

## AIPAC Papers Find Americans Support Israel By Wide Margin

In a study analyzing three decades of American public opinion toward Israel, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) has found that "support for Israel over the Arab nations is one foreign policy issue on which there has been a wide consensus in the United States for over 30 years. Americans have consistently favored Israel by margins of four and five-to-one." Furthermore, claims AIPAC, "Israel is now substantially more popular than it was at the time of the Camp David breakthrough in 1978."

The study, entitled *How Americans Feel About Israel*, assembles, for the first time in one place, Gallup, Roper, Harris, and other polls, giving conclusive evidence of the American public's exceptionally strong feelings for Israel.

The poll data is categorized by demographic group and by specific issue. The results are striking and they are consistent. Writes AIPAC, "majority support for Israel comes from every region of the country, from women as well as men, from Catholics as well as Protestants, and from all other social groups."

One of the monograph's more surprising findings deals with Black Americans. A recent Washington Post/ABC News Poll reveals that this group supports Israel over the Arab nations by a margin of

three-to-one. Moreover, 16 out of 21 members of the Black Congressional Caucus (an even higher percentage than their white colleagues), have consistently voted for foreign aid to Israel and against major arms sales to those Arab nations still not at peace with Israel.

Nor is Israel a partisan issue. According to AIPAC, Democratic and Republican support for Israel averages four-to-one, and in more recent polls, Republicans have been more supportive than Democrats.

The study also reports that, contrary to a widespread misconception, young people actually have stronger feelings for Israel than their elders, and support for the Jewish state among 18 to 24-year-olds has increased over the past decade. This phenomenon can be explained by the greater number of people completing high school and college in the United States, because the more educated citizens become, the more supportive of Israel they are.

Beyond general sympathy for Israel, the study finds that Americans also adopt pro-Israel positions on a wide variety of specific issues. On the question of U.S. arms sales to Arab countries still at war with Israel, "virtually all polls...show clear majority opposition to such sales." In 1978, the public was opposed

to the sale of 60 F-15 fighter planes to Saudi Arabia by an average of four-to-one; in 1981, opposed the sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia by two-to-one; and in 1982, opposed selling anti-aircraft missiles to Jordan by more than three-to-one.

In regard to the disposition of territories administered by Israel since 1967, AIPAC finds that "majorities of Americans since 1967 have favored Israel holding on to all or part of the lands it acquired in the Six-Day War": twenty-two percent prefer that Israel hold on to all the land; 54 percent propose that Israel retain territory important to its security but return the rest; and only 9 percent believe that Israel should return all the land.

The study also reports that by a wide margin, Americans believe that Israel is a more reliable ally than any other country in the Middle East. By more than three-to-one, Americans support the current level of aid to Israel or believe it should be increased. And, the PLO is seen by a majority of Americans as "part of a world-wide terror group who hijack planes, kidnap people, and are international outlaws," and therefore do not deserve recognition by the United States.

Overall, the support of the American people for Israel is wide and deep. The reasons for this support lie in the fact that Israel is a sister democracy and the one reliable ally American can count on in the region. Furthermore, the public sympathizes with Israel's struggle against aggression by radical Arab states and inherently supports the idea of a Jewish homeland. "For all these reasons," concludes AIPAC, "support for Israel is one of the most consistent features of the American consensus of foreign policy. It is a value that the American people are unlikely to surrender."

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee is the only American organization registered to lobby Congress on legislation affecting Israel. It is supported by private donations from more than 50,000 members in all fifty states.

How Americans Feel About

### Academy Gala

mansions," notes Richard, "especially in the arches and spiral staircases."

Charlene loves Morrocroft because the house, with its hand-crafted detailing and cozy nooks, makes her feel like she's living in Europe. The Muller family, which includes sons David and Adam and daughter Sloane, a fourth grader at the Hebrew Academy, became acclimated to the size of Morrocroft during the nine months of fixing it up before moving in. Still, admits Charlene, "It's sometimes hard to find everyone for dinner."

In the past four years, the Mullers have been decorating Morrocroft with antiques, handmade rugs and mementos collected during their extensive travels. Other changes include a new billiard room, once an office, complete with a 1930s inlaid mahogany table and an adapted gas light. The Mullers are also building a sauna and exercise room in the basement.

Israel is the tenth in a series of "AIPAC Papers" analyzing various aspects of the U.S.-Israel relationship. For more information, write or call the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, 444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 412, Washington, D.C. 20001, (202) 638-2256.

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Patron's tickets for the gala are \$125 a couple and can be obtained by writing Florence Widis, 5238 Seacroft Road, Charlotte, NC, 28210. Her phone is 525-3957. Checks should be made out to the North Carolina Hebrew Academy.

General chairperson of the 1985 gala is Patti Weisman. Peggy Gartner is in charge of food; Florence Widis, reservations; Charlene Muller and Marilyn Cohen, invitations; and Saul Brenner, publicity.

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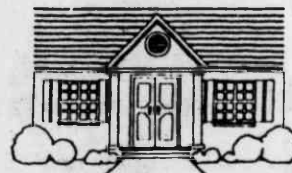
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