THESIS

ISRAEL AND THE RISE OF THE NEOCONSERVATIVES, 1960-1976

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Spring 2010

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

March 30, 2010

WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY DANIEL GORDON HUMMEL ENTITLED ISRAEL AND THE RISE OF THE NEOCONSERVATIVES, 1960-1976 BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS.

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

ISRAEL AND THE RISE OF THE NEOCONSERVATIVES, 1960-1976

Despite the importance of neoconservatism in modern American history, inadequate attention has been paid to how the neoconservatives developed their fixation with the state of Israel. The link between the two has either been explained as a natural extension of ethnic loyalty or as part of a conspiratorial plot by un-American, separately Jewish interests. This study complicates the common explanations for the neoconservative fixation with Israel by examining the neoconservatives at their temporal roots in the 1960s and 1970s. Particular attention is given to the context in which neoconservatives coalesced and rallied around Israel as a central component of their new ideology. By reexamining the rise of the neoconservatives in American politics through the lens of their symbolic relationship with Israel, three actors rise as most prominent in their influence on neoconservative thought. On the sub national level Black Nationalists clashed with neoconservatives in the context of 1960s domestic upheaval. On the national level, Kissinger's détente policies were perceived by neoconservatives as posing an existential threat to Israel's survival. Finally, on the international level, Third World denunciations of Israel provided neoconservatives with a stage to present their vision of Israel to the American public. Examining these conflicts substantiates the widely recognized neoconservative fixation with Israel with historical context. This study relies on the writings of prominent neoconservatives, including Norman Podhoretz, Nathan

Glazer, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the periodical journal *Commentary*, and a wide variety of other primary sources that address neoconservative actions and motivations from 1960-1976.

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NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

The term neoconservative is a highly problematic one. It was first used in 1972 to derisively identify a group of anti-Stalinist liberals who, throughout the course of 1960s, turned against a slew of Great Society programs and racial quotas. Subsequently, this original group of neoconservatives embraced the name and thus branded one of the major political traditions in the last half century of American history. This study spans the years 1960 to 1976, but uses the term neoconservative the whole time. It is hoped that this decision does not take away from the quality of historical contingency so essential in all serious analysis of history.

Furthermore, at various times the term "Jewish neoconservative" is used to emphasize the ethnic origins of the group, particularly in contrast to other groups that are discussed. This term is used only as a literary device. Due to the narrow scope of this study and to save space, "Jewish neoconservative" and "neoconservative" refer to the same group of largely Jewish, New York intellectuals, unless noted.

IMPORTANT PERSONS AND TERMS

Black Nationalism – advocates Black unity and political, cultural, and social self-determination. During the 1960s many Black Nationalists fused Marxism with their existing call for self-determination. Major Black Nationalist groups include SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) and the Black Panther Party.

Détente – a relaxation of international relations during the Cold War. In the United States détente was most famously advocated by President Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

Theodore Draper (1912-2006) – historian and political writer who wrote in *Commentary* in the late 1960s and 1970s. During the 1960s he also published works on Israeli politics, Black Nationalism, and the Vietnam War.

Nathan Glazer (born 1924) – a sociologist who wrote profusely in *The Public Interest* and *Commentary* in the 1960s and 1970s. During the 1960s he collaborated with Daniel P Moynihan to study ethnicity and race in America.

The "Golden Age" – an interpretation of American society in the 1945-1960 era. Neoconservatives subsequently looked back on this period as a time of cosmopolitanism, consensus, and a strong shared American culture.

Henry Kissinger (born 1923) – National Security Advisor from 1969-1973 and Secretary of State from 1973-1977. Popularized the policies of détente in the United States. He served under Presidents Nixon and Ford and most famously brokered major agreements with the Soviet Union, North Vietnam, and in the Middle East during the 1970s.

The Non-aligned Movement – a collection of Third World nations founded in 1961 to counterbalance the powerful Western and Soviet blocs of nation-states. Their influence as a group was felt mostly in international organizations like the United Nations where Non-aligned countries tended to vote together on issues.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1927-2003) – served as US Ambassador to the United Nations from 1975-1976 and New York senator from 1976-2000. In the 1970s he was notably a non-Jewish intellectual who shared neoconservative convictions.

Norman Podhoretz (born 1930) – editor-in-chief for *Commentary* from 1960-1995. He guided *Commentary* in the late 1960s to become the major flagship publication for neoconservatism while also maintaining the magazine's focus on Jewish culture.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the rise, development, and impact of a small but influential group of Cold War liberals eventually known as neoconservatives. More specifically, this story is about their distinctive fixation with the state of Israel. At its most fundamental level, the neoconservative fixation with Israel made the group's ideology irreducibly transnational. Over the 1960s and 1970s Israel's physical security and survival became so intertwined with American interests in neoconservative thought that the two nations and their interests were difficult to separate. Neoconservatives proceeded to remap their national agenda with a set of interest that stretched beyond the standard national interest. The centrality of Israel to the rise of the neoconservatives is virtually unquestioned today, but to adequately account for the unique relationship between neoconservatives and Israel, the usual national narrative is inadequate.

As the old story goes, neoconservatives staked out their position on a multitude of issues in the late 1960s and early 1970s – race relations, affirmative action, Great Society programs, the Vietnam War, the Cold War – that contrasted sharply with the establishment in Washington. As a consequence of the political and social upheaval in the 1960s, neoconservatives began a decade-long secession from the Democratic Party. The rise and prominence of student protestors, anti-war demonstrators, and "anti anti-communism" positioned neoconservatives against the trends in the party; neoconservatives viewed the world in terms more akin to John Kennedy than George

McGovern. The reassessment of American power after the Vietnam War, too, positioned

neoconservatives against those who subsequently advocated a more conciliatory

approach to East-West relations.

These causes take center stage in the existing scholarship on the neoconservatives,

and for good reason. [1] Major events in the 1960s era undoubtedly affected the rise and

formation of the neoconservatives. The contingency of domestic upheaval and

international politics enabled and shaped neoconservative ideas and the public's response

to them. However, there has been less scholarly focus on the role Israel played in shaping

neoconservative thought during the 1960s and 1970s. If there is one boast about the

neoconservatives, then and now, it is that they hold an extremely unique vision for the

world and America's place in it. Their fixation with Israel in this vision has been

discussed frequently but rarely investigated at its temporal roots or accompanied with a

serious examination of the context which early neoconservatives operated in. Emphasis

on the influences that affected neoconservative thought will allow an examination of how

neoconservatives formed such a potent ideology.

Ideology, like any historical term, has multiple meanings dependant on context

and author. For the sake of this thesis, ideology indicates the ways in which

neoconservatives organized their surrounding social and geopolitical situations into a

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[1] The classic works on 1970s neoconservatism include Gary J Dorrien, *The Neoconservative Mind: Politics, Culture, and the War of Ideology* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); John Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1994* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Mark Gerson, *The Neoconservative Vision: From the Cold War to the Culture Wars* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 1996); and Peter Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979).

comprehensible and actable set of ideas.[2] Their ideology allowed them to look at national

and global realignments in the 1960s and 1970s with a belief that they understood what

they saw. This thesis examines the historical process by which neoconservatives formed

their ideology through their interaction with ideological opponents and the broader

context of the era.

Whether they were concerned with civil rights or the missile gap,

neoconservatives often presented their arguments by invoking a special link with the state

of Israel. The link was couched in language that emphasized a global context where the

two groups – neoconservatives and Israelis – shared the same ethnicity and the same

democratic values. Neoconservatives were adamant about their American citizenship and

sought to perfect the linkage of these two communities through influencing American

national politics. On the surface this development presented a paradox: the premise of a

community that crossed national boundaries was the basis for an ongoing national debate.

The national agenda neoconservatives advocated remapped the boundaries of the nation-

state to include interests outside of the normal purview of national interests.

Neoconservatives argued that the survival of Israel, while it provided little in the way of

economic or *realpolitik* advantages to the United States, was vital to the maintenance of

post-war American international power and, more importantly, the Western democratic

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[2] This idea originates with Michael Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), xi. Hunt defines ideology as "an interrelated set of convictions or assumptions that reduces the complexities of a particular slice of reality to easily comprehensible terms and suggests appropriate ways of dealing with that reality." Another example of a study that examines ideology in historical terms is Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950-1957* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 8.

tradition (indeed, the argument was made by others that US support for Israel was a material and political liability).

The expansiveness, perhaps even audaciousness of this claim was not lost on the neoconservatives or their opponents. But just as fantastic as Israel's global centrality for the neoconservatives was the equal centrality it held for their opponents. Neoconservatives chose certain oppositional groups to confront – Black Nationalists of the 1960s, the Nixon- Kissinger administration, the Third World bloc in the United Nations – who also saw Israel as vital to their agendas. These groups presented the neoconservatives with well defined opposition and stark contrasts to their own agenda. Israel, and the cluster of symbols it held for each group, became contentious points of conflict as each of these groups struggled to find broad support for their visions of the world. Due to the ideological nature of the neoconservatives and their opponents, invoking Israel usually entailed sweeping ethical and moral judgments instead of specificity or analyses of the situation on the ground. The notions that Israel conjured in the mind mattered more than anything else. For the neoconservatives, Israel's symbolism was of paramount importance to the sub national, national, and international debates in which they engaged. In order to understand the rise of the neoconservatives, they have to be placed in the context of global debates about political values during the upheaval of the 1960s and 1970s.

One note bears a brief discussion when discussing the rise of the neoconservatives. This story argues for noticeable and significant movement for the neoconservatives, both in ideas and influence. Neoconservatism moved from the margins of public discourse in the 1960s to an active and influential player in mainstream public

discourse by the mid-1970s. This story assumes that there is such a "mainstream" in American society and that it is a contested area. Borrowing historian Thomas Bender's idea of "public culture," a forum where by "power in its various forms…is elaborated and made authoritative," provides this story with a suitable framework for the neoconservatives' endgame by 1976.[3] They sought to universalize their ideas, making their symbols of Israel understandable to a larger American electorate. By the early 1970s, they sought to move from an ethnocentric to a national ideology.

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The common process neoconservatives and their opponents shared was the mapping of ideological meaning onto Israel for the purposes of sub national, national, and international agendas. Elevating this process in the story of the rise of the neoconservatives addresses a fundamental problem in the existing scholarship. The tricky relationship between neoconservative "Americanness" and "Jewishness," which obviously has ramifications on the neoconservative relationship to Israel, has suffered from unwillingness to seriously look beyond the borders of the United States for forces at work in the formation of the neoconservatives' ideology. Historiographically, historians of the neoconservatives must recognize that political debates did not arise simply within or between nations, but among different communities. The very separation of American and Jewish presupposes a definition of the prior that excludes the long influences American Jews have had in American history. For the neoconservatives, their Jewish ethnicity has been alternately overemphasized or de-emphasized for a variety of reasons,

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[3] See Thomas Bender, "Wholes and Parts: The Need for Synthesis in American History," *The Journal of American History* 73, no. 1 (June 1986): 126.

but fundamentally because historians have resisted blurring the lines between preconceived notions of the "American way" and a supposedly separate Jewish culture from whence neoconservatives sprung.[4]

In regards to overemphasis, works examining American foreign policy have tended to latch onto the neoconservatives' Jewish background and essentialized the group's support for Israel in such terms.[5] Some intangible bond between Jews, it would seem from these works, leads neoconservatives to naturally – that is, it requires no explanation – support Israel and its policies. Such arguments are often grounded in studies assessing the neoconservative influence in the George W. Bush administration (2001-2009). Unfortunately, many authors with contemporary concerns fail to differentiate between generational or historical context when they portray neoconservatives as secretive, conspiratorial, or monolithic. Judgments on the ethical nature of American foreign policy are customarily tied to these arguments. Assumptions of conflict – between US and Israeli interests, between Jewish policymakers makers and Anglo policymakers, between the Jewish lobby and other lobbies – often go unchecked.

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[4] The post-World War II American national identity focused on political consensus, which many authors of neoconservatism seem to assume as a barometer of "Americanness," is discussed as a historically contingent phenomenon in Wendy Wall, *Inventing the "American Way": The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), especially 1-12, 241-277.

[5] These works are usually highly partisan, but are also much more popular than scholarly works. For example see Patrick J Buchanan, *Where the Right Went Wrong: How Neoconservatives Subverted the Reagan Revolution and Hijacked the Bush Presidency*, (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2004); Craig R Eisendrath, *Bush League Diplomacy: How the Neoconservatives Are Putting the World at Risk* (Amherst, N.Y: Prometheus Books, 2004); and Stephen J Sniegoski and Paul Gottfried, *The Transparent Cabal: The Neoconservative Agenda, War in the Middle East, and the National Interest of Israel* (Norfolk, VA: Enigma Editions, 2008).

The rigid container of American interests, grounded in strict national terms, sees the

encroachment of a foreign "Jewish interest" as dangerous.

On the other hand, historians have also tended to deemphasize the role that Jewish

ethnicity and Israel have played in the overall formation of neoconservative ideology and

the group's national agenda. Many scholarly works have devoted little to no discussion to

the origins of neoconservative support for Israel or any account of change over time

between the neoconservatives' Jewish background and their relationship to Israel.[6] The

major set pieces of the 1960s and 70s – the Vietnam War, the Cold War, Watergate – are

commonly given the most explanatory power in these works. Neoconservatives are

characterized by the traditional American political spectrum as moving from left to right.

Judged in only these terms, fixation with Israel is more a symptom rather than a cause of

the group's development.

The definitive project is to synthesize the major events of the time period with a

more nuanced appraisal of why neoconservatives fixed their sights on Israel and why

their fixation took the shape that it did. This synthesis necessarily renders the "American

or Jewish?" question obsolete. The dichotomies between domestic and foreign influences

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[6] The classic scholarly works on neoconservatism contain little to no sustained discussion
on the formation of the neoconservative fixation with Israel. Most works acknowledge the
centrality of Israel's security to specific neoconservatives, particularly Norman Podhoretz, but
fail to synthesize this acknowledgement into their larger narratives. Dorrien, *The Neoconservative
Mind*, 184-196, dedicates one 13 page section to Podhoretz's fixation with Israel, but fails to
highlight important changes in national and global contexts during the 1960s and 1970s. Ehrman,
The Rise of Neoconservatism, 85-86 contains no sustained discussion of Israel, but does chronicle
Moynihan's tenure at the UN and his fight against Resolution 3379 (see Chapter III). Gerson, *The
Neoconservative Vision*, 161-171 gives a brief account of Podhoretz's writings on Israel and
Moynihan's tenure at the UN. Finally, and most conspicuously, Helbrunn, *They Knew They Were
Right*'s narrative is structured into a three act "Exodus" in order to highlight the Jewish nature of
neoconservatism, but it lacks a sustained discussion of Israel until addressing the 1980s. A brief
section, from 81-86, discusses neoconservative reactions to the 1967 war.

or "tendencies" in neoconservative thought are impossible to separate. Clear boundaries between the two did not exist; not for the neoconservatives and not for the groups discussed in relation to them.

This final conclusion is inspired by a change in the historiographical landscape over the past two decades. With calls for new, transnational histories of the United States, historians have sought to contextualize the US in broader terms than its national borders. It was not until the end of the Cold War that historians like Ian Tyrell, Thomas Bender, and Akira Iriye began the conscious push to incorporate and bring to center stage units of history that have crossed or disregarded national boundaries, particularly in the field of American history.[7] Akira Iriye has called for a focus on different forces overlooked or dismissed by previous historians. Such new units of history have included "human migrations, economic exchanges, technological inventions and transfers, and cultural borrowing and transformation."[8] Emphasis on the "interconnectedness of human history" places the nation in context, no longer assuming its permanency without question. Important forces of history - interrelationships, economics, and culture – can be more fully accounted for with a transnational frame of inquiry. [9]

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[7] See Thomas Bender, *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), especially 1-14 and Ian Tyrrell, "Making Nations/Making States: American Historians in the Context of Empire," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 3 (December 1999): 1015-1044.

[8] Akira Iriye, "Internationalizing International History," in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2002), 51-52.

[9] Akira Iriye, "The Internationalization of History," *The American Historical Review* 94, no. 1 (February 1989): 3. The historiography on transnational communities includes Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-*

The idea of interconnectedness is not just applicable to material connections between two or more groups.[10] Neoconservatives constructed a strong and significant ideological connection with Israel on the basis of a complex relationship between their ethnicity and ideology. This community's power was not displayed through concerted action that crossed national boundaries; its use was bound to the national agenda that neoconservatives sought for American society. The power of this form of interconnectedness is not necessarily inversely proportional to the power of the nation-state, as is the case in many other transnational histories.[11] Instead, the links neoconservatives argued for between the US and Israel were directed toward a national audience in order to achieve a national political agenda. Nevertheless, the neoconservative argument rested on an irreducibly transnational mode of thought.

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Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Aims McGuinness, *Path of Empire: Panama and the California Gold Rush* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008). See also Ryan Irwin, "A Wind of Change? White Redoubt and the Postcolonial Moment, 1960-63," *Diplomatic History,* volume 33, #5 (November 2009): 897-925.

[10] The power of geographically separate groups unified by ideology and common ideas is explored in the context of student movements in Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2003), especially 88-130.

[11] By attempting to diminish the assumption of absolute national identities, the transnational approach has emphasized this inverse relationship. For an example see Matthew James Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). For a criticism of the transnational approach on the grounds that it goes too far in diminishing national power see Peter Fritzsche, "Global History and Bounded Subjects: A Response to Thomas Bender," *American Literary History* 18, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 283-287.

This new perspective relies primarily on the writings and documents produced by American neoconservatives. In particular, the monthly periodical *Commentary* acted as the neoconservative flagship publication in the 1960s and 1970s and illuminates powerful changes over time between neoconservatives and their relationship to Israel. In order to adequately account for the historical forces that shaped the rise of the neoconservatives, considerable time is spent also assessing the ways Black Nationalists and the Third World utilized Israel in their own ideological projects. Emphasis on the broader context neoconservatives operated in is intended to illuminate multiple angles of Israel's symbolism in the 1960s and 1970s.

The three chapters of this thesis are arranged to highlight three major theaters of operation that helped define neoconservative ideology. The interaction between neoconservatives and sub national, national, and international actors facilitated the content and scope of the neoconservatives' fixation with Israel. The three theaters of operation expose even further the artificial boundary between domestic and foreign forces in the history of the neoconservatives, but they also act as organizational units that allow a more detailed discussion of the grievances neoconservatives voiced against particular opponents at particular points in time.

The three chapters are also organized in a roughly chronological way to highlight the important change over time that neoconservatives experienced. Not only was the national and international context vastly different in 1960 and 1975, but the neoconservatives had moved great distances in perspective and motivations. In brief, neoconservatives turned inward in the 1960s in response to a variety of international and national forces, culminating with their confrontation with Black Nationalists in 1967. In

the early 1970s, with the threat of Black Nationalism subsiding but the strong

ethnocentric link to Israel still present, neoconservatives turned to the national stage and

argued a radical shift from the foreign policy implemented by Kissinger.

Neoconservatives finally arrived on the national political stage when they confronted

Third World derision of Israel in the UN in 1975. The insight of this chronology,

discussed more below, grapples with how a fringe, sub national group pushed their

ideology from the margins to the center of American political debate.

Chapter I situates early neoconservatives against Black Nationalism in the 1960s

and highlights the role of group identity that supported the neoconservative association

with Israel following the Six Day War in 1967. This chapter explores the dynamics of

radicalism as neoconservatives remapped the definition of their ethnic ties to include

Israel as a response to the antagonistic transnational community articulated by Black

Nationalists. The prominent spokesmen for Black Nationalism positioned themselves as

actors in a worldwide revolutionary struggle of national liberation. The Third World,

North Vietnam, China, and most importantly for neoconservatives, the Palestine

Liberation Organization (PLO), were the crucial members of Black Nationalism's

globally situated struggle, which after June 1967 fixated on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Due

to a confluence of domestic and international forces, neoconservatives and Black

Nationalists found themselves at polar opposites of the conflict. In the context of the

global uprisings in 1968, each side employed even more radical language and claimed

even stronger ties to their transnational communities.[12] This trend of one-upmanship

ingrained neoconservatives with a group identity that situated itself on an international

stage, acting for the benefit of American Jews and Israelis alike.

Chapter II takes the identity formed in the context of 1960s group politics and

shows how neoconservative ideas entered the national political discourse in the 1970s. As

a reaction to the Vietnam War and the next Arab-Israeli war in 1973, neoconservatives

embarked on a concerted effort to undermine the policy of détente pursued by the Nixon

Administration. By focusing their criticism on Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, the

architect of détente, neoconservatives advocated a new vision for US foreign policy that

addressed its weaknesses in a global context. Israel and its integral links to

neoconservative identity were universalized by the group as a device to criticize détente

and to reimagine a unifying purpose for US foreign policy in the post-Vietnam era. The

success of this project presented a cogent though divisive view of the United States,

Israel, and their relationships to the rest of the world, particularly in contrast to the Soviet

Union and the Third World.

Finally, Chapter III moves to the international scene where neoconservatives

further defined Israel as a prominent member of democratic outposts around the globe.

Israel's ideological symbolism is in full bloom during Daniel Patrick Moynihan's short

but influential tenure as US Ambassador to the United Nations (UN) in 1975.

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[12] On the 1968 uprisings, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter I, see Carole Fink et al., *1968, the World Transformed*, Publications of the German Historical Institute (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Suri, *Power and Protest*, 164-212; and Jeremi Suri ed., *The Global Revolutions of 1968: A Norton Casebook in History*, Norton casebooks in history series (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007).

Moynihan's "Liberty Party" - essentially a network of democracies - was imagined in part as a response to a concerted effort in the Third World to link Israel to a network of imperialist powers because of its treatment of the Palestinians. The collision over the nature and membership of international identities parallels in structure the same collision early neoconservatives had with Black Nationalists. The contested dialogue between the US Ambassador and Third World delegates in the UN General Assembly presents neoconservative development, even at this early stage in the group's history, as an international, as well as sub national and national, process. By the late 1970s the original Jewish neoconservatives had fractured, though the majority of them threw their weight behind Ronald Reagan for President and entered mainstream American politics in positions of power.

But the Reagan years were in the far and unforeseeable future. To understand the role of Israel and impact of the neoconservatives in the 1970s and beyond, this story begins a world away in the uncertain days of the early 1960s.

CHAPTER I: One-upmanship, 1960-1972

I.   Introduction

One major change in 1960s America was the rise in "identity politics." Much of the

domestic upheaval of the decade could not simply be explained by state-to-state tensions

of the Cold War. Instead, there developed in tandem with the international political scene

new communities based on ethnicity, gender, class, race, and religion that took

precedence over older coalitions. Similarly in the US solidarity among newly defined

groups larger than the traditionalist political unit of the individual threatened to alter the

political landscape. Murray Friedman indicated as much in January 1969 when he

claimed in *Commentary* that "The ideology of individualism…bears little relation to the

American reality." Instead, "We seem… to be moving into a phase of American life in

which ethnic self-confidence and self-assertion…are becoming more intense."[13]

The drastic change in *Commentary*, let alone American politics, is even more

striking when Friedman's observations are compared to another *Commentary* article from

almost twenty years earlier in 1950. In concern Dorothy Thompson warned the journal's

overwhelmingly Jewish readers, "You cannot become true Americans if you think of

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[13] Both quotes in Murray Friedman, "Is White Racism the Problem?," *Commentary*
(January 1969): 61.

yourselves in groups. America does not consist of groups."[14] The article went on to argue

that American Jews could not be loyal citizens while also feeling "sympathy for their

favorite foreign country" of Israel. With language lifted from Washington's farewell

address, Thompson claimed any support for the distant Jewish community in the Middle

East would work to "facilitat[e] the illusion of an imaginary common interest where no

real common interest exists."[15] Perhaps in 1796 Washington was right; and perhaps in

1950 Thompson was as well. Both claims, however, were obsolete by 1970.

This chapter examines the opposing ideologies of the Jewish neoconservatives

and their most adversarial opponents on the New Left: Black Nationalists. The quest for

political legitimacy in the 1960s pulled both groups into a spiraling contest of one-

upmanship that expanded and redefined their respective communities. At the end of the

1960s, Jewish neoconservatives and Black Nationalists saw themselves and each other as

transnational actors; members of global communities defined by ethnicity, not national

boundaries. During the 1960s Black Nationalists identified themselves with Africa and

the Third World in an effort to bolster their political agendas in the United States. At the

same time Jewish neoconservatives mythologized and forsook the "Golden Age"

paradigm of the 1950s and aligned themselves with ethnocentric Jewish concerns, the

security of Israel chief among them. The two groups ultimately came into direct conflict

in the aftermath of the Six-Dar War in June 1967, which pitted Israel against its Arab

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[14] Dorothy Thompson, "Do Israeli Ties Conflict with U.S. Citizenship?: America Demands a Single Loyalty," *Commentary* 6 (March 1950): 212. The quote is attributed to President Woodrow Wilson speaking to German Americans in 1915.

[15] Ibid., 210.

neighbors in what observers believed to be a zero-sum game of Israel's survival or Palestinian nationhood. Black Nationalists sought to link American Jews to Israeli imperialism, and Jewish neoconservatives sought to vilify Black Nationalists as allies with the Third World. By relying so heavily on the fates of distant communities in order to form and bolster their agendas, Black Nationalists and Jewish neoconservatives were forced to choose from diametrically opposed options: Black or white, separatism or integration, the Third World or the First World, Arabs or Israelis.

Israel stood at the center of the Jewish neoconservatives' new ideology. In the neoconservative contest with Black Nationalists, Israel assumed vital importance as a symbol and extension of the Jewish community under attack by anti-colonial nationalism. Threats from Third World nationalist movements and Black Nationalists in the United States diverged in certain areas, but Jewish neoconservatives believed they were cut from the same revolutionary, violent, anti-Semitic cloth. The blurred lines between domestic and foreign threats drove the Jewish neoconservatives to intellectual action as they developed a concern for Jewish safety and security in an effort to combat the New Left in general and Black Nationalists in particular.

II. Norman Podhoretz and the Beginning of the Jewish Neoconservatives

"Over the past decade," Earl Raab wrote in 1970, "most American Jews have worked out for themselves, in one way or another, what Israel means for them."[16] Upon reading this,

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[16] Earl Raab, "The Deadly Innocence of American Jews," *Commentary* (December 1970): 39.

the first question that inevitably comes to mind is why was Israel, a state since 1948,

finally at the forefront of American Jewish contemplation over the past decade, and not in

the decades prior? One answer by historian Seth Forman provides the reason that non-

religious American Jews had a unique relationship with their ethnic identity: unlike

"Black intellectuals who were born Black," Forman states, "the Jewish intellectuals had

to discover their Jewishness."[17]

Forman's observation illuminates the precarious way many American Jews

grappled with their ethnic identity after World War II. Prior to the 1960s, American Jews

sought to negate any differences their ethnicity might have made between themselves and

the liberal anti-communist consensus that dominated American politics.[18] Integration,

even assimilation, moved Jews away from ethnic isolation and toward a less antagonistic

existence. In neoconservative mythology, the 1950s represented the "Golden Age" of

American society; a time when a single, common culture was shared by most Americans.

The 1950s witnessed, according to neoconservatives, the height of cosmopolitanism in

American culture and universalism in national principles. The brief decade and a half

after World War II worked itself into neoconservative imagination as the paradigm of

America's Golden Age, the essence of the "melting pot," and the lure of American

society. American Jews actively embraced the Golden Age and believed that the less

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[17] Seth Forman, *Blacks in the Jewish Mind: A Crisis of Liberalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 99.

[18] For a full elaboration of this argument see Eric L Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

Jewish imprint their own lives had, the less at risk they were to systematic exclusion, racism, and worst of all, a second Holocaust.

It was clear to most American Jews, *Commentary's* editor-in-chief Norman Podhoretz included, that the early 1960s presented new challenges to the common American culture. A turn toward political and cultural particularism among Black Americans, women, and homosexuals threatened to fracture the ostensibly unified national culture. Podhoretz and his fellow Jewish neoconservatives regarded this turn with concern. As Americans consolidated around ethnic, religious and sexual identities the Golden Age of the 1950s transformed into an era defined by identity politics. Neoconservatives identified student unrest, racial tensions, and the Vietnam War as major factors which undermined the Golden Age of the 1950s. As a defensive reaction, Jewish neoconservatives abandoned what was left of the common culture in the early 1960s and replaced their search for integration with an agenda explicitly Jewish in nature. In the early 1960s Jewish neoconservatives developed a new sense of "Jewishness" tailored to address the chaotic forces of the 1960s.

Podhoretz and his likeminded Jewish friends did not act apart from the society they were in. During the 1960s internal and external factors led Blacks and Jews to coalesce around their respective ethnic identities. The process of Jewish intellectuals "discovering" their Jewishness and the reality that many Black activists subscribed to the separatist ideology of Black Nationalism led to a dramatic ideological split between the two groups. The new atmosphere of antagonism created a process of one-upmanship wherein both communities solidified their identities in relation to each other. This first section traces the development of a distinctly neoconservative brand of American

Jewishness built upon two seemingly disparate developments: the Eichmann Trial in Israel and the realization that the Golden Age was irrevocably fractured. Podhoretz in particular reached an intellectual crisis in 1963 as the issues of anti-Semitism and race relations approached a critical juncture.

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The first American Jewish encounter with the Holocaust is attributed by many historians to an international event – the Eichmann Trial in 1961. The Trial represented a challenge to American Jews who were, as neoconservative Nathan Glazer put it, newly "sensitized to the enormity of the extermination of Jews."[19] In more specific terms, wrestling with the legacy of the Holocaust intensified Jewish fears of irrational anti-Semitism and led to a rejection of socio-economic explanations for anti-Semitism. Grappling with the irrationality of anti-Semitism converged with a second fear. The early 1960s ushered in a heightened sense of the domestic and international rhetoric aimed at Jews and Israel that seemed to imply Jews had to act more morally than others in order to justify their existence. Israel's regional and international isolation only amplified the individual and collective threats neoconservatives recognized. In the 1960s Podhoretz and other Jewish neoconservatives regarded themselves as an ethnic community under threat, in a fight for their right to "exist as a distinct and separate people."[20]

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[19] Nathan Glazer, *American Judaism*, 2nd ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 172.

[20] Norman Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends: Falling Out with Allen Ginsberg, Lionel & Diana Trilling, Lillian Hellman, Hannah Arendt, and Norman Mailer* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1999), 159.

The Eichmann Trial began in April 1961 after Mossad agents secretly kidnapped the ex-Nazi official, Adolf Eichmann, in Argentina. Eichmann was a member of the SS and tasked with planning the mass deportation and extermination of Jews during World War II. He lived a life of anonymity after the war, but eventually Israeli agents captured and transported him to Israel in 1960 to stand trial for crimes against humanity. Eichmann was found guilty and hanged in May 1962.

One of Podhoretz's close friends, Hannah Arendt, a German Jew who fled Europe in the 1940s, traveled to Israel to report on the trial for *The New Yorker*. Her account and reactions were published in 1963 as *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Study in the Banality of Evil*. The book suffered intense criticism in the American Jewish community. Arendt sought to give a rational explanation for Nazi anti-Semitism and, according to Podhoretz, failed to adequately condemn the Holocaust. The trial, or more precisely, Arendt's influential interpretation of the trial, shattered many Jews' hopes that the Golden Age would continue indefinitely. The controversy surrounding Arendt signaled a definitive shift toward Jewish concerns that dominated neoconservative thought in subsequent years.

The Eichmann Trial was the first internationally visible event that revealed the horrors of the Holocaust to American Jews. The trial exposed the system of deportation, conditions in concentration camps, and death counts in Eastern Europe during Eichmann's tenure. Also on display were the unnerving moral dilemmas Arendt later highlighted; questions that complicated the popular and straightforward story of evil Nazi murderers and helpless Jewish victims. Distasteful moral dilemmas arose during the trial, including one Arendt recounted in which the chief Israeli prosecutor, Gideon Hausner,

repeatedly asked concentration camp survivors who testified against Eichmann: "Why did you not protest? Why did you board the train? Fifteen thousand people were standing there and hundreds of guards facing you – why didn't you revolt and charge and attack?"[21] While Arendt, as well as most American Jews, found this line of questioning "cruel and silly," agreement on how to interpret the trial ended there.[22] Underlying the charges against Eichmann and the historical discussion of the Holocaust was a more pressing concern for many American Jews. In essence, the trial acted as a medium for American Jews to argue about how Jews fit into modern America.

In her book, Arendt focused on Rabbis and local Jewish officials throughout Europe that voluntarily and readily aided the SS, and also postulated that had there been a concerted Jewish resistance to the Nazis, fewer Jews would have died. She emphasized a systematic, functional philosophy of evil to explain the actions of Jews and Nazis. Along with her earlier study of totalitarianism, she attempted to organize and understand, but not excuse, the seemingly irrational destruction of the Holocaust. Arendt argued that the "machinery of destruction" operated outside the moral purview of any single individual, thus complicating the guilt of the primarily bureaucratic Eichmann. Some misread Arendt's arguments; dissenters believed she tried to justify Eichmann's actions or place blame for the Holocaust on Jews themselves. Neither point was accurate, but a growing consensus in the American Jewish community interpreted the book as an indictment of Jews as coconspirators in the Holocaust.

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[21] Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Viking Press, 1963), 11.

[22] Ibid., 12.

The trial raised Jewish anxieties, but it also presented anxious Jews like Podhoretz with a platform to construct a particularistic Jewish discourse centered on the Holocaust. Podhoretz's rebuttal to *Eichmann on Trial,* titled "Hannah Arendt on Eichmann: A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance," relied on the two contentions. First, that anti-Semitism was an irrational and thus unjustifiable force, and second, that anti-Semitism still existed in the 1960s. The prior idea reinforced the victimhood of European Jews and forwarded the notion that anti-Semitism presented an inescapable danger which Jews would have to guard against. The latter idea, more pressing to Podhoretz, was that the Holocaust seemed indicative of a larger trend in human history in which Jews had to justify their existence in a unique and unequal way. Such a threat affected every Jew who lived in a country where he or she was a minority, and similarly on the international stage where Israel was outnumbered by antagonistic Arab neighbors.

Podhoretz's response first criticized Arendt for the way in which she portrayed Eichmann and his actions. According to Arendt, Eichmann performed the work given to him by the Nazi Party and SS in order to advance his career above all else.[23] Ultimately Eichmann was guilty of abdicating his moral will and autonomy, performing the duties of a bureaucrat and dismissing moral dilemmas for the sake of comfort. Arendt believed that Eichmann was not an atypical case, and the trial proved that Nazis did not have to be crazed, extraordinary, or even anti-Semitic to perform genocide. This argument was an extension out of Arendt's previous book, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, which focused on the bureaucratic and expansive tendencies of totalitarian regimes and sought to ascribe

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[23] Ibid., 29-31.

the problems of totalitarianism to systemic and macro trends instead of individuals and the choices they made.[24]

Podhoretz opposed any rational explanation of the Holocaust, particularly a morally relative one like Arendt proposed. The destruction caused by Nazis, according to Podhoretz, had no rationalization and no sociological diagnoses: "Murderers with the power to murder descended upon a defenseless people and murdered a large part of it. What else is there to say?"[25] Similarly, "because Hitler and his cohorts were madmen on the Jewish question, there is probably little of general relevance we can learn from the Final Solution."[26] Anti-Semitism was not an extraneous variable to Eichmann's actions: "It was perverse to deny that Eichmann was an anti-Semite: how could a man have joined the Nazi party, let alone the SS, without being an anti-Semite?" For Podhoretz anti-Semitism was the primary mover in Eichmann's and the Nazis' actions, not "banal" career considerations. The "simple picture" which Arendt rejected and which Podhoretz endorsed – Nazis were evil murders and Jews helpless victims – laid the blame for the Holocaust at the feet of the Nazis and their manifestation of irrational anti-Semitism. Arendt's argument, which Podhoretz charged "underlines every trace of moral ambiguity," was dangerously close to painting the entire Holocaust in a color of moral

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[24] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973).

[25] Norman Podhoretz, "Hannah Arendt on Eichmann: A Study in the Perversity of Brilliance," *Commentary* (September 1963): 205.

[26] Ibid., 207.

relativism.[27] This last argument forwarded a long held belief by many Jews that anti-Semitism was akin to a supernatural force in the world that could only recede, not disappear. According to this line of thinking, any rationalization of anti-Semitism debased the Holocaust's victims and possibly justified anti-Semitic actions. Furthermore, mankind's seemingly innate inclination toward anti-Semitism represented an ever present threat that required proactive steps by Jews to discourage.

Along with an emphasis on irrationality, Podhoretz identified the most ominous instance of anti-Semitism at work in the early 1960s: an intellectual segregation of Jews pervasive particularly during the Eichmann Trial. His focus changed to Israel, and he took particular issue with a statement made by Edmond Cahn, then a professor at NYU, who wrote of Israel's punishment for Eichmann:

> If Eichmann should be convicted and put to death, we could only say that the Israelis had conducted themselves 'like the nations.' On the other hand, if the prosecutor should recommend or the court impose a sentence of life imprisonment, the whole world would respond with renewed faith and admiration.

In a *Commentary* editorial, Podhoretz responded:

> I wonder why it is that Israel must always be asked to act more nobly than other nations. Isn't this demand a way of telling Jews they must justify their existence instead of taking it for granted that they have a simple right to exist and therefore to be 'merely' human, 'like the nations'? [28]

The jump from Cahn's call for Israel to impose a life sentence to Podhoretz's extrapolation of the conditions under which all Jews had to live speaks to Israel's symbolism for the neoconservatives even at this stage in 1963. Explicit and consistent

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[27] Ibid., 201.

[28] Both quotes in Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends*, 158.

identification with Israel did not come until after the Six-Day War, but Podhoretz already

positioned rhetoric against Israel as a rallying cry to solidify a new American Jewish

identity. The larger point was that Podhoretz viewed the singling out of Jews as a

dangerous weapon: "The Eichmann case… was the first time I ever clearly understood

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."[29] Arendt's book also

suffered from the same anti-Semitic notion that "Jews [were] to be better than other

people, to be braver, wiser, nobler, more dignified – or be damned."[30] Podhoretz's

response reinforced the new turn in Jewish identity the neoconservatives were taking:

"the Jews were there because they were there, and unless and until they themselves

decided to disappear through conversion and assimilation, no one had the right to set

special conditions for their continual existence."[31] Podhoretz's wife, Midge Decter,

expressed similar sentiments about Israel on her visit to the country in 1970: "The state of

Israel is finally justified by nothing more, and requires nothing more, than its own

existence."[32]

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In 1963 Podhoretz also wrote perhaps his most famous article for *Commentary*.

"My Negro Problem – And Ours" addressed the loss of the Golden Age and sought to

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Podhoretz, "Hannah Arendt on Eichmann," 208.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Midge Decter, "A Look at Israel," *Commentary* (May 1971): 42.

explore the reasons for its demise. The article was autobiographical and attempted to turn

pervasive Black-White stereotypes on their head. Podhoretz revealed his personal

difficulties in accepting the notion that all Blacks in the United States were oppressed

when he had been on the receiving end of Black bullying in his childhood. He "grew up

fearing and envying and hating Negroes" but had worked to fight these feelings for the

cause of Black equality.[33] Historian Clayborne Carson argues that these childhood

memories, and the visceral way in which Podhoretz portrayed them, "became a metaphor

for the change in the relationship of Jews to Blacks from benefactor and sympathizer to

competitor and fellow victim."[34] Podhoretz's final answer to the "problem" of Black-

White relations was miscegenation; a solution he believed would limit the disadvantages

of ethnic minorities and effectively begin a post-ethnic America where Jews and Blacks

could no longer antagonize each other.[35]

In more abstract terms, Podhoretz's article signaled yet another blow to the

Golden Age and an early sign that the Golden Age's restoration was unfeasible. Black

Americans, it seemed, were determined to pull away from the common culture in an

effort to better their own particularistic agenda at the expense of racial harmony.

Particularism was fracturing the fragile cosmopolitan plurality struck after World War II.

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[33] Norman Podhoretz, "My Negro Problem - and Ours," *Commentary* (February 1963): 99.

[34] Clayborne Carson, "Black-Jewish Universalism in the Era of Identity Politics," in *Struggles in the Promised Land: Toward a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 183.

[35] Podhoretz would later reverse himself and admit that his call for miscegenation was too simplistic.

Following "My Negro Problem" other Jewish neoconservatives began to voice opposition to the direction Black-Jewish relations were moving. Proof of Black antagonism came in the Black ghettos and the summer riots of 1964, which were accompanied with slanders toward Jewish shopkeepers, particularly in the neoconservatives' own New York City. Milton Himmelfarb also saw Black and Jewish interests diverging, even in the ranks of the moderate civil rights leaders like "Dr. King and many others" who "say harsh things about 'the power structure,' but the non power structure is usually worse."[36] He also stated bluntly that "About Negroes, Jews fear what our grandparents feared about muzhiks [Russian peasants], violence."[37] Nathan Glazer later lamented that in 1964 urban Blacks viewed the Jew "not as a coworker or friend or ally, but, in a word, as an exploiter."[38]

Commentary published most of these concerns. The trajectory of Podhoretz's writings and the disposition Jews gained toward the Black community turned cautious and antagonistic in the mid-1960s. Like Podhoretz, whose training was in literary criticism, Jewish neoconservatives sought to influence local and national policy through argument instead of direct political action. Jewish neoconservatives confronted the breakdown of the Golden Age by embracing a Jewish outlook that was defensive and ethnocentric. In essence, they collectively turned inward in the face of a perception that the world was growing more inhospitable toward Jews.

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[36] Milton Himmelfarb, "Negroes, Jews, and Muzhiks," *Commentary* (October 1966): 86.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Nathan Glazer, *Ethnic Dilemmas 1964-1982* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), p. 29.

The most relevant and logical consequences of the Jewish neoconservatives' new concerns were a sensitivity and apprehensiveness to anti-Semitism in American culture. The "vibrating antennae" which alerted neoconservatives to possible anti-Semitic remarks by Washington DC, the evening news, and Black activists were, according to historian Peter Novick, overly sensitive, and most instances were "laughably trivial."[39] The triviality of anti-Semitic remarks made in the months after the Six-Day War – remarks which Novick attributes to the "civil rights movement [which] was collapsing into impotence and disarray" – will be examined below.[40] Historical judgments about the long term relevance of anti-Semitic statements in the late 1960s neglect the impact such statements had on the sensitive and defensive Jewish neoconservatives in the 1960s. The global and transnational links Black Nationalists would draw between their struggle and anti-colonialism permanently reshaped the way neoconservatives defined their threats and their interests.

III. Black Nationalists in a Global Context

While Black Nationalists strove to draw meaningful links and break down barriers between Black Nationalism and Third World liberation movements, most Blacks opted to view the transnational context (what historian Waldo Martin Jr. calls "Third Worldism") as a loose "ideological construct, a rhetorical device, promoted for a variety of ends by

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[39] Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 172.

[40] Ibid.

numerous Black activists."[41] The power of a transnational ideology was manifested in its

malleability and ability to reinterpret the Black national struggle in global terms.

Neoconservatives would later react with alarm as the Black Nationalist ideology gained a

definitive anti-Semitic, anti-Zionist edge. Black Nationalists were the vehicle by which

radical, global postcolonial discourse was "brought home" to Jewish neoconservatives in

the US.

Unlike Black Nationalists, Third World nationalists could point to recent histories

of colonialism to bolster their cause. Third World movements often agreed that "the

Negro in the United States" was a victim of colonialism, but to the national Black

audience that Black Nationalists ultimately spoke to, the best that anti-colonial rhetoric

could muster was a metaphorical comparison. Black Nationalists routinely invoked a

metaphor that charged Black Americans were no more than a colonized people under the

imperial authority of White America. It was no substitute for a more convincing colonial

history, with a homeland and foreign occupier (indeed, Black Americans had a precarious

situation because they did not live in their homeland and, as many Black Nationalists

pointed out, they themselves were the foreigners), but the metaphor of colonialism was

powerful and varied. It was not only utilized by Black Nationalists, but also by civil

rights moderates like Kenneth Clark who typified the effort to re-contextualize the

American situation in 1965: "The dark ghettos are social, political, educational and –

above all – economic colonies. Their inhabitants subject peoples, victims of the greed,

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[41] Waldo Martin Jr., "Nation Time!": Black Nationalism, the Third World, and Jews," in
Struggles in the Promised Land: Toward a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States
(New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 183.

cruelty, insensitivity, guilt, and fear of their masters."[42] Such rhetoric was one of the primary vehicles by which Black Nationalists linked the Black American struggle to global decolonization and also linked American Jews with the West, Israel, and imperialism.

For Black Nationalists, globalizing their struggle promoted and loosely grouped two convincing critiques of the United States. Racial and Marxist criticisms of American society resonated with many Blacks and drove a deeper wedge into the Golden Age Jewish neoconservatives sought to salvage. Ostensibly, both racial and Marxist prescriptions for Black Nationalists advocated action against the existing national and international power structures. For the years leading up to 1967, racial and Marxist Black Nationalists largely worked in tandem at the local level in groups like SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) to forward common principles in their agendas.

Organizations like SNCC and the Black Panther Party most heavily printed, preached, and endorsed the notion that racism in the United States was just one example of the global struggle against colonialism. Globalizing the plight of Blacks in the United States served as a unifying ideology, and was utilized to smooth over differences among racial and Marxist Black Nationalists for a greater cause. This motivation was at work when James Forman, SNCC's director of international affairs in 1967, explained the role of globalizing the national struggle: "Often circumstances that seem confused, disturbing, and bewildering at one level then blend to produce new forms of struggle on a healthier

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[42] Kenneth Clark and William Wilson, *Dark Ghetto* (Wesleyan University Press, 1989), 11.

basis and at a higher level."[43] Forman's words were indicative of a larger trend during the 1960s where leaders of ethnic groups focused less on tangible, local issues and more on issues of symbolic importance.[44] Ultimately, globalizing the Black struggle took what was once a discussion about less developed and more developed nations on the global scale and replicated the same situation on a domestic national scale.

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The *Black Panther Newsletter's* May 1967 issue featured a letter addressed to a "Sister Baldwin" from SNCC coordinator Willie Ricks. Ricks urged Sister Baldwin to avoid being "whitewashed" by what she heard or read from the white media. Instead Ricks recommended "five Black books" to read. The first three books were *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, *Malcolm X Speaks*, and *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon. Ricks pleaded with Sister Baldwin (and anyone else for that matter) to "lose your white mind and get your Black mind together," a process which could only be advanced by reading these books.[45] The letter served primarily as a platform to attack those who questioned the validity of Black Nationalism, but it also acted as a reading list

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[43] James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries: A Personal Account* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 497.

[44] Waldo Martin Jr., "Nation Time!": Black Nationalism, the Third World, and Jews," 177-182.

[45] Willie Ricks, "SNCC Worker Speaks to a Sister: A Letter to Sister Baldwin," *Black Panther Newsletter* (15 May 1967): 6. Books four and five were W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* and E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*.

from which Black Nationalists derived their ideas.[46] The mindset which dominated Black

Nationalist thought, typified by Ricks' suggested readings, was a hybrid of Malcolm X's

transnationalism and Frantz Fanon's global revolutionary outlook.

In the late 1950s Malcolm leveled a consistent criticism against moderate civil

rights leaders for their refusal to rethink their struggle in a global context. Specifically, he

saw the need for Blacks to identify with African nationalist movements as a means to

universalize, and thereby strengthen, their political agenda. Historian James Meriwether

identifies Malcolm's successful criticism as part of a "psychological return to Africa" in

the Black community that worked to globalize Black Nationalism and allow activists like

Malcolm to universalize their struggle.[47] The "return to Africa" was so pervasive that

Meriwether believes it was a major factor in broader Black American thought by the late

1950s, as Blacks "increasingly looked to contemporary Africa and found their inspiration

and pride."[48] Malcolm focused on the universal application of human rights, believing

that they could gain international support and bring newly decolonized nations around the

world to the aid of the Black Nationalist struggle. According to Kevin Gaines, a civil

rights historian, Malcolm hoped the focus on human rights would help build a

transnational American identity, with the ultimate goal that his efforts would produce the

"expansiveness of Blackness as a grounds for national belonging, for international

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[46] Willie Ricks, "SNCC Worker Speaks to a Sister: A Letter to Sister Baldwin," *Black Panther Newsletter* (15 May 1967): 6. Books four and five were W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* and E. Franklin Frazier, *Black Bourgeoisie*.

[47] James Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935-1961* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 179.

[48] Ibid., 145.

identification, and ultimately for their [Black Americans] full participation in American life."[49]

Reimagining Black Americans' struggles in a global context played a vital role in Malcolm's efforts. As a prime example, Malcolm utilized African nationalist movements to illuminate injustices in the United States and to emphasize a new transnational context for future action. Specifically, he focused on developments like the Mau Mau Uprising, which "became a potent symbol of Black resistance against both white supremacy and the civil rights leadership."[50] Kenyan peasants started the uprising in 1952 and aimed to overthrow the British colonial government. Though the rebellion failed militarily, the efforts of the Kenyan peasants and the independence of Kenya in 1963 held great symbolism for nationalist movements around the world. Malcolm utilized the uprising to emphasize a Black connection with Africa. He drew on anti-colonialist philosophies and presented the uprising as paradigmatic for its struggle to institute comprehensive change by any means necessary. More importantly for Black Nationalists, Malcolm linked the struggle in Kenya to his own call for similar action in the United States, claiming "you and I can best learn how to get real freedom by studying how Kenyatta [leader of the uprising] brought it to his people in Kenya." Furthermore, "that's what we need in

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[49] Kevin Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana: Black Expatriates and the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 205.

[50] Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans*, 148.

Mississippi. In Mississippi we need a Mau Mau. In Alabama we need a Mau Mau. Right

here in Harlem, in New York City, we need a Mau Mau."[51]

Malcolm's death in 1964 left a legacy of transnational, pan-African ideology that

Black Nationalists appropriated in the years that followed. Aside from the *Black Panther*

Newsletter's suggested readings, the group's weekly newsletter often featured a column

dedicated to lessons learned from Malcolm titled "Brother Malcolm Speaks." In the

minds of Malcolm and his followers, the metaphor of colonialism worked to break down

national barriers between Black Nationalists and Africans. The actual ties between Black

Nationalists and African nationalist movements remained limited for much of the 1960s,

but ideologically Malcolm helped Black Nationalists perceive themselves as transnational

actors and define their community not by nation, but by race.

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Malcolm's transnational ideology was part of an activist agenda he had pushed

since the early 1950s.[52] Still, it was also adopted by those Black activists who saw the

mainstream civil rights movement (led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.) as an ineffectual

vehicle for meaningful change. The perception of stalled progress led many Black

Nationalists to move away from Dr. King's fundamental commitment to non-violence in

the mid-1960s. Particularly, groups like SNCC and the Black Panthers saw the national

civil rights movement as a failed experiment in light of the movement's inability to

meaningfully change the social, economic, and political inequality that existed in the

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[51] Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans,* 149.

[52] See Peniel E. Joseph, "The Black Power Movement: A State of the Field," *The Journal of American History* 96.3 (2009): 766-768.

United States. As a major part of the rejection of non-violence, many Black Nationalists adopted Frantz Fanon's apocalyptic *The Wretched of the Earth* as a handbook for revolution. The 1966 book focused primarily on the Algerian struggle for independence against France, but Fanon's larger goal was to promote a Marxist-inspired self-assertion among the Third World; a goal that Fanon believed would regenerate the world and maintain a peaceful international community. Black Nationalism's rejection of non-violence coupled with anti-Semitic rhetoric was a crucial component in raising the alarm and ire of observing neoconservatives. As an example, John Paul Sartre's foreword to Fanon's book explicitly endorsed violence as a means to achieve revolution: "This irrepressible violence is neither sound nor fury…it is the man re-creating himself."[53]

Like many civil rights activists, in the 1950s Fanon saw the United States as the center of the struggle between colored and white people and believed that coexistence based on "a fierce humanism" was in the future. In his 1952 book *Black Skin, White Masks,* Fanon prophesied a peaceful resolution to race relations in the United States and believed, as many activists did following World War II, that American race relations were improving and part of a forward marching history of Western civilization. Fanon envisioned on a national level what he wished for on a global level:

> The twelve million Black voices howled against the curtain of the sky. Torn from end to end, marked with gashes of teeth biting into the belly of interdiction, the curtain fell like a burst balloon. On the field of battle, its four corners marked by scores of Negroes hanged by their testicles, a monument is slowly being built that promises to be majestic. And at the top of this monument, I can already see a white man and a Black man hand in hand.[54]

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[53] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1966), 18.

[54] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks,* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1968), 222.

Fanon's evocative vision turned less optimistic over the next decade. One writer in the neoconservative *The Public Interest* contrasted Fanon's 1952 hopes to his views in *The Wretched of the Earth*. In the first, "He [Fanon] believed that America had within itself the fundamental transformation which elsewhere would necessitate action on an international scale," and in the latter, "America appears as a second Europe, more monstrous than the first."[55] While Fanon's writings shifted the location for the "fundamental transformation" to the struggle in Algeria and the Third World for inspiration, Marxist Black Nationalists in SNCC and the Black Panther Party sought to appropriate Fanon's work and keep the Black struggle in America central to global decolonization. By utilizing the metaphor of colonialism, Black Nationalists brought Fanon's global revolution back to their national struggle. The *Black Panther Newsletter*, which acted as the major Marxist mouthpiece for Black Nationalists, had already appropriated Fanon's major arguments and endorsed a colonial, class-based critique of America prior to the Six-Day War. The newsletter featured interviews of its members which contended that racism could not entirely explain the condition of Blacks in America: "The white race oppresses Black people not only for racist reasons but because it is also economically profitable to do so."[56]

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[55] Aristide Zolberg and Vera Zolberg, "The Americanization of Frantz Fanon," *The Public Interest*, no. 9 (Fall 1967): 57.

[56] Anonymous, "Interview with George Dowell, Rich.," *Black Panther Newsletter* (15 May 1967): 4. Also, see Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*, (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2005), 224-226.

It was through a combined philosophy, the two major components of which were Malcolm X's transnationalism and Frantz Fanon's violent, global vision for revolution that organizations like SNCC and the Black Panthers reimagined the Black Nationalist struggle. Explicit anti-Semitism existed as a rhetorical flourish prior to 1967, but the more pressing purpose for Black Nationalists was to liberate colored people from a global system controlled by whites of various ethnic and religious backgrounds. Malcolm X reinforced a global view of the white threat based on universal grievances of human rights violations while Fanon gave Black Nationalists a map to violent revolution. The Six-Day War, like the Mau Mau Uprising, provided an opportunity for Black Nationalists to identify with Third World nationalist movements and furthermore define the white threat. Black Nationalist appropriations of Malcolm X and Fanon assured that once war broke out in the Middle East they would insist that the war be viewed in a global context.

IV. The Muddled Message

On 5 June 1967 the Six-Day War broke out between Israel and the Arab states of Egypt, Syria and Jordan. Israel won a stunning victory against all three countries and occupied the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, West Bank, and East Jerusalem. For Black Nationalists the war accelerated the process of globalizing their struggle. Most Black Nationalists supported the Arab States and Palestinian refugees in the war because for them they represented Third World struggles against the Western-backed forces of Israel. Black American responses to the stunning Arab defeat varied widely, but all Black Nationalists believed the "colonial" struggle in the Middle East was directly related to their own struggle in the United States. In relation to the neoconservatives, the major

development to arise from the war was a concerted Black Nationalist critique of Israel that relied on both racial and Marxist based grievances. This section focuses on the conflicting responses within the Black Nationalist community and traces how the two critiques coalesced after June 1967.

Historians have examined the aftermath of the Six-Day War with a focus on the anti-Semitic messages espoused by SNCC in their June-July 1967 newsletter, Amiri Baraka's (formerly LeRoi Jones) anti-Semitic poetry, and other pronouncements that had vivid and racist depictions of Jews and Zionists in America and Israel. Particularly in the case of SNCC's newsletter, Black Nationalists focused on anti-Semitic stereotypes that portrayed Jews as greedy, conspiratorial, brutal, and conniving. The newsletter exemplified the racial critique of Israel in action.

SNCC's June-July 1967 newsletter was written by Ethel Minor, an old associate of Malcolm X's and close friend of Stokely Carmichael. In June 1967 she led a study group of the Israel/Palestine situation and, in the aftermath of the war, wrote a highly critical article for SNCC's internal circulation titled "The Palestine Problem: Test Your Knowledge."[57] This source appears in nearly every historical study on the subject of Black – Jewish relations because of its alleged racism. The newsletter paired Minor's words with cartoons and pictures that implied a global Zionist conspiracy against the Third World and Blacks in America. It is unfortunate for SNCC that this article was published, as it received extensive criticism in the press and Jewish communities. According to SNCC's director of international affairs, James Forman, the article was

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[57] Anonymous, "The Palestine Problem: Test Your Knowledge," *SNCC Newsletter* (June-July 1967). Unofficially attributed to Ethel Minor.

never meant to be published and was certainly not meant to indicate the official position of SNCC. Less attended to in the historiography is a private letter Forman wrote prior to the June-July newsletter. The letter was addressed to SNCC's executive secretary Stanley Wise and it grappled with the problem of declaring Palestinian solidarity in the highly politicized atmosphere following the war. Forman's argument depicts a much more nuanced and cautious approach to the war and also the extent to which Black Nationalists were divided between racial and Marxist interpretations of Black Nationalism. The Marxist critique forwarded by Forman and others would receive less publicity than the more scandalous public statements released by SNCC and the Black Panthers. Nevertheless, the economic dimensions of the metaphor of colonialism and global nature of Marxist criticism insisted that that the Six-Day War be viewed in a global context, which forced everyone, neoconservatives included, to pick sides.

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Forman wrote his letter on June 7, 1967 as he prepared for a diplomatic mission to meet the ambassador from Guinea. The letter called for SNCC to exhibit patience following the Six-Day War. He noted that the sentiment in the United States tilted heavily in support of Israel, even among civil rights leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Within SNCC's ranks, "Obviously the 'gut' reaction in many people is against Israel and for the Arabs, reflecting the Black-white tension [in the United States]."[58] Any public statement, however, needed precise language to avoid the organizational turmoil and public backlash SNCC experienced after they publicly denounced the war in Vietnam.

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[58] James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries: A Personal Account* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 493.

With this in mind, Forman broached the subject of what consequences would ensue if

SNCC publicly declared Palestinian solidarity. The answers he provided were grim, but

he believed that a new emphasis on Marxist reasons for Palestinian support was the best

course of action.[59] The change in tactics, Forman argued, would diminish the racial

ideology at work in the Black Nationalist community. He sought to shift the reason for

Palestinian sympathies from Blacks supporting the "dark skinned" Arab countries to

prioritizing economic exploitation. He bluntly stated that he was "absolutely convinced

that we can go nowhere in the future in terms of programming if we do not accentuate a

class analysis of the national and international scene." He clarified:

> We cannot, for instance, just explain glibly the events in the Middle East as a
> struggle of Blacks against whites when the actors themselves have a different
> viewpoint. That is not to say we must not speak of racism, for racism is involved
> in the Middle East crisis. But it is a serious error to even think one can eliminate
> racism without dealing with the fundamental cause of exploitation, the unequal
> distribution of wealth throughout the world, and the desire of those who have
> control of the wealth to keep it.

Forman also believed a Marxist worldview was more in line with contemporary

international politics: "It is interesting to note that the countries supporting the Arab

nations are fundamentally socialist nations or those striving for socialism."[60] By seeing

the Six-Day War in Marxist terms Forman sought to unify Blacks and Palestinians

against economic exploitation regardless of the racial makeup of Israel or the Arab states.

　　　　This argument, to shift SNCC's position from racial to economic grievances, was

a crucial component to globalizing SNCC's struggle. It also worked in concert with other

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

Black Nationalists who shared a similar Marxist ideology. Beyond Forman's argument, Eldridge Cleaver, information minister of the Black Panther Party, shared Forman's global outlook. In his memoirs, published as *Soul on Ice* in 1968, he linked Third World anti-colonial struggles to Black economic freedom in the United States: "If the nations of Asia, Latin America, and Africa are strong and free, the Black man in America will be safe and secure and free to live in dignity and self-respect."[61] "Free" in Cleaver's sense meant an end to exploitation by the white capitalist system. That system spanned the globe: "We are living in a time when the people of the world are making their final bid for full and complete freedom…Even if the white man wanted to eradicate all traces of evil overnight, he would not be able to do it because the economic and political system will not permit it."[62] The Black Panther's Marxist ideology was also commonly elucidated in the party's newsletter. The newsletter featured lessons on capitalism, exploitation, and Marxism, often taught by Cleaver, which expanded upon the global context of Black Americans' struggle.

The calculated thinking of Forman and the Marxist critique of Cleaver were overshadowed with the release of Ethel Minor's article in July 1967 and the wave of explicitly anti-Semitic statements by other prominent Black Nationalists. "The Palestine Problem" tapped into racist currents of Black Nationalist thought prefaced on racial stereotypes already widespread. Anti-capitalist and anti-colonialist rhetoric took on definitively anti-Jewish qualities as the SNCC article asked if readers knew the

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[61] Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*, 1st ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 125.

[62] Cleaver, *Soul on Ice,* 124.

"documented facts" of the Arab-Israeli crisis. The article charged that economic

exploitation of Arab and African countries was due to the connivances of the "Rothschild

family," who controlled "much of Africa's mineral wealth," and "were involved in the

original conspiracy to create the 'State of Israel.'"[63] The article presented clearly that

Black Nationalists were not just anti-colonialist in principle, but that their version of

Middle East colonialism had a definitive racial component. In the most ideologically

clear cartoon to accompany Minor's allegations, Gamal Abdel Nasser, the leader of

Egypt, and Muhammad Ali, the American boxer who joined the Nation of Islam in 1964,

were both depicted with nooses around their necks held by a white hand tattooed with the

Star of David and a US dollar sign.

Ralph Featherstone, publicity director for SNCC, responded to the charges of

anti-Semitism in a press conference.[64] He sought to clarify that the organization was not

against Jews as a race, but only against Zionism and Israel. However, Featherstone

admitted that Arab embassies supplied material for the June-July article. He also felt the

need to defend SNCC's continued use of the metaphor of colonialism. Zionism in the

Middle East, he contended, was similar to Jewish shopkeepers' exploitation of Black

ghettos, "those Jews in the little Jew shops," but stating this fact, he argued, did not

assume anti-Semitism.[65]

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[63] Anonymous, "The Palestine Problem," 4.

[64] Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1981), 268.

[65] Robert Weisbord, *Bittersweet Encounter: the Afro-American and the American Jew*, (Westport, Conn: Negro Universities Press, 1970), 104.

Stokely Carmichael, the SNCC chairman in June 1967, exemplified the heightened anti-Semitic atmosphere. According to Carson, "Carmichael moved from the class orientation he brought into SNCC toward a race-first perspective that rejected Marxism and insisted that African Americans must be provided with 'an African ideology which speaks to our Blackness.'"[66] Carmichael pointed out differences between racism and capitalism and argued that eradicating the latter did not cure the former. Revolutionary groups had to fight for their "humanity," which supplied a common bond among all non-white anti-colonial struggles: "Just as the Arab world is fighting for humanity, just as our forces in Africa are fighting for humanity…, the black man in America is fighting for humanity. We stand with the Third World."[67]

Even while he claimed he did not harbor anti-Semitic sentiments – only anti-Zionist and anti-Israeli – Carmichael called for Black Nationalists and Arab students alike to "all become Lady Fatima," a Palestinian arrested for her ties to Al-Fatah.[68] In the same speech to the Organization of Arab Students, Carmichael alleged a global Zionist plot much like the one depicted in SNCC's June-July newsletter: "the same Zionists that exploited the Arabs also exploit us in this country. That is a fact."[69] Utilizing the metaphor of colonialism, Carmichael vowed, "We have begun to see the evil of Zionism

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[66] Carson, "Black-Jewish Universalism in the Era of Identity Politics," 188.

[67] Charmichael, *Stokely Speaks*, 143.

[68] Ibid., 142.

[69] Ibid., 138. Ethel Minor, the unofficial author of SNCC's June-July 1967 newsletter, wrote the introduction to *Stokely Speaks* 1971 edition.

and we will fight to wipe it out wherever it exists, be it in the Ghetto of the United States

or in the Middle East."[70]

The larger Black Nationalist community followed Carmichael's move toward a

racial critique of Israel. Any distinction between anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism was

rendered useless in cases such as this Black Panther poem from 1967:

> Really, Cause that's where Christ was crucified,
> No-no-no-no
> We're gonna burn their towns and ain't all
> We're gonna piss upon the Wailing Wall
> And then we'll get Kosygin and de Gaulle
> That will be ecstasy, killing every Jew in Jewland.
> Jew-Land, Not another day should pass
> Really, Without a foot up Israel's ass
> No-no-no-no
> Jewland, Uh-huh-uh-huh, Jew-Land[71]

Amiri Baraka wrote similarly themed anti-Semitic poetry. In his famous poem "Black

Art" he wrote:

> We want poems like fists beating niggers out of Jocks or dagger poems in the
> slimy bellies of the owner Jews
> Look at the Liberal spokesman for the Jews clutch his throat and puke himself
> into eternity.[72]

In another poem he wrote of cracking "steel knuckles in a jewlady's mouth."[73] Anti-

Semitism also invaded discussions about the university, as Black activists like Sudia

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[70] Ibid., 142.

[71] Trends Analysis Division of the American Jewish Committee, *The Black Panther Party - The Anti-Semitic and Anti-Israel Component*, New York, N.Y: American Jewish Committee, January 23, 1970, 2.

[72] Weisbord, *Bittersweet Encounter*, 123.

[73] Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 115.

Masoud, publisher and editor of the *Islamic Press International News-Gram*, warned that Jewish professors with Zionist inclinations intentionally obscured and devalued Arab and African cultures in their curriculum in order to deprive students of an appreciation of Islamic contributions to history.[74]

In total, the public stands that Black Nationalists took following the Six-Day War focused more on the racial aspects of the conflict in lieu of a less racial economic critique. Unsophisticated and clear concepts of ethnic conspiracies worked to grab headlines, but failed to forward the Marxist cause that Black Nationalists like James Forman articulated in private. Class-based internationalism worked to unify many Black intellectuals on the issue of Palestinian solidarity, but failed to grab hold in popular discourse. Different Black Nationalists emphasized one of the two critiques – racial and Marxist – which were ostensibly opposed to each other in the Black community, but in public discourse, and particularly to Jewish neoconservatives, they bled together.

Neoconservatives heard dual claims in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. Marxist Black Nationalists focused on Israel as a nexus for global economic inequalities displayed by the disparate positions of Jews and Palestinians in the Middle East. In other words, Israel was the epitome of the Western world's imperialist, capitalist system. Neoconservatives also recognized a much louder set of propositions that focused on racist depictions of Israel, Jews, Zionism, and the same capitalist system. By highlighting the race divisions between Jews and Arabs, these Black Nationalists sought to draw parallels to divisions between Blacks and Whites in the United States. The confluence of the two

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[74] Weisbord, *Bittersweet Encounter,* 99.

currents, expressed most clearly in the dichotomy of thought in SNCC by Forman and

Minor, formed a general threat to concerned neoconservatives who saw Black

Nationalists link American Jews and the state of Israel as allied antagonists. Even as

Forman privately opposed the rash and "hastily edited" Minor article, he classified the

racial arguments made by Minor as a step in the right direction:

> Our position against Israel, as I saw it, took us one step further along the road to revolution. For SNCC to see the struggle against racism, capitalism, and imperialism as being indivisible made it inevitable for SNCC to take a position against the greatest imperialist power in the Middle East, and in favor of liberation and dignity for the Arab people. [75]

Thus Forman's class-based analysis provided the contextualization for more divisive

racial rhetoric that served as a rallying cry to globalize the Black Nationalists' struggle.

One historian's survey of Black Nationalist publications following the war

observed that "a naïve reader might well accept the notion of a worldwide Jewish

conspiracy extending from the ghettos of the United States where Afro-Americans are

subjugated by Jews to the Levant where Israeli imperialists are stealing Arab territory.

And Zionist aggression in the Middle East portends a like fate for the African

Motherland."[76] The readers in mind were no doubt impressionable Black radicals – the

ones most likely to pick up SNCC's June-July 1967 newsletter. However, Jewish

neoconservatives also took notice of the mass of Black Nationalist rhetoric directed at

Jews from New York to Tel Aviv. Naïve or not, neoconservatives discerned a troubling

trend with their heightened "vibrating antennae." The combination of Marxist

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[75] Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries*, 496.

[76] Weisbord, *Bittersweet Encounter*, 100.

internationalism and anti-Semitic publicity projected a global threat that simultaneously

linked Black Nationalists to the Third World and Jews to Israel.

V. A Full-fledged Defense

Returning to the Six-Day War, Israel's victory also galvanized the American Jewish

community, and not just Jewish neoconservatives. Historian Melani McAlister asserts

that in the wake of the war "Jewishness became more important, and identification with

Israel became a more important aspect of Jewishness."[77] In *Commentary*, Arthur

Hertzberg described the transformation as revolutionary:

> The crisis was far more intense and widespread than anyone could have foreseen.
> Many Jews would never have believed the grave danger to Israel could dominate
> their thoughts and emotions to the exclusion of everything else; many were
> surprised by the depth of their anger at those of their friends that carried on as
> usual, untouched by fear for Israeli survival and the instinctive involvement they
> themselves felt.[78]

The doors to a transnational identity between American Jews and Israel burst wide open

when Jews of all types – religious, secular, and atheist – possessed a new found "sense of

belonging to a worldwide Jewish people, of which Israel is the center."[79] Norman

Podhoretz directly linked the war to his earlier writing about the Holocaust, believing the

war "to have represented the recovery…of the Jewish remnant from the

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[77] McAlister, *Epic Encounters,* 111.

[78] Arthur Hertzburg, "Israel and American Jewry," *Commentary*, (August 1968): 69.

[79] Ibid., 72.

grievous…wounds it suffered at the hands of the Nazis."[80] He also described a more

visceral reaction that elucidated the transnational ties American Jews had already built

with Israel: "The feeling was one of literal identification, a literal embodiment of the idea

that *kol yisrael arevim zeh ba-zeh*, every Jew is a part of every other."[81]

Jewish solidarity rose at the same time that Black Nationalist antagonism toward

Israel reached its most malicious point. Between 1967 and 1972 Podhoretz and the

Jewish neoconservatives launched a concerted campaign to confront anti-Semitism in the

Black Nationalist movements and more generally on the New Left. They believed that

Black criticisms against Israel were also veiled criticisms of American Jews. Thus, in the

aftermath of the Six-Day War, Jewish neoconservatives regarded criticism against Israel

as inseparable from anti-Semitism. The American Jewish Committee (publisher of

Commentary), released a report in 1970 that charged: "In recent years the anti-Semite has

conveniently camouflaged his purpose under a cover of anti-Zionism."[82] The report stated

that those who uttered anti-Zionist statements believed America an oppressive country

both at home and abroad, and that "Israel is its (American imperialism's) Middle East

arm" and that "All Jews are either Zionists or are supportive of Israel." The conclusion,

then, was that "Jews are enemies."[83] The same argument was corroborated by Black

[80] Norman Podhoretz, "A Certain Anxiety," *Commentary* (August 1971): 6.

[81] Ibid.

[82] American Jewish Committee, *The Black Panthers,* 1.

[83] Ibid., 2.

Nationalists like Harold Cruse who wrote in 1967: "There is much evidence that today Negroes really do have a Jewish problem, and the Jew is not just a hatred symbol."[84]

Ultimately Jewish neoconservatives engaged Black Nationalists by resorting to ethnocentric arguments and fashioning American Jews as another community defined by ethnicity; a "competitor and fellow victim." With the Golden Age finally spent, and its restoration unfeasible for Jews following 1967, Jewish neoconservatives turned inward and strengthened their ideological links to fellow Jews and Israel. The role of *Commentary* now definitively became, in Podhoretz's words, to ask of any major event "Is it good for the Jews?" even before asking if it was good for the United States.[85]

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Public statements by SNCC, Carmichael, and others signaled an identifiable shift in political realities for the Jewish neoconservatives. Podhoretz lamented, "If the anti-Semitism of the Right continues to live underground, the anti-Semitism of the Left has moved in recent years… into the common light of day."[86] Earl Raab reacted to anti-Israeli rhetoric by exclaiming that Israel was the victim of "the greatest program of organized anti-Semitism since Hitler."[87] Raab also warned that the metaphor of colonialism was expanding on the "other coast" (referencing the Black Panther Party, headquartered in Oakland, California) where the "expressivist metaphor" of "Jew pig"

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[84] Harold Cruse, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (New York: Morrow, 1967), 497.

[85] Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends*, 168.

[86] Forman, *Blacks in the Jewish Mind*, 204.

[87] Earl Raab, "The Deadly Innocence of American Jews," *Commentary* (December 1970): 39.

represented "daily signals" of increased anti-Semitism.[88] It was on the East Coast, too,

where "the new liberal big-city coalition, in which the only ethnicity is Third World,

bears with it a bias which is, if anything, anti-Israel and cool to the Jewish community."[89]

Even in Nathan Glazer's more measured assessment of Black Nationalist anti-Semitism

he reminded the reader that:

> Jews have good reason to be sensitive – they are still… the only people (along with the Gypsies) who have been subjected, and as recently as twenty-five years ago, to the effort of a great power to wipe them off the face of the earth… And the Jewish state in Israel is still the only one in the world, aside from Biafra, which has good reason to fear that genocide is the aim and policy of its unreconciled enemies.[90]

In more general terms neoconservatives concerned themselves with the rise of

Black Nationalists who identified themselves with Third World revolutions and resorted

to violence to achieve their political ends. The combined threat of heightened anti-

Semitic publicity and a rejection of non-violence forced neoconservatives to evaluate

their own safety in New York City, in the midst of escalating race riots that now routinely

invoked Jews, Zionists, and Israel on the list of villains. Glazer noted that in conjunction

with charges of American colonialism in Vietnam, race riots were evolving into

expressions of global revolution:

> Public housing projects are called 'prisons,' poverty is labeled 'slavery,' disrespectful language becomes 'brutality,' the demand for better living conditions becomes the call for 'liberation' and 'freedom.' And men are willing to do things

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[88] Earl Raab, "The Black Revolution and the Jewish Question," *Commentary* (January 1969): 29.

[89] Raab, "The Deadly Innocence of American Jews," 34.

[90] Nathan Glazer, "Blacks, Jews, and Intellectuals," *Commentary* (April 1969): 35.

for liberation and freedom that they probably would not do for higher welfare payments.[91]

Escalating anti-Semitism made Jews the target of violence or worse by Blacks who linked their cause with the Palestinians' and New York Jews with global imperialism. Glazer was unsure what caused the riots; he believed the explanation lied in the realm of irrationality, much like Podhoretz had charged half a decade earlier in regards to the Holocaust. He postulated that a paradox was at the heart of Black unrest – it simply did not make sense that the past thirty years, which represented "a good deal of progress" for Blacks, could result in increased dissatisfaction and racism directed at Jews. Glazer explicated the point: "When we attack Black anti-Semitism, let us be perfectly clear that we are attacking the fruits of five years of growing rage and irrationality."[92] Jewish neoconservatives continued to regard anti-Semitism as an irrational force and rejected sociological or economic explanations for the sudden rise in Black Nationalist anti-Semitism; in essence, Jews and Israel were both victims of an immutable historical force.

As fallout from the SNCC newsletter spread, Neoconservatives remained alarmed as Black Nationalists sympathized more specifically with armed Palestinian resistance. In 1969 the *Black Panther Newsletter* published glowing articles of Al-Fatah, the fighting force of the PLO, and praised the group's "road of armed struggle which brooks no false solutions, does not recognize the so-called peaceful solution, and knows only the gun as

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[91] Nathan Glazer, "The Ghetto Crisis," *Encounter,* (November 1967): 19.

[92] Glazer, "Blacks, Jews, and Intellectuals," 35.

the sole means to achieve victory."[93] Eldridge Cleaver told a *New York Times* reporter

that "the Black Panther Party in the United States fully supports Arab Guerillas in the

Middle East" and Stokely Carmichael continued to attack Israel, saying in a speech in

1969 that he had "once been for the Jews" but was now seeing things more clearly.[94]

Perhaps most disturbing was a January 1970 CBS news statement which reported that the

Al-Fatah "guerilla organization is discussing training Black Panthers in actual combat in

Israel to prepare them for sabotage and assassination campaigns in the United States."[95]

These attacks were highlighted in *Commentary* with other alarming tactics by the

Black Panther Party. In his September 1970 article, Tom Milstein chronicled numerous

other verbal assaults the Black Panther's carried out against American Jews. The judge

who sentenced Huey Newton, a Panther leader, to jail time in 1970 was labeled a "Zionist

judge." The Conspiracy 8 Trial, whereby Bobby Seale was "sacrificed" by other

complicit Zionists, also facilitated a slew of anti-Zionist sentiments. These ranged in

target from "the White Left in the USA," a large portion of which were "Zionists and

therefore racists," to the oppressors of the "Palestinian peoples" with whom the Panther's

took their stand.[96]

Later, in the early 1970s, Norman Podhoretz would write in the *New York Times*

Magazine that the Arab wars against Israel represented a second failed Holocaust which

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[93] Ibid.

[94] American Jewish Committee, *The Black Panthers,* 6; Carmichael, *Stokely Speaks*, 137.

[95] American Jewish Committee, *The Black Panthers,* 7.

[96] All quotes in Tom Milstein, "A Perspective on the Panthers," *Commentary* (September 1970): 43.

sought to finish the job of the first one. He interpreted the war as a wakeup call.

American Jews needed to realize that:

> if for the second time in this century, the world were to stand by while a major
> Jewish community was being destroyed, it would be hard to evade the suspicion
> that an irresistible will was at work to wipe every last Jew off the face of the
> earth, to make this planet entirely *Judenrein* – a will which… would not rest
> until… it found an equally effective instrument for disposing of the last
> community of Jews, the one in the United States.[97]

Podhoretz's alarm emphasized the transnational turn that Jewish neoconservatives took

after the Six-Day War. Jewish neoconservatives contended that the anti-Semitic urge for

a Holocaust did not stop arbitrarily at a country's boundary. Instead, the Jewish

community in America was integrally linked to Jews in Israel. The irrationality of anti-

Semitism targeted a Jew because of his ethnicity, not his nationality. Podhoretz's

memoirs concisely sum up the post-1967 era, from the perspective of the

neoconservatives:

> Thus around the same time that Israel was being portrayed as a nation of
> imperialist white settlers oppressing a dark-skinned native populace, American
> radicals… began pointing more and more openly to American Jews as the
> principal oppressors of American blacks. Jewish landlords and Jewish
> shopkeepers were, they said, exploiting them economically while Jewish social
> workers and Jewish school teachers were oppressing them culturally.[98]

The ramifications of such a prevalent threat led to the advancement of a

transnational identity which neoconservatives nurtured in the years following the Six-Day

War. Podhoretz later wrote that after the war he would direct *Commentary* to "become

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[97] Quoted in Jacob Heilbrunn, *They Knew They Were Right: The Rise of the Neocons*, (New York: Doubleday, 2008), 134.

[98] Norman Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks: A Political Memoir*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 330.

more aggressive than it had ever been before in defending Jewish interests both at home and abroad."[99] Inevitably, *Commentary's* content took a particularistic turn. Between 1967 and 1972 there were only a few exceptions to *Commentary's* continuous railing against the New Left. There was a dearth of articles on US foreign policy, though a number of articles focused on the postwar peace talks in the Middle East. Changes in neoconservative priorities, which are explored in the following chapter, only came about gradually and solidified after the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Staunch support for Israel came out in articles that attacked Arab positions at the peace table, firsthand accounts of the fighting (from an Israeli perspective), and exposés on life in Israel.

The various strains of thought discussed above composed the beginning of the process Jewish neoconservatives undertook following the Six Day War to bring Israel as a central component into their political identity. Jewish neoconservatism, a mentality which Podhoretz admitted he and his fellow Jews would have considered "no broader than the horizons of the tribe" a decade before, was now the chosen ideology.[100] While the particularistic interests of Jewish neoconservatives after 1967 were focused on the safety and security of American Jews, that concern became inextricably linked to the safety and security of Israel. In most basic terms, Jewish neoconservatives thought of themselves as irreducibly transnational actors; members of a global community defined by ethnicity. While the threat from anti-Semitic Black Nationalists faded with time, neoconservative concern for Israel remained high. The neoconservative fixation with

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[99] Podhoretz, *Ex-Friends*, 168.

[100] Norman Podhoretz, "Is it good for the Jews?" *Commentary* (February 1972): 7.

Israel was a by-product of the intense ideological conflict between Black Nationalists and

Jewish neoconservatives, but its continuing relevance in 1970s evolved out of

confrontations with other ideologies that threatened Jewish and Israeli interests.

CHAPTER II: The New Consensus, 1970-1976

I. Introduction

Jewish neoconservatives, unlike Black Nationalists, were not interested in separatism or

leftist radicalism. Their radicalization was not rooted in the notion of dissent. On the

contrary, Jewish neoconservatives sought to rebuild, albeit under different axioms, the

Golden Age of the 1950s by upgrading that era's consensus in the early 1970s. As the

previous chapter shows, Jewish neoconservatives responded to the rise in anti-Semitic

rhetoric after the Six Day War by building solidarity with Israel, collectively turning

inward, and exposing anti-Semitism as irrational and unjustifiable. American Jews

abandoned the Golden Age in the 1960s to escape what they believed to be more serious

threats, and according to the Jewish neoconservatives, the Golden Age had also

abandoned them. It was unable or uninterested in confronting the New Left's critique of

"Amerika" or containing the violence that took place in 1968. Rather than embracing the

extremes of dissent, neoconservatives focused on building a new consensus for American

society that addressed the lessons learned from the 1960s.   Historians have generally

chosen to see the neoconservatives as the last guardians of the "vital center" of American

 foreign policy that was shattered by Vietnam.[101] The interpretation is tempting and in

many ways correct. Neoconservatives held a strong anticommunist line in the 1970s and agreed that two of the United States' major foreign policy objectives were to maintain American hegemony in Europe and contain communism in a bipolar world. They also believed, like earlier Cold Warriors, that American democracy offered other nations an example of modernization that they should emulate.

But in other ways the foundations of the vital center – the belief in a monolithic communist threat and the ability to project American military power anywhere in the world – were dated by 1970. The Sino-Soviet split exposed divisions in the communist world, and more importantly for neoconservatives the US military's morale and the American public's willingness for military intervention were devastated after Vietnam. A new consensus needed a new set of axioms that Americans could rally around. Far from advocating a return to the pre-Vietnam mindset, neoconservatives sought to address and provide solutions to the problems that arose out of the late 1960s.

This chapter chronicles a transition period and explores how Jewish neoconservatives transformed their ethnocentric turn inward into a project for a new consensus – the hope for a new Golden Age that featured the security of Israel as a foundational axiom. Because Jewish neoconservatives believed that any move toward rebuilding the Golden Age was their best chance at safety and security, their push for a new consensus expressed a type of continuity with their concerns of the 1960s. In 1976 Podhoretz still stated his anxiety about pervasive anti-Semitism, which, in its new form sought "to deal with the phenomenon of a Jewish state among other states as it once dealt

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[101] See, for example, Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism*, 1-62.

with Jewish individuals and communities living in states dominated by other religious or ethnic groups."[102]

Two major developments from 1970-1976 were crucial in changing the neoconservative agenda: the lengthy conclusion to the Vietnam War and the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Neoconservatives believed that learning the wrong lessons from these events would doom the possibility of future US military action and ultimately the Golden Age they hoped to rebuild. Jewish neoconservatives concerned themselves less with combating specific New Left factions like the Black Nationalists, and more with criticizing national policy. In the 1970s, blame for American conduct in Vietnam and the Yom Kippur War was now at the feet of the Nixon administration, specifically Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and his policy of détente.[103]

These two major developments and their neoconservative interpretations formed the basis of a transition period from a definitively *Jewish* neoconservatism to a more identifiable mainstream neoconservatism of the mid-1970s that was based on universalistic ideological principals. Far from actually restoring a Golden Age premised on the same values that dominated the 1950s, neoconservatives developed a new argument based on ideological allegiance instead of detente's national interest, a "new,

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[102] Podhoretz, "The Abandonment of Israel," *Commentary* (July 1976): 27.

[103] Black Nationalism as a movement fractured in the early 1970s. Many of the flagship organizations, like the Black Panthers and CORE, went bankrupt. Consequently, their message of separatism and Black racial solidarity was also marginalized at this time. See Carson, *In Struggle*, 287-306.

liberal universalism."[104] In direct contrast to Henry Kissinger's "realist" objectives – a collection of aims meant to foster coexistence with the Soviet Union and its allies instead of direct confrontation – neoconservatives viewed the world in ideological blocs that tended to mirror the same ethnic allegiances and threats they encountered in the late 1960s. Israel and the United States were members of the "liberty party" defined by democratic political systems, however imperfect, and regardless of the facts on the ground in Israel's occupied zones. Similarly, the self-asserted and complicated allegiances between Black radicals, North Vietnam, the PLO, and communist powers were grouped by their "totalitarian" or "authoritarian" structure of government.[105] Resurrecting the old 1950s totalitarian critique of the Soviet Union updated the "plausible and frightening vision of a Manichean, bifurcated world."[106] Differentiating between these two systems found later explication by Daniel Patrick Moynihan (see Chapter 3) and in the late 1970s by Jeane Kirkpatrick, but during the early 1970s neoconservatives found it sufficient to frame the ideological conflict in bipolar terms.[107]

Besides the emphasis on totalitarianism, the new consensus did share one other extremely important aspect with the old vital center: an emphasis on American military

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[104] Mario Del Pero, *The Eccentric Realist: Henry Kissinger and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 132.

[105] Even the Black Panther Party is discussed in such terms. See Tom Milstein, "A Perspective on the Panthers," *Commentary* (September 1970): 42.

[106] Del Pero, *The Eccentric Realist,* 132. See also Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973).

[107] For the origins of the "Kirkpatrick Doctrine," which differentiated between totalitarian governments and supposedly less antagonistic authoritarian regimes, see Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Dictatorships and Double Standards," *Commentary,* (November 1979): 34-45.

power. However, neoconservatives emphasized American militarism for different reasons

than the first Cold Warriors. In the wake of Vietnam, neoconservatives hoped that a new

militarism, when combined with their ideological argument, would form a cogent

consensus issue that most Americans could rally around. While many Americans looked

to Israel and her 1967 victory as the very embodiment of effective militarism, "a practical

example of effectiveness in the use of [military] power," in a different way

neoconservatives became evermore convinced of Israel's fragility after October 1973.[108]

American military power took on new meaning in light of Vietnam, the Yom Kippur

War, and détente. Neoconservatives did not question Israel's will to forcibly defend its

interests, but that country's newly realized reliance on US support meant that US

intervention was crucial to Israel's security.

The parallel goals of promoting an ideological worldview and a new American

militarism were the foundations for the project of a new consensus. Following the Yom

Kippur War in October 1973 neoconservatives launched a broad and general criticism of

détente that managed to universalize their attachment to Israel and simultaneously

"undercut" détente from the political right.[109] By framing US support for Israel in

ethnocentric terms *and* as central to the project of a new consensus, neoconservatives

worked to evolve their 1960s ethnocentrism into something that could appeal to

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[108] Melani McAlister argues that Israel represented a common image among many groups in the 1970s, one that "revitalized masculinity and restored national pride" (*Epic Encounters*, 197). That image grows much more complicated when checked with the rhetoric neoconservatives espoused about Israel, which usually focused on that country's weakness (imposed by outside forces) and fragile security, not military strength.

[109] Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999), 109. For Kissinger's full discussion of the successful neoconservative opposition to détente see 105-112.

mainstream American political discourse. The push to topple détente was fueled by ideological and militaristic language that acted to both place Israel in the center of a worldwide ideological struggle and to cure America of its weakened post-Vietnam state, what neoconservatives and others termed "Vietnam Syndrome."[110]

Though Nixon, Kissinger, and the neoconservatives shared a generally similar assessment of what the post-Vietnam problems were for the US – the problem of public willingness to support military intervention, the problem of public consensus, the problem of a fractured Washington bureaucracy – their language stood in stark contrast to each other. Kissinger's emphasis on cooperation and "coexistence" between the superpowers was countered with neoconservative concerns to sharply distinguish systems of government and humanitarian records. Ideological clarity, the ultimate objective of neoconservatives, was couched in language that recalled America's history of "democratic institutions" and the exceptional nature of American foreign policy in that it was "value" driven.[111] The reinvigorated militarism neoconservatives wanted to see often took the form of linking their opponents to 1930s style "appeasement" and calling for Americans to buck the complacency brought on by the Vietnam debacle. On specific measures, such as the SALT I accords, when Kissinger talked of "mutual disarmament" neoconservatives cried foul, instead claiming that the US was selling its military

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[110] For a discussion of Vietnam Syndrome see G. L. Simons, *Vietnam Syndrome: Impact on US Foreign Policy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998). Also, Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 155-197.

[111] For emblematic examples of this language see, for example, Nathan Glazer, "American Values and American Foreign Policy," *Commentary* (July 1976): 32 and Peter Berger, "The Greening of American Foreign Policy," *Commentary* (March 1976): 23-27.

superiority for fanciful prospects of peace. The larger project of ideological clarity and a

new militarism were a powerful combination in the face of Kissinger's self-proclaimed

realism and the Nixon Doctrine's shift from direct military intervention to material

support. The neoconservatives' contrast to the Nixon-Kissinger détente in the early 1970s

served to more clearly define the new vision for America which the neoconservatives

sought.

II. The New Threat: Remembering Vietnam

Jewish neoconservatives were never staunch supporters of the war in Vietnam. In the

mid-1960s *Commentary* criticized the war by publishing multiple negative articles, some

by the magazine's foremost writers – Nathan Glazer, Theodore Draper – and some by

other (mostly Jewish) contributors.[112] Outside of *Commentary*, Draper, a regular

contributor to *Commentary* in the 1970s, published a highly critical account of the

Johnson administration's decision-making process and Podhoretz criticized the war in his

1967 autobiographical work, *Making It*.[113] As an example of the unqualified

condemnations in *Commentary*, during the height of antiwar demonstrations in 1967 and

1968 Draper published his thoughts on the war: Vietnam was "a political debacle, a

military folly, and a moral disgrace…the Johnson administration is determined to come

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[112] For example see Oscar Gass, "Vietnam-Resistance or Withdrawal?," *Commentary* (May 1964); Nathan Glazer, "Vietnam: The Case for Immediate Withdrawal," *Commentary* (May 1971); Maurice Goldbloom, "Johnson So Far: III: Foreign Policy," *Commentary* (June 1965); David Halberstam, "Getting the Story in Vietnam," *Commentary* (January 1965): 30-34.

[113] Theodore Draper, *Abuse of Power* (New York: Viking Press, 1967); Norman Podhoretz, *Making It* (New York: Random House, 1967), especially 59-60,

out of this war with something that it can claim to be a military "victory" or at least a

setback for the Vietnamese Communists, no matter how much of South and North

Vietnam must be destroyed in the process." [114]

The Six Day War did not change many minds about Vietnam, either. "Doves for

War" was the new moniker for those who advocated for peace in Vietnam but saw no

contradiction with also supporting Israel's military victories in the Middle East.[115] The

ethnocentric concerns many Jewish neoconservatives felt toward Israel did not apply to

the South Vietnamese or the Johnson Administration. Neoconservatives argued that the

two situations were entirely different. The difference centered on what neoconservatives

believed to be the legitimate and illegitimate uses of force. While Israel was fighting for

its survival, the only perceivable interest in Vietnam was propping up a corrupt and inept

South Vietnam. The crux of the matter was whether or not violence worked to defend and

foster democratic values or hindered them. Vietnam, just like the race riots of the late

1960s, threatened to further dissemble consensus on national and international levels.

Black Panthers and communism were both labeled "totalitarian" entities at odds with

American values.[116] Calls for de-escalation or immediate withdrawal were shared by

most of the neoconservatives and *Commentary's* vehement criticism of Vietnam in the

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[114] Theodore Draper, "Vietnam and American Politics," *Commentary* (March 1968): 15.

[115] See Theodore Draper, *Israel and World Politics: Roots of the Third Arab-Israeli War* (New York: Viking Press, 1968).

[116] See Milstein, "A Perspective on the Panthers," 42.

1960s even led some to label Podhoretz as a "liberal dissenter" and his fellow Jews as part of the New Left chorus against the war.[117]

However, the neoconservative critique of Vietnam differed greatly from the New Left's. The emphasis would change over time, but by 1972 neoconservatives argued for a coherent and unified interpretation of Vietnam. Historian Robert Tomes describes the process neoconservatives took:

> First, demand withdrawal from Vietnam, thus establishing a credibility which conservatives who continued to support the war could not achieve, then establish an interpretation of the war which assigned its responsibilities to well-meaning errors in judgment and general good intention. Next, exonerate those who had supported the war in its initial stages, and finally, conclude that the overall rationale of American internationalism was not the cause of difficulty, although the application of anticommunism to the local Vietnamese situation had indeed been misguided and incorrect.[118]

This interpretation managed to salvage the possibility of future American intervention, and most importantly portrayed Vietnam as an aberration instead of an indication of American values. Neoconservatives contended that talk of war crimes were unwarranted; while mistakes had been made, the war was a noble endeavor and defensive in nature.

The war did, however, indirectly aid ignoble struggles in the United States. More catastrophic than the slow and embarrassing Vietnamization process from 1969-1973 was the loss of nearly all consensus on American foreign policy at home, one of the key elements of the Golden Age in the 1950s. The Washington bureaucracy appeared divided on the proper course of American foreign affairs. Some intellectuals backed a new isolationist agenda, détente had its advocates as well while still others like Fritz Kraemer,

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[117] Tomes, *Apocalypse Then*, 194.

[118] Ibid., 227.

Secretary of Defense Arthur Schlesinger, and his successor Donald Rumsfeld backed a new militarism so similar to Podhoretz and *Commentary* that they too were soon labeled neoconservatives.[119]

A shattered domestic consensus on foreign policy was the major impetus for Jewish neoconservatives to reinterpret Vietnam. By positioning Vietnam as part of the grand narrative of American history wherein men fought and died for a valiant, though mismanaged cause, neoconservatives like Podhoretz sought to circumvent the New Left and mainstream criticisms which questioned America's historical role of military intervention. The shift from criticizing Vietnam to reinterpretation took place as early as 1970. In a short article, "First Things, and Last," which was subsequently cited by other Jewish intellectuals as groundbreaking for its sharp pivot on Vietnam, Podhoretz contemplated the forty thousand dead soldiers "in a war for which even the President of their country now refuses to make any noble or transcendent claim."[120] In May 1970 he traveled to Vicksburg, Mississippi, one of the deadliest sites of the American Civil War with his friend Willie Morris, the editor of *Harper's.* In his own words:

> As Willie and I wandered together up and down the interminable rows of gravestones reading the names and the regiments of all those fallen children of a hundred years ago, I was suddenly invaded by a phrase from the Gettysburg Address…*that these dead shall not have died in vain*. "What do you really think, Willie," I said, "did they die in vain or not?" For a long moment he stared down at a gravestone, but instead of answering he led me over to where his grandmother, who had come along with us…was sitting… "Mamie," he said, "tell us. Did all those dead boys buried here die in vain or not? What do you think, Mamie?" The

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[119] On the so called Republican neoconservatives in the Nixon and Ford administrations see Len Colodny and Tom Shachtman, *The Forty Years War: The Rise and Fall of the Neocons, from Nixon to Obama* (Harper, 2009).

[120] Norman Podhoretz, "First Things, and Last," *Commentary* (July 1970): 27.

old woman… shook her head slowly… "I don't know, son," she said, "I don't know." And then, pausing to consider, she added in a tone that simultaneously chilled the blood and warmed the heart, "I reckon they all would have been dead and buried by now anyway."[121]

Mamie Morris' insight had implications beyond the Civil War, Podhoretz concluded:

That astonishing remark—which says, among all the other things it says, that to die young in a war is one of the possible ways for mortal beings to die, and not necessarily the worst—has been much on my mind today, Memorial Day of 1970, as the wanton American involvement in Vietnam comes closer and closer to an end.[122]

This confession proved to be a landmark shift in *Commentary's* thinking that bore political fruit in the years to come. In a short five hundred words Podhoretz sought to re-remember Vietnam in purely ideological, moralistic, and militaristic terms. His Jewish readers responded in kind and expanded on his meaning. One such reader later wrote:

By setting Vietnam within the context of U.S. history and the history of human civilization, he was saying that… despite its ugliness and inefficiency, the reality of war remains the final safeguard of freedom…Its truth struck me particularly as a Jew. All that separated the doomed uprising in the ghettos of Poland from Israel's victory against the combined Arab forces in 1967 was this unpalatable truth, that "to die young in a war is one of the possible ways for moral beings to die, and not necessarily the worst."[123]

Buried in the numerous historical applications of Mamie Morris's insight was a concerted effort by Podhoretz to revitalize an earlier militaristic strain in American foreign policy. The maxim that war was "the final safeguard of freedom" applied to Israel as much as it did to Vietnam or the United States. The dominant New Left interpretation of Vietnam

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[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ruth R. Wisse, "The Maturing of "Commentary" and of the Jewish Intellectual," *Jewish Social Studies* 3, no. 2, (Winter 1997): 35.

was as a crime or act of imperialism; the mainstream interpretation of Vietnam was as an

embarrassing set of catastrophes and wasted lives – neither of these interpretations

allowed for future American intervention in a post-Vietnam era.

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In order to rebuild the Golden Age neoconservatives had to do more than

advocate an ideological and militaristic interpretation of Vietnam. The 1972 presidential

race offered an opportunity to attack opponents of American militarism. Running against

the incumbent Richard Nixon was Senator George McGovern on the Democratic ticket,

whose tagline, "Bring America Home," emphasized the desire by many in the Democrat

Party to withdraw American commitments from around the globe. Jewish

neoconservatives, nearly every one of them still a registered Democrat in 1972, saw

McGovern's nomination, and more importantly the newfound power of his New Left

coalition, as an affront to traditional American liberalism. In no uncertain terms

neoconservatives charged that McGovern and his supporters – McGovernites –

represented the hijacking of the Democrat Party by the New Left. Ideologically,

McGovern and his base interpreted Vietnam as a criminal act that spoke to deeper issues

in American society. McGovernites argued that the war exposed American capitalist

ambition, American imperialism, racism, and a host of other ills embedded in the

country's very nature. [124]

More specifically neoconservatives opposed McGovern on two concrete issues:

racial quotas and Israel. Setting aside the complex debate about racial quotas,

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[124] For a survey of McGovern's platform see Theodore H White, *The Making of the President, 1972*, (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1973).

McGovern's precarious position on Israel in the 1972 campaign illustrates directly how neoconservatives voiced their concerns for Israel in terms of American military strength. In a September 1972 *Commentary* piece leading up to the election, Glazer and Milton Himmelfarb, a regular contributor on Jewish culture, took opposing sides on the election with Glazer supporting McGovern and Himmelfarb supporting Nixon. Glazer's support was half hearted at best, based less on a positive view of McGovern and more on a pessimistic assessment of his ability to affect change once in office. Podhoretz acted as moderator and wrote an introductory article where he did not explicitly choose sides, but notably failed to mention a single praiseworthy attribute of McGovern. The three men's characterizations of McGovern and support for Israel illustrate how Jewish neoconservatives could at once express deeply ethnocentric sympathies for Israel and still maintain that the conclusion of such sympathies – US support for Israel – was in line with mainstream American policy and the project of a new consensus.

"McGovern and the Jews: A Debate," featured some of the most passionate displays of the neoconservative's transnational Jewish identity found in *Commentary*. Both participants, Glazer and Himmelfarb, prefaced their position on candidates by unequivocally expressing the centrality of Israel to the American Jewish community. For Glazer, "the survival of Israel is for Jews an interest that must transcend all other interests" and thus superseded any concept of "national interest."[125] Himmelfarb was even more adamant, "The Jews' overriding foreign-policy interest is Israel. More accurately, our overriding interest of any kind is Israel. If – which God forbid – Israel

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[125] Nathan Glazer and Milton Himmelfarb, "McGovern and the Jews: A Debate," *Commentary* (September 1972): 44.

should cease to exist, do we not know in our bones that the Jews would cease to exist?"[126]

The morally vague actions of Nixon's first administration in the Middle East no doubt led

both participants to articulate their pro-Israel sentiments up front. Unified on the

importance of Israel, Glazer and Himmelfarb proceeded to diverge on the possibility that

McGovern, and more importantly the "new coalition of blacks, youth, and women" that

would inevitably follow him into a new administration, would reverse American support

for Israel.[127]

Himmelfarb expressed his doubts that if McGovern fulfilled his promise to

drastically reduce American military commitments abroad, Israel would suffer more than

most American allies. Despite McGovern's recent pro-Israeli comments (attributed to

political opportunism), he wondered "How seriously can we take the new pro-Israel

statements and planks of a candidate whose policy is diplomatic and military

withdrawal?"[128] Evidence that others, people who harbored antagonism toward Israel,

saw McGovern as weak on Israel presented itself as well: "How reassuring can it be to

Jews that the Arabists of the National Council of Churches (like the anti-Israel secular

Left) were rapturous about McGovern's nomination?"[129]

Glazer offered similar skepticism of McGovern's personal motives toward Israel,

but was less concerned about the political capital McGovern could accrue to actually

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[126] Ibid., 48.

[127] Norman Podhoretz, "Between Nixon and the New Politics," *Commentary* (September 1972): 6.

[128] Glazer and Himmelfarb, "McGovern and the Jews," 48.

[129] Ibid.

change America's commitments to Israel: "I believe Jewish political influence in this country is such that any American President must give some support to Israel" and similarly, the memory of Vietnam was so pervasive that "no American President-unless he is someone we should distrust as adventurist or unbalanced – will risk war with Russia to save Israel." Glazer's support of McGovern rested less on how much he feared McGovern could change America's support for Israel and more on the overinflated sense other neoconservatives like Himmelfarb and Podhoretz held of what Nixon could do for Israel:

> That Nixon has leaned more to the end of accepting risk than McGovern I do not doubt; and yet how far toward that end can he really lean? One recalls a poll in which only 8 percent of the American people were willing to go to war to protect Israel, an even smaller proportion than was willing to go to war to protect India![130]

In other words, the limits of American support for Israel were restricted even for the White House. Instead, a lack of national consensus and will to use force were the major culprits. He lamented that "It would not be a popular – or even a possible – policy for this country to send American troops or to risk nuclear war for Israel." Furthermore, he was:

> Amazed that President Nixon still acts as if American military power could be used in defense of our allies and that other countries act as if they credit this possibility…We will send arms, we will send economic aid, we will move aircraft carriers around – though to what purpose I do not understand, since it is perfectly clear that these carriers will not be used against Russia or the Arabs to protect Israel.

Podhoretz concurred with Glazer that enchantment with Nixon was not the cause of less Jewish support for McGovern. He explained that "the turn away from McGovern has been caused not by a sudden access of Jewish enthusiasm for Nixon or his party, but

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[130] Ibid., 45.

by a steadily mounting Jewish uneasiness over McGovern."[131] Podhoretz echoed many of
the same criticisms that Himmelfarb leveled at McGovern, particularly in regards to the
threat McGovernites posed if they gained power in a wide range of American institutions.
He wondered specifically if "the forces led by McGovern will retain control of the
Democratic party or whether they will be…the Gold-waterites of the Left."[132] The answer
was too serious to leave to chance. Jews, he suggested, were concerned "much more by
the general attitudes of the New-Politics movement than by McGovern's stand on
Israel."[133] In this case, coalition trumped candidate.

McGovernites, more than even McGovern himself, led Himmelfarb and
Podhoretz to shed their lifelong allegiances to the Democrat Party in 1972. Glazer's
continued support for McGovern (he never subsequently revealed who he actually voted
for) was the product of a calculated decision whereby his uneasiness with McGovern was
outweighed by his allegiance to the Democrat Party. Glazer emphasized the limits of the
President to work against prevailing policy and opinion. What all three participants
agreed on was the lack of will in Washington and by the public to fully support Israel if
that country's survival required American military intervention.

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[131] Podhoretz, "Between Nixon and the New Politics," 4.

[132] Ibid. "Gold-waterites" refers to the followers of Barry Goldwater in the 1964
Presidential election who believed they were shifting the Republican Party drastically to the
political right for years to come. From Podhoretz's perspective in 1972 the Goldwater movement
failed to affect lasting change in the Republican Party. In contemporary historiography on
American conservatism Goldwater and the 1964 election receive much more credit. See, for
example, Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right*,
(Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[133] Ibid., 8.

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In the end the 1972 election witnessed the lowest Jewish vote for a Democratic candidate since Adlai Stevenson in 1956. McGovern only accumulated 65% of the Jewish vote on his way to the worst presidential loss in modern American history.[134] Podhoretz, with a vote for Nixon, or rather a vote against McGovern, wrote a piece just after the election that can only be described as gloating, boastful, and relieved that McGovern lost and by such a wide margin. However, the article is also insightful in revealing how neoconservatives perceived McGovern as a threat and how the ethnocentric, often parochial interests discussed in Chapter I informed the way neoconservatives perceived the New Left and their international as well as domestic agenda. Podhoretz identified the main reasons why voters rejected McGovern in 1972:

> Disgust was directed, first of all, at the cultural revolution of the 60's… for show-off students, for runaways, for attacks on the family and the system, for obscenity, for pot, for prisoner pity, for dropping out, for tuning in, for radical chic, for storefront lawyers, for folk singers, for muggings, for addicts, for well-do-to Wasps grogged on charity binges.[135]

Coupled with these cultural markers Podhoretz linked them to criticisms of American foreign policy. The same McGovernites who were folk singers and addicts also reveled "in branding American participation in the Vietnam war a crime, in comparing Johnson and then Nixon to Hitler, openly pray[ing] for an outcome that would spell humiliation

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[134] Jewish Virtual Library, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/jewvote.html, accessed 2/10/10.

[135] Norman Podhoretz, "What the Voters Sensed," *Commentary* (January 1973): 6.

and defeat for the United States."[136] The two sets of grievances were linked by their New Left origins. The New Left was "patronizing, unsympathetic, and finally hostile" to the beliefs of the majority of Americans. Podhoretz's argument reinforced the neoconservative interpretation of Vietnam. What undermined the effort in Vietnam were aberrational cultural forces that Americans had finally rejected and expelled (in disgust) in the 1972 election. Had these forces never existed or gained influence, the war might have been prosecuted successfully.

Nixon's victory, however, failed to comfort the Jewish neoconservatives. They still saw the pervasive lack of will in the American public as the primary threat to support for Israel, both before and after November 1972. In opposition to McGovern's platform, the idea of "Vietnam Syndrome" hinted at in Podhoretz's and Glazer's discussion of McGovern sufficiently bolstered the neoconservative interpretation of Vietnam's legacy. Melani McAlister defines the syndrome in this way: "In the wake of its failure to use force properly, the nation [United States] was afflicted with a profound failure of nerve."[137] The syndrome was thus an infection, an aberration on the historical military role America played in the world as intervener and guarantor of democratic principles. The condition Glazer described whereby American presidents could not feasibly use American troops to protect allies was the most dangerous symptom of the Vietnam Syndrome.

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[136] Ibid.

[137] Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945-2000* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 186.

The project for a new consensus utilized the Vietnam Syndrome and the need to shed Vietnam's legacy as central axioms. Such an emphasis placed military prowess at the forefront of the neoconservative agenda and solidified American military strength as integral to America recovering from the 1960s. In the neoconservative interpretation of Vietnam, progress was measured by how willing and able the American public, in conjunction with the President, was to prepare for and to prosecute military ventures overseas. Conversely, American weakness showed itself in the McGovernite strain of the Democrat Party, which sought to immediately end support for South Vietnam and substantially decrease US troop levels around the world.

With McGovern soundly defeated neoconservatives set their sights on the very administration they had supported in 1972. Symptoms of the syndrome were everywhere, specifically in the foreign policy of Nixon and his National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger. Podhoretz in particular did not see eye to eye with Kissinger, who "reversed Theodore Roosevelt's dictum" and often talked the anticommunist talk, but never followed through on his tough rhetoric.[138] Kissinger, according to Podhoretz, "often sounded like Winston Churchill while behaving like Neville Chamberlain" and thus sabotaged the military's recovery from Vietnam and resurrected the specter of 1930s style appeasement.[139] The self-described realist's focus on statesmanship and geopolitics also tended to reduce moral considerations in policy. Thus, according to neoconservatives, Kissinger failed to see the world in ideological terms. Kissinger's

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[138] Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks*, 346.

[139] Ibid.

ascent to power in 1973, when he became both Secretary of State and National Security Advisor, put him in direct confrontation with the project for a new consensus. His closing actions in Vietnam, where direct American military action ended in early 1973, and his pursuit of détente with the Soviet Union (which influenced his actions in the 1973 Yom Kippur War) alienated those who were looking for moral clarity in American actions.

Vietnam acted as both a cause and effect for the Jewish neoconservatives' new consensus project. The neoconservatives were genuinely concerned about the legacy of the Vietnam War and the potentially paralyzing role the war might play in future American commitments. Neoconservatives believed Israel's security was only assured in a program that addressed the weaknesses of the late 1960s, namely a national failure of nerve.

III. The New Threat Compounded: The Yom Kippur War

The debacle in Vietnam and all the baggage it carried did not seem to imminently threaten Israel's war making capacity in the near future. Vietnam, after all, was no Israel. Israel showed such military prowess in 1967 that neoconservatives, American politicians, and Israeli officials all hoped a future Middle East war, if inevitable, was years away. That hope, and the idea of Israel's immutable prowess, vanished in October 1973. Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack against Israel on Yom Kippur (6 October), the holiest day in Judaism. During the first two days of fighting Arab forces scored substantial victories, reclaiming much of the territory lost in 1967. A failed Egyptian offensive and massive American airlift turned the tides of war, however, and on 24 October both sides agreed to a ceasefire. Israeli troops routed and almost encircled a large

part of Egypt's army by the time of the ceasefire, but the overriding interpretation of the war by Israelis and American Jews was that Israel lost the political, military, and geographical dominance it gained in 1967.

Jewish neoconservatives amplified the war's ambiguous, if not negative, outcome for Israel even more. The Yom Kippur War did not come with the same anti-Semitic publicity in the US as did the Six-Day War, but the threat to Israel, and thus Jews, was more marked than before. Podhoretz believed the war, one in which no American soldiers played a part, exposed the dependency Israel now had on American military influence:

> What had saved Israel from being overrun by Arab armies was an airlift of American arms; and what had prevented the Russians from intervening when they threatened to do so at a certain point was the American nuclear deterrent. Nothing could have more vividly demonstrated the inextricable connection between the survival of Israel and the military adequacy of the United States.[140]

The neoconservatives soon rallied around this interpretation of the war. The link between the Vietnam Syndrome and Israeli security was also made. Podhoretz pleaded with American Jews to realize the "unpleasant truth that the hostility to anti-Communist intervention was as dangerous to Israel as…anti-Zionism."[141] The lessons learned were clear: Israel's security was utterly dependent on the American public bucking the Vietnam Syndrome. Earl Raab concurred with Podhoretz in his study on poll numbers of American support for Israel: "Israel is now almost absolutely dependent on the United States for its very existence…only the diplomatic and military resources of the United

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[140] Ibid., 350.

[141] Ibid., 351.

States stood between Israel and possible extinction."[142] Another *Commentary* contributor, Gil Carl AlRoy, emphasized the same lesson learned: "Israel's only hope lies in its military power; if that power can be nullified or made irrelevant [by Arab powers and their allies], Jewish statehood will be doomed."[143]

The Yom Kippur War turned neoconservatives adamantly against Kissinger. Kissinger's policy of détente as it pertained to the Middle East fed their fears. Détente's explicit concern for fulfilling national interest objectives instead of ideological ones, and Kissinger's self-portrayal as a grand European statesman who practiced *realpolitik* instead of an American idealist like Woodrow Wilson created the perception that Kissinger was an amoral diplomat with no ideological ties to Israel's survival. Kissinger's conduct during the war bolstered this perception. In particular, neoconservatives charged that first Kissinger purposely withheld aid to Israel in order to gain influence over postwar peace talks and that he then subsequently allowed Egypt an "honorable defeat" instead of a total Israeli victory following the American airlift to maintain friendly relations with the Soviets. Recent scholarship points toward at least a partial vindication of the neoconservatives' concerns. Historian Zach Levey summarizes the politics of the airlift by stating that "President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger…sought to regulate the flow of arms to Israel…and thus control its military moves. They intended to leave Israel with a level of armament that would circumscribe

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[142] Earl Raab, "Is Israel Losing Popular Support?," *Commentary* 57 (January 1974): 26.

[143] Gil Carl AlRoy, "Do the Arabs want Peace?," *Commentary* 57 (February 1974): 61.

its strategy and, following cessation of hostilities, increase its dependence on

Washington." [144]

    Commentary focused its criticisms on Kissinger's conciliating attitude toward the

Soviet Union, which was, according to Draper "waist deep in war." Détente's

preoccupation with coexistence, it was argued, blinded Kissinger to the Soviet impetus

behind the Yom Kippur War.[145] Even an acknowledgement of the administration's airlift

was also a veiled criticism:

> The Israelis have reason to be grateful to the United States for the aid which they
> received when they needed it most. After a week of bureaucratic wavering and
> division, President Nixon acted with forcefulness and decision. For the future,
> however, the policy before October 13 is more alarming than the policy after that
> date is encouraging.[146]

    Following the initial reactions to the Yom Kippur War and the realization of

Israel's dependency on American support, the neoconservatives turned a critical eye to

the international institutions and national policies that they deemed responsible for

Israel's isolation and security troubles. Kissinger's actions during the war and his

subsequent shuttle diplomacy were praised by the majority of Americans, but the

neoconservatives were less impressed.[147] Eugene Rostow labeled the Yom Kippur War a

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[144] Zach Levey, "Anatomy of an Airlift: United States military assistance to Israel during the 1973 war," *Cold War History* 8, no. 4 (2008): 481.

[145] Theodore Draper, "From 1967 to 1973: The Arab-Israeli Wars," *Commentary* (December 1973): 44.

[146] Ibid.

[147] Historian Salim Yaqub raises similar questions about the prevailing view of Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy in Salim Yaqub, "Henry Kissinger and the Arab-Israeli Conflict," in *Nixon in the World: American Foreign Relations, 1969-1977* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 235-45. Yaqub criticizes Kissinger's actions in part because they "abetted Israeli

"Pearl Harbor" for Nixon and Kissinger's foreign policy, "an explosion which revealed acute tensions between reality and the models for reality which have dominated many minds."[148] Criticisms of détente focused on its reinforcement of the status quo in international affairs and its reliance on diplomacy with countries who were not equally motivated to pursue Kissinger's catch phrase of "common interests." These objectives were directly contradictory to, or so neoconservatives asserted, their push for ideological militarism.

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One of the more damning consequences of the Yom Kippur War was the exposed inability of the international community to mediate the dispute effectively. "Rarely," Draper lamented in reference to the Soviet Union, "has the world organization been so crudely used to provide a fig – leaf for naked great power."[149] Kissinger's public support for a United Nation (UN)-mediated cease fire and his bewildering actions during the war linked him to the larger guilt of the international community. The war signaled a new and sustained neoconservative attack on the United Nations, especially that body's actions toward Israel. Reflecting on the UN's inaction, Draper correspondingly charged the body with impotence; that "its members, if they have any consciences left, will long have to account for the fact that they did nothing to restore peace when Israel was in

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expansionism" (245). This critique contrasts sharply with the neoconservatives, but both dispel the myth of Kissinger acting "evenhanded" between both sides.

[148] Eugene Rostow, "America, Europe, and the Middle East," (February 1974): 40.

[149] Draper, "From 1967 to 1973," 44.

danger…This war may well be to the United Nations what the Italio-Ethiopian war was to the League of Nations." [150]

Neoconservatives believed the UN represented a major trend in global developments that neither the ultraconservative right nor Kissinger understood. From 1945 to 1973 UN membership ballooned from fifty-one original states to 135, most of whom were Third World countries. Instead of celebrating the expansion, neoconservatives saw the rise in membership as a threat. Almost all of the forty-four inductees in the 1960s were Third World countries that had openly condemned "Israeli imperialism" or expressed sympathy with Palestinian nationalism. Draper characterized the UN in 1974 as "little more than an international forum in which member states ruthlessly pursue their national interest according to certain rules or principles which they recognize, pursue, or violate as they see fit." [151]

Kissinger's postwar diplomacy in the UN thus drew the ire of the neoconservatives. Israel, under pressure from Kissinger, "grudgingly" accepted the Geneva forums for possible peace talks, but it was inconceivable to Draper how Kissinger believed he could reach a fair peace agreement under such circumstances. In reference to a possible postwar peace settlement, Draper identified unbalanced Third World representation that worked against Israeli interests:

> The Arabs start with their own eighteen votes. They are sure to pick up eight more from the non-Arab Muslim countries. Then come the twelve inevitable votes from the Communist countries. Twenty-six African nations, which do not now have diplomatic ties with Israel, unwaveringly back the Arabs as part of their dues in

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[150] Ibid.

[151]Theodore Draper, "The Road to Geneva," (February 1974): 24.

the Afro-Asian bloc... About a dozen other "nonaligned" nations, such as India and Yugoslavia (for whom nonalignment has come to mean nonalignment with only one side), make no effort to hide their pro-Arab commitment. In Western Europe, France and Spain are consistently hostile to Israel, and Britain does not lag far behind. If most or all of the Latin-American bloc, as part of its lip service to the "Third World," goes along, as it usually does, the Arabs can count on at least two-thirds of the General Assembly on almost any issue that lines them up against Israel.[152]

The Security Council was no better, where the Soviet Union and Communist China had veto power over any initiative. These countries competed between each other to see "which one could be more pro-Arab than the Arabs."[153] Kissinger's separately settled armistice agreements with Egypt, Syria, and Jordan were subjected to less criticism than his UN actions, but the theme of moral relativism followed neoconservative descriptions of Kissinger's agreements. Following the Sinai Peace Agreement Podhoretz invoked the same type of language used to describe the UN:

> The United States government has now evidently persuaded itself that the Arabs no longer wish to destroy Israel, that the only thing at this point which threatens Israel's existence is Israel's own "intransigence," and that it is for the Israelis' own good that they be forced and bribed into making what they themselves consider dangerously one-sided concessions.[154]

In response to the massive expansion of UN membership and the changing values it espoused, ex-isolationist (now an interventionist) Robert Tucker expanded the criticism of the UN and charged that the international body had failed to anticipate the rapid

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[152] Ibid., 23.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Norman Podhoretz, "Making the World Safe for Communism," (April 1976): 37.

decolonization of the Cold War era.[155] Third World countries now clamored for a "new"

equality; a system where the First World financially and politically supported the Third

World. The "new egalitarian" vision was nothing more than the old "unequal" colonial

system in a new guise, with a new set of inequalities. The primary difference now was

that the major powers – Britain, France, and the United States – were on the receiving

end of inequalities that were once perpetrated by those same powers in previous decades.

Tucker concluded that "The new egalitarianism is little more than a refurbished version

of the old equality which was quite compatible with almost any and all forms of

inequality."[156] Kissinger's inability to confront the Third World-communist bloc during

October 1973 exemplified détente's inability to deal with or even comprehend an

ideological struggle underlying national interests in the Middle East.

Essentially the neoconservatives saw the international system under Kissinger's

watch as broken. The US and Israel could no longer depend on an international body like

the UN to provide security. The expansion of membership and new egalitarian sentiment

undermined US interests to the benefit of new nations that were authoritarian or

totalitarian in nature and were ideologically allied with the Soviet Union. Detente's

emphasis on dialogue and diplomatic solutions, and the self-pronounced change in Cold

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[155] Robert Tucker published a neo-isolationist tract in 1972 (Robert W Tucker, *A New Isolationism: Threat or Promise?* (New York: Universe Books, 1972)) but by 1975, and largely due to the Yom Kippur War and OPEC oil crisis, Tucker was radically advocating the possibility of US troops securing oil interests in the Middle East. For the latter see Robert Tucker, "Oil: The Issue of American Intervention," *Commentary* 59 (January 1975): 21-31. His lamentations about the new egalitarianism in the international scene are reminiscent of similar concerns neoconservatives voiced about new forms of racial equality inside the US.

[156] Robert Tucker, "A New International Order," (February 1975): 41.

War tactics from containment to coexistence lessened the possibility of a more decisive

militaristic foreign policy and perpetuated the Vietnam Syndrome.

Inaction by European allies before and during the Yom Kippur War furthered the

neoconservatives' general critique on interest-based policymaking and specifically on

Kissinger's failed moral leadership. Caught "woefully unprepared," Western Europe was

blamed not only for its inaction during the war. According to Rostow the war was

actually "brought about by divisions in the alliance [NATO]." Following this logic,

Rostow chided European allies for their internal division and a lack of ideological clarity:

> If the allies had… acted together for the last six years to protect their vital
> common interest in the Middle East, the risks of the October [Yom Kippur] War
> both for the Arabs and for their Soviet patrons would have been far too great to
> consider. Indeed, had the allies been united in their policies toward the Middle
> East… they should long since have achieved a fair and balanced peace in the
> area.[157]

He concluded that the war "made cruelly manifest the only significant influence Europe

can have in world politics is as an active member of the Atlantic alliance." [158] European

inaction, like America's Vietnam Syndrome, was partly a consequence of the public's

idleness. For Europe, Earl Raab identified the common voter as the culprit. In a theme

that would reappear, countries who only sought their national interest were the ones

afflicted by a lack of national will:

> The policies of England, France, et al. toward Israel in October 1973 did indeed
> stem from indifference, but it was indifference of the kind exemplified by the
> voter who doesn't care whether his candidate is anti-Semitic. These nations
> clearly did not have a commitment to legal or moral principles which outweighed

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[157] Both quotes in Rostow, "America, Europe, and the Middle East," 40.

[158] Ibid.

their own needs—in this case, oil. If the Israelis had had the oil instead of the Arabs, there is no question where those European nations would have stood.[159]

These criticisms bolstered neoconservative claims that the US needed a militaristic and ideologically driven foreign policy. Israel's value in the eyes of American administrations plummeted if national interest was the sole determining factor in deciding action on an international scale. Instead of détente, neoconservatives sought for the US to take the moral lead on ideological action. Echoing Raab, the majority of nations, according to Glazer, "limit themselves to defending their national interests."[160] Even democratic countries, like West Germany or Japan, only strove for values beyond themselves, "only by way of following the lead of the United States."[161] Kissinger's leadership during the war, wherein he sought to maximize US national interests, was judged as a failure for its inability to maintain ideological clarity or break through international pressure by non-democratic, anti-Israeli countries. Détente was judged unsuitable for America to take leadership in situations of international crisis.

IV. The New Response: Criticizing Détente

Sustained criticism of the Yom Kippur War's postwar diplomacy quickly opened the way for broader criticisms of détente. A typical attack like this one from Draper conflated Kissinger's actions (or inaction) in the Middle East with détente's overall philosophy:

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[159] Earl Raab, "Is there a New Anti-Semitism?," *Commentary* (May 1974: 54.

[160] Nathan Glazer, "American Values and American Foreign Policy," (July 1976): 33.

[161] Ibid.

> While Mr. Nixon and Dr. Kissinger were basking in the warmth of détente, the
> Russians were heating up a war in the Middle East. While a new academic
> doctrine was developing that the Soviet Union had become a conservative, status-
> quo power that abjured risks and renounced upsetting the existing balance of
> forces, the Soviet Union was preparing to take incalculable risks to upset the
> precarious balance in one of the most sensitive areas in the world.[162]

Along with Vietnam, the Yom Kippur War was used by Jewish neoconservatives to launch a direct and sustained critique of Kissinger's détente policies. The foundation of a new consensus, whereby the majority of Americans could agree on the conduct of American foreign affairs, required identifying and dismantling the weak parts of existing US policies. Following the Yom Kippur War, neoconservatives spent 1974-1976 attacking détente on multiple fronts.

In his own account, Kissinger explains that Vietnam and other global trends had removed the viability of a bipolar containment strategy. Détente's stated objective was to cool relations between the two superpowers and move toward a multi-polar system of political and economic relations while maintaining a bipolar military order. The blocs of multi-polar power included Japan, Western Europe, the Soviet Union, the United States, and China. Kissinger theorized that global power would diffuse between them into regional regencies and that world peace would be in each power's interests.[163]

Examined in an international context, Kissinger's push for détente was part of a larger global phenomenon in the late 1960s. Historian Jeremi Suri argues that détente acted as a conservative response to domestic upheaval that the United States, China, the

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[162] Draper, "From 1967 to 1973," 42.

[163] For a summary of Kissinger's philosophy upon entering office see Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, (New York: Simon &Schuster, 1979): 50-74.

USSR, and other countries experienced during the late 1960s, particularly in 1968. In order to stabilize domestic situations world leaders undertook the process of confirming and legitimizing each other's international standing. Among other examples of this new attitude, the SALT 1 treaty, the opening of China, and to some extent the Yom Kippur War were supposed to stabilize, not disrupt, great power interests.[164]

For the United States détente sought to stabilize domestic pressures by shifting the objective of US policy from containing communism until its dissolution to coexisting with the Soviet Union, China, and other "totalitarian" states. Kissinger argued that communists were beholden to their own national interests just like any other country; that democracy and communism could coexist in relative peace as long as both sides pursued well defined common interests. The ability to interact with the Soviet Union on the basis of national interest assumed that the Soviet Union had no innate ideological propulsion to its geopolitical aims. Neoconservatives believed the opposite – that the Soviet Union was driven by ideology and dreams of expansion – and rejected Kissinger's reasoning.[165] Many, including *Commentary's* most adamant détente dissenters, recognized Kissinger's skill as a diplomat but rejected his vision for post-Vietnam American foreign policy.

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As the previous sections show, neoconservatives found themselves at odds with the Nixon Administration's détente policies in the Middle East and Vietnam.

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[164] See Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[165] See Norman Podhoretz, "Kissinger Reconsidered" in *The Norman Podhoretz Reader: A Selection of His Writings from the 1950s Through the 1990s* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 205.

Furthermore, deep ideological divisions separated the two sides and their approaches to foreign policy. The project of a new consensus was built on ideological militarism, a project whose two concepts Kissinger publicly rejected and détente attempted to avoid. The sustained neoconservative attack on détente was thus a product of the inherent contradictions between the two different visions for post-Vietnam America. However, to elucidate why neoconservatives launched a broad attack against détente, more explanation is required. Earl Raab gives a valuable insight in his study of poll numbers in explaining why neoconservatives chose to go after détente in a general way instead of confining their criticisms to Israel's security.

Raab's study of American public opinion in early 1974 concerning Israel sought to answer two questions: How much did Americans support Israel and why did Americans feel the way they did? The first answer required quantitative figures, which Raab supplied in full. He concluded that it seemed Americans were in a "somewhat ambivalent state" of opinion, by no means passionate about the country's survival.[166] And why was that the case? To answer his second question Raab supplied a theory on how the public formulated their opinions on foreign policy. He posited that "[The public does] not feel the competence which their daily experience gives them to judge many domestic issues, and would prefer, if possible, to leave foreign policy to more skilled hands."[167] This inevitably gave the leaders in power an upper hand in shaping public policy. Raab turned to a sociological law suggested by sociologist Hadley Cantril: "'when an opinion

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[166] Raab, "Is Israel Losing Popular Support?," 28.

[167] Ibid.

is not solidly structured, an accomplished fact tends to shift opinion in the direction of that accomplished fact.'"[168] Kissinger's actions, in other words, could shape the way most Americans viewed Israel, a "not solidly structured" issue. He concluded that "the elite actions of political leadership, of government, could be decisive in either strengthening or weakening general public support for Israel."[169]

In this context, the neoconservative attack against détente starting in 1974 was as much about changing public opinion as toppling détente. The attack resulted in moving *Commentary's* discussion away from Israel-centric concerns and toward a more global view with Israel as the center. Podhoretz shifted *Commentary's* focus and published new articles by Draper, Walter Laqueur, and Robert Tucker that pointed toward a broad and general critique of détente's strategies and consequences.

Draper took the lead on the attack. One of Draper's most vocal concerns about détente was the conviction that the policy rested on a set of erroneous assumptions. If détente was followed to its logical conclusion, it would place America in "worse trouble than ever" unless "détente pays off in continuous, long lasting Soviet good will and good behavior," which was unlikely.[170] As an example, a central assumption of détente was that its primary objective was to avoid a nuclear war. Draper found this point superfluous, something cold war strategies of containment were already built to do and thus not a

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[168] Ibid.

[169] Ibid., 28-29.

[170] Theodore Draper, "Détente," (June 1974): 45. Another formulation of this idea was presented in December 1973: "Unfortunately, détente with illusions is worse than no détente at all; one-sided detente is worse than no détente at all" (Draper, "From 1967 to 1973," 42)

justification for continuing détente policies. It was "time to stop using 'cold war' as a

scare term and 'détente' as a sedative term; in their relationship to nuclear war, they are

not all that different." Indeed, Kissinger, in defending détente's failure to avoid the Yom

Kippur War defined détente as a strategy where "confrontations are kept within bounds

that do not threaten civilized life" to which Draper responded: "It is small comfort to

learn that all other confrontations, short of threatening civilized life, are still compatible

with détente."[171] So why did Kissinger claim that avoiding nuclear war was not only

détente's primary objective, but also its primary success? For Draper the answer was

simple: the Yom Kippur War had shattered the détente paradigm and thus Kissinger was

speaking in falsities:

> The new party line fell back on the minimal version of détente… Whereas
> the original basic principles of détente were specific and concrete,
> Secretary Kissinger now described détente as "inherently ambiguous" and
> "ambivalent." The best and almost the only thing he could say in favor of
> détente was that it limited "the risks of nuclear conflict.[172]

The final conclusion was that both cold war and détente were "accordion-like terms; they

can be pushed and pulled in and out so that they may mean almost anything."[173] The

pursuit of détente, whatever it meant, was dangerous not only because of the policies it

promoted, but because it was a highly ambiguous framework that could not be adequately

critiqued or questioned due to its evasiveness. Furthermore, whatever it did do, "A policy

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[171] Draper, "Détente," 39.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Ibid.

which faces the possible [a nuclear war], but not the probable leaves something to be desired."[174]

Other *Commentary* articles attacked specific aspects of détente. Triangle diplomacy with China after the momentous diplomatic "opening" in 1972 received multiple direct criticisms. The generally applauded moves by the administration were criticized with a variety of unique arguments. For example, Draper deemed the premise of Kissinger's strategy – making China a third "pole" to balance out the Soviet-American relationship – as faulty. Draper argued that rather than subjecting the Soviets to an either/or scenario forcing them to protect their Western front with Europe or their Eastern front with China, Kissinger's new diplomacy had only driven the Soviets to expand their military to meet demands on both fronts.[175]

Another attack on Nixon and Kissinger's most momentous foreign policy event had to do with the administration's treatment of Taiwan. Taiwan's replacement by Communist China on the UN Security Council fed neoconservative fears of that body's partiality and also bred fears about the US's support for other allies including Israel. The "Taiwanization" of Israel was the subject Gil Carl AlRoy's February 1974 piece on the Middle East peace process:

> Like Communist China, the Arab nations appear to themselves as a humiliated and long-tormented giant, now fast regaining their might on a global scale; like Taiwan, Israel in their view is a dwarf-like, artificial prop of American imperialism, the instrument through which the United States had been striving to intimidate and exploit the mass of oppressed

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[174] Ibid., 40.

[175] Ibid., 28. There is a small sense of irony in Draper's statement in that this very line of thinking was subsequently endorsed by the majority of neoconservatives in the 1980s.

humanity. And if America could be forced to abandon Taiwan, surely
Israel must follow sooner or later. Thus the notion of the "Taiwanization"
of Israel entered the vocabulary of political discourse in the Arab world.[176]

Such speculation made any rapprochement with China suspect and any positive prospects

of triangle diplomacy in relation to Israel unlikely. Despite the administration's deep ties

to the anti-Communist regime in Taiwan, the fact that they recognized the Chinese

Communist Party as the sole legitimate government on that mainland was indicative of

another "softening" of American resolve to its closest allies. It was thus the case that

America was betraying old allies and erroneously placing their faith in new ones.

Walter Laqueur leveled criticisms at Kissinger's multi-polar objectives and his

emphasis on American sacrifices for coordinated gains between the two superpowers:

"no pentagonal world system is in sight; there is no symmetry (for if America is

retrenching, the other side is not)."[177] He also exploited one of the major obstacles to

détente's objectives. Kissinger had to, at the same time, work to limit American military

commitments abroad in order to foster an atmosphere of understanding and also maintain

strike capabilities to ensure American national interests were safe. Laqueur described

Kissinger's predicament "to withdraw American troops from various parts of the globe,

but also to persuade America's allies that the U.S. is as strong as before and that it will

stand by its commitments" as untenable. Détente's rhetoric could not change reality:

> Kissinger cannot hope to accommodate all these demands even to a limited
> extent… He will have to preside over America's decommitment, to take care that
> it is carried out as smoothly and as painlessly as possible. This process can be

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[176] AlRoy, "Do the Arabs want Peace?," 61.

[177] Walter Laqueur, "Kissinger and the Politics of Detente," *Commentary* (December 1973): 52.

described as a long overdue withdrawal from an exposed position, a realistic adjustment to a new world situation. But it will also be interpreted by Russians and Europeans, by Chinese and Japanese, as a retreat from power which makes it imperative for them to reconsider their own positions.[178]

By 1976 *Commentary* had managed to produce articles criticizing détente in Eastern and Western Europe, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.[179] Concern about the Soviet Union's "good will" to maintain binding agreements like SALT 1 was also displayed in force.[180] The Jewish neoconservatives had managed to take their concerns about Israel's security that were rooted in détente's weaknesses and apply them to foreign policy considerations around the globe.

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[178] Ibid.

[179] See Peter Berger, "The Greening of American Foreign Policy," *Commentary* (March 1976); Theodore Draper, "Appeasement & Detente," *Commentary* (February 1976); Walter Laqueur, "The West in Retreat," *Commentary* (August 1975); Roundtable Discussion, "America Now: A Failure of Nerve?," *Commentary* (July 1975). On the US relationship with Southeast Asia see Robert Elegant, "China, the U.S. & Soviet Expansionism," *Commentary* (February 1976); Edward Luttwak, "Seeing China Plain," *Commentary* (December 1976); Edward Seidensticker, "Japan After Vietnam," *Commentary* (September 1975). On the US relationship with Europe see Hadley Arkes, "Democracy and European Communism," *Commentary* (May 1976); Walter Laqueur, "The Trouble With France," *Commentary* (May 1974); Walter Laqueur, "Eurocommunism" and Its Friends," *Commentary* (August 1976). On the US relationship with the Third World see P.T. Bauer, "Western Guilt & Third World Poverty," *Commentary* (January 1976). Finally, on the US relationship the Middle East see Bernard Lewis, "The Palestinians and the PLO," *Commentary* 59 (January 1975); Bernard Lewis, "The Return of Islam," *Commentary* 60 (January 1976); Robert Tucker, "Oil: The Issue of American Intervention," *Commentary* 59 (January 1975); Robert Tucker, "Further Reflections on Oil and Force," *Commentary* (March 1975). Taken in its entirety, *Commentary's* portrayal of détente grew increasingly negative. The geographic focus of the articles mentioned above usually managed to conclude that American "appeasement" or "lack of will" led to global conditions deteriorating.

[180] This aspect is often explored in scholarship on neoconservatism. In particular Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson's criticisms of SALT I and II severely hurt negotiations. See Colodny and Shachtman, *The Forty Years War,* 216-224; Kissinger, *Years of Renewal,* 121-135.

The call for ideological clarity and a new American militarism was universal and applicable to American interests in every corner of the globe. The inward turn Jewish neoconservatives took in the 1960s was now inverted. In view of the inadequacy of détente, Israel's security was discussed in *Commentary* in a new, outward, and more powerful way than before. The ethnocentric links between neoconservatives and Israel in the 1960s – domestic "Third Worldism" and the intensely communal ties brought about by the Six-Day War – were now deliberately couched in universalistic language consistent with the global ideological threat neoconservatives had worked to identify. Non-Jewish Americans who viewed the direction of détente with concern could now speak the same ideological language as neoconservatives, both in relation to Israel's security and American foreign policy.

The project for a new consensus placed Israel at the center of the now-established worldwide ideological struggle. Glazer put the task to *Commentary* readers explicitly:

> The main job [of American Jews] is to argue for and defend the principles which are the only lasting basis for United States support of Israel: that the United States is committed to the independence of free nations, and of democratic nations most especially.[181]

Earl Raab similarly identified ideological principles as the best hope for spreading support for Israel among the American public: "support for Israel has nothing to do with Israel as a Jewish state; it is, rather, the belief that Israel is a small democratic nation which is trying to preserve its independence."[182]

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[181] Nathan Glazer, "The Exposed American Jew," (June 1975): 30.

[182] Raab, "Is Israel Losing Popular Support?," **27.**

Neoconservatives employed two significant shifts in their project of a new consensus after October 1973. First was the deployment of universalistic rhetoric that placed Israel simultaneously at the center and on the front lines of the ideological war between "free" and "totalitarian" countries. The more that discussions about Israel relied on organizing its plight in ideological terms, the more Israel became integral to America's new ideological mission.

This tactic was utilized most expertly by Podhoretz, whose article in July 1976, "The Abandonment of Israel," explored the tensions between détente's realist approach and the neoconservative's ideological context. According to Podhoretz détente's supposed abandonment of Israel was due to the mistaken belief that material and political interests superseded the value of Israel as an ideological outpost. He identified the free flow of Middle East oil and détente's obsession with avoiding Soviet confrontations as the impetuses for the "Vietnamization of Israel."[183] Kissinger and the White House appeared to want to liquidate their support for Israel in the same "way in which we got out [of Vietnam]."[184] These material and political interests were superseding Israel's ideological value as a democracy in a region of authoritarian regimes. Israel was "the only democratic society in the Middle East, the only one in which the press is free and speech is free, and the only one in which minorities of every kind, ethnic, religious, and

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[183] Podhoretz, "The Abandonment of Israel," 25. Notice the multiple uses of state "-izations" by *Commentary*: "Taiwanization," "Vietnamization," and Podhoretz often referred to accommodation with the Soviet Union as "Finlandization."

[184] Ibid.

political, enjoy civil and political liberties."[185] Podhoretz sought to place Israel's value in its political ideology.

Moreover, Kissinger and his realist supporters were aloof from the global ideological debate that was taking place around them. According to Podhoretz, while Soviet and Third World forces framed Israel's existence in ideological terms, they did so with a "stunning inversion of the truth."[186] Material and political arguments were circulated in the totalitarian and authoritarian communities, but ideological ones presented Israel with more difficult challenges. Podhoretz grew enraged that Israel was "condemned for violations of human rights by tyrannical and barbarous regimes in which there is no freedom of speech of the press, in which no political opposition is permitted, and in which minorities are systematically persecuted."[187] The inversion of values and ideological battle represented the true threat to American and Israeli security. Podhoretz believed that nuclear war, the very thing détente sought to avoid, was looming in the Middle East. It was not a present danger because of material or political interest, however. "It lies," he said, instead

> in the ideas which have been placing the Israelis under such intolerable moral pressures in the past three years, blaming them and hectoring them, putting them in the dock and on the defensive, magnifying their every fault and discounting their every virtue; and it lies in the policies which are calculated to strengthen the hands of their enemies while isolating and weakening and finally forcing the Israelis into a desperate corner where only the memory of Samson will serve.

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[185] Ibid., 27.

[186] Ibid.

[187] Ibid.

The new consensus also sought to cure the American public of the Vietnam Syndrome. Israel's centrality to the ideological struggle required the will by Americans to wage war, not just diplomacy, to aid Israel. Podhoretz prodded the establishment in just such a direction:

> If a nuclear war should ever erupt in the Middle East, then be it on the heads of all those in the United States and elsewhere—inside government and out, in the foundations and in the universities, in the councils and in the press—who under cover of self-deceptions and euphemisms and outright lies are "negotiating over the survival of Israel" instead of making the survival of that brave and besieged and beleaguered country, the only democracy in the Middle East and one of the few left anywhere on the face of the earth, the primary aim of their policies and the primary wish of their hearts.[188]

The Defense budget was a crucial aspect of America's ability to make the survival of Israel a reality. From 1970 to 1975 the US defense budget dropped by an average of 4.5% a year.[189] This symptom of the Vietnam Syndrome worried neoconservatives, who shared Edward Luttwak's view that "If these trends continue much further, the ability of the United States to deter Russian activism overseas, to preserve the global political balance, and thus incidentally give Israel a fighting chance will undoubtedly come into question."[190] Israel required, among other things, the moral and ideological clarity of the United States as it assumed leadership against misinformation and moral condemnations against the West. More practically, the Jewish state needed "weapons, ammunition, and

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[188] Ibid., 31

[189] Edward Luttwak, "The Defense Budget and Israel," *Commentary* (February 1975): 27.

[190] Ibid., 28.

high technology" to fend off the physical threats Arabs posed.[191] Ultimately America

needed to reclaim its past initiative and take the ideological reins as the world's

"evangelist of freedom and democracy."[192] Using Israel as the anchor to this project

guaranteed its centrality and symbolism as an ideological outpost.

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While the neoconservatives enthusiastically built their project for a new

consensus, it was by no means guaranteed to take hold in mainstream political discourse.

This chapter has chronicled the attempt by Jewish neoconservatives to rebuild the Golden

Age under new axioms by utilizing arguments, interpretations, and language. By early

1975 no Jewish neoconservative held a substantial political appointment in the Ford

administration and future prospects looked unpromising. Furthermore, the nuanced

change in rhetoric did not appear to have a sizeable impact on American willingness to

deploy military force in the service of its allies. There were isolated examples of US

military intervention in the 1970s, like the Mayaguez Incident in July 1975, but setting

these aside, the neoconservative interpretation of Vietnam was not accepted by a majority

of Americans, nor was the American public enthusiastic about increased support for

Israel.[193]

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[191] Ibid., 37.

[192] Podhoretz, "Making the World Safe for Communism," 40.

[193] On the Mayaguez Incident see Melanson, *Reconstructing Consensus,* 77-78. Melanson argues that the minor incident in July 1975, whereby US forces bombed Cambodia in retribution for an incident where Cambodian pirates kidnapped US navy men, was consciously thought of by President Ford and Kissinger as a move toward bucking the Vietnam Syndrome. The event

However, Israel's new ideological context had ample opportunity to find a wider audience. It turned out that Israel's new found symbolism was fittingly most effective in the services of a non-Jewish neoconservative, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Moynihan's close friendship with Podhoretz and special opportunities as US Ambassador to the UN represent the final stage of the neoconservative journey from obscurity to significance; the assimilation of the Jewish neoconservative subculture into the dominant public culture of America. Moynihan's tenure at the UN in 1975-1976 fully fleshed out Israel's new universalistic appeal.

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played a minor role in American thinking about the Vietnam Syndrome. Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign explicitly endorsed the idea that the Vietnam Syndrome was still prevalent during the Carter administration.

CHAPTER III: Claiming Zionism, 1975-1976

I. Introduction

At the same time that *Commentary* was on offense against Kissinger's national détente

agenda an even more expansive battle was on the horizon. Daunting challenges against

the communist powers and the Third World could only be met, it was argued, with

confrontation and resoluteness; their interests were incompatible with the US's. Such was

the thinking on 10 November 1975, when the United Nations General Assembly passed

Resolution 3379 by a vote of 72 to 35. The resolution had only one operative sentence,

that the Assembly "Determines that Zionism is a form of racism and racial

discrimination." [194] As devastating a sentence as that was to Israel, a state founded on the

ideology of Zionism, it was not the worst of all possible outcomes in the fall of 1975. An

original measure in the General Assembly sought to expel Israel from the United Nations

altogether. Despite that measure's failure the supporters of 3379, most of whom were

communist or Third World nations who were members of the Non-aligned Movement,

had successfully agreed and acted on an issue that was on the surface provincial and

unrelated to disparate areas of the postcolonial world in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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[194] Resolution 3379 may be found in its entirety UN General Assembly, XXX Session, "Resolution 3379 [Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination]," in *Resolutions of the General Assembly, XXX Session*, 10 November 1975, 83-84.

This success, while a blow to Israel, opened the way for U.S. Ambassador Daniel Patrick Moynihan to publicly articulate the new consensus neoconservatives were eager to sell to the American public.

Moynihan had his own path to Resolution 3379. Leading the opposition against the resolution Moynihan managed to loudly voice his disagreements, futile as they were to the final outcome of the vote. Moynihan's intellectual evolution in the 1960s and 1970s, like the Jewish neoconservatives, points to a time of crisis in the 1960s and a search for ideological consensus in the 1970s. The fact that Moynihan was not Jewish (though he lived in the same cosmopolitan New York environment) allowed him to act as bridge between the hitherto explored Jewish neoconservatives and the mainstream political discourses of the mid-1970s that did not tailor to a specific ethnic group. Moynihan's neoconservatism was a product built on the desire for ideological clarity in the wake of the 1960s. Moynihan adopted the Jewish neoconservative critique of the international scene and détente during the early 1970s as a vessel to explicate what he believed to be a looming domestic crisis of consensus. In the process of defending Israel, Moynihan brought the ideological worldview that neoconservatives believed Kissinger and détente had overlooked, into mainstream discourse.

The neoconservatives' rise to influence in the mid-1970s, of which Moynihan was such an integral part, also existed in a broader global context. The neoconservatives' encounters with Black Nationalists and Kissinger's détente policies in the 1960s and 1970s were conflicts between sub national and national actors, though the identities of Black Nationalists and neoconservatives certainly had transnational elements. A crucial component of the neoconservative fixation with Israel also played out on the international

scene, between international actors. Resolution 3379 is an example of how the neoconservative new consensus was articulated to the American public as Moynihan argued on Israel's behalf in the international forum of the UN. In other words, Moynihan embodied the development of Israel as a symbol and a central axiom to the new consensus from an international context. Particularly, this international approach shows the way in which Moynihan's reactions to domestic upheaval in the 1960s also developed in a global context. In broader terms, Moynihan's conflict with the resolution explored the ways in which domestic and global dialogues interacted on the international stage.

Moynihan articulated the apex of the new consensus ideology by linking the United States and Israel in ideological terms. This chapter further illustrates how neoconservatives constructed an ideology that transcended the group's ethnocentric concerns of the 1960s. Neoconservatives would not find a better orator than Moynihan, who was a dynamic public speaker and well known public figure. Moynihan's brief though action-packed tenure as US Ambassador to the UN from July 1975 through February 1976 occurred at the same critical time that neoconservatives entered mainstream American politics. Though the opportunity for debate on 3379 was in the international forum of the UN, Moynihan's new consensus message was tailored for and directed at the American public. Like the Jewish neoconservatives, Moynihan did not limit his arguments to the national context, though his objectives were geared to reestablishing American power in a post-Vietnam world.

The battle over Zionism and Israel's symbolism split into two sides of a single, internationally contested dialogue. Supporters and opponents of the resolution both linked Israel to bigger ideological groups as their primary strategy in the debate over

3379. Third World supporters of the resolution argued "the case of Palestine (Israel)" was an instance of "Zionist settler colonialism" pursuing a "singular imperialist strategy."[195] This method of vilification incorporated Israel's Zionist methods into an imperialist network of states that included Portugal, South Africa, and Rhodesia. Moynihan, in response, forwarded the idea of an ideological network of "free democracies" which, in the context of 3379, held Israel and the United States as its most notable members.

What immediately becomes clear is that the idea of Israel was definitively non-Jewish in Moynihan's mind. He readily adopted the new consensus approach to Israel, making that state a central player in the global ideological struggle. The primary strength of Moynihan's approach was that his discussion of Israel also worked to forward a particular national agenda in the US. Moynihan endorsed the new consensus program and wanted to forward that project in order to support Israel. The object of 3379 – Zionism – was extrapolated and actually a referendum on democracy in Moynihan's mind:

> It was not Zionism that was condemned at the United Nations on Friday, it was Israel; and not the State of Israel nearly so much as the significance of Israel as one of the very few places… where Western democratic principles survive, and of all such places, currently the most exposed.[196]

The resolution had, in other words, nothing and everything to do with the subject it explicitly condemned. Moynihan's defense of Zionism ultimately changed into an expansive exposition of the neoconservatives' new consensus. Whatever historical or denotative definitions Zionism held in the 1970s were disregarded and supplanted on the

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[195] Organization of African Unity, XII Session, "AHG/Resolution 77 [Resolution on the Question of Palestine]," in *Resolutions Adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government*, 1 August 1975, 12-15.

[196] Daniel P Moynihan, *A Dangerous Place*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), 188.

international stage as these two sides each claimed the virtues and vices of Zionism as their own.

II. Internationalizing the New York Intellectual

Moynihan's defense of Zionism can only be understood in relation to his earlier attraction to ideas that were similar to those of the Jewish neoconservatives. Moynihan's public service was distinguished by the time he accepted his post at the UN in April 1975: he served in some capacity under four successive presidents dating back to the Kennedy administration. He first gained notoriety for the March 1965 *Moynihan Report*, which argued that black Americans had developed a dependency on welfare programs – a condition molded from the minority's history as slaves. The report was highly divisive and many critics labeled it as racist or a case of blaming the victim. Lost in the controversy, and in subsequent historical accounts, was Moynihan's larger preoccupation with ethnicity in society. The report cited an impending "new crisis" in the nation's race relations, with the unchanged status of the "negro family" likely to cause "massive deterioration of the fabric of society and its institutions."[197] Moynihan's recommendations failed to convince President Johnson, but the preoccupation with ethnicity and its disruptive effects on American society continued to shape Moynihan's thought. From the report's release to the mid 1970s Moynihan wrote or edited four books

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[197] Daniel P Moynihan, "The Negro Family: A Case for National Action," *US Department of Labor website*, March 1965, http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm, Introduction.

on the subject of ethnicity and continued to forecast that a new crisis was at hand.[198] In

tandem with Nathan Glazer, Moynihan linked his fixation on a US ethnic crisis to

broader concerns:

> It seems clear that ethnic identity has become more salient, ethnic self-assertion
> stronger, ethnic conflict more marked everywhere in the last twenty years… the
> reasons include the rise of the welfare state, the clash between egalitarianism and
> the differential achievement of norms, the growing heterogeneity of states, and
> the international system of communication…there is a phenomenon here that is…
> no mere survival but intimately and organically bound up with major trends of
> modern societies.[199]

His views were tinged with a scientific skepticism unbecoming of a positivist

New England liberal and a Harvard sociologist. Like the *Moynihan Report* and his

subsequent battles in the UN, Moynihan promoted a decidedly defensive posture when

dealing with ethnic and demographic crises. This stance is attributable to the broader

implications of the neoconservative turn inward during the 1960s and the tepid reaction

many neoconservatives had to the Great Society initiatives of the Johnson administration.

One of Moynihan's biographers explains:

> They [Moynihan, Glazer, and other neoconservatives] had all watched social
> science being used and, as most of them thought, misused, as a guide to public
> policy and government action. They shared a skepticism about the belief, which
> was the cornerstone of interventionist liberal thinking, that once social scientists

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[198]Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *On Understanding Poverty: Perspectives from the Social Sciences* (New York: Basic Books, 1969); Moynihan and Nathan Glazer, *Beyond the Melting Pot; the Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1970); Moynihan, *Business and Society in Change* (New York: American Telephone and Telegraph Co, 1975); Moynihan, Glazer, et al., *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1975).

[199] Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan, "Why Ethnicity?" *Commentary* (October 1974): 39

identified a problem, it was the function of government to devise, fund and staff programs to deal with it, and the problem would duly disappear.[200]

Moynihan's own solutions to race relations veered away from comprehensive government solutions. The *Moynihan Report* argued to wean disadvantaged Blacks *off* such programs. Another instance of his social scientific skepticism was Moynihan's infamous memo to President Nixon in 1970 that suggested "the issue of race could benefit from a period of 'benign neglect,'" that is, the administration's focus on race issues had exacerbated, not helped, the national debate.[201] Moynihan believed there was a limit to the effectiveness of proactive governmental and social scientific interventions on the issues of ethnicity and race. These two forces were ultimately far more powerful than any institution and far more expansive than any group of scientists could quantify.

These notions led Moynihan to contemplate broader issues in American politics, most notably the effect ethnicity had on America's relationship to the world. Much like the way Podhoretz and *Commentary* (and Black Nationalists) had linked 1960s upheaval to international situations, Moynihan saw domestic interethnic friction affecting America's foreign relations, and vice versa. His thoughts were laid out in an important June 1974 *Commentary* article, "Was Woodrow Wilson Right?" On the surface it appeared Moynihan was calling for a naïvely classical Wilsonian worldview where America's role was to make the world "safe for democracy." That old notion relied on a simple framework that smoothed over global and ethnic diversity and elevated American

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[200] Godfrey Hodgson, *The Gentleman from New York: Daniel Patrick Moynihan: A Biography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 124.

[201] "Text of the Moynihan Memorandum on the Status of Negroes," *New York Times*, 1 March 1970, 69. This memo is also known as the "Benign Neglect" memo.

ideals. Contrary to the rise of the New Left and the emphasis on excluded groups in the social sciences, Wilson and his supporters examined the inclusion of minorities into mainstream America not in light of their prior exclusion, but in celebration of the "expansion of liberty" that progressed forward against totalitarianism and political oppression.

Moynihan's article reinterpreted Wilson's original ideology in terms "quite external to the eschatology of Wilsonianism."[202] The reality of a truly "multi-ethnic population" provided Moynihan with a premise to rethink Wilson's vision. Instead of a program focused on spreading democracy throughout the world, Moynihan used Wilson to argue for a pragmatic national ideology for a post-Vietnam and postmodern public. The United States had "quietly and rapidly" become "a nation of first and second generation immigrants…a nation drawn from the entire world."[203] Self-determination, propounded by Wilson and his followers after World War I, had "set off" domestic ethnic groups (Black Americans, Jewish Americans, Irish Americans, and Polish Americans) to a point that made the US public "inextricably involved in the fate of other peoples the world over."[204] He concluded, "There will be no struggle for personal liberties (or national independence or national survival) anywhere in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, in Latin America which will not affect American politics."[205]

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[202] Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "Was Woodrow Wilson Right?" *Commentary* (June 1974): 30.

[203] Ibid.

[204] Ibid.

[205] Ibid.

Moynihan's own assessment of the American public was a bleak indictment of the effect that 1960s domestic upheaval and Vietnam had had on the foreign policy establishment. Wilson's original effort following World War I assumed a supportive and homogenous American public. Moynihan's realization that no such public existed led him to rethink the goals of American foreign policy, which he posited were inseparable from America's domestic situation. The pragmatic, decidedly defensive solution for a multiethnic America was to avoid a foreign policy based on ethnic or geo-historical identities, and move toward a different type of national consensus that could draw in the disparate interests in American society toward a common set of objectives:

> There is only one course likely to make the internal strains of consequent conflicts endurable, and that is for the United States deliberately and consistently to bring its influence to bear on the behalf of those regimes which promise the largest degree of personal and national liberty.[206]

Moynihan, in other words, believed a sufficiently universalistic ideology could trump ethnicity and create a nationwide consensus that smoothed over frictions of identity politics. He believed that it must, or ethnocentrism would dominate a stretched and thinned American military and public patience. The new ideology was not, however, offered as a fix all. As a reaction to the ethnic divisions around him, Moynihan limited his new objectives. A new consensus had to include defensive measures to protect democracies and contain communism wherever possible. If implemented properly these

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[206] Ibid.

measures would hopefully limit the influence of dangerously radical factions motivated

by ethnic or divisive ideological doctrines in the political process. [207]

With his concerns and position clear, Moynihan's specific prescriptions were

hopelessly vague. A typical rally cry in his June 1974 article declared, "we stand for

liberty, and the expansion of liberty."[208] Moynihan argued that the United States should

come to the aid of its allies, but did that include economic aid? Military aid? Sending

troops? How was the level of a society's liberty to be judged? The questions were

limitless, and Moynihan provided no immediate or concrete answers. Critics justifiably

attacked the article in such terms, but they missed a fundamental preoccupation with the

role of ideology and consensus in Moynihan's argument. Moynihan was less concerned

with the specifics of ideology than with the macro prospects and consequences a

consensus ideology could have.

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If, according to Moynihan, his ideology could cure America from the divisions of

multi-ethnicity and inculcate consensus in a multi-ethnic America, he saw a similar

ideological, situation on the international scale. Moynihan saw on the world stage similar

circumstances to those inside the US: antagonistic groups that, if unified by a consensus-

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[207] This reaction to the domestic and international upheaval in the 1960s might be seen in direct contrast to National Security Advisor/ Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Kissinger advocated and ultimately implemented a policy of détente that was designed to operate without a consensus of public support, a luxury Kissinger thought an impossibility in the early 1970s. Moynihan, with the benefit of time in 1974, as well as the comfortable position of *not* having to construct a viable foreign policy, advocated a different direction. This divide in approach may help to explain the sharp contrast between détente's "realism" and the neoconservative's "idealism" in the 1970s.

[208] Moynihan, "Was Woodrow Wilson Right?," 31.

building ideology, could be a powerful force. The evolution of Moynihan's thought by 1975 indicated a complication of the bipolar ideological war between democracy and totalitarianism, the "worldwide struggle between free societies and those not free."[209] Instead, Moynihan added a third force that had increasingly utilized a unified ideology, though to different ends. The confluence of the Non-aligned Movement had not, according to Moynihan, been an accident. "Upon their becoming independent," he wrote, "we saw them as candidates for the American tradition or the Russian, not perceiving that they had already had [an ideology] of their own."[210] The ideological coherence of the group was remarkably flexible and influential on economic and humanitarian issues in international politics. Moynihan would explicate the Third World's ideology in his most popular article of the 1970s, "The United States in Opposition," which posited that a "distinct history and logic" in the Third World was derived from common colonial experiences of exploitation.[211]

Unfortunately, Moynihan's historical account of this ideology in the Third World was specious at best.[212] Peter Steinfels rebutted in 1979 that Moynihan had created the

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[209] Ibid., 29.

[210] Hodgson, *The Gentleman from New York*, 218.

[211] Daniel Moynihan, "The U.S. in Opposition" *Commentary* (March 1975): 43.

[212] Historian Peter Willets lends an inkling of credence to Moynihan's hypothesis when he states "[non-alignment] is different from other ideologies in that an ideology is usually concerned with the role of individuals in society, whereas non-alignment is concerned with the role of states in the international system" (Peter Willetts, *The Non-aligned Movement: The Origins of a Third World Alliance* (London: F. Pinter, 1978), 29). For a systematic dismissal of Moynihan's argument see Peter Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), 150-159.

concept of a unified Third World threat "out of sheer style."[213] Ideological coherence in

the Non-aligned Movement did have some tangible aspects to it, but Moynihan probably

overstated his case. Nevertheless, Moynihan's theory was entertaining and compelling.

He argued that following World War I there was a worldwide "British Revolution" where

colonies of the British Empire adopted Britain's domestic inequalities to their own

colonial context. Specifically, upper class colonial subjects left their homelands to study

in European schools (namely London), where they were educated in the virtues of social

democracy. These educated subjects saw the social democratic critique on Britain's own

domestic rich/poor divide as a metaphor for colonizer/colonized divide. The metaphor

migrated back to the fringes of empire and was adopted by various nationalists in India,

Egypt, and Southeast Asia, among other places, in the form of a new, twisted, and

authoritarian ideology rooted in the colonial experience. Unfortunately, the theory had

little evidentiary backing. The fact that the expansive Non-aligned Movement consisted

of not only ex-British colonies, but also ex-French, Portuguese, and Spanish colonies

jumbled Moynihan's argument. Diversity in Third World theories of government and

implementation were also not addressed. Finally, Moynihan's Euro-centric focus was at

odds with the intellectual trends of the 1970s, where academics were hard at work finding

indigenous roots for nationalist ideologies.[214] Regardless, the theory gives insight to

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[213] Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 136.

[214] It is also ironic that Moynihan's awareness of an assertive Third World may have been born indirectly through Nixon and Kissinger's successful *détente* policy in 1970-72, which allowed more vocal opposition to the two-bloc system dominant since 1945. Regardless of the historical ironies,

Moynihan's worldview, which emphasized the centrality of ideology to historical and contemporary problems.

Moynihan's article argued that this third force ideology, out of sheer numbers the "new majority" in international politics, was a threat to Western democracy. He advocated direct rhetorical confrontation with the Third World bloc in international bodies like the UN. The article gave Moynihan a new level of popularity. Released in March 1975, Moynihan's "tough talk" approach to international diplomacy attracted the attention of Secretary of State Kissinger, who called Moynihan after reading the article, explaining in a most candid tone, "I'll pay you the highest compliment: I wish I'd written it myself."[215] In the context of Saigon's fall that same month, Kissinger no doubt sought to throw new bodies into the fray and shore up conservative support at home. By June 1975 Moynihan was in confirmation hearings for U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.

The hearings gave Moynihan another venue to further clarify his views on ideology. The tri-polar world order was now more clearly conceptualized. At its most basic level: "The world is divided between the totalitarian powers…, the West, and this large new majority of nations." Couched in Cold War rhetoric Moynihan explained, "Our job is to see that the social democracies of Asia and Africa and Latin America succeed. The totalitarian job is to see that they fail."[216] The battleground, then, was set. Evident in

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[215] Hodgson, *The Gentleman from New York,* 221.

[216] United States, *The United States and the United Nations: Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Ninety-Fourth Congress, First Session* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1975), 366-367.

both totalitarian and Non-aligned societies was "a systematic effort to declare that ours [America] is the worst society the world has known. It is drummed in and beaten into the minds of people all over the world by persons who know what they are doing." He concluded, "I sometimes think we have been more innocent about ideology than we are taught to be."[217] Non-aligned countries were not monolithic authoritarian entities, but Moynihan believed the pervading forces in the Third World were anti-democratic.

Moynihan took his post at the United Nations with a mandate to change the tone of American rhetoric. Kissinger's realist style would ultimately come into conflict with Moynihan's ideological confrontations, but it was Moynihan, not Kissinger, who received most of the media and political spotlight in late 1975. The shortness of his tenure spoke to the volatility of his demeanor, but Moynihan's vision for a consensus ideology and his antipathy for the Third World indicated a bubbling up of neoconservatism into mainstream American politics. Moynihan's time at the UN emphasizes the culmination of the neoconservatives' ethnocentric and universalistic strains into an ideology that accommodated Jews and non-Jews alike. In practical terms Moynihan managed to both defend Zionism, a predominately Jewish issue, and also promote Israel on universalistic grounds as a democracy and international ally.

III. The Unholy Alliance

When Peter Steinfels, one of the neoconservatives' most articulate critics in the 1970s, tabulated the numerous inconsistencies in Moynihan's "The United States in

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[217] Ibid.

Opposition," he concluded that "Moynihan was saying what he was saying, or saying nothing at all," clearly indicating the latter.[218] To the extent that Moynihan's "British Revolution" had any factual basis, Steinfels' criticism rings true. However, on Moynihan's assertion that the Third World embraced unified positions on key international issues; that was indeed a historical reality in 1975. The many Non-aligned Movement declarations, as well as those in other Third World organizations, publicly pronounced some generally agreed upon objectives and assumptions that, assumedly, the signers agreed to.[219] Prior to the 1970s, agreement in the Non-aligned Movement was limited to little more than very general declarations that denounced colonialism and called for economic equality. One issue, however, gained prominence throughout the 1960s: the wholesale condemnation of Israeli actions in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Even more specific than this regional issue, Non-aligned countries particularly attacked the role that Zionism played in Israel's territorial and humanitarian intransigence. Opposition to Israel's policy of expanding settlements into occupied territories and the Palestinian refugee crisis fueled widespread denunciation of what appeared to be the driving force behind Israel's policies: its founding ideology of Zionism.

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[218] Steinfels, *The Neoconservatives*, 136.

[219] For a general history of Third World organizations during the Cold War see Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A Biography of the Short-Lived Third World* (New Delhi: Left Word, 2007) and Willets, *The Non-aligned Movement*. For a history of the Group of 77, an economic Third World organization matching closely in membership to the Non-aligned Movement, see Karl P Sauvant, *The Group of 77: Evolution, Structure, Organization* (New York: Oceana Publications, 1981). For US-Soviet involvement in the Third World see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

As an isolated issue, Israel's policies and Zionism's influence on those policies could not attract a broad audience in the Third World. Israel's direct actions were contained to the Middle East region, and even then regional powers like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq were not existentially threatened by the Jewish state. In order for the Non-aligned Movement to find consensus on any issue, they had to universalize particular injustices for a broader context. The process of universalizing the evils of Zionism; of arguing that Zionism was inseparable from *apartheid*, colonialism, neo-colonialism, and imperialism, is the focus here. Similarly, the Third World managed to generally argue that the Palestinian struggle against Israel and Zionism was inseparable from other nationalist movements around the globe. Universalizing anti-Zionist rhetoric first gained international prominence through the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as that body gained political recognition in Third World organizations. The PLO successfully incorporated its particular grievances into organizations like the Non-aligned Movement and the Organization for African Unity (OAU). The rhetoric created a unified sense of purpose, and by the early 1970s anti-Zionism was a definitive consensus item on the Third World's international agenda. The argument upon which universal anti-Zionism rested placed the state of Israel (which was conceptually inseparable from Zionism) in ideological allegiance with other imperial, colonial, and racist powers into a nebulous though menacing *imperialist network*. Due to the malleable definitions of Zionism, colonialism, racism, and imperialism; the network had, at any one time, different members. Nevertheless, by the early 1970s Third World delegates to the Non-aligned

conferences, OAU summits, and UN sessions routinely grouped the countries of Portugal,

South Africa, Rhodesia, and Israel as joint offenders.[220]

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The idea of a global Third World consensus was at the heart of the Non-aligned

Movement's founding principles. The Movement's mission was to "voic[e] the

aspirations of the vast majority of the peoples of the world" at "a moment when world

peace is seriously threatened."[221] Members hoped the Non-aligned bloc would stand in

opposition to the West and Soviet Union to "eliminat[e] historical injustices and

liquidation of national oppression guaranteeing…to every people their independent

development."[222] The first Non-aligned Conference in 1961 highlighted these themes,

often optimistically predicting that the end of colonialism was at hand.[223] While mentions

of Israeli aggression were made in general debate, the Movement's concern over the

Arab-Israeli conflict was largely regionalized in the early 1960s. Struggles in Rhodesia,

Algeria, Angola, and even Korea received more discussion time than Israel. In fact,

Prince Seyful Islam El Hassan, the Yemeni Representative, expressed his feeling in the

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[220] The process of linking Zionism to colonialism, *apartheid*, and other imperialist terms required just as much malleability in the definition of Zionism as it did in the previously mentioned terms. The goal here is not to show how Zionism was redefined in Third World terms, but to show the consequences of such a redefinition. For a relevant example of the former see Meir Litvak and Esther Webman, *From Empathy to Denial: Arab Responses to the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 215-270.

[221] Non-aligned Movement, "Declaration of the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries," in *The Conference of the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade, September 1-6, 1961* (Accra, Ghana: Ghana Ministry of Information, 1961), 253.

[222] Ibid., 255.

[223] Ibid., 253-54.

second conference held in Cairo in 1964, that "the United Nations should bear full

responsibility for the present situation in Palestine."[224] Zionism had scant references in

the first two conferences, while the Arab-Israeli conflict only occupied two short bullet

points in the second conference's declarations. Notably, a declaration dedicated to

condemning *apartheid* made no mention of Israel or Zionism.[225] Anti-colonial struggles

in the "Old Empires" – Britain, France, and Spain – were higher priorities.

Both early conferences had an aura of confidence, but developments in

subsequent years proved their optimism fleeting. After the second conference the

Movement suffered major political setbacks. The list of challenges was daunting. In 1964

the United States and the Soviet Union implemented a ban on voting in the 19th session of

the United Nations.[226] A multitude of coups affected membership around the world,

making a concerted bloc response to new situations impossible. Resolutions in the OAU

and Organization Africaine Commune (OAC) in 1965 were also met with controversy

and division. In March 1965, a Yugoslav-sponsored joint declaration condemning the

Vietnam War, a predictably unifying issue in the Third World, gained support of only 17

nations. Gamal Abdel-Nasser, Egypt's President and host to the second conference, was

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[224] Prince Seyful Islam El Hassan, Personal Representative of the King of Yemen, Al Imam Ahmed, Speech transcript in *The Conference of the Heads of State*, 1961, 240. I do not wish to mischaracterize the level of anti-Israeli sentiment, which was no doubt high in particular delegations. The Moroccan representative, for example, lambasted the ill effects of Israel's "imperialism," and Hassan himself made references to imperialism, though he did not specify if he was referring to Israel, the West, or some other entity.

[225] Lal Bahadur Shastri, "Program for Peace and International Co-Operation," in *The Cairo Conference of Non-Aligned Nations (October 5-10, 1964): Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's Speeches and the Declaration as Adopted by the Conference* (New Delhi: Information Service of India, 1964), 16-20.

[226] These examples are taken from Willets, *The Non-aligned Movement*, 31-36.

severely embarrassed by the Arab powers' pitiable military performance in the Six-Day

War in 1967 and passed away in 1970.[227] By 1969 the Movement had failed to meet for 5

years, and there was little common agenda for its members to promote.

With the PLO's founding in 1964, however, the roots of consensus on at least one

issue, the Arab-Israeli conflict, was apparent. The PLO was consistent and adamant about

its characterization of Zionism and its negative effects. The original PLO charter, dating

to May 1964, characterized Zionism as "a colonialist movement in its inception,

aggressive and expansionist in its goals, racist and segregationist in its configurations and

fascist in its means and aims."[228] Bearing striking resemblance to Resolution 3379 eleven

years later, the Palestinian National Convention asserted strongly and often the linkages

between Zionism and racism. The subsequent affirmation of the PLO's amended charter

by the Arab League in 1968 indicated a level of regional consensus on the evils and

linkages of Zionism and the violent remedies the PLO proposed.[229]

The PLO, however, aimed at something more grandiose than regional solidarity.

The rhetoric and linkages between Zionism and colonialism were lobbied in larger,

global organizations after 1964. While the climb to Observer status in the Movement was

a slow process, in the summer of 1969 a PLO delegate was invited to the Consultative

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[227] These examples are taken from Willets, *The Non-aligned Movement*, 31-36.

[228] 1st Palestinian National Congress, "The Palestinian National Charter (Article 19)," *Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations*, 1964, http://www.un.int/palestine/PLO/PNA2.html. Accessed 6 September 2009.

[229] 4th Palestinian National Congress, "Revised Palestinian National Charter (particularly Article 9)," *Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations*, 1968, http://www.un.int/palestine/PLO/PNAcharter.html. Accessed 6 September 2009.

Meeting in Belgrade, the first of its kind since 1964.[230] In that meeting, Middle East

regional actors linked anti-Zionism to global anti-colonial struggles in an attempt to

solidify broader support. The push for anti-Zionism as a primary agenda item for the

Movement was first facilitated by regional members in the face of a bleak outlook for the

Movement's solidarity on any issue.

The July 1969 Consultative Meeting reflected lowered expectations and a search

for consensus that could drive a prospective third conference in 1970. Members were

generally more skeptical of the Movement's effectiveness, with some in attendance

openly vowing secession if past and future declarations were not realized.[231] The general

sense indicated a search for consensus-building agenda items that could show signs of

progress and thereby validate the Movement's existence. One such item was solicited by

representatives from Lebanon, Jordan, Algeria, and Morocco, who argued for the

"problem of the Middle East" to occupy a prominent place in the Consultative Meeting

and subsequent conference in 1970.[232] The final speaker at the July 1969 meeting was

Khaled Yashruti, representing the PLO by special invitation. Yashruti's fiery speech

dwelled at length on the history of Zionism and its calamitous effects not only on

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[230] Consultative Meetings were prerequisites to most Non-aligned Movement Summits.

[231] See, for example, Abdoulaye Fofana, "Speech of Abdoulaye Fofana," in *Consultative Meeting of Special Government Representatives on Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade, July 8-12, 1969* (Medjunarodna Politika, Beograd, 1970), 83. As Peter Willets describes: "There is no direct evidence that the response was not favorable [to a third conference]. This statement is a deduction based on (a) the delay of sixteen months before any meeting took place, (b) the low level of representation and non-specific agenda and (c) the strength of opposition to a summit expressed at the Consultative Meeting." (Willets, *The Non-aligned Movement*, 54, fn. 111).

[232] For example, *Consultative Meeting of Special Government Representatives on Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade, July 8-12, 1969,* 87.

Palestinian livelihood, but on the universal anti-colonial struggle. Zionism was again termed "expansionist," "fascist," "and "colonialist."[233] The PLO spokesmen went so far as to conflate Zionism and Israel, claiming "*Israel* is only a new form of colonialism."[234] The strong rhetoric gained universal appeal as Yashruti conveyed his cause to all "struggling brothers" in Asia, Africa, and Latin America: "we are waging one battle on various fronts…a mutual and common battle."[235]

Anti-Western sentiment, apparent throughout the consultative meeting and third conference, also paralleled anti-Zionist sentiment. The Conference roundly condemned U.S. intervention in Vietnam, yet failed to mention the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia just two years prior.[236] The diplomatic and material aid given by the US to Israel also made Israel an easy symbol of Western aggression. At the third conference the Syrian representative explained, "assurance and support from the Socialist countries…prompted us to reject the idea that the Soviet Union should be put on the same plane as the United States."[237]

The mix of Anti-Western sentiment, heightened concern for a Middle East peace settlement after the 1967 Six-Day War, and the vacuum of other viable agenda items led the Movement to adopt a harsh and decidedly supportive stance on the Palestinians'

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[233] Khaled Yashruti, "Speech of Khaled Yashruti," in *Consultative Meeting of Special Government Representatives on Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade, July 8-12, 1969*, 167.

[234] Ibid.

[235] Ibid., 168.

[236] Non-aligned Movement, "Resolution on South-East Asia," *Review of International Affairs*, no. 491 (September 1970): 26.

[237] Willets, *The Non-aligned Movement*, 34.

situation at the Third Conference in 1970. Three resolutions roundly criticized Israel in response to their conduct in the peace process and some less well-known Black September operations in Lebanon. Radically anti-Zionist rhetoric was not found in the 1970 official documents, however. While some member states lobbied for such language, the 1970 conference was occupied mostly with African anti-colonialist support; the conference passed five declarations in support of various African independence movements. Still, radical rhetoric was on the rise in the Movement's member states, as evidenced by Sudan's President Jaafar Mohammad Numeiry's speech to the conference, wherein he sketched an early conception of the imperialist network:

> Across the oceans of Zambia we can see an ocean of atrocities which almost drawns *[sic]* a great part of Southern Africa. Across the frontiers of North-Eastern Africa we witness a brutal aggression experienced by another stronghold of colonialism and Zionism, that is Israel, and which events prove to us every day that it is still adopting illegal and aggressive ways and is ready to make further aggressions and expand with the help of American colonialism which does not want the Arab people to be liberated, and happy, enjoying freedom and progress.
>
> The similarity between both racial citadels can easily be seen. Both were implanted by colonial powers and Zionists. Both are greatly supported by imperialism and encouraged to suppress and oppress peoples. Thus it is not surprising that we find complete co-operation and harmony between Zionism, colonialism, and racialism.[238]

The beginnings of a well articulated linkage between Zionism and *apartheid* were apparent, and while the Conference's official declarations failed to mention Zionism, movement on the issue had noticeable appeal. Vehement anti-Zionism obtained a level of permissiveness on the global stage as yet unseen.

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[238] Jaafar Mohammed Numeiry, "The Main Enemy: Colonialism and Imperialism (delivered at the Third Conference on Non-Aligned Countries in Lusaka, September 8-10, 1970)," *Review of International Affairs*, no. 492 (October 20, 1970): 12.

The fourth conference in Algiers in 1973 moved clarification of the imperial

network forward by bounds. As host nations had a large degree of influence in the

wording of declarations, the heavily pro-Palestinian Algerian delegation constructed the

most radical Movement condemnation of Zionism in the 1970s.[239] In a broader sense the

search for a consensus agenda led Movement members to officially link African and

Arab concerns for the ongoing decolonization in Africa and the Arab-Israeli conflict.[240]

The 1973 Political Declaration was by far the most far-reaching; it now officially

promoted an imperialist network and achieved broad unity in the organization. Arab and

African interests were brought together by unifying the threats on both continents:

> The case of Palestine, where Zionist settler colonialism…has taken the form of a
> systematic uprooting of the Palestinian people… is *exactly the same as the
> situation in Southern Africa*, where racist segregationist minorities use the same
> method of colonial domination and exploitation in pursuit to the requirements *of a
> single imperialist strategy*.[241]

With the imperialist network out of the bag, the network grew quickly to include Portugal

(with its remaining colonial holdings), Rhodesia (with its white minority dictatorship),

South Africa (with its policy of *apartheid*), and Israel (with its policy toward the

Palestinians). The transition from the Movement to the United Nations was quick, with a

resolution, following the Yom Kippur War, in December 1973 explicitly linking "the

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[239] See Willets, *The Non-aligned Movement*, 35.

[240] As Willets points out, some have argued that the Non-aligned Movement after 1961 should be renamed an Afro-Asian movement. See GH Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966).

[241] 4th Summit of the Non-Aligned Countries, "Political Declaration of the Fourth Conference of Non-Aligned Countries," in *Documents of the Fourth Summit of the Non-aligned Countries*, *5-9 September 1973* (A/9330). Official report (New York, 1973). (emphasis added).

unholy alliance between Portuguese colonialism, South African racism, Zionism, and Israeli imperialism."[242]

The network gained further credence through the OAU Kampala summit in 1975, which gave a more conceptual account of Zionism that linked its origins with those of *apartheid* and Zimbabwe's (recognized by the British as Southern Rhodesia's) racist regime:

> The racist regime in occupied Palestine and the racist regimes in Zimbabwe and South Africa have a common imperialist origin, *forming a whole* and having the *same racist structure* and being *organically linked* in their policy aimed at repression of the dignity and integrity of the human being…[243]

The "Palestinian question," which was the "root cause of the struggle against the Zionist enemy," was allocated special attention in the OAU's 12th Assembly.[244] The Assembly argued that Zionist propaganda now threatened both African and Arab states, thereby unifying the two regions in victimhood. Action was sanctioned "to organize an information campaign in which all African information media participate to unmask the racist aggressive nature of the Zionist entity…and to confront and refute all Zionist

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[242] UN General Assembly, XXVIII Session, "Resolution 3151 G [Policies of aparthied of the Government of South Africa]," in *Resolutions of the General Assembly, XXVIII Session*, 14 December 1973, 30, operative paragraph 5. The UN reiterated the same linkage in UN General Assembly, XXVIII Session, "Resolution 3324 E [Policies of aparthied of the Government of South Africa]," in *Resolutions of the General Assembly, XXIX Session*, 14 December 1973, 38-39: The General Assembly "Condemn[s] the strengthening of political, economic, military, and other relations between Israel and South Africa."

[243] Organization of African Unity, XII Session, "AHG/Resolution 77 [Resolution on the Question of Palestine]," in *Resolutions Adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government*, 1 August 1975, 12-15, paragraph 7. (emphasis added).

[244] Ibid., paragraph 5.

misleading propaganda campaign aimed at arousing hostility against both the Arab and African Worlds."[245]

The linkage of Zionism to universal anti-colonial struggles was a strong victory for Arab countries and the PLO in particular. Strong anti-Zionist rhetoric facilitated regional and international goals, as now a strike against Zionism was a strike against *apartheid* and colonialism throughout the world (and vice versa). The definitive link between Zionism and specific imperial or colonial circumstances in Africa further solidified opposition to Israeli policy from most African and Arab countries. The 1973 Yom Kippur War polarized the debate even further as nineteen African countries severed diplomatic ties with Israel in the war's aftermath. At the 1975 Lima Foreign Minister's Meeting the PLO was promoted above comparative African liberation movements to full participant status, thereby officially elevating the plight of the Palestinians above the mass of Third World independence movements. The 30th Session of the United Nations would be a ready battleground to assert the Non-aligned and Third World consensus agenda on Zionism.

IV. Collision and the Meaning of Zionism

The ideology of the Non-aligned Movement and Moynihan's push for a new consensus ideology collided just weeks after his Congressional confirmation hearings in June 1975. The Non-aligned Movement had constructed a strong ideological stance on Israel, linking

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[245] Organization of African Unity, XII Session, "AHG/Resolution 76 [Resolution on the Middle East and Occupied Arab Territories]," in *Resolutions Adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government*, 1 August 1975, 7-10, operative paragraph 9.

it to *apartheid* and similar practices in Africa. The linkage created an imagined network

of imperialist forces in Portugal, Rhodesia, South Africa, and Israel that could be

summarily condemned and delegitimized. Arab and African concerns, now officially

linked to the underlying antagonism of imperialism, created areas of agreement where it

was hoped the Third World could achieve meaningful progress. Conditions in Israel and

South Africa were, it was argued, *the* prototypical examples of "alien colonialist settlers"

subjecting indigenous populations to discrimination and exploitation.

Moynihan responded to this rhetoric by requisitioning the very same entities –

Israel and Zionism – to address both the international condemnation of Zionism and to

fashion an argument for his new consensus ideology. The ideology put into practice

Moynihan's earlier intellectual constructions of ethnicity and ultimately included Israel

not in terms of its imperialistic policies or its Jewish makeup, but in terms of the nation's

"democratic" values. The Cold War, now tri-polar in Moynihan's mind, included an

advancing Third World ideology with totalitarian backers. In "the Liberty Party's"

defense – the group of democratic countries – Moynihan advanced his argument during

the fall of 1975 as Resolution 3379 passed the UN Third Committee and finally the

General Assembly on 10 November 1975.

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The months of September and October saw two major developments that

influenced the ultimate passage of 3379. First, a push to expel Israel from the General

Assembly failed, a development Moynihan termed a victory won in no small part by

administration heavyweight Henry Kissinger threatening sufficiently vague ultimatums if

Israel were to suffer expulsion.[246] Second, on 16 October, Somalia, with the co-sponsorship of 26 other nations, introduced Resolution 3379 in the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee of the United Nations (the Third Committee).[247] The resolution, with only the one operative sentence, was a striking accomplishment of the Third World consensus agenda.

The final debate in the Third Committee lasted only two days. Delegations in support of the resolution voiced their theories about the nefarious links between Zionism and South Africa. Kuwait's Ambassador Fayez Sayegh articulated the general sentiments: "Expanding relations between the two regimes is a manifestation of an underlying ideological affinity that attracts the bastion of racism in western Asia and the stronghold of racism in southern Africa to each other."[248]

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[246] Moynihan, *A Dangerous Place,* 172. See UN General Assembly, XXX Session, *2355th Plenary Meeting [Speech by Kissinger]*, 22 September 1975 (A/PV.2355). Official record (New York, 1975). For Non-aligned agenda see UN General Assembly, XXX Session, *Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, Lima, Peru, 25-30 August 1975*, 30 August 1975 (A/10217), Annex I, Page 16: "…the possibility of eventually depriving [Israel] of its membership in [the United Nations]." See also Organization of African Unity, XII Session, "AHG/Resolution 76 [Resolution on the Middle East and Occupied Arab Territories]," in *Resolutions Adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government*, 1 August 1975, 7-10, operative paragraph 8.

[247] Third Committee, Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian, XXX Session, *Report of the Third Committee (A/10320) at the 2400th Plenary Meeting*, 10 November 1975 (A/30/PV.2400). Official record (New York, 1975), 772.

[248] Fayez A. Sayegh, "Statement made at the 2143th meeting of the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) of the General Assembly on 17 October 1975," in *Zionism: "A Form of Racism and Racial Discrimination": Four Statements Made at the UN General Assembly* (New York: Office of the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations, 1976), 23. For similar statements by other African and Arab delegations see Third Committee, Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian, XXX Session, *Report of the Third Committee (A/10320) at the 2400th Plenary Meeting*, 10 November 1975 (A/30/PV.2400). Official record (New York, 1975), 769-772.

While the resolution was introduced in the General Assembly and passed on 10 November, multiple debates took place in the first weeks of November. Tangential discussions of Zionism occupied much of the "Question of Palestine" debate from 3-7 Nov, in which Saudi Arabia's Representative Jamil Baroody was the most vocal (and verbose) supporter of 3379. Baroody, oddly a Lebanese born Christian representing Saudi interests, supplied a long-winded history of Zionism. He argued that there was a dichotomy between destructive "political" Zionism and benign "spiritual" Zionism. He talked about "European Jews – who told me personally that they were not Zionists" and "our Semitic Jews," which, presumably the good Jews, only manifested a spiritual Zionism.[249] Baroody's meandering tone, which occupied hours in the debate chambers, reflected on, among other things, how the "five Crusades" of the Middle Ages "had all boomeranged." Europeans, "who were mostly barbarians at that time," managed to learn the "rudiments of chivalry" from their Muslim foes. The Crusades were an early example of a "nationalistic movement based on religion" of which modern Zionism was the latest incarnation.[250] The link between colonialism and Zionism was clear as well:

> Colonialism is nothing compared to the usurpation of a people…the British and the French did not take the land of the indigenous people in their colonies…We do not hate the Zionists who tried to kill the Palestinians and usurp their rights, we feel sorry for them. Do not tell us, "There is an Arab in our delegation". That ploy was used by many countries in colonial days.[251]

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[249] Jamil Baroody, UN General Assembly, XXX Session, *2391th Plenary Meeting [Question of Palestine]*, 3 November 1975 (A/30/PV.2391). Official record (New York, 1975), paragraph 10.

[250] Ibid., paragraphs 16-18.

[251] Ibid., paragraph 88.

In the midst of Baroody and other Third World representatives who continued

with the anti-Zionist theme, Moynihan shifted his focus away from the specifics of

Zionism. Instead he emphasized his own network of democracies to counter the

pervading Third Committee condemnation of the imperialist network. He recalled later in

his memoirs, "I now found a theme. That the issue was not Israel but democracy."[252] His

rebuttals from 3-7 Nov claimed that the United Nations had become "a locus of general

assault by the majority of nations in the world on the principles of liberal democracy

which are now found in only…a dwindling minority [of nations]."[253] The majority Third

World bloc was passing vitriolic "obscene acts" in the Third Committee under the

auspices of anti-colonialism, supposedly "preoccupied with economic issues of a

distributive nature." He continued:

> This ought not surprise us, for by all doctrinal lights of the 20th century, this is
> what we are *supposed* to be preoccupied with. And yet…this is not in fact what
> the 20th century is turning out to be about. To the contrary, it is the ancient and
> supposedly recessive bonds of race and creed which increasingly occupy the
> political forums of the world.[254]

These words laid out Moynihan's antipathy for "race and creed" (read: ethnic) divisions

in international politics. According to Moynihan, Israel, a practitioner of "the principles

of liberal democracy," was under attack not for its policies in the contested post-1967

occupied zones, but because it stood next to the United States against the majority Third

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[252] Moynihan, *A Dangerous Place*, 187.

[253] Ibid.

[254] Ibid., 189.

World ideology.[255] Moynihan's worldview was colored by ethnic and political-based

ideologies, not interests or regional concerns. Simplifying the debate in this way made an

attack against Zionism an attack against liberal democracy.

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Moynihan lamented in his memoirs that the General Assembly vote was a

foregone conclusion. He recalled that "The General Assembly was tense, not with

uncertainty of the outcome, but rather with the knowledge of it."[256] Only two countries

spoke before the vote, which tallied 72 in favor and 35 against with 32 abstentions. The

relatively close vote (in comparison to other votes explicitly condemning political

oppression in other parts of the world) reflected the divisiveness of the resolution, but the

Non-aligned and Soviet blocs had approximately 65 secured votes at all times during the

debate.

In the vote's aftermath Moynihan retooled his consensus ideology in purposefully

confrontational language. He later recollected, hinting at the headache his harsh words

gave the White House, that the words he delivered were "our speech wholly, Washington

having had the sense to leave us be."[257] He denounced the resolution as "a lie, but it is a

lie which the United Nations has now declared to be a truth."[258] In a telling twist,

Moynihan also sought to hold Israel up as an exemplar of the new consensus he wanted

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[255] Ibid., 196.

[256] Ibid.

[257] Ibid.

[258] Ibid.

to see in the United States. Speaking to the international body, though also to the multi-ethnic American public, he classified Israel, like the United States, as "extraordinary" in its demographic makeup. There were "black Jews, brown Jews, white Jews, Jews from the Orient and Jews from the West."[259] Also there were "large numbers of non-Jews, among them Arabs of both Muslim and Christian religions and Christians of other national origins."[260] The strength of Israel and its Zionist ideology was in its ability to channel the disparate followers of Judaism into an effective political unit. Ethnic, cultural, and theological differences were subsumed in an intense ideological nationalism. He classified Zionism as exceptional precisely because it defined its members not in terms of ethnicity, geography or historical situation, but in terms of belief. It was in common ideology that widely distinct social and ethnic groups could find purpose and unity. Moynihan's construction of Zionism made it the prototype of his new consensus ideology. He charged that what Israel had achieved through Zionism should be emulated in the United States. Israel's feat of unifying a diverse population into a cohesive society should be followed, not denounced. That the General Assembly characterized such an accomplishment as racist exposed for Moynihan "what civilization had come to."[261]

The most devastating rebuttal to Moynihan's speech came again from Saudi Arabia's Jamil Baroody. Baroody condescendingly attacked Moynihan's disparaging words toward delegates in favor of the resolution and his characterization of Israel: "He

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[259]Daniel P Moynihan, UN General Assembly, XXX Session, *2400th Plenary Meeting*, 10 November 1975 (A/30/PV.2400). Official record (New York, 1975), 797, paragraph 327.

[260]Ibid.

[261] Ibid., paragraph 329.

said 'It is a lie' again and again…But we are liars; 72 liars? Do you have a monopoly on

the truth?"[262] He directly attacked Moynihan's definition of "free democracies," asking,

> "Why [support Israel]? Because it is a "bastion of democracy." What democracy?
> Ritualized democracy? Religion was ritualized before democracy. That is why
> people went to churches…and [yet during two world wars] the next day they cut
> each other's throats.[263]

Kuwait's Ambassador Fayez Sayegh leveled similar charges at Israel:

> A policy prohibiting a Palestinian from actually returning to his home…on the
> basis that the first is a Jew and the second is a non-Jew, how can a country like
> that be described as a democracy, and how can the label of racism and racial
> discrimination be questioned in application to that particular country?[264]

He also adopted rhetoric similar to the PLO, "There is no liberation movement today that

does not feel fraternal bonds with the PLO or condemn Zionism as a racist and colonial

movement."[265]

In the post-vote exchange the Non-aligned Movement countered Moynihan's

assertion of Israel and Zionism's membership in the network of democracies with a

reassertion of Zionism's role in their own imperialist network. The moment of collision

ironically had little to do with Zionism itself. The complicated and still undefined role of

Zionism in Israel's policies, what one would think would be the crux of Zionism's racism

(or democratic spirit), was a secondary issue to both sides. These competing uses for

Zionism reduced Israel and its relationship to Zionism to simplistic and malleable

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[262] Jamil Baroody, UN General Assembly, XXX Session, *2400th Plenary Meeting*, 10
November 1975 (A/30/PV.2400). Official record (New York, 1975), 801, paragraph 376.

[263] Ibid., 803, paragraph 391.

[264] UN General Assembly, XXX Session, *2400th Plenary Meeting*, 10 November 1975
(A/30/PV.2400). Official record (New York, 1975), 790, paragraph 249.

[265] Ibid., 791, paragraph 262.

symbolism. The ideological collision between the Third World and Moynihan supplanted specificity, leaving in its wake a demoralized and largely irrelevant Israeli Ambassador Chaim Herzog, a genuinely angered Ambassador Moynihan, and an embattled resolution whose subject of condemnation had no settled definition.

V. Aftermath

But Moynihan's display was not primarily for the Third World or even Israel; it was meant for the US public. Moynihan's objective, laid out in his *Commentary* articles, was to reinvigorate American foreign policy in a nationally unifying way. And for all of the criticism Moynihan received at Turtle Bay, the American public unequivocally supported Moynihan's tough stance and effort to portray Israel as a democracy in a global ideological war. While Kissinger in private referred to Moynihan as "going wild" and a "disaster," opinion polls showed Moynihan was at the height of his popularity.[266] The *New York Times* reported that of the 7,308 letters and messages Moynihan had received at the U.S. Mission since July 1975, only ninety-four were critical of his actions.[267] In January 1976 an Opinion Research Institution poll found a seventy percent response approving of Moynihan's actions in the United Nations. Similarly, in November 1975, following the resolution's passage, Gallup Poll recorded its lowest approval ratings for

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[266] "Conversation between President Ford, Henry Kissinger, and Brent Scowcroft," Declassified Document Retrieval System transcript, October 25, 1975, 4.

[267] Paul Hoffman, "Moynihan's Style in the United Nations Is Now an Open Debate," *New York Times*, 21 November 1975, 3.

UN performance in its thirty year existence.[268] Podhoretz, in his memoirs, remembers a rosy (probably too rosy) post-vote atmosphere that nevertheless speaks to the aura surrounding Moynihan in late 1975. After the 10 November vote Podhoretz recalls:

> Walking the streets of New York, he [Moynihan] would be stopped by passersby and slapped on the back in restaurants, his table would be surrounded by people congratulating and thanking him; in a theater or concert hall, the mere sight of him was likely to set off a standing ovation.[269]

Podhoretz also aided Moynihan by writing the opening lines to Moynihan's post-vote speech on 10 November. The two neoconservatives, one Jewish the other not, were able to wrap a simultaneously ethnocentric and ideological issue in universal language. The paradox allowed Moynihan, someone who had no special ethnic predisposition to identify with Israel or Jews, to speak in a way that could bring Israel to the forefront of global politics and inseparably link that state to the US. Podhoretz summed up Moynihan's actions:

> Moynihan's response to the Zionism/racism resolution…arose not out of any special feeling to Israel or the Jews as such, but out of a conviction that the resolution represented an attack…against the democratic world…he believed that the campaign to delegitimize the state of Israel was aimed ultimately at the democratic world in general and the United States in particular. The ideological defense of Zionism was therefore dictated not only by moral consideration but by the National American interest.[270]

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[268] Joe Byrns Sills, "Fever Chart of the U.N.," *Worldview Magazine* (1 October 1976): 3.

[269] Norman Podhoretz, *Breaking Ranks: A Political Memoir*, 1st ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), 352.

[270] Ibid., 353.

The international contest over Zionism's meaning was not won by either the Third World or Moynihan. The majority of Americans continued to view Israel as a free democracy, though perhaps with a different sense of what that meant, and most Non-aligned populations continued to harbor deep resentment toward Israel and identify with the plight of the Palestinians. Resolution 3379 was eventually revoked in the aftermath of the Gulf War in 1991, though twenty-five nations, almost all from Arab nations, opposed the revocation. The consensus building measures so relevant in the 1970s – the imperialist network and the struggle against colonialism – had faded away as the Cold War ended and the Third World began to lose its clearer Cold War purpose. However, 3379 did manage to hurt the broader program for the United Nations 30th Session in 1975, the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The resolution's bitter contest polarized opinion on Israel and impaired UN consensus on the path the Decade would take.

Israel's own voice, largely ignored by both sides in the resolution's debate, was drowned out by larger international concerns. More was at stake than the definition of Zionism. Neoconservative ideology collided with the accumulated perceptions of Zionism in the Third World, and each side scrambled to claim the term, and by extension Israel, into their own ideologies. For Moynihan and the neoconservatives, Israel's precarious treatment of Palestinian refugees and its tiered system of citizenship for non-Jews were subsumed in the more abstract ideological debate. In the simplest terms, neoconservatives believed Israel was justified in its actions because of its regional disadvantages and the ideological role it played in the Cold War. If there was major blame for the refugee crisis neoconservatives believed Israel only shared a small amount

in comparison to the intransigent and stubborn Arab world. Throughout the 1970s neoconservatives avoided a sustained exploration of this possible incongruity.

The brief time of similitude between Moynihan and the Jewish neoconservatives that ended in the mid-1970s was prodigious for both groups. Moynihan's pro-democracy and nationalist rhetoric contributed to what one historian has called the "Nationalist Renaissance" in the 1980s, though President Ronald Reagan's policies did not fully line up with Moynihan's vision.[271] Moynihan left his neoconservatism (and his neoconservative friends like Podhoretz) at the same time the movement was gaining national influence. The four term New York senator (1976-2000) would serve as a faithful opposition to what he deemed excessive secrecy in American foreign policy, particularly during the Reagan administration.[272] He also turned against the neoconservatives' militarism in the 1980s and believed Reagan's military buildup was superfluous and harmful to peaceful prospects for the end of the Cold War.

For the Jewish neoconservatives in 1975-1976, the resolution's contest served as an important battle in a larger ideological war. Moynihan's tenure at the UN catapulted the neoconservative worldview of an ideologically divided world into mainstream America and solidified Israel's centrality to Western democracy. Kissinger's détente policies were seriously challenged from a multitude of political angles, but Moynihan's was perhaps the most successful in its ability to tap into the Jewish neoconservatives'

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[271] See Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2001), 347-374.

[272] See Daniel P Moynihan, *Secrecy the American Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

new consensus rhetoric and tailor it for the 1970s. Moynihan managed to make Israel

matter in Cold War terms that exceeded ethnocentric concerns. He facilitated the move of

Israel to an American national interest item.

CONCLUSION

Following the 1976 Presidential election neoconservatives entered a new phase. The Carter Presidency proved fertile ground for an ideology based on militarism and ideological clarity. Some Jewish neoconservatives joined the Committee on the Present Danger, an anti-Soviet, pro-Israeli, pro-military think tank whose members populated the State and Defense departments during the first Reagan Administration (these included Eugene Rostow and Jeane Kirkpatrick).[273] The genealogy of neoconservatism into the 1990s is most identifiable in this group. Podhoretz took an advisory position in the US Information Agency from 1981-1987 while also maintaining his duties at *Commentary*. Still many more, including Moynihan, Glazer, and Draper, veered away from the militarism and ideology they helped build, and during the 1980s and later voiced opposition to what they deemed the excesses of *Commentary* and neoconservative ideology.

So why did the original group of Jewish neoconservatives fail to stay unified after the 1970s? There are many answers; most of them require a discussion of the contingency of the era in which neoconservatives rose to influence. The legacy of *neoconservatism* continues in various forms to today, but the specific group of neoconservatives followed

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[273] See Jerry Wayne Sanders, *Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment*, (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1983).

in these pages requires no abstraction. Forged in the 1960s, Jewish neoconservatives responded to specific threats against their identities as Jews and Americans. Israel became a central component of their response and the ultimate counterattack to the threats they identified. Their dissolution as a unified intellectual group was because of a different set of challenges that offered different responses. The lure of Israel continued for most of the Jewish neoconservatives, but by 1981 the United States was no longer operating under the policy of détente or in the throes of violent domestic upheaval. Furthermore the 1982 First Lebanon War was widely interpreted by American Jews as Israel's first offensive war. The high rate of Lebanese civilian casualties led many American Jews to question their unyielding support for Israel.[274]

Nevertheless, mainstream (that is, elected) politicians in both major political parties maintained an overwhelmingly positive view of Israel. Indeed, by the 1980s neoconservatives no longer held such powerful sway over popular American conceptions of Israel as they did following the 1967 or 1973 wars. As Melani McAlister highlights, by 1980 evangelical Christians, military policymakers, traditional conservatives, labor unions, and other American Jewish voices had large followings and were discussing the positive value and symbolism of Israel in the same national context neoconservatives were.[275] It is arguably no coincidence that these groups subsequently saw Israel in the same light as neoconservatives: as an exemplar of effective militarism and a beckon of

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[274] See Steven T Rosenthal, *Irreconcilable Differences?: The Waning of the American Jewish Love Affair with Israel* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England [for] Brandeis University Press, 2001).

[275] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 195-197.

democracy. However, to directly link neoconservative arguments to any of these groups would require another, and longer, study. What bears mentioning are the similarities in language and usage that Israel received as an outside symbol for these different national agendas.

The physical distance, yet similarity, between Israel and the United States made the Jewish state a suitable and attractive symbol of universal values in a post-Vietnam age dominated by national doubt and postmodern subjectivism. Facts on the ground regarding Palestinian refugees often only aided a subjective critique of the Arab-Israeli conflict, but in the macro picture Israel stood against seemingly insurmountable odds and maintained at least a quasi-democratic system of government. In the face of adjacent monarchies and dictatorships, Israel's survival spoke to a wide spread American sentiment for democratic survival in a hostile international order. At once both infinitely exposed and the ultimate symbol of effective militarism, American symbolism of Israel embodied some of the fundamental hopes and fears of the American public. The Jewish neoconservatives represent a particularization of this American mindset. Their ideas, or rather the ideas they expressed, in relation to Israel gained widespread appeal in the 1980s as the American government reasserted its Cold War militarism and President Reagan articulated stark ideological differences between democracy and the "evil empire" of the communist world.

The neoconservatives of today, who are almost explicitly labeled so by virtue of their stances on American military and foreign policy, share less in common with their 1960s forefathers than it might at first appear. In particular, the end of the Cold War marked a definitive shift in neoconservative thinking. Ironically, neoconservatism thrived

on the Cold War order; the very order Jewish neoconservatives sought victory over. Rapid changes on the national and international scale changed neoconservative thought. Whereas in the 1970s neoconservatism was a defensive response to encroachment on the democratic world, post-Cold War neoconservatism argued for an offensive ideology to maintain American hegemony as the single global in the world.[276] This unipolar vision further fractured the remnants of the original group of Jewish neoconservatives.

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Historiographically this thesis has argued that in order to better understand American history narratives must incorporate a broader context than that of the nation-state. The unit of nation-state cannot address the complex development of the neoconservatives by itself. Examining neoconservative thought directed at opposition in sub national, national, and international contexts allows for a fuller, more nuanced account of how Israel was differently represented through time and circumstance. Fully exploring the meanings Americans draw between themselves and other peoples of the world will necessarily change the conception of what "American" means. The neoconservative turn inward – their embrace of their Jewishness – did not make the group less American in that moment than when they trumpeted an explicitly nationalist agenda years later. Demarcating between "American" and "Jewish" predisposes any subsequent conversation to a set of fallacious premises about what the "American way" entails. In order to find the mainstream of American political discourse, one possible component of Thomas Bender's "public culture," entails looking at the various ethnic, national, and

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[276] See, for example, Charles Krauthammer, *Democratic Realism: An American Foreign Policy for a Unipolar World* (AEI Press, 2004).

social bonds on which Americans themselves drew to formulate attractive and influential ideas.[277]

The process by which neoconservatives universalized their fixation on Israel is not a unique story. The particulars are of course specific to the neoconservatives, but the broader process of affecting American society through the universalization of particular ideological visions happens every day. It is the language through which Americans debate their national agenda. And like neoconservatism, in American discourse ideologies tend to rise and fall based on their popular appeal and the contingencies of the moment. In moments like November 1975, even in the shadow of procedural defeat, neoconservatives arrived on the public stage with an interpretation of the world, and Israel, that completed the long journey from the margins of political discourse to the center of public debate.

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[277] See Bender, "Wholes and Parts," 126.

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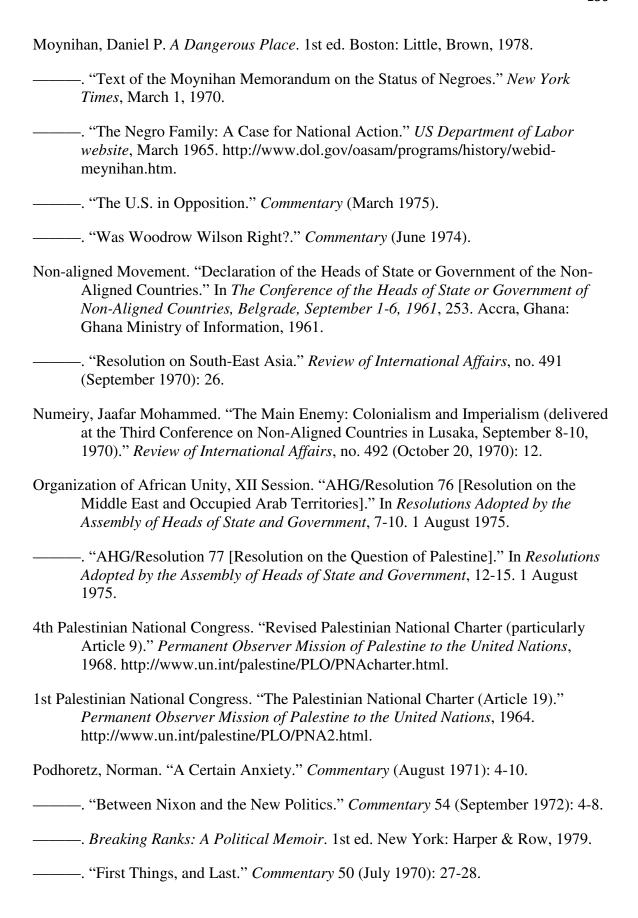———. "The Arab-Israeli Wars: 1967 and 1973." *Commentary* (December 1973): 31-45.

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