength", June 1956, 516-521.

Hughes, H. Stuart. "The Strategy of Deterrence – A Dissenting Statement", March 1961, 185-192.

\_\_\_\_. "Deterrence", July 1961, 64-67.

Jastrow, Robert. "Why Strategic Superiority Matters", March 1983, 27-32.

Katz, Shlomo. "No Hope But Exodus: Does History Spell the Doom of Western Jewry", April 1946): 12-19.

\_\_\_\_. "Understanding Jewish Resistance in Palestine: The Aims and Methods of Hagana", July 1946, 45-50.

Kirkpatrick, Jeane. "Dictatorships and Double Standards", November 1979, 34-45.

Knox, Israel. "Is America Exile or Home?: We Must Begin to Build for Permanence", November 1946, 401-408.

Kristol, Irving. "How Basic is 'Basic Judaism'? A Comfortable Religion for an Uncomfortable World", January 1948, 27-34.

\_\_\_\_. "The Nature of Nazism", September 1948, 271-282.

\_\_\_\_. "Civil Liberties, 1952 – A Study in Confusion: Do We Defend Our Rights by Protecting Communists?", March 1952, 228-236.

\_\_\_\_. "Deterrence", July 1961, 64-67.

\_\_\_\_. "About Equality", November 1972, 41-47.

\_\_\_\_. "Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy: A Symposium", April 1978, 53-54.

\_\_\_\_. "The Political Dilemma of American Jews", July 1984, 23-29.

\_\_\_\_. "Liberalism and American Jews", October 1988, 19-23.

Kurth, Gertrud M. "The Complex behind Hitler's Anti-Semitism: A Psychoanalytic Study in History", January 1948, 77-82.

Lavine, Harold. "Mr. Eisenhower's Far East Policy: The Prescription, As Before", May 1955, 415-420.

Laqueur, Walter Z. "The Moscow-Cairo Axis: Its Aim: To Drive the West Out", May 1956, 409-417.

\_\_\_\_. "How Real Is Arab Nationalism? Nasserism Paves the Way for Communism", April 1957, 328-335.

\_\_\_\_. "Revolutionism and the Jews: New York and Jerusalem", February 1971, 38- 46.

\_\_\_\_. "The West In Retreat", August 1975, 44-52.

\_\_\_\_. "What We Know About the Soviet Union", February 1983, 13-21.

Leftwich, Joseph. "Songs of the Death Camps: A Selection with Commentary", September 1951, 269-274.

Lehrman, Hal. "What U.S. Support Means: Behind Washington's New Decisiveness", June 1948, 485-492.

\_\_\_\_. "Gathering Storm of U.S. Israeli Relations: The Issues Behind the Conflict", October 1949, 317-328.

\_\_\_\_. "The Arabs, Israel, and Near East Defence: Our Government's Still Unsettled Policy", December 1952, 563-574.

\_\_\_\_. "The New Germany and her Remaining Jews: A Reporter's Notebook", December 1953, 513-524.

\_\_\_\_. "Arms for Arabs – And What For Israel? Dilemmas in the Search for a Middle East Balance of Power", November 1954, 423-433.

\_\_\_\_. "The Crisis in the Middle East: Is An Arab-Israeli War Inevitable?", March 1956, 210-221.

\_\_\_\_. "Western Self-Interest and Israeli Self-Defence: They Coincide", May 1956, 401-408.

Levin, Meyer. "Crisis in Palestine: The Battle of the Children", January 1946, 25-27.

Lichtheim, George. "Will Soviet Anti-Semitism Teach the Lesson? For Most Britishers It Has", March 1953, 221-226.

Liebman, Charles S. "American Jews: Still a Distinctive Group", August 1977, 57-60.

\_\_\_\_. "Jewish Liberalism Revisited", November 1996, 51-53.

Luethy, Herbert. "The Wretched Little Demon That Was Hitler: He Possessed the 'Mass Soul' of the Third Reich", February 1954, 129-138.

Luttwak, Edward N. "The Defense Budget and Israel", February 1975, 27-37.

Lynd, Staughton. "How the Cold War Began", November 1960, 379-389.

McDonald, Dwight. "Scrambled Eggheads on the Right", April 1956, 367-373.

Maimon, Salomon "A Rational Exposition of the Jewish Faith: The Spirit and the Role of the Talmud", May 1946, 72-78.

Meyer, Peter. "The Jewish Purge in the Satellite Countries: Behind the Communist Turn to Anti-Semitism", September 1952, 212-218.

\_\_\_\_. "Stalin Follows in Hitler's Footsteps", *Commentary*, January 1953, 1-18.

Morgenthau, Hans J. "Vietnam: Another Korea?", May 1962, 369-374.

\_\_\_\_. "Asia: The American Algeria", July 1961, 43-47.

\_\_\_\_. "The Impotence of American Power", November 1963, 384-386.

Moynihan, Daniel P. "The United States in Opposition", March 1975, 31-44.

\_\_\_\_. "The Politics of Human Rights", August 1977, 19-26.

Nuechterlein, James. "Neoconservatism & Irving Kristol", August 1984, 43-52.

Peretz, Martin. "The American Left and Israel", November 1967, 27-34.

Pipes, Richard. "Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Win and Fight a Nuclear War", July 1977, 26-31.

Podhoretz, Norman. "The Issue", February 1960, a-184.

\_\_\_\_. "The Issue", April 1960, a-368.

\_\_\_\_. "The Issue", May 1960, a-460.

\_\_\_\_. "The Issue", July 1960, a-92.

\_\_\_\_. "The Issue", August 1960, a-184.

\_\_\_\_. "My Negro Problem – and Ours", February 1963, 93-101.

\_\_\_\_. "Hannah Arendt on Eichmann: A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance", September 1963, 201-208.

\_\_\_\_. "Liberalism and the Negro: A Round-Table Discussion", March 1964, 25-42.

\_\_\_\_. "The Tribe of the Wicked Son", February 1971, 6-10.

\_\_\_\_. "A Certain Anxiety", August 1971, 4-10.

\_\_\_\_. "Is It Good For The Jews?", February 1972, 7-14.

\_\_\_\_. "Between Nixon and the New Politics", September 1972, 4-8.

\_\_\_\_. "Intellectuals at War", October 1972, 4-8.

\_\_\_\_. "Living with Free Speech", November 1972, 6-8.

\_\_\_\_. "What the Voters Sensed", January 1973, 4-6.

\_\_\_\_. "America Now: A Failure of Nerve? – A Symposium", July 1975, 16-87.

\_\_\_\_. "Making the World Safe For Communism", April 1976, 31-41.

\_\_\_\_. "The Abandonment of Israel", July 1976, 23-31.

\_\_\_\_. "The New American Majority", January 1981, 19-28.

\_\_\_\_. "The Future Danger", April, 1981, 29-47.

\_\_\_\_. "J'Accuse", September 1982, 21-31.

\_\_\_\_. "Appeasement by Any Other Name", July 1983, 25-38.

\_\_\_\_. "The Hate That Dare Not Speak Its Name", November 1986, 21-32.

\_\_\_\_. "Editing *Commentary*: A Valedictory", June 1995, 19-20.

\_\_\_\_. "In the Matter of Pat Robertson", August 1995, 27-32.

\_\_\_\_. "Neoconservatism: A Eulogy", March 1996, 19-27.

Poliakov, L. "The Mind of the Mass Murderer: The Nazi Executioners – and Those Who Stood By", November 1951, 451-459.

Raab, Earl. "The Black Revolution & the Jewish Question", January 1969, 23-33.

\_\_\_\_. "The Deadly Innocences of American Jews", December 1970, 31-39.

\_\_\_\_. "Quotas by Any Other Name", January 1972, 41-45.

\_\_\_\_. "Is Israel Losing Popular Support?: The Evidence of the Polls", January 1974, 26-29.

\_\_\_\_. "Are American Jews Still Liberal?", February 1996, 43-45.

Radista, Bogdan. "Beyond Containment To Liberation: A Political Émigré Challenges Our Machiavellian Liberalism", September 1951, 226-231.

Rauschenbush, Winifred. "The Lessons of the Peekskill Riots: What Happened And Why", October 1950, 309-323.

Riemer, Shlomo. "The Hard Road to Israeli Self-Dependence: Facing Up to the Grim Economic Realities", August 1953, 139-145.

Rorty, James. "The Lessons of the Peekskill Riots: What Happened And Why", October 1950, 309-323.

\_\_\_\_. "The Anti-Communism of Senator McCarty: It Slays More Friends than Foes", August 1953, 122-129.

Rosenberg, Harold. "The Trial and Eichmann", November 1961, 369-381.

Rosenzweig, Franz. "On Being a Jewish Person", November 1945, 71-78.

Rostow, Eugene V. "The American Stake in Israel", April 1977, 32-46.

Roth, Cecil. "The Two Cradles of Jewish Liberty: The New World and the Mother Country", February 1954, 109-117.

Rovere, Richard H. "The Conservative Mindlessness", March 1965, 38-42.

Rustin, Bayard. "From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement", February 1965, 25-31.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Africa, Soviet Imperialism and the Retreat of American Power", October 1977, 35-43.

Scammon, Richard M. "Black Progress and Liberal Rhetoric", April 1973, 35-43.

Seabury, Paul. "The Idea of Merit", December 1972, 41-45.

Selznick, Philip "Berkeley", March 1965, 80-85.

Shattan, Joseph. "Why Breira?" April 1977, 60-65.

Sholem, Gershom. "Jewish Messianism and the Idea of Progress: Exile and Redemption in the Cabala", April 1958, 298-305.

Shuster, Zacharia. "Must the Jews Quit Europe? An Appraisal of Propaganda for Exodus", December 1945, 9-16.

Smelansky, Moshe. "A Palestinian Warns Against Small States: Political Independence vs. National Independence", November 1946, 418-423.

Sowell, Thomas. "Are Quotas Good for Blacks?", June 1978, 39-43.

Srole, Leo. "Why DP's Can't Wait: Proposing an International Plan of Rescue", January 1947, 13-24.

Talmon, J.L. "Uniqueness & Universality of Jewish History: A Midcentury Revaluation", July 1957, 1-14

Thompson, Dorothy. "America Demands A Single Loyalty: The Perils of a 'Favorite' Foreign Nation", March 1950, 210-219.

Trefousse, H.L. "German Historians' Verdict of Hitler: This Time No 'Stab-in-the-Back'", September 1953, 264-270.

Trevor-Roper, H.R. "Is Hitler Really Dead?: A Historian Examines the Evidence", February 1951, 120-130.

Trilling, Lionel. "On the Death of a Friend", February 1960, 93-94.

\_\_\_\_. "Young in the Thirties", May 1966, 43-51.

Tucker, Robert. "Oil and American Power", January 1977, 29-36.

\_\_\_\_. "The Middle East: Carterism Without Carter?", September 1981, 27-36.

Warshow, Robert. "The 'Idealism' of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg: 'The Kind of People We Are'", November 1953, 413-418.

Wechsler, James A. "The Road Ahead for Civil Rights", October 1948, 297-304.

Wechsler, Nancy F. "The Road Ahead for Civil Rights", October 1948, 297-304.

Weltsch, Robert. "Crisis in Palestine: Before and After the Truman-Bevin Announcement", January 1946, 21-24.

Westin, Alan F. "Our Freedom – and the Rights of Communists: A Reply to Irving Kristol", July 1952, 33-40.

\_\_\_\_. "Do Silent Witnesses Defend Civil Liberties?: The Course of 'Profoundest Wisdom'", June 1953, 537-546.

\_\_\_\_. "Winning the Fight Against McCarthy: The Need to Struggle on Two Fronts", July-August 1954, 10-15.

Wildavsky, Aaron. "Government and the People", August 1973, 25-32.

Wisse, Ruth R. "The New York (Jewish) Intellectuals", November 1987, 28-38.

Anne Frank, "The Diary of Anne Frank: The Secret Heart Within the Secret Annex", May 1952, 419-432.

Anne Frank, "The Diary of Anne Frank II: First Love and Finis", June 1952, 529-544.

"Letters to the Editor", April 1963, 338-347; May 1963, 430-438; June 1963, 525-530.

*The Public Interest Articles*

Altshuler, Alan. "The Potential of 'Trickle Down'", Spring 1969, 46-56.

Armor, David J. "The Evidence on Busing", Summer 1972, 90-126.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Double Double Standard: A Reply", Winter 1973, 119-132.

Bane, Mary Jo. "Is Welfare Replacing the Family", Winter 1983, 91-101.

Banfield, Edward C. "A Welfare Crisis Without 'Solutions'", Summer 1969, 89-101.

Barzun, Jacques. "Art – by Act of Congress", Fall 1965, 63-70.

Bell, Daniel. "What is the Public Interest?", Fall 1965, 3-5.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Study of the Future", Fall 1965, 119-130.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism", Fall 1970, 16-43.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On Meritocracy and Equality", Fall 1972, 29-68.

Berns, Walter "Pornography and Democracy: The Case for Censorship", Winter 1971, 3-24.

Brezinski, Zbigniew. "Purpose and Planning in Foreign Policy", Winter 1969, 52-73.

Brooks, David. "God and the Neocons", Winter 1997, 95-101.

Bronfenbrenner, Martin. "Japan's Galbraithian Economy", Fall 1970, 149-157.

Crozier, Michael. "French Students: A Letter from Nanterre-La-Folie", Fall 1968, 151-159.

Diamond, Martin. "Conservatives, Liberals, and the Constitution", Fall 1965, 96-109.

Drucker, Peter F. "The Sickness of Government", Winter 1969, 3-23.

\_\_\_\_\_. "What is 'Business Ethics'", Spring 1981, 18-36.

Friedman, Milton. "A Free Market in Education", Spring 1966, 107.

Glazer, Nathan. "The Paradoxes of American Poverty", Fall 1965, 71-81.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Beyond Income Maintenance: A Note on Welfare in New York City", Summer 1969, 102-120.

\_\_\_\_. "On "Opening Up" the Suburbs", Fall 1974, 89-111.

\_\_\_\_. "Towards an Imperial Judiciary", Fall 1975, 104-123.

\_\_\_\_. "The Affirmative Action Stalemate", Winter 1988, 99-114.

\_\_\_\_. "Neoconservative from the Start", Spring 2005, 13-18.

Gilpin, Robert. "European Disunion and the Technology Gap", Winter 1968, 43-54.

Ginzberg, Eli. "The Case for a Lottery", Fall 1966, 83-90;

\_\_\_\_. "Sweden: Some Unanswered Questions", Fall 1970, 158-166.

\_\_\_\_. "Some Lessons of the 1960s", Winter 1974, 211-220.

Greenberg, Daniel S. "The Myth of the Scientific Elite", Fall 1965, 51-62.

Heclo, Hugh. "What Welfare Crisis?: A Comparison Among the United States, Britain, and Sweden", Fall 1973, 61-83.

Heilbroner, Robert. "Men and Machines in Perspective", Fall 1965, 27-36.

Husock, Howard. "Blacks, Jews and Neighborhood Change", Spring 1992, 118-126.

Janowitz, Morris. "The Case for a National Service System", Fall 1966, 90-110.

Jencks, Christopher. "Is the Public School Obsolete?", Winter 1966, 18-27.

Kristol, Irving. "What is the Public Interest?", Fall 1965, 3-5.

\_\_\_\_. "The Troublesome Intellectuals", Winter 1966, 3-6.

\_\_\_\_. "New Right, New Left", Summer 1966, 3-7.

\_\_\_\_. "'When Virtue Loses All Her Loveliness' – Some Reflections on Capitalism", Fall 1970, 4-15.

\_\_\_\_. "Capitalism, Socialism, Nihilism", Spring 1973, 3-16.

\_\_\_\_. "Ideology and Supply-Side Economics", April 1981, 48-54

\_\_\_\_. "Scepticism, Meliorism, and *The Public Interest*", Fall 1985, 32-42.

\_\_\_\_. "American Conservatism 1945-1995", Fall 1995, 81-92.

\_\_\_\_. "Forty Good Years", Spring 2005, 5-11.

- Kristol, William. "Defending Democratic Capitalism", Summer 1982, 102-108.
- Letwin, William. "Democracy and the English University", Fall 1968, 139-150.
- Levine, Robert A. "Assimilation: Past and Present", Spring 2005, 93-108.
- MacRae, Norman. "Whatever Happened to British Planning?", Fall 1970, 140-148.
- Mayntz, Renate. "Germany: Radicals and Reformers", Fall 1968, 160-172.
- Moynihan, Daniel P. "The Professionalization of Reform", Fall 1965, 6-16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "What is 'Community Action'", Fall 1966, 3-8.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Crisis of Confidence?", Spring 1967, 3-10.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Equalizing Education: In Whose Benefit?", Fall 1972, 69-89.
- Murray, Charles A. "No, Welfare Is Not Really The Problem", Summer 1986, 3-11.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Does Welfare Bring More Babies", Spring 1994, 17-30.
- Nisbet, Robert. "The Permanent Professors: A Modest Proposal", Fall 1965, 37-50.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Twilight of Authority", Fall 1969, 3-9.
- Pettigrew, Thomas F. et al. "Busing: A Review of 'The Evidence'", Winter 1973, 88-118.
- Prager, Dennis. "Homosexuality, the Bible and Us – A Jewish Perspective", Summer 1993, 60-83.
- Raison, Timothy. "The British Debate the Welfare State", Fall 1965, 110-118.
- Rein, Martin. "What Welfare Crisis?: A Comparison Among the United States, Britain, and Sweden", Fall 1973, 61-83.
- Solow, Robert M. "Technology and Unemployment", Fall 1965, 17-26.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Some Lessons of the 1960s", Winter 1974, 211-220.
- Sowell, Thomas. "Black Excellence – The Case of Dunbar High School", Spring 1974, 3-22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Patterns of Black Excellence", Spring 1976, 27-58.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Affirmative Action Reconsidered", Winter 1976, 47-65.

Wanniski, Jude. "The Mundel Laffer Hypothesis - A New View of the World Economy Part II", Spring 1975, 31-52.

Wilson, James Q. "The Bureaucracy Problem", Winter 1967, 3-9.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Urban Unease: Community vs. City", Summer 1968, 25-39.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Rise of the Bureaucratic State", Fall 1975, 77-103.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Crime and American Culture", Winter 1983, 22-49.

Wohlstetter, Albert. "'Third Worlds' Abroad and at Home", Winter 1969, 88-107.

Wohlstetter, Roberta. "'Third Worlds' Abroad and at Home", Winter 1969, 88-107.

### Monographs

Abrams, Eliot. *Faith or Fear: How Jews Can Survive In Christian America*. New York: Free Press, 1997.

Abrams, Nathan. *'Commentary' Magazine, 1945-1959: 'A Journal of Significant Thought and Opinion'*. London: Valentine and Mitchell, 2007.

Adorno, Theodore W. et al., *The Authoritarian Personality: Studies in Prejudice*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1951.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. London: Penguin Classics, 2006.

Auerbach, Jerold S. *Rabbis and Lawyers: The Journey from Torah to Constitution*. Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1990.

Baron, Salo A. *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1952.

Barrett, William. *The Truants: Adventures Among the Intellectuals*. New York: Doubleday, 1982.

Bazelon, David L. *Power in America: The Politics of the New Class*. New York: New American Library, 1967.

Bell, Daniel. *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*. New York: Free Press, 1961.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Coming of the Post-Industrial Society*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. New York: Basic Books, 1978.

Bell, Daniel, and Irving Kristol. *Confrontation: The Student Rebellion and the Universities*. New York: Basic Books, 1968.

Bell, Daniel, ed. *The Radical Right*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2002.

Berkson, Isaac B. *Theories of Americanization: A Critical Study, with Special Reference to the Jewish Group*. New York: Teachers College of Columbia University, 1920.

Bloom, Alexander. *Prodigal Sons: The New York Intellectuals And Their World*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Blum, John Morton, ed. *Public Philosopher: Selected Letters of Walter Lippman*, New York: Ticknor and Fields, 1985.

Blumenthal, Sidney. *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment: The Conservative Ascent to Political Power*. New York: Union Square Press, 2008.

Breitman, Richard, and Alan M. Kraut. *American Refugee Policy and European Jewry, 1933-1945*. Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1988.

Brinkley, Alan. *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin and the Great Depression*. New York: Random House, 1988.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Liberalism and Its Discontent*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Brodin, Karen. *How Jews Became White Folks And What That Says About Race in America*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1998.

Brooks, David. *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There*. New York: Touchstone, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *On Paradise Drive: How We Live Now (And Always Have) In the Future Tense*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004.

Browning, Christopher R. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. London: Penguin Books, 2001.

Brudnoy, David, ed. *The Conservative Alternative*. Minneapolis, Mn.: Winston Press, 1973.

Buchanan, Patrick J. *Where the Right Went Wrong: How Neoconservatives Subverted the Reagan Revolution and Hijacked the Bush Presidency*. New York: Saint Martin's Press, 2005.

Buckley, William F., Jr., ed. *American Conservative Thought in the Twentieth Century*. Indianapolis, In.: Bobbs-Merril, 1970.

Burnham, James. *Containment or Liberation? An Inquiry Into the Aims of United States Foreign Policy*. New York: John Day, 1953.

Cahan, Abraham. *The Rise of David Lewinsky*. New York: Dover Publications, 2002.

Cantor, David. *The Religious Right: The Assault on Tolerance and Pluralism in America*. New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1994.

Chambers, Whittaker. *Witness*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1952.

Coleman, Peter. *The Liberal Conspiracy: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe*. New York: Free Press, 1989.

Cohen, Steven M. *The Dimensions of American Jewish Liberalism*. New York: American Jewish Committee, 1989.

Cooney, Terry A. *The Rise of The New York Intellectuals: 'Partisan Review' and Its Circle, 1934-1945*. Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986.

Coser, Lewis and Irving Howe, eds. *The New Conservatives: A Critique from the Left*. New York: The New American Library, 1977.

Crossman, Richard H., ed. *The God That Failed*. London: Hamilton, 1950.

Daalder, Ivo H., and James M. Lindsay. *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2003.

Davis, Mac. *They All Are Jews: From Moses to Einstein*. New York: Jordan Publishing Company, 1937.

Decter, Midge. *The Liberated Woman and Other Americans*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1971.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Liberal Parents, Radical Children*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1975.

DeMuth, Christopher, and William Kristol., eds. *The Neoconservative Imagination: Essays in Honor of Irving Kristol*. Washington, D.C.: The AEI Press, 1995.

De Tocqueville, Alexis. *Democracy in America*. London: Penguin Books, 2003.

Diamond, Sara. *Roads to Dominion: Right Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States*. New York: The Guilford Press, 1995.

Dillard, Angela. *Guess Who's Coming For Dinner Now?: Multicultural Conservatism in America*. New York: New York University Press, 2001.

Diner, Hasia R., *A New Promised Land: A History of Jews In America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Dinnerstein, Leonard. *Uneasy At Home: Anti-Semitism and the American Jewish Experience*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Antisemitism in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Dollinger, Marc. *Quest For Inclusion: Jews and Liberalism in Modern America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Dorman, Joseph. *Arguing the World: The New York Intellectuals in Their Own Words*. New York: The Free Press, 2000.

Dorrien, Gary. *The Neoconservative Mind: Politics, Culture, and the War of Ideology*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Drachlser, Julius. *Democracy and Assimilation: The Blending of Cultural Heritages in America*. New York: Macmillan, 1920.

Edsall, Thomas Byrnes, and Mary D. Edsall. *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights and Taxes on American Politics*. New York: Norton, 1991.

Ehrmann, John. *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945 – 1994*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995.

Feingold, Henry L. *The Politics of Rescue, 1938-1945*. Rutgers, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Time for Searching: Entering the Mainstream, 1920-1945*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Fermaglich, Kirsten. *American Dreams and Nazi Nightmares: Early Holocaust Consciousness and Liberal America, 1957-1965*. Waltham, Ma.: Brandeis University Press, 2006.

Fishman, Sylvia Barack. *Jewish Life in American Culture*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2000.

Foner, Eric. *Give Me Liberty: An American History*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2006).

Foreman, Seth. *Blacks in the Jewish Mind: A Crisis of Liberalism*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

Friedman, Murray. *The Neoconservative Revolution: Jewish Intellectuals and Public Policy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Frank, Thomas. *What's Wrong With America? The Resistible Rise of the American Right*. London: Secker and Warburg, 2004.

Fuchs, Lawrence H. *The Political Behavior of American Jews*. Glencoe, Il.: Free Press, 1956.

Fukuyama, Francis. *After the Neocons: America At the Crossroads*. London: Profile Books, 2006.

Gerson, Mark, ed. *The Essential Neoconservative Reader*. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Neoconservative Vision: From the Cold War to the Culture Wars*. New York: Madison Books, 1997.

Gerstle, Gary. *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

Ginsberg, Benjamin. *The Fatal Embrace: Jews and the State*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Glazer, Nathan. *American Judaism*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1957.

Glazer, Nathan, and Daniel P. Moynihan. *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians and Irish of New York City*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1963.

Glazer, Nathan. *Remembering the Answers: Essays on the American Student Revolt*. New York: Basic Books, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Affirmative Discrimination: Ethnic Inequality and Public Policy*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Goldschmidt, Arthur, Jr., and Lawrence Davidson. *A Concise History of the Middle East*. Oxford: Westview Press, 2006.

Goldstein, Eric L. *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Goldwater, Barry. *The Conscience of a Majority*. New York: Basic Books, 1970.

Goren, Arthur A. *The Politics and Public Culture of American Jews*. Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1999.

Gottfried, Paul. *The Conservative Movement*. New York: Macmillan, 1993.

Griffith, Robert, and Paula Baker, eds. *Major Problems in American History Since 1945*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007.

Gurock, Jeffrey S. *Orthodox Jews In America*. Bloomington, In.: Bloomington University Press, 2009.

Halper, Stefan, and Jonathan Clarke. *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Hartz, Louis. *The Liberal Tradition in America*. New York: Hartcourt, Brace and World, 1955.

Heilbrunn, Jacob. *They Knew They Were Right: The Rise of the Neocons*. New York: Doubleday, 2008.

Hentoff, Nat. *The New Equality*. New York: Viking Press, 1964.

Herberg, Will. *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology*. New York: Doubleday, 1955.

Hertzberg, Arthur. *A Jew in America: My Life and a People's Struggle for Identity*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2002.

Himmelfarb, Gertude. *One Nation, Two Cultures*. New York: Random House, 1999.

Himmelstein, Jerome L. *To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

Hirschmann, Albert O. *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*. Cambridge, Ma.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1991.

Hoever, J. David, Jr. *Watch on the Right: Conservative Intellectuals in the Reagan Era*. Madison: University of Virginia, 1991.

Hook, Sidney. *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx: A Revolutionary Interpretation*. New York: The John Day Company, 1933.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Heresy Yes, Conspiracy No*. New York: The John Day Company, 1953.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the Twentieth Century*. New Yorker: Harper & Row, 1987.

Horne, Gerald. *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995.

Howe, Irving. *A Margin of Hope: An Intellectual Autobiography*. San Diego: Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Steady Work: Essays in the Politics of Democratic Radicalism, 1953-1966*. New York: Harcourt, 1966.

Hunt, Michael H. *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*. New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1987.

Isserman, Maurice. *If I Had a Hammer: The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

Isserman, Maurice, and Michael Kazin. *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2006.

Jacoby, Susan. *Alger Hiss and the Battle for History*. New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 2009.

Jeffers, Thomas L., ed. *The Norman Podhoretz Reader: A Selection of His Writings from the 1950s through the 1990s*. New York: Free Press, 2004.

Jumonville, Neil, ed. *The New York Intellectuals Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Kadushin, Charles. *The American Intellectual Elite*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2006.

Kallen, Horace. *Culture and Democracy in the United States*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1998.

Kamm, Oliver. *Anti-Totalitarianism: The Left-Wing Case for a Neoconservative Foreign Policy*. London: Social Affairs Unit, 2005.

Kaplan, Mordecai M. *Judaism as Civilization*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934.

Katz, Shlomo, ed. *Negro and Jew: An Encounter in America*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1967.

Kaufman, David. *Shul with a Pool: The 'Synagogue Center' in American Jewish History*. Waltham, Ma: Brandeis University Press, 1999.

Kaufman, Robert G. *Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000.

Kazin, Alfred. *New York Jew*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987.

Kazin, Michael. *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998.

Kirk, Russell. *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Santayana*. Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1953.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Politics of Prudence*. Bryn Mawr, Pa.: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1993.

Konvitz, Milton R. *Judaism and the American Idea*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978.

Kristol, Irving. *On the Democratic Idea in America*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972.

\_\_\_\_\_, et al. *The American Revolution: Three Views*. New York: American Brands, 1975.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Two Cheers for Capitalism*. New York: Basic Books, 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Reflections of a Neoconservative: Looking Back, Looking Ahead*. New York: Basic Books, 1983.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Publishers, 1995.

Krugman, Paul. *The Conscience of a Liberal*. New York: Norton & Norton, 2007.

Kruse, Kevin. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Ladd, Everett Carl Jr., and Seymour Martin Lipset. *The Divided Academy: Professors and Politics*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975.

Lasch, Christopher. *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1991.

Liebman Charles S., *The Ambivalent American Jew: Politics, Religion and Family in American Jewish Life*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973.

Liebowitz, Nathan. *Daniel Bell and the Agony of Modern Liberalism*. Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Lindsey, Hal. *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 1970.

Lipset, Seymour M. *Rebellion in the University*. New York: Little, Brown & Company, 1971.

Lipstadt, Deborah E. *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933-1945*. New York: Free Press, 1986.

MacDonald, David B. *Thinking History, Fighting Evil: Neoconservatives and the Perils of Analogy in American Politics*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009.

MacLean, Nancy. *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2006.

MacLeish, Archibald. *Jews in America*. New York: Random House, 1936.

Mann, James. *The Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet*. New York: Penguin, 2004.

Marx, Karl, *Capital* Vol.1. London: Penguin Books, 1990.

McAllister, Melani. *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media & U.S. Interests in the Middle East Since 1945*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

McGirr, Lisa. *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New Right*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Medoff, Rafael. *The Deafening Silence: American Jewish Leaders and the Holocaust*. New York: Shapolsky, 1987.

Miller Douglas T., and Marion Nowack. *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were*. New York: Knopf Doubleday, 1977.

Micklethwait, John, and Adrian Wooldridge. *The Right Nation: Why America is Different*. London: Penguin, 2005.

Mitchell, Brian Patrick. *Eight Ways to Run the Country: A New and Revealing Look at the Left and the Right*. Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007.

Moore, Deborah Dash. *GI Jews: How World War II Changed a Generation*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2005.

Morgan, Michael L. *Beyond Auschwitz: Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Morris, Benny. *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999*. New York: Knopf, 1999.

Murray, Douglas. *Neoconservatism: Why We Need It*. London: Social Affairs Unit, 2005.

Nash, George H. *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*. Wilmington, De.: ISI Books, 2008.

Neusner, Jacob. *Stranger at Home: 'The Holocaust,' Zionism and American Judaism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Niewyk, Donald L. *The Jews in Weimar Germany*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980.

Novick, Peter. *The Holocaust in American Life*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

Oren, Michael B. *Power, Faith and Fantasy: America in the Middle East 1776 to the Present*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007.

Phillips, Kevin. *The Emerging Republican Majority*. New York: Doubleday, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Post-Conservative America: People, Politics, and Ideology in a Time of Crisis*. New York: Vintage, 1982.

Phillips, William. *A Partisan View: Five Decades of the Literary Life*. New York: Stein and Day, 1983.

Norman Podhoretz. *Making It*. New York: Random House, 1967.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Breaking Ranks: A Political Memoir*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Present Danger*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Ex-Friends: Falling Out with Allen Ginsberg, Lionel and Diana Trilling, Lillian Hellman, Hannah Arendt and Norman Mailer*. New York: Free Press, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. *My Love Affair with America: A Cautionary Tale of a Cheerful Conservative*. New York: Free Press, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *World War IV: The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism*. New York: Doubleday, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Why Are Jews Liberals?* New York: Doubleday, 2009.

Posner, Richard A. *Public Intellectuals: A Study in Decline*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Quadagno, Jill. *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Ralph, James. *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1993.

Ribuffo, Leo P. *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983.

Rieder, Jonathan. *Canarsie: The Jews and Italians of Brooklyn Against Liberalism*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University Press, 1987.

Rosenfeld Alvin H., ed. *Thinking About the Holocaust: After Half A Century*. Bloomington, In: Indiana University Press, 1997.

Sachs, Karen Brodtkin. *How Jews Became White Folks And What That Says About Race in America*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998.

Saleski, Gdal. *Famous Musicians of a Wandering Race*. New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1927.

Sanders, Jerry W. *Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment*. Boston: South End Press, 1983.

Sanua, Marianne R. *Let Us Prove Strong: The American Jewish Committee, 1945-2006*. Waltham, Ma.: Brandeis University Press, 2007.

Sarna, Jonathan D. *Jacksonian Jew: The Two Worlds of Mordechai Noah* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publisher, 1981).

\_\_\_\_\_. *American Judaism: A History*. New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 2004.

Saunders, Frances Stonor. *Who Paid the Piper: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*. London: Granta Books, 1999.

Scammon, Richard M., and Ben J. Wattenberg. *The Real Majority: An Extraordinary Examination of the American Electorate*. New York: Coward-McCann, 1970.

Schuettinger, Robert L., ed. *The Conservative Tradition in European Thought: An Anthology*. New York: Putnam, 1970.

Segev, Tom. *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1993.

Shandler, Jeffrey A. *While America Watches: Televising the Holocaust*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Shapiro, Edward S. *A Time for Healing: American Jewry Since World War II*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. *We Are Many: Reflections of American Jewish History and Identity*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2005.

Shorris, Earl. *Jews without Mercy: A Lament*. New York: Anchor Press, 1982.

Silberman, Charles E. *A Certain People: American Jews and Their Lives Today*. New York: Summit, 1985.

Simon, William E. *A Time For Truth*. New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1978.

Sleeper, Jim. *The Closest of Strangers: Liberalism and the Politics of Race in New York*. New York: Norton, 1990.

Sniegoski, Stephen J. *The Transparent Cabal: The Neoconservative Agenda, War in the Middle East, and the National Interest of Israel*. Norfolk, Va.: IHS Press, 2008.

Sollors, Werner. *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Solomon, Gus J. *The Jewish Role in the American Civil Rights Movements*. London: The World Jewish Congress, 1967.

Sorin, Gerald. *Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America*. Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997.

Staub, Michael E. *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

Steinfels, Peter. *The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979.

Stelzer, Irwin, ed. *Neoconservatism*. London: Atlantic Books, 2004.

Stember, Charles H. *Jews in the Mind of America*. New York: Basic Books, 1966.

Strong, Donald. *Organized Anti-Semitism in America: The Rise of Group Prejudice During the Decade 1930-1940*. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1941.

Svonkin, Stuart. *Jews Against Prejudice: American Jews and the Fight for Civil Liberties*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.

Tanenhaus, Sam. *An Un-American Life: The Case of Whittaker Chambers*. New York: Random House, 1998.

Tosh, John, and Sean Lang. *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods, and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2006.

Trilling, Diana. *The Beginning of the Journey: The Marriage of Diana and Lionel Trilling*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1993.

Trilling, Lionel. *Beyond Culture*. New York: Viking Press, 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Middle of the Journey*. New York: New York Review of Books Classics Series, 2002.

Tyroler, Charles, ed. *Alerting America: The Papers of the Committee for the Present Danger*. New York: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984.

Wald, Alan M. *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left From the 1930s to the 1980s*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987.

Webb, Clive. *Fight Against Fear: Southern Jews and Black Civil Rights*. Athens: University Press of Georgia, 2001.

Whitfield, Stephen J. *Voices of Jacob, Hands of Esau: Jews in American Life and Thought*. Hamden, Ct.: Archon Books, 1984.

\_\_\_\_\_. *American Space, Jewish Time: Essays in Modern Culture and Politics*. Hamden, Ct.: Archon Books, 1988.

Williams, Michael C. *Culture and Security: Symbolic Power and the Politics of International Security*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Wisse, Ruth R. *Jews and Power*. New York: Schocken Books, 2007.

Witonki, Peter P., ed. *The Wisdom of Conservatism*. New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1970.

Wyman, David S. *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and The Holocaust, 1941-1945*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis, 1938-1941*. Amherst: Massachusetts University Press, 1968.

Yablonka, Hanna. *The State of Israel vs. Adolf Eichmann*. New York: Schocken Books, 2004.

### Essays and Articles

American Jewish Committee, Annual Survey of American Jewish Opinion 2008.

Abrams, Nathan. "A Significant Journal of Jewish Opinion? The Jewishness of *Commentary Magazine*", *American Jewish Archives Journal* LV, no. 1 (2003): 35-62.

Arendt, Hannah. "Reflections on Little Rock", *Dissent*, Winter 1959.

Atlas, James. "The Counter Counterculture", *The New York Times*, February 12, 1995.

Auerbach, Jerold S. "Liberalism, Judaism and American Jews: A Response". In *The Americanization of the Jews*, edited by Robert M. Seltzer and Norman J. Cohen, 144-148. New York: New York University Press, 1995.

Avishai, Bernard. "Breaking Faith: *Commentary* and the American Jews", *Dissent*, Spring 1981.

Bartley, Robert L. "A Most Improbable 'Conservative'", *Wall Street Journal*, November 10, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Irving Kristol and Friends", *Wall Street Journal*, May 3, 1972.

Bell, Daniel. "Plea for a 'New Phase' in Negro Leadership", *New York Times Magazine*, May 31, 1964.

Boas, Franz. "Are the Jews a Race?" *World Tomorrow*, January 1923.

Boot, Max. "What the Heck Is a 'Neocon'?" *Wall Street Journal*, December 30, 2002.

Brickner, Garbielle. "*Commentary*, American Jewish Committee Separate", *The New York Sun*, December 21, 2006.

Brinkley, Alan. "The Problem of American Conservatism", *American Historical Review* 99, no. 2 (April 1994): 409-429.

Buchanan, Patrick J. "Whose War?" *American Conservative*, May 24, 2002.

Buckley, William F., Jr., "Why the South Must Prevail", *National Review*, August 24, 1957.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Split in the Family", *National Review*, December 15, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Come On In, the Water's Fine", *National Review*, March 9, 1971.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Re Irving Kristol", *The Alternative*, June-September 1972.

Burnham, James. "Selective Yes. Humanism Maybe", *National Review*, May 12, 1972.

Cohn, Werner. "The Politics of American Jews". In *Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, edited by Marshall Sklare, 614-626. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1958.

Cohen, Eliot E. "Age of Brass," *The Menorah Journal*, October 1925.

\_\_\_\_\_. Interview in *Time*, January 29, 1951.

Cohen, Steven M., and Leonard J. Fein. "From Integration to Survival: American Jewish Anxieties in Transition", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 480 (July 1985): 75-88.

Cohen, Steven M. and Charles S. Liebman. "American Jewish Liberalism: Unraveling the Strands", *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 61, no. 3 (Autumn 1997): 405-430.

Coleman, Peter. "The Brief Life of Liberal Anti-Communism," *The New Republic*, September 15, 1989.

Continetti, Matthew. "Two, Three, Many Neoconservatives: Forty Years of The Public Interest", *The Weekly Standard*, December 18, 2006.

Dalin, David G. "Louis Marshall, the Jewish Vote, and the Republican Party", *Jewish Political Studies Review* 4, no. 1. (Spring 1992): 55-84.

Dawidowicz, Lucy S. "The Arab-Israel War of 1967". In *American Jewish Yearbook*, edited by The American Jewish Committee, 198-229. New York: American Jewish Committee, 1968.

Decter, Midge. "An Activist Critic on the Upper West Side". In *Creators and Disturbers: Reminiscences by Jewish Intellectuals of New York*, edited by Bernard Rosenberg and Ernest Goldstein, 351-367. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Neocon Memoir", *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June-September 1999): 183-194.

Diamant, Nathan. "How the GOP Won the Orthodox Vote", *The Jewish Daily Forward*, November 12, 2004.

Drury, Shadia B. "Saving America: Leo Strauss and the Neoconservatives", *Evatt Foundation*, September 10, 2003.

Ehrman, John. "Commentary, *The Public Interest*, and the Problem of Jewish Conservatism", *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June-September 1999): 159-181.

Elon, Amos. "The Excommunication of Hannah Arendt". In *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, Hannah Arendt, vii-xxiii. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.

Epstein, Joseph. "The New Conservatives: Intellectuals in Retreat". In *The New Conservatives: A Critique from the Left*, edited by Lewis A. Coser and Irving Howe, 9-28. New York: Quandrangle, 1977.

Epstein, Itzhak. "American Jewry: On the Barricades or on the Fence?" *Jewish Liberation Journal*, May 1969.

Fackenheim, Emil L. "Jewish Values in the Post-Holocaust Future: A Symposium", *Judaism*, 16, no. 3 (Summer 1967): 266-299.

Fein, Leonard. "Liberalism and American Jews", *Midstream*, October 1973.

Feingold, Henry L. "'It Can Happen Here': Antisemitism, American Jewry and the Reaction to the European Crisis, 1933-1940", The Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Antisemitism and Racism. <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw2000-1/feingold.htm> (accessed 19.03.2008).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Roosevelt and the Holocaust: Reflections on New Deal Humanitarianism", *Judaism* 18, no. 3 (Summer 1969): 259-276.

Fuchs, Lawrence H. "American Jews and the Presidential Vote", *The American Political Science Review* 49, no. 2 (June 1955): 385-401.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Sources of Jewish Internationalism and Liberalism". In *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, edited by Marshall Sklare, 595-613. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960.

Gans, Herbert J. "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America". In *Making Sense of America: Sociological Analyses and Essays*, Herbert J. Gans, 167-193. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, 1999.

Glazer, Nathan. "Social Characteristics of American Jews, 1654-1954". In *American Jewish Yearbook*, edited by The American Jewish Committee, 14-20. New York: American Jewish Committee, 1955.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Effects of Emerging Urban-Suburban and Anti-Segregation Developments on Jewish Communal Service", *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Fall 1964.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Ghetto Crisis", *Encounter*, November 1967.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Crisis of American Jewry", *Midstream*, November 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Jewish Interests and the New Left", *Midstream*, February 1971.

\_\_\_\_\_. "From Socialism to Sociology". In *Authors of Their Own Lives: Intellectual Autobiographies of Twenty American Sociologists*, edited by Bennett M. Berger, 190-209. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Anomalous Liberalism of American Jews". In *The Americanization of the Jews*, edited by Robert M. Seltzer and Norman J. Cohen, 133-143. New York: New York University Press, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Man Without Footnotes". In *The Neoconservative Imagination: Essays in Honor of Irving Kristol*, edited by Christopher DeMuth and William Kristol, 3-12. Washington D.C.: The AEI Press, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Campus Crucible: Student Politics and the University". In *The Essential Neoconservative Reader*, edited by Mark Gerson, 41-63. Reading, Ma.: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Commentary - The Early Years". In *Commentary' in American Life*, edited by Murray Friedman, 38-51. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005.

Gewen, Barry. "Irving Kristol, Godfather of Modern Conservatism, Dies at 89", *New York Times*, September 18, 2009.

Goldstein, Eric L. "'Different Blood Flows in Our Veins': Race and Jewish Self-Definition in Late Nineteenth Century America", *American Jewish History* 85, no.1 (March 1997): 29-55.

Gottfried, Paul. "What's In A Name? The Curious Case of 'Neoconservative'", VDARE.com. <http://www.vdare.com/gottfried/neoconservative.htm> (accessed August 11, 2009).

Gottfried, Paul. "Notes on Neoconservatism", *World and I*, September 1986.

Green, Arthur. "The Response Symposium", *Response*, Winter 1970-1971.

Greenberg, Cheryl. "Negotiating Coalition: Black and Jewish Civil Rights Agencies in the Twentieth Century". In *Struggles in the Promised Land: Towards a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States*, edited by Jack Saltzman and Cornel West, 153-175. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Halpern, Ben. "The Roots of American Jewish Liberalism", *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (December 1976): 190-214.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Jewish Liberal Mind", *Midstream*, January 1971.

Harap, Louis. "X-Ray on *Commentary*", *Jewish Life*, July 1947.

\_\_\_\_\_. "*Commentary* Moves to the Right", *Jewish Currents*, December 1971.

Harrington, Michael. "The Welfare State and Its Neoconservative Critics", *Dissent*, Fall 1973.

Hertz, Richard C. "Rising Tide of Negro-Jewish Tensions", *Ebony*, December 1964.

Himmelfarb, Gertrude. "Letter to the Editor", *First Things*, January 1997.

Himmelstein, Jerome L. "'Reverse Discrimination' and 'The Rape of Progress' – Neo-Conservatives on Affirmative Action and Nuclear Power", Center for Research and Social Organization, Working Paper 222 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1980): 1-30.

Hofstadter, Richard. "A Long View: Goldwater in History", *New York Review of Books*, October 8, 1964.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt – 1954". In *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, Richard Hofstadter, 41-65. New York: Vintage Books, 2008.

Hook, Sidney. "The Tragedy of German Jewry", *New Leader*, November 26, 1938.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Freedom to Learn but Not to Riot", *New York Times Magazine*, January 3, 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. "An Open Letter to George McGovern", *New America*, September 30, 1972.

Howe, Irving. "This Age of Conformity", *Partisan Review*, January - February 1954.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Mid-Century Turning Point: An Intellectual Memoir", *Midstream*, June - July 1975.

Jacobs, Yaakov. "To Picket...Or to Pray?", *Jewish Observer*, April 1968.

Joseph, Lawrence B. "Neoconservatism in Contemporary Political Science: Democratic Theory and the Party System", *The Journal of Politics* 44, no.4 (November 1982): 954-982.

Kallen, Horace M. "Democracy versus the Melting Pot, A Study of American Nationality", *The Nation*, February 18 and 25, 1915.

Kateb, George. "On the Legitimation Crisis", *Social Research* 46, no. 4 (Winter 1979): 695-727.

Kazin, Alfred. "Introduction: The Jew as Modern American Writer". In *The Commentary Reader: Two Decades of Articles and Stories*, edited by Norman Podhoretz, xv-xxv. New York: Atheneum, 1966.

Kirk, Russel. "The Neoconservatives: An Endangered Species", Heritage Lecture 178 (Washington D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1988).

<http://www.heritage.org/Research/PoliticalPhilosophy/HL178.cfm> (accessed August 30, 2009).

Kirkpatrick, Jeane J. "A Normal Country in a Normal Time", *The National Interest*, Fall 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Neoconservatism as a Response to the Counter-Culture". In *Neoconservatism*, edited by Irwin Stelzer, 233-240. Atlantic Books: London, 2004.

Kirsch, Adam. "Hannah Arendt's Conflicted Zionism", *The New York Sun*, March 21, 2007.

Klingenstein, Susanne. "'It's Splendid When the Town Whore Gets Religion and Joins the Church': The Rise of the Jewish Neoconservatives as Observed by the Paleoconservatives in the 1980s", *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 21, no. 2 (2003): 83-98.

Kristol, Irving. "Is the Welfare State Obsolete?" *Harper's Magazine*, June 1963.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Few Kind Words for Uncle Tom", *Harper's Magazine*, February 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Letter from New York: Teaching In, Speaking Out: The Controversy over Viet Nam", *Encounter*, August 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Old Politics, the New Politics, and the New New Politics", *New York Times Magazine*, November 24, 1968.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Why Jews Turn Conservative", *Wall Street Journal*, September 14, 1972.

\_\_\_\_\_. "What Is A Neoconservative?" *Newsweek*, January 19, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Memoirs of a Trotskyist", *New York Time Magazine*, January 23, 1977. Reprinted in Irving Kristol, *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1995): 469-480.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Thoughts on Equality and Egalitarianism". In *Income Redistribution*, edited by Colin D. Campbell, 35-42. Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1977.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Neoconservatism: An Idea Whose Time is Now", *Esquire*, February 13, 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Liberal Tradition of American Jews". In *American Pluralism and the Jewish Community*, edited Seymour Martin Lipset, 109-116. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Defining the National Interest", *The National Interest*, Fall 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_. "My Cold War", *The National Interest*, Spring 1993.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On the Political Stupidity of the Jews", *Azure*, Autumn 1999.

\_\_\_\_. "A Conservative Welfare State". In *Neoconservatism*, edited by Irwin Stelzer, 145-148. Atlantic Books: London, 2004.

\_\_\_\_. "Robert L. Bartley, 1937-2003", *The Weekly Standard*, December 22, 2003.

Kopkind, Andrew. "The Return of Cold War Liberalism", *The Nation*, April 23, 1983.

Lehman, Irving. AJCongress emergency meeting, March 1933.

Levey, Geoffrey Brahm. "The Liberalism of American Jews – Has It Been Explained?" *British Journal of Political Science* 26, no. 3 (July 1996): 396-401.

Lewis, Anthony. "The Brooding Hawks", *The New York Times*, February 10, 1977.

Lewis, Neil A. "Senators Criticize Shamir's Position on Mideast Peace", *The New York Times*, March 6, 1988.

Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Paul Seabury. "Lessons of Berkeley", *Reporter*, January 28, 1965.

Lipset, Seymour Martin. "'The Socialism of Fools': The Left, the Jews and Israel", *Encounter*, December 1969.

\_\_\_\_. "The Sources of the 'Radical Right' – 1955". In *The Radical Right*, edited by Daniel Bell, 259-312. New York: Doubleday, 1971.

Lipset, Seymour Martin, and, Richard B. Dobson. "The Intellectual as Critic and Rebel", *Daedalus*, Summer 1972.

Lyons, Eugene. "Our New Privileged Class", *American Legion Magazine*, September 1951.

Margolis, Max. "The Truth About the Jews", *B'nai B'rith News*, June 1924.

Marshall, Joshua Micah. "Remaking the World: Bush and the Neoconservatives", *Foreign Affairs*, November-December 2003.

Medding, Peter Y. "Towards A General Theory of Jewish Political Interests and Behaviour", Paper delivered at the Fifth International Seminar of Bar Ilan University's Institute for Judaism and Contemporary Thought (June 1975): 115-144.

Mehlman, Bernard H. "Letter to the Editor", *Jewish Week*, May 30, 1968.

Miller, Merle. "Why Norman and Jason Aren't Talking", *The New York Times Magazine*, March 26, 1972.

Moore, Deborah Dash. "Reconsidering the Rosenbergs: Symbol and Substance in Second-Generation American Jewish Consciousness", *Journal of American Ethnic History* 8, no. 1 (Fall 1988): 21-37.

Morgenstern, Julian. *American Hebrew*, 22 September 1922.

Moynihan, Daniel P. "Nirvana Now," *The American Scholar*, Autumn 1967.

Nash, George H. "Forgotten Godfathers: Premature Jewish Conservatives and the Rise of *National Review*" *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June-September 1999): 123-157.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Joining the Ranks: *Commentary* and American Conservatism". In '*Commentary*' in *American Life*, edited by Murray Friedman, Murray, 151-173. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005.

Noah, Timothy. "Fathers and Sons", *The New York Times*, January 13, 2008.

Novick, Peter. "Is the Holocaust An American Memory?" In *Ernst Fraenkl Vorträge zur amerikanischen Politik, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft, Geschichte und Kultur*, edited by Susanne Rohr and Sabine Sielke, 1-19. Berlin, Germany: JFK Institut für Nordamerikastudien der Freie Universität Berlin, 2002.

Phillips, Kevin. "The Hype That Roared", *Politics Today*, May - June 1979.

Podhoretz, Norman. "The Intellectuals and Jewish Fate", *Midstream*, Winter 1957.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Know Nothing Bohemians". In *The Norman Podhoretz Reader: A Selection of His Writings from the 1950s through the 1990s*, edited by Thomas L. Jeffers, 29 – 40. New York: Free Press, 2004. Originally published in *Partisan Review*, Spring 1958.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Young Generation". In *Doings and Undoings: The Fifties and After in American Writing*, Norman Podhoretz, 105-111. London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Culture of Appeasement", *Harper's Magazine*, October 1977.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Reagan: A Mistaken Identity", *New York Post*, August 6, 1985.

\_\_\_\_\_. "What If Reagan Were President?" *New York Post*, April 29, 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. "How Reagan Succeeds As a Carter Clone", *New York Post*, October 7, 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Following Irving". In *The Neoconservative Imagination: Essays in Honor of Irving Kristol*, edited by Christopher DeMuth and William Kristol, 57- 62. Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1995.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Riddle of Reagan", *Weekly Standard*, November 9, 1998.

Polier, Justine Wise, and Shad Polier. "Fear Turned to Hatred", *Congress Bi-Weekly*, February 18, 1963.

Prinz, Joachim. "America Must Not Remain Silent", *Congress Bi-Weekly*, October 7, 1963.

Raphael, Marc Lee. "The Maturing of American Jewish Historiography", *Review in American History* 1, no. 3 (September 1973): 336-342.

Rosenberg, Bernard, and Irving Howe. "Are American Jews Turning Toward the Right?" In *The New Conservatives: A Critique from the Left*, edited by Lewis A. Coser and Irving Howe, 64-89. New York: Quadrangle, 1977.

Rubenstein, Richard L. "The Rabbis Visit Birmingham", *The Reconstructions*, May 31, 1963.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Jews, Negroes, and the New Politics", *The Reconstructions*, November 17, 1967.

Rubin, Debra. "Europe's Right is Embracing Its Jews: Old Hatreds Fading as Nationalists Turn Anger on Muslims", *New Jersey Jewish News*, March 31, 2009.

Salomon, George. "America's Response". In *American Jewish Yearbook*, edited by The American Jewish Committee, 85-103. New York: American Jewish Committee, 1962.

Sarna, Jonathan D. "American Jewish History", *Modern Judaism* 10, no. 3 (October 1990): 343-365.

\_\_\_\_\_. "American Jewish Political Conservatism in Historical Perspective", *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June-September 1999): 113-122.

Saveth, Edward N. "Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Jewish Crisis, 1933-1945". In *American Jewish Yearbook*, edited by The American Jewish Committee, 37-50. New York: American Jewish Committee, 1945-1946.

Schlesinger, Arthur M. "Maker War Not It", *Harper's Magazine*, March 1982.

Schmelz, U.O. "The Demographic Impact of the Holocaust". In *Terms of Survival: The Jewish World Since 1945*, edited by Robert S. Wistrich, 42-55. Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005.

Schneir, Walter and Miriam Schneir, "Cryptic Answers", *The Nation*, August 14-21, 1995.

Schoenfeld, Gabriel. "Death Camps As Kitsch", *New York Times*, March 18, 1999.

Schulweis, Harold. "The New Jewish Right", *Moment*, May-June 1975.

Shandler, Jeffrey A. "Aliens in the Wasteland: American Encounters with the Holocaust on 1960s Science Fiction Television". In *The Americanization of the Holocaust*, edited by Hilene Flanzbaum, 33-44. Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.

Shapiro, Edward S. "Jews and the Conservative Rift", *American Jewish History* 87, no. 2/3 (June-September 1999): 195-215.

Shenker, Israel. "Ideological Labels Changing Along With the Label-Makers", *The New York Times*, November 12, 1970.

Silk, Mark. "Notes on the Judeo-Christian Tradition in America", *American Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 65-85.

Skinner, David. "Farewell to *The Public Interest*", *The Weekly Standard*, April 25, 2005.

Smith, Terence. "Opinion in U.S. Swinging to Right, Pollsters and Politicians Believe", *The New York Times*, December 4, 1977.

Staub, Michael E. "'Negroes are not Jews': Race, Holocaust Consciousness, and the Rise of Neoconservatism", *Radical History Review* 75, no. 3 (1999): 3-27.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Smart", *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 24, no. 4 (2006): 2-12.

Steinfels, Peter. "Beliefs", *The New York Times*, July 23, 1994.

Syrkin, Marie. "Can Minorities Oppose 'De Facto' Segregation?" *Jewish Frontier*, September 1964.

Tabor, Michael. "The Jewish Youth Scene", *Jewish Currents*, October 1970.

Toll, William. "Horace Kallen: Pluralism and American Jewish Identity", *American Jewish History* 85, no. 1 (March 1997): 57-74.

Traub, James. "Nathan Glazer Changes His Mind, Again", *The New York Times*, June 28, 1998.

Treiman, Daniel. "Former Foe of Affirmative Action Backs Policy in Michigan Case", *The Jewish Daily Forward*, June 13, 2003.

Vidal, Gore. "The Empire Lovers Strike Back", *The Nation*, March 22, 1986.

Wacker, R. Fred. "Assimilation and Cultural Pluralism in American Social Thought", *Phylon* 40, no. 4 (1979): 325-333.

Walzer, Michael. "Nervous Liberals", *New York Review of Books*, October 11, 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Why Are Jews Liberal? (An Alternative to Norman Podhoretz)", *Dissent*, October 26, 2009.

Wallerstein, Bertha. "The Jewish Babbitt," *The Nation*, May 28, 1924.

Waskow, Arthur. "A Radical Haggadah for Passover", *Ramparts*, April 1969.

Webb, Clive. "A Tangled Web: Black Jewish Relations in the Twentieth-Century South". *Jewish Roots in Southern Soil: A New History*, edited by Marcie Cohen Ferris and Mark I. Greenberg, 192-209. Waltham, Ma.: Brandeis University Press, 2006.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Counterblast: How the Atlanta Temple Bombing Strengthened the Civil Rights Cause", *Southern Spaces* (June 22, 2009).  
<http://www.southernspaces.org/contents/2009/webb/1b.htm> (accessed August 13, 2009).

Wertheimer, Jack. "America's Jews: Highly Fragmented, Insufficiently Disputatious". In *The Fractious Nation? Unity and Division in Contemporary American Life*, edited by Jonathan Rieder and Stephen Steinlight, 98-114. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Whitfield, Stephen J. "Hannah Arendt and the Banality of Evil", *The History Teacher* 14, no. 4 (August 1981); 469-477.

Wilson, James Q. "A Life in the Public Interest" *The Wall Street Journal*, September 21, 2009.

Wisse, Ruth R. "The Maturing of *Commentary* and of the Jewish Intellectual", *Jewish Social Studies* 3, no.2 (Winter 1997): 29-41.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Jewishness of *Commentary*". In '*Commentary*' in *American Life*, edited by Murray Friedman, 52-73. Philadelphia: Temple University, 2005.

Wolfson, Adam. "Conservatives and Neoconservatives". In *Neoconservatism*, edited by Irwin Stelzer, 215-231. London: Atlantic Books, 2004.

Wright, Robert. "The Neocon Paradox", *New York Times*, April 24, 2007.

Worsthorne, Sir Peregrine. "Irving Kristol in London", In *The Neoconservative Imagination: Essays in Honor of Irving Kristol*, edited by Christopher DeMuth and William Kristol, 26-34. Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1995.

"Civil Liberties: Jew Baiting", *Time*, September 22, 1941.

"Our Country, Our Culture: A Symposium", *Partisan Review*, May-June 1952.

"Our Country, Our Culture: A Symposium", *Partisan Review*, September-October 1952.

“Terrible Swift Sword”, *Newsweek*, June 19, 1967.

“YAF 10”, *New Guard*, September 1970.

“Come Home Democrats”, *The New York Times*, December 7, 1972.

“Come Home Democrats”, *The Washington Post*, December 7, 1972.

“Anti-SALT Lobbyists Outspend Pros 15 to 1”, *Christian Science Monitor*, March 23, 1979.

“Godfather of Neoconservatism Dies”, *BBC News online*.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/8264260.stm> (accessed September 19, 2009).

### Other Sources

Dorman, Joseph. *Arguing the World*, PBS, 1998.

Coulter, Ann. “The Big Idea” CNBC (October 8, 2007).

<http://mediamatters.org/research/200710100008> (accessed September 30, 2009).

Michele Kelemen talking to Jeremy Ben Ami, “New PAC Rallies Pro-Israel Jews for Mideast Peace”, NPR (April 15, 2008).

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=89642157> (accessed November 4, 2009).

“Welcome to Havurat Shalom”. <http://www.thehav.org/> (accessed October 14, 2009).

“The Jewish Vote in Presidential Elections”.

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/jewvote.html> (accessed November 10, 2009).

“Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Council on Foreign Relations”.

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/18844/jacksonvanik\\_amendment.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/18844/jacksonvanik_amendment.html) (accessed January 5, 2010).

# **List of Abbreviations**



ACCF	American Committee for Cultural Freedom
ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
ADL	Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
AEI	American Enterprise Institute
AJC	American Jewish Committee
AJCongress	American Jewish Congress
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
CCF	Congress for Cultural Freedom
CCNY	City College of New York
CDM	Coalition for a Democratic Majority
CPD	Committee on the Present Danger
DTP	Diana Trilling Papers
FDR	Franklin Delano Roosevelt
HEW	Department of Health, Education and Welfare
LBJ	Lyndon Baines Johnson
LDP	Lucy Dawidowicz Papers
LTP	Lionel Trilling Papers
NPP	The Norman Podhoretz Papers
NAACP	The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People
NOW	National Organization for Women
PI	The Public Interest
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PNAC	Project for the New American Century
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SNCC	Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee
WEAL	Women's Equity Action League
WRB	War Refugee Board
WSJ	Wall Street Journal
YAF	Young Americans for Freedom
YPSL	Young People's Socialist League
ZOA	Zionist Organisation of America