CHAPTER: THREE

The RJC and Republicanism: Socio-economic and Politico-security Issues
Today, the Republican Party has representatives from various factions, be it social conservatives, neoconservatives, moderates, fiscal conservatives, Republicans in Name Only (RINO)\(^1\), Log Cabin Republicans (LCR)\(^2\) etc. Since the time of Ronald Reagan, the Republican Party has been marching on among other things, with a coalition of different ethnic groups. Jews had already started aligning more on a formal basis ever since the formation of the RJC in 1985. Friedman (1999: 101-102) elaborated on how a significant number of Jews back the Republican Party.

“As a Republican or, perhaps more accurately, a conservative political trend took shape reaching a peak in the two Reagan administrations and the Republican takeover of the House and the Senate in 1994, Jews continued to defy it. Despite such clear cut, political patterns, a significant, conservative, Jewish political tradition indeed exists.”

This chapter deals with the issues related to the Jews and the Republican Party. What do Jews look for as issues? Whether Republicanism is simply another way to reconcile American ideals with Jewish commitments? What are the factors which bind Republican Jews to the Party in terms of economics, domestic politics, and foreign policy? Are they like other ethnic Republicans - African-Americans, Asians and Hispanics in the Party? Have they carved a niche for themselves in the Republican Party or not? Where do Republican Jews find themselves in terms of some contentious issues like abortion, same-sex marriages, stem cell research, school prayers, separation of church and state, etc? How does the Republican Jews lobby advise leaders from state capitals to the U.S. Capitol and from the local party offices to the Republican National Committee? Besides Israel, what are the other foreign policy issues to which American Jews are still concerned about? And how do they educate the Republican administration?

\(^1\) The term implies that, despite party affiliation, RINOs are not “authentic” Republicans. The label is usually acquired because the politician’s political actions, policies, positions on certain issues or voting records are considered to be at variance with core Republican beliefs. The term is only used by conservatives. They believe that the party’s core beliefs are conservative and therefore politicians are not true Republicans, unless they adhere to conservative beliefs. Celeste Greig, a long-time Los Angeles conservative Republican, created the acronym RINO.

\(^2\) Log Cabin Republicans stand on the front lines of today’s most important battle for the civil rights of gay and lesbian Americans. The Log Cabin stresses its loyalty to the Republican Party: “We are loyal Republicans,” its website says. “The members believe in low taxes, limited government, strong defense, free markets, personal responsibility, and individual liberty.
Attachment to Reaganomics

There is a famous anecdote. An American went to a pond. After which he thought what to do now. Suddenly a man came from behind and asked him, “What are you looking for?” He replied, “I want to do fishing in this pond.” The other man said: “Forget fishing. I give you a fish, so no need to worry and no need to spend time in fishing.” The American took the fish home and started getting a fish daily. But one day it all stopped. He was left with no option but to learn fishing. The American acquired his own fishing net and quickly learned the tricks. This way he not only fed himself but also started selling surplus fish. Thus, the American started making good money. He became rich in few years. In America, it is called the spirit of individual survival. The Republican Party platform promotes “survival of individual,” which is the most significant aspects of less government, and more money to people.

Howard Jarvis\(^3\) was no less an entrepreneur in launching the Proposition 13 tax cut movement in California than was Ray Croe in launching McDonald’s, but both gave specific form to the previously amorphous though finally sovereign wishes of the public. (Gilder 1981: 28-29) Jarvis’s Proposition 13 started the anti-big-government tide in America. Stephen Moore further elaborates how Jarvis was an important player in furthering the fiscal conservative ideas:

“Proposition 13 was a political earthquake whose jolt was felt not just in Sacramento but all across the nation, including Washington, D.C. Jarvis’s initiative to cut California’s notoriously high property taxes by 30 percent and then cap the rate of increase in the future was the prelude to the Reagan income tax cuts in 1981. It also incited a nationwide tax revolt at the state and local levels. Within five years of the passage of Proposition 13, nearly half the states strapped a similar straitjacket on politicians’ tax-raising capabilities. Almost all of those tax limitation measures remain the law of the land today.”

In the 1980 Presidential election campaign, Reagan urged for the limited government - a government which has less interference in a citizen’s life. President Reagan won a landslide victory. But here, there was economics attached to the voting pattern.

\(^3\) Howard Arnold Jarvis was an American businessman, lobbyist, and politician. He was an anti-tax activist responsible for passage of California’s Proposition 13 in 1978.
Reaganomics was built on favorable economic and fiscal policy, relaxed environmental rules to let the industry grow, greater spending on defense industry, tax reductions, domestic spending cuts, reduced regulatory capabilities etc.

Many Americans realized that the era of the Big Government did not actually accomplish its goal. Even after spending big money on tackling crime, illegitimacy, illegal drug, the problems continued to dog the government. Before Reagan, the tax was increased in order to pursue the big government’s goal. It actually dented a hole in people’s wallets. Many Americans came under tax bracket, as they were just out of their colleges. For the younger generation it was a new experience, a bitter fantasy with the socialists’ structure in the 1960s, which continued even in the 1970s, till Reagan put a brake and eliminated many unnecessary high spending efforts pursued by the previous governments.

As soon as Reagan took charge, the US Congress deregulated the banking and natural gas industries and lifted ceilings on interest rates. Federal price controls on airfares were lifted as well. To make the American economy more vibrant, Reagan adopted tax cut approach and persuaded the Congress. In 1981, he pushed a bill through Congress, cutting taxes 5 percent in 1981 and 10 percent in 1982 and 1983. Ginsberg (1993: 189) said the Reagan administration had come into office praising the virtues of free market competition and unfettered capitalism.

"Jewish financiers played a critical role in helping the administration to fulfill its pledges. In turn, the administration, for a time, protected these financiers from attack by their corporate and political foes."

---

4 Economic program followed by the administration of President Ronald Reagan beginning in 1980. Reaganomics was partially based on the principles of supply-side economics and the trickle-down theory. Reaganomics stressed lower taxes, higher defense spending, and curtailed spending for social services. After a reduction of growth in the money supply by the Federal Reserve Board combined with Reaganomics to produce a severe recession in 1981-82, the Reagan years were characterized by huge budget deficits, low interest and inflation rates, and continuous economic growth.

5 It is an interventionist style of government as government is perceived as being excessively big-spending and attempting to control too many aspects of people’s lives.
As Reagan said, don't trust government, not bad government, or even big government, but just plain vanilla government. (Bell 1976: 320) Reagan revolution brought many liberal financiers into its club. American Jews became a key player in shaping the economic policies of the Reagan administration. Jews presided over the great expansion of liquidity – money and credit – that funded the economic boom and expansion of equity values of the Reagan era. (Ginsberg) Many American Jewish businessmen like Saul Steinberg, Victor Posner, Carl Icahn, Nelson Pelz, the Belzberg family, Sir James Goldsmith became active in the policy formulation. It was based on a philosophy that private sector has much to do with economics. Their basic argument was that the government was burdened with the implementation of the liberal programs like the New Deal and the Great Society.

With the advent of the first Reagan Administration, Jews recognized that the 1980 election constituted, to some degree, a popular revolution. (Friedman 1985: 64) Jews pioneered program trading that among other things permitted corporations to generate excess revenues in their position funds that could then be employed for other corporate purposes. (Ginsberg: 192)

Decontrol was the mantra for many capitalist countries in the late 1970s and 1980s. With Reagan in the White House during 1980s, Conservatives advocated for total decontrol. The two oil crises which the world grappled with in the 1970s had made the policy planners sense its importance. The US economy had to face the brunt of the crises created by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Steinberg (1988: 21) writes that since Emperor Diocletian’s days in ancient Rome, pricing always depended on increase in demand and decrease in productivity. (Steinberg) This was exactly the case in the 1970s. The oil price controls resulted in a decrease in domestic petroleum extraction, resulting in increased American dependence on Arab oil. Neoconservatives felt that the willingness of businessmen to surrender the ideology for profit extended beyond Communism and into some purely economic issues, like free trade. (Gerson 1996: 238) During the apex of the oil crises, Kristol asked the oil companies to cut prices voluntarily,
which would demonstrate evidence of political thinking and counter the ruthless image that capitalism often displayed. (Friedman 2005: 180)

Reagan was convinced that federal programs promoted tardiness and moral decay. So he was in favor of benefits given only to the “needy people.” Jews continued to maintain their upward mobility, even after the end of baby boomer phase,

Besides businessmen, there were writers and economic thinkers who wholeheartedly supported Reagan’s programs. For many years, the conservative thinkers sat on the fringes wanting to implement their vision of a capitalist structure. Reagan gave nod to their plan. And the nation moved from the Keynesian economics to Milton Friedman’s free market principles. There were a plethora of articles written by conservative authors giving suggestions as to how the administration should formulate its economic principles.

The *Commentary* and the *Public Interest* extolled Reagan’s economic vision. Harvard Philosopher Robert Nozick was one of the many economic thinkers who switched side from socialism to free market. Nozick published *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (1974), which helped to spread pro-capitalist ideas in the United States as well as in Great Britain during Reagan and Thatcher governments respectively. (Friedman 2005: 178) Gerson suggests the growing friendliness to market economics may have been the most important contribution by the neocons to Public Policy. (Friedman)

Irving Kristol (1978: 121) analyzes the neocon economic thinking, “the basic principle behind a conservative welfare state ought to be a simple one: (whoever possible, people should be allowed to keep their own money rather than having it transformed (via taxes) to the state – on condition that they put it to certain defined used.”

A historical review of any of the governments in the United States - Republican or the Democrats suggests the basic social responsibilities of governance do not change. There have been budget cuts by the Republican Party at the helm of affairs, but the basic premise of social spending remains unchanged. In the *Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith
argues that real riches came from the power of production and supply, not by bullion collected through a trade surplus. (Gilder 28-29) Kristol was among the first few ideologues who believed that capitalism must be linked with moral and social responsibility. (Friedman 178)

“Capitalism, after all, is the traditional American economic and social system; unlike the nations of Europe, we have never known any other. And people who wish to defend and preserve traditional institutions are indeed conservative, in the literal sense of that term.” (Kristol 136)

Many liberal journalists also opposed government regulations in the 1980s. One of them was Max Lerner. Having once seen the country’s economic institutions as “systemically rigged” against the working poor, he started believing that Reagan’s determination to overthrow Keynesian theory and replace it with free market economics (with tax cuts as its pivot) was a bold and necessary step. (Friedman: 179)

Moreover, Reaganomics was nurtured on the basics of “supply side economics.” Kristol tapped the brilliance of Jude Wanniski, an unknown journalist in the early 1970s who coined the term “supply – side economics.” Actually, before “supply side economics,” Wanniski’s theory was known as “The Mundell – Laffer Hypothesis,” which first appeared in the 1975 issue of The Public Interest. It outlined a simple, almost elemental thesis - people work harder when they are allowed to keep more of their money. (Friedman: 182) Prominent neoconservatives Jews sided with the Reagan ideas on economic policy. Gerson (203) elaborates:

“The key principle behind it is that people will work harder when they are allowed to keep their money. When people work harder, they make more money. When they earn more money, the government has more money to tax. If in the short run, government’s revenues decrease that is fine, because the government should not spend so much anyway.”

---

6 An economic theory which holds that reducing tax rates, stimulates savings and investment for the benefit of everyone. It is also called trickle-down economics. With its emphasis on aggregate supply, rather than aggregate demand (as in the Keynesian economics), supply-side economics is concerned with the productive capacity of the economy. Government measures included: tax cuts; measures to facilitate the mobility of labor; reduction in public expenditure; and deregulation.
The "Mundell – Laffer Hypothesis" later came to be known as the "Laffer Curve." It was basically developed at the Two Continents Restaurant in Washington D.C., a dinner organized by Wanniski to Laffer. (Friedman: 182) During the dinner, Laffer drew a graph on a cocktail napkin to demonstrate how government's revenues increase when taxes are raised at very low rates and diminishes when the taxes hit a certain point on the curve to the point where higher tax rates actually decreases government's revenues. (Gerson: 204)

The foundation of an economic theory, which was an alternative to Keynesian economics continued to be the hallmark of successive Republican governments in the White House from Reagan to Bush Jr. For Kristol, such philosophy provided "the social and economic security a modern citizenry demands while minimizing governmental intrusion into individual liberties." (Shapiro 2001: 218)

Reagan's main aim to implement such ideologies was to build a proper conservative base for the Republican Party. He basically prepared a FDR coalition in the Republican Party. The Republican idea, which was molded on conservative and neoconservative thinking, provided an alternative to the New Deal and the Great Society. His economic idea was to make individual Americans wealthier. In calling for deep tax cuts and putting more money in the pockets of people, supply-siders identified with the average American and helped to create a conservative majority. (Friedman: 184)

"The neoconservatives knew that there was something to capitalism besides money, beyond acquisition – something moral that spoke about ways the society organizes itself. They wanted to see how this system worked, and how people – and values – fit into the equation. It is from this point that the neoconservatives began their consideration of capitalism." (Gerson: 211)

The Jewish population of the United States has, at best, remained static for the past 50 years, despite the influx during the same period of at least half a million Jewish immigrants from Russia and other East European countries. For the last three decades, American Jews have controlled their birthrates and tend to have smaller families. Alan J. Steinberg says the Reagan economics program was God sent He further writes, the implementation of reduced marginal tax rates and indexation for inflation gave the
young, upwardly mobile Jewish families the ability to bring up their children besides obtaining a sufficient surplus to contribute economically to the welfare of the entire Jewish Community. (Steinberg: 18) Young Jewish families needed tax benefits to send their children to the Jewish Day Schools. And in the recent times, sending children to the Jewish Day has become a costly affair. By sending children to the Day Schools, Jews have learnt who they are and long for a strong identity to succeed as a member of a minority in a majority culture.

The Jewish system of welfare differed radically from the modern system because of basic Jewish concepts of the role of wealth, economic justice, the dignity of the individual, and the moral responsibility of the individual, where there is respect for the individual and the need to make him economically independent as quickly as possible. (Sternberg 2001: 67) Rabbi Daniel Lapin, an Orthodox Jew and a fiscal conservative supports the free market ideology. For Lapin, free market is not a modern man’s creation, but a message in the Holy Scriptures, which the western civilization is following in the modern economic governance.

“Jewish law, extracted from the Torah, imposes 613 rules upon Jews. A disproportionate number of those laws relate to property and money. In fact, no area of law is given as much attention in the Torah as the area dealing with free-market transactions between free and independent citizens of the 613 commandments presented in the Torah.” (Lapin 1999: 225)

The final word on taxation in the Hebrew Scriptures is found in Proverbs 12:24, which declare: “the hand of the diligent shall produce wealth but the lazy will be subject to taxation.” (Lapin 234) According to the 11th century Rabbi Solomon Yitzchaki, these words warn against excessive taxation which hinders productivity and only comes to pass through the laziness and indifference of citizens who declare to resist the oppression. (Lapin: 234)

---

7 A Jewish day school is a modern Jewish educational institution that is designed to provide Jewish children with both a Jewish and a secular education in one school on a full time basis, hence its name of “day school” meaning a school that the students attend for an entire day and not on a part time basis. The substance of the “Jewish” component varies from school to school, community to community. While some schools may stress Judaism and Torah study others may focus more on Jewish history, Hebrew language, Yiddish language, secular Jewish culture, and Zionism.
It is a liberal idea to impose more taxes; based on the argument more government intervention means you need more money. The argument is that rich can afford high taxes, which can be helped to improve the conditions of poor. One supporter of tax cut is Wayne Allyn Root, the self-styled Millionaire. Root, a Jew and a son of a butcher, started from scratch. Root has been consistently voting for the Republican Party and is attached to the RJC. After living in New York and California for several years, he moved to Nevada, the fastest growing state and known as a tax haven state in America. Root says he votes for the Republicans because they understand that by keeping taxes low on the risk-takers and wealth-creators, those productive citizens will have more money to create more jobs, opportunities, and wealth for everyone. (Root: 2005)

The conservative economists say that a high tax rate kills the dreams of middle class for whom America is known for centuries. When Bush Sr. entered the White House he gave a rousing speech, "Read my lips. No new taxes." It became an instant hit with the economists who favored free market. For them, Bush administration was an extension of Reagan's economic policy. He promised to continue other economic policies that had brought general, if not universal, prosperity to the country. But his 'no tax cut' pledge suffered a blow, in the final days of the 101st Congress. The President and Congress reached a compromise on a budget package that increased the marginal tax rate and phased out exemptions for high-income taxpayers.

The democrat Bill Clinton administration which came after Bush Sr. favored a big government. The Clinton administration increased marginal income-tax rates. He had to suffer from the tax raise. This was reflected in 1994 Congressional elections when the Republicans fought with new ideology – "Contract with America" proposed by Newton Gingrich. The Republicans won the House and the Senate. The arrival of the Gingrich Republicans in Congress stopped this slow-motion repeal of Reaganomics.
The tax cuts became a buzzword of the Republicans during George W. Bush first Presidential election campaign in 2000. After winning the election, the Senate passed Bush Jr.'s ten-year $1.35 trillion tax cut plan.

“These are the basic ideas that guide my tax policy: lower income taxes for all, with the greatest help for those most in need. Everyone who pays income tax benefits — while the highest percentage tax cuts go to the lowest income Americans. I believe this is a formula for continuing the prosperity we've enjoyed, but also expanding it in ways we have yet to discover. It is an economics of inclusion. It is the agenda of a government that knows its limits and shows its heart.”

— President George W. Bush

The tax relief plan accepted and promoted by the President Bush was based on values that Republicans promote in their party platform - access to the middle class, family, equal opportunity, and the entrepreneurial spirit. So the Republicans are known as fiscal conservatives.* Republicans believe that in the long run, wealth is created by hard-working, risk-taking individuals and not by the government programs. After all, the wealthy have benefited disproportionately from two rounds of Bush's tax cuts.

The Bush administration believed tax cuts would help the economic growth at a steady pace. Their firm belief on Crandall Pierce writing highlights such examples. A couple of years ago, the Wall Street Journal published his article under the title High Rates, Low Rates - Same Yield and the graph shows that Americans are willing to yield up to 20 percent of their aggregate labor for the common good. (Lapin: 232) From 1960 to the present, the top tax rate has fluctuated between 28 percent and 91 percent; figures reveal that revenue has barely shifted away from the 20 percent of Gross Domestic Product that one would expect. (Lapin) In fact, with this, Jewish Republicans question wisdom of their counterparts, who are more in numbers and say, “sauce for the goose is not the same for the gander?” American Sociologist Earl Raab wrote in 1990s that if you scratch an

---

8 georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/reports/taxplan.pdf
9 *Fiscal conservatives remain pro-business, they are hesitant to increase spending as a way to spur the economy. They believe the best way to promote a healthy economy is to cut taxes, reduce government waste and curtail frivolous federal programs. They believe social services should be funded with money from philanthropists and advocate tax breaks for those who contribute to worthy charitable organizations.
American Jew, you will find as ever, a Democrat voter – but that if you scratch somewhat
deeper, you will not always find a liberal. (Friedman 2000)

The Domestic Issues

The Jewish Republicans make a distinctive view of cultural scenario in America. Naturally, for them counter-culture\textsuperscript{10} became tool for opposition. The conservative interpretation of cultural nationalism advanced Jewish communal interests and reinforced the political importance of the acculturation process. (Dollinger 2000: 225) Despite being successful in the American society, Staub (2002: 5) wrote that the American Jews face problems internally.

“American Jews debated how Jewish identity could and should matter and what political stands Jews should take. Whether the topic under dispute was American anticommunism activism on behalf of American civil rights, the purported lessons of the Holocaust for the American context, Israel and Israeli-Palestinian relations, the war in Vietnam, the State of Jewish religious observance, the counterculture, or the Women’s and gay and lesbian liberation movements, Jews accused each other of being inadequately or improperly Jewish.”

But with the counterculture movement, fragmentation in the society had already started. The heart of the Jewish neoconservative argument was a critique of the New Left “Counterculture” of the 1960s, and Irving Kristol was perhaps its best known proponent. (Haggard 1998: 168-169) In three volumes of essays, On the Democratic Idea in America (1972), Two Cheers for Capitalism (1978), and Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea (1995), Kristol voiced a traditional conservative complaint: When the demand is made for the state to guarantee absolute equality amongst its citizens without attempting to shape manners and morals, “a bizarre inversion of priorities” takes place. (Haggard: 169) Podhoretz launched his full-scale attack on counterculture in the June 1970 issue of Commentary, using what he would later call “the definitely provocative style that would

\textsuperscript{10} In the United States, the counterculture of the 1960s became identified with the rejection of conventional social norms of the 1950s. Counterculture youth rejected the cultural standards of their parents, especially with respect to racial segregation and initial widespread support for the Vietnam War.
typify this phase of Commentary's history.” (Friedman: 187) Bell described that the counterculture proved to be a conceit:

“It was an effort, largely a product of the youth movement, to transform a liberal life-style into a world of immediate gratification and exhibitionistic display. In the end, it produced little culture and countered nothing.” (Bell: 81)

Indeed, it was a critical test for the American Jewish community. The mushrooming of such problems tested their nerves for many years. Memories about the Holocaust were still fresh in people's mind, as were memories of McCarthy's “political thuggery” and the 1956 Israel’s war with Arab nations. The period of baby boom\textsuperscript{11} brought prosperity for American Jews. They quickly established them into the America’s political, economic and cultural life. While Jews were integrating, they were also actively considering rehabilitation of the poorest in the society.

For Kristol, it was a birth of the New Class which grew out of the expansion of higher education and enormous increase in the number of college-educated individuals.

The New Class, Kristol argued, wished to redistribute power to government (in which members of the New Class, as intellectual and technical elite, would play a dominant role). (Friedman: 188)

The conservative philosophy believes that in order to make high growth, there should not be government with high level of regulations. Kristol believed government's burden should be reduced to find a solution to problems.

In the late 1960s, however, the once potent moral influence of anti-communist liberalism was shattered by the radical movement that erupted in response to the Vietnam War. If cultural nationalism encouraged Blacks to adopt self-interested positions, Jewish neoconservatives said that they should also afford the same opportunity to advance their own social ideals. (Dollinger: 224) This led to Jewish way of setting things, on the lines

\textsuperscript{11} The United States experienced an “explosion” of births after American soldiers returned home from World War II. The sociologists define those born between (and including) 1946 and 1964 as baby boomers.
of Black’s position in the 1960s. Jews felt like taking tips from the Blacks. The Jews were bold and were not ashamed of learning from the poor ethnic group.

“Marxist Zionist ideology with the ethnic politics of 1960s America, Jews paralleled their love of Israel to the spirit of African American ethnic nationalism. Just as militant civil rights workers argued that their white purges amounted to nothing less than “Black Zionism,” more and more American Jews looked to the Jewish state as a source of ethnic pride.” (Dollinger: 224)

The comprehensive victory of Israel in the 1967 war was a matter of pride for American Jews. But some Blacks questioned Jewish support to Israel. It heightened the feelings of anti-Semitism. With the Blacks asserting themselves, they elbowed Jews out of the civil-rights movement. It was a setback for the decade-old friendship between both the communities. Most accounts of the demise of the black-Jewish alliance, for instance, date the dissolution of that alliance to the growth of black militancy and rising incidence of black anti-Semitism from the mid-sixties on, rather than to any earlier conflicts between Jews over what Jews’ obligations to other groups should be. (Staub: 6)

Since its inception, affirmative action has been a problem for the American Jewish community. When the Democratic Party supported affirmative action programs and acknowledged group-based social inequality, many one-time liberal Jews bolted, charging that cultural nationalism diverted liberalism away from its consensus oriented and rights-based values. (Dollinger: 224)

Due to centuries of subjugation and slavery, the African-Americans felt affirmative action is the key to advancement in American society. Jews, on the other hand, felt quota had an adverse effect, who always believed in progress achieved through merit. They felt, education was the tool for success and gateway to American societal integration. Jews believed in working hard and improving their life through merit. They thought since certain groups had in the past faced discrimination in attaining positions of wealth and influence, members of these groups should not be compensated with favored status. The 1960s brought many changes to the American Jewish community.
“The 1960s marked the rise of Jewish pride, witnessed a revitalization of religious communal commitments, and saw the revival of Jewish particularism as a crucial counterpoint to a liberal-left Jewish universalism. In these and other respects, Jews remade themselves as they transformed the nation in this critical period.” (Staub: 25)

The hippie culture, though, made considerable presence in America, leading to the decline of the family system. Throughout the United States, illegitimacy and single parenthood increased. Marriages failed in all income and ethnic groups.

“Divorce became the rule rather than the exception. Great number of young people postponed marriage or abandoned the institution altogether in pursuit of individual self-fulfillment. With the traditional family under attack, parental discipline weakened. Crime rates rose precipitously.” (Friedman: 186)

Neoconservatives believed that the culture must enforce its moral standards independent of the law. (Gerson: 278) As crime became a matter of increasing concern to Americans in the late sixties, Jewish groups felt it was the fallout of a deeper malaise stemming from poverty, hopelessness, and discrimination. (Friedman: 42) Roger Kimball, one of the new group critics, traced the origins of the cultural revolutions to the avant garde writers of the Beat Generation of the 1950s: Their programmatic anti-Americanism, their avid celebration of drug use, their squalid, promiscuous sex lives, their pseudo – spirituality, their attack on rationality and degradation of intellectual standards, their aggressive narcissism and juvenile political posturing: in all this and more, the Beats were every bit as ‘advanced’ as any Sixties radical. (Friedman 190) Contrary to Marx’s assertion that capitalism had transformed families into inanimate articles of commerce, Gertrude Himmelfarb found working-class Victorian family-oriented and stable. (Friedman: 190)

Separation of Church and State

America is by and large a secular nation where every religion has the freedom to practice its beliefs. America has remained ‘truly secular,’ but taking oaths in the name of the Almighty ‘In God we trust’, celebrating various festivals in the White House and prayers in the Congress by different faiths are a few signs where religious beliefs have been
promoted by the government. In fact, it is not an overt display of religiosity, but different traditions have been kept intact. America is different from France, another secular country, where display of religious symbols is banned in the public place. The American constitution has separated the church and the state, but according to Rabbi Lapin (141) since its formation America, has maintained a Christian – Judeo tradition.

“Both American Christians and American Jews who are serious about their faith believe that the family is the fundamental building block of society. It is part of the Judeo-Christian tradition. Similarly, both religious Jews and religious Christians would believe that marriage is a religious covenant and that people ought to marry within their faith.”

For many years instances of preserving traditional institutions and values were seen in the American society. Growing demand to reconsider the topic again shows people are becoming serious over more religious participation by the state. For years, America regarded religion as a personal affair – a “habit of the heart” in Robert Bellah’s memorable phrase – that configures individual identity and moral behavior, yet remains outside the prefecture of public discourse. (Raschke 2003: 249) Americans continue to take pride in keeping religious discourse outside the public purview.

Jews, for many years, would pray and argue for the separation of the church and state. Elliott Abrams (1997: 36) writes that Jews feel safer when the society is secular. Hence they preach secularism. He poses a question, “Why have Jews come to believe this?”

“They see religion not as the guarantor of civic virtue but as the source of civic strife – and of danger for Jews. Also, because in their view a greater role for religion in American life means an increasingly Christian, and accordingly less hospitable, environment”.

The fear of Jewish leaders of the possible consequences of restoration of religion to a vital place in public life is what throws them into an alliance with the secularists and helps make their own thinking so thoroughly secular. (Sarna and Dalin 1997: 250) But Jews are slowly answering to a situation where if America becomes a religious nation, then what would happen to them. For years, Jews supported the issue of separation of
Church and State. It is only towards the end of the twentieth century that the debate over separation of church and state intensified again.

A number of Jewish writers of conservative bent, intellectuals and the Orthodox Jewish community have supported religious traditions in the public square. They argue that without religious sermon, American society has fallen, lost traditional dignity, failed on family values and there has been an increase of crime, divorce, single parenthood, drug abuse and rape. So, a section of people think that to stop the American society from falling into the trap of such perverse thing the church and state should not be separated.

The Christian right wing religious groups such as the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition started asserting their positions in early eighties. Since then, cohesiveness between religious right wing and the Republican Party have been demonstrated in elections and public discourse has set a new trend.

**Orthodox Support to Religious Values**

The Orthodox Jewish community in America has been favoring for more religious discourse. They represent an adaptable group in whatever society they have lived and have survived the worst persecutions, pogroms, anti-Semitism and Hitler's 'Final Solution'; all with the adoption and the will to survive in any kind of society. In America, Jews have accepted the fact that they live in a Christian dominant society, which is nonetheless secular. The Orthodox Jewish community believes, if people were to become more deeply religious, this would have a favorable effect upon the American society.

During the 1950s, when there was marked decline in religiosity of the American society. Many scholars thought religion would become a subject of private life. But at the same time, some people belonging to different religions favored an overt display of religious symbols in public life. In the 1950s, very few Jews would speak against the separation of church and the state. One of them was, Will Herberg. He was considered an exception among the Jewish liberals. Herberg spoke for the restoration of religion. He was very
critical of Jewish stand on liberal values. Immanuel Jakobovits, the Orthodox rabbi of the prestigious Fifth Avenue Synagogue in New York City and the future Chief Rabbi of England, joined Herberg in this appeal. Herberg and Jakobovits criticized Court decisions banning Bible reading and prayer in the public schools.

In 1958, Rabbi Arthur Gilbert also emerged as early and trenchant critic of the strict separationist position, voicing and reiterating some of Herberg's earlier concerns in a major address to the annual convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. (Dalin 2002: 295) These minority champions won support of many more people, as likes of Professor Jacob J. Petuchowski of Hebrew Union College and Seymour Siegel of the Jewish Theological Seminary. Milton Himmelfarb, editor of the American Jewish Year Book, began to eschew their earlier liberal faith in separationism and to develop a strong Jewish conservative argument for the desirability of greater religious involvement in American public life. (Dalin) They were the real founders to give a call for religion in the public space. Since 1965, the Orthodox Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA) has been helping to shape church-state debate and litigation on behalf of Jewish interests.

In the 1970s, the orthodox Jews came up with the assault on the counterculture. They favored traditional values in the public square. The emerging neoconservative thinkers, too, pushed for religion. They warned an American moral and political culture uninformed by religious beliefs and institutions undermined the position of Jews and Judaism, and the health of a democratic society. Himmelfarb (112) wrote:

"Political neoconservatism, in short, finds its equivalent on something like religious neoconservatism. This dissident Jewish culture – still very much a minority – has succeeded in affirming the religious and communal uniqueness, the particularity and integrity of the Jewish faith, without isolating or segregating itself from the country at large."

Kristol came in support of more religion and questioned the secular fabric of the American Republic. Actually his argument was based on Leo Strauss, who was one of the
frontline thinkers on imposing religion to make public in the purview of moral law, against which the society could degenerate.

No religion should determine national policy as a matter of right, but each religion must enter the fray of public debate if that discussion is to reflect the nation as a whole and if it is to attain the richness that only multiple parties with differing views can give it. Dorff: 245) The alternate position to Jewish neocons on the separation of church and state is not a surprise to anybody. Many Jews have accepted the position. The number of Orthodox Jews are growing and trying to influence others. Since 1980 to 2000, they grew from seven percent to more than 10 percent. Two decades ago, from seven percent to the double digit in 2000s, one can find changes in the American society, and number of Orthodox community is still adding due to the persistent mainstream Orthodoxy advocacy in the public square had its effect on non-Orthodox Jewry. The sight of skullcap wearing Jews at the work places in New York is its strongest effect.

Fifty years ago, religious education for Jewish children in the United States was almost exclusively an extracurricular activity, but due to a quiet revolution over the last several decades, day schools at the elementary, junior – high, and even high – school level are thriving as never before, boasting some 200,000 pupils and 700 schools around the country. Many day schools are affiliated to the orthodox Jewish communities giving them a sense of pleasure, who are advocating government aid to the religious schools. Like Separation of church and state, Liberals also do not share the concept of the Day schools. The relatively growing Orthodox Jewish community, for more than three decades, now has been championing the concept of the Day schools. Perhaps, it is because of their confidence that the Orthodox do not feel threatened by any other faith; they are too busy proselytizing among other Jews to worry about Christians proselytizing among them. (Himmelfarb: 120)

The Orthodox Jewish community questions the existence of a strict wall between the church and the state, when a military chaplain who serves in the army, be it Rabbis or from other religious priests, is paid by the federal government. They also question the
fact that the religious denomination do not get aid and tax favors from the government. They also cite the fact that when the Rabbis and other priests can go to both Houses of Congress to give blessings, then they have every right to the installation of menorah at the public place. Himmelfarb (123) writes, the Jewish religion is no longer bound by the liberal credo and they are no longer so fearful of the rhetoric of religion, which comes naturally to a benign and tolerant President, or, for that matter, of the rhetoric of morality (the "axis of evil"), which was so appropriate a response to the event of 9/11.

The idea of providing funds to the religious schools cropped up in the 1960s when there were sincere debates on role of religion on the public square. The religious Orthodox community is of the view that morality based education would be able to check the degrading moral values of the American Jewish community. They feel, over the years, the enrolment of Jewish children in the public schools has not only led to their assimilation in American society, but has resulted in the loss of ethos and culture. Also, beginning with the 1960s, the public schools were not the same in terms of education as they were before. The 1970s did not only see a vocal support by the religious schools from the Orthodox community but the other religious denomination in America shed its old position of asking money from the government.

The Chabad\textsuperscript{12} (Lubavitch) organization's vigorous campaign, beginning in the 1970s, to construct a privately funded Chanukah menorahs\textsuperscript{13} (candelabra) on public property in cities throughout the United States precipitated a heated debate within the American Jewish community whether it was constitutionally permissible and proper to do so. (Sarna: 288-289) The American Jewish community is divided on the Supreme Court's decision, in the case known as Allegheny County, City of Pittsburgh and Chabad v.

\textsuperscript{12} Chabad-Lubavitch is a Hasidic movement in Orthodox Judaism. One of the world's largest Hasidic movements, it is based in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. The Chabad promotes Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge in the Jewish society. Lubavitch is the only extant branch of a family of Hasidic groups once known collectively as the Chabad movement; the names are now used interchangeably.

\textsuperscript{13} The Menorah is lit on the eight nights of Chanukah (Hanukkah), commemorating the miracle at the Temple in Jerusalem. Since the Chanukah lights are not to be used for any work, Menorahs have a ninth candle on them, called the Shamash, used to light the other candles.
ACLU, ruled that a Chabad-sponsored menorah standing next to a Christmas tree in front of Pittsburgh’s City Hall did not violate the First Amendment. (Sarna)

Support for School Vouchers

Jewish parents feel that the only way to save their culture is to send children to the day schools, so that they can understand more about the Jewish religion and customs. But the day schools require greater funds to meet the burden of modern curriculum and religious education. With the Jewish financers disappearing fast, the schools find themselves in a bigger crisis. In order to sustain and operate the schools, the Jewish Orthodox community along with other religious groups are voicing for school vouchers. Vouchers promised a financial support to fledgling Jewish day schools, and the end of the secular activist Jewish-liberal alliance heralded a renewed emphasis on Jewish education. (Dollinger: 225)

School vouchers, though not meant for state funding of religious schools, is to make school choice for those children who cannot afford it. The parents simply see increased voice for providing good schools are making the cause for school vouchers stronger and known. In the 1990s, a number of state legislatures experimented with voucher plans, and at least in one case, the Milwaukee plan*14, students attending Jewish day schools were beneficiaries of a voucher program. (Wertheimer 229)

The RJC believes that to oppose vouchers is inconsistent with the effort to strengthen financial support and state sponsorship for religious schools. They also support that every child should go to school and support President Bush’s program ‘No Child Left Behind.’ Jewish neoconservatives, by linking the cultural nationalist’s goal of “turning inward” to the Republican Party, redefined the politics of acculturation and forced their more

---

14 Milwaukee’s plan began as an experiment nearly 20 years ago. It was first limited to non-sectarian private schools, but religious institutions were admitted into the program after a state Supreme Court ruling in 1998. The study reported that 20,244 students are taking part in the voucher program. Many attend religious schools. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reports that one institution, St. Anthony Catholic School, has 1,021 voucher students, reported.
progressive co-religionists to fully consider the implications of their newfound liberalism. (Wertheimer)

Not only the Jewish orthodox community's day schools are mushrooming, but there is also a growth of Conservative and the Reform movement schools. These schools are openly lobbying for higher government grants so that the promise of day school education is not ignored.

"In 1940, teachers were asked what they regarded as the three major problems in American schools. They identified the three major problems as: littering, noise, and chewing gum. Teachers in the 1990s were asked what the three major problems in American schools were, and they defined them as: rape, assault, and suicide." (Sternberg: 111)

So in the light of such developments, which is harming the education system, the decibel of religious schools and school choices are bound to increase. But their only problem is that they are not getting broader public support. This means that from the liberal Jews who still carry the notion of separation of church and state, and for them, school vouchers serve one of them. Lamm (2005: 251) wrote:

“If we have to make concessions on the issue of separation of church and state in order to be able to get enough money to help our educational systems survive, so be it. It is no great patriotic act of a questionable political ideology. Survival of the Jewish people is not a goal to be lightly dismissed.”

**Intermarriages**

Today cutting across the Jewish denominations in the US, the Jewish population is decreasing except for the Orthodox ones. The decline is not due to the American Jews making *aliyah*\(^{15}\) to Israel, but the intermarriages of Jews with other faith have posed

\(^{15}\) *Aliyah* is widely regarded as an important Jewish cultural concept and a fundamental concept of Zionism that is enshrined in Israel's Law of Return, which accords any Jew deemed as such by *halakha* and/or Israel secular law and eligible non-Jews with immediate Jewish relatives, the legal right to assisted immigration and settlement in Israel, as well as automatic Israeli citizenship.
threat to the Jewish community. It has become one of the highly debated topics in the American Jewish community. The National Jewish Population Study survey of 1990 has found intermarriages in the Jewish community increased dramatically over the course of the second half of the twentieth century. For the last three decades, the rate of intermarriage is growing.

But before 1970, percentage of intermarriage that is a Jew marrying a non-Jew was just 13 percent. (Table 1) But since 1985, the rate of increase in intermarriages has maintained a steady growth as the rates of intermarriages have stabilized in the mid-40% range. The intermarriage rate was 43% for Jews during 1991-95. It increased even further during 1996-2001, when the percentage of intermarriage came around 47%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year marriage began</th>
<th>Percent intermarried</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1970</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1979</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1984</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-1990</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1995</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-2001</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The pattern of Jewish outmarriage over three generations in America was like that of Japanese-Americans: little outmarriage in the immigrant group, more in the second generation, and substantially more in the third. (Abrams: 102) It has been observed that the third immigrant generation actually becomes a naturalized member. With Jews moving up in the social and economic ladder and also moving out of the cities as once they used to live in a group, it is accepted that intermarriages will increase.
The result of intermarriage is being seen now: the majority of new “Jewish” households formed in the United States now consist of one Jew and a gentile who has not converted to Judaism. (Abrams: 100) Some see it positively, but many, who do not support intermarriage, see it as a silent Holocaust. Apart from intermarriages, more young Jewish women are career oriented. They prefer career to household, so the marriage is not taking place at the right time and indeed, with career on high on mind, many prefer to remain childless.

The Orthodox Jewish group, however, is unaffected by the rising intermarriages. They solve problem by providing Jewish education to the children. Orthodox parents and the Day schools seem to give their children enough reasons to stay Jew. They feel that children stick to their customs and adhere to values even after they are grown up. Somehow, they reach adulthood with solid answers to the question of “why be Jewish?” and “how to remain Jewish?”

“The greater one’s Jewish education, the less likely one is to intermarry. 43 percent of those who lacked any Jewish education intermarried, 29 percent among those who had one day per week of Jewish education intermarried, 23 percent of those who had part-time Jewish education intermarried, and only 7 percent of those who attended Jewish day school or yeshiva intermarried.”

Debate on Abortion

Today abortion is a fiercely debated issue among Jews and other Americans too. For Jews who believe in pro-life, abortion debate is an integral struggle of the culture war with their fellow liberals who are in favor of abortion or pro-choice. Describing the family as the essential unit out of which all deeper attachments grew, Moses Hess, alerts in Rome and Jerusalem, to both the resiliency of the Jewish nation as well as to the strains that have kept Jews as such small people. (Wisse 1992: 93)

The Jewish family used to be conceived – at least from the outside – as the very model of solidity, compensating through the cohesion of its membership for the pursuing assaults
that were launched against it. (Wisse) For Don Feder (1996: 100), gay rights and abortion are destroying the very fabric of Jewish values:

Abortion advocacy and gay rights share the same premises. Both are breaking down societal restraints and advancing the concept of absolute autonomy in the sexual realm. Both want a Cole Porter society in which moral sense, "anything goes." The two movements have a synergetic effect; they simultaneously enhance and advance each other.

The cost of living in America is exuberantly high. With taxes to pay, many mothers who advance their career to bear the brunt of living family go for abortion. So in America, women have to spend half of their income on availing the best facilities and pay taxes. This leads to compromising on having a kid. On emerging debate of pro-choice and pro-life, Michael Lapin (Interview: 2005), a member of RJC, California chapter who votes for Republican Party says:

"Life should not be like buying or selling object. Life is not like a market where you go to purchase or sell object... I respect life and abortion means a life which was to come, wouldn’t come any more... the concept of abortion is difficult to digest as the foundation of America was based on Judeo-Christian belief."

The orthodox Jewish community has resisted the idea of abortion for long. Orthodox Jews generally tend to have more kids. So it is seen that when all other Jewish denominations are not adding their tally, it is the orthodox group, who have kept the tradition and beliefs besides carrying big families. Most orthodox view that the gay rights and abortion are closer to the Christian beliefs that drive the GOP agenda. The orthodox leaders embrace charitable choice and school vouchers, believing that Republican policies can aid Jewish education. The Orthodox Jews believe that abortion, though not considered murder, should be strongly discouraged.

"Although Jewish tradition does not regard abortion as murder, it is a practice that is discouraged and is considered to be a sin. At best, during the first forty days of pregnancy, an argument is made by some Jewish scholars that the soul has not yet entered the body of the fetus, and therefore, an abortion during that period does not carry the same condemnation as those preformed at a later period. There is also today some evidence that brain waves and heartbeats do not commence until roughly forty days have
passed since inception, which would tend to support the prior statement.” (Sternberg: 102)

So Judaism has always come to the defense of life. And Jews, who support pro-life, see it as an excellent opportunity to increase the Jewish population in America, which is decreasing due to assimilation, intermarriage and abortion. The orthodox also cite principles of Halacha\(^{16}\) (Jewish Life), which details responsibilities towards parents, spouses, children, strangers, the poor, employees, employers, customers, and community. Jews, who support the Republican ideologies, in nutshell feel there should be emphasis on family values. According to Halacha, Parents should spend more time with their children teaching values, which is ignored by many parents as a lot of energy goes in earning money and leaves a huge void in family togetherness and child development. So the conservatives think that unless the government stays entirely out of business, taxation, and education, it has to make decisions that will encourage one or the other path. (Lapin: 196)

Though the historical ties with the New Deal are slowly fading away for the Jewish community, Jews who even vote for Republicans are generally liberal on abortion and stem cell research. Josia Michael, a college student and a young Jewish Republican from Los Angeles tends to be liberal on the issue of abortion. She supports pro-choice but emphasizes that if somebody wants to go for abortion then it is okay. (Michael: 2005, Interview)

In 1998, when Republican Party considered a proposal to slash funds to candidates who did not support the ban on “partial-birth abortion,” Jewish Republicans worked very hard to defeat the proposal. The RJC is of view the Republican Party should follow a “big tent philosophy,” in which every creed, religion and ethnic group comes under the Republican umbrella, to widen the GOP base of the country. In Judaism, the life of the mother takes

\(^{16}\) Halakha or Halacha is the collective body of Jewish religious law, including biblical law (the 613 mitzvot) and later talmudic and rabbinic law, as well as customs and traditions. Judaism classically draws no distinction in its laws between religious and ostensibly non-religious life. Hence, Halakha guides not only religious practices and beliefs, but numerous aspects of day-to-day life. Halakha is often translated as “Jewish Law”, although a more literal translation might be “the path” or “the way of walking.”
precedence over her unborn child. Jews are raised with the feeling that they are part of a community, and have to contribute to the well-being of all, as the world is the Jew’s congregation.

Science, technology, and free markets, unshackled by external restraints of religion and ethics, have become powerhouses creating economic abundance and material well-being. At the same time, unsanctified polity and secular society have been spared the noxious effects of religious intolerance and have enjoyed the benefits that flow from the personal freedoms of thought, association, and expression that many religions have typically been unwilling to allow. In theory, politics could tend to the common good while economic life secures the production and consumption of a steadily increasing level of goods and services, and the family sphere could promote the values of love, intimacy, and mutual aid while the religious sphere teaches basic morality and ritually sanctifies the life cycle moments between birth and death.

**Republican Jews and the Foreign Policy**

While the Republican Jews have taken strong positions on social, economic and domestic political issues, some of them also had strong views on critical foreign policies of the country. Since the US entered the Cold War in the late 1940s, with the long - telegram from George F. Kennan, America’s Ambassador to the erstwhile USSR, both the parties – Republican and Democrat have approved of American defense throughout the world with strong anti-Communist policies. Since then foreign policy has been a major theme in Presidential elections, and those candidates who appear dovish on such issues are relegated to the dustbin. George McGovern met this fate in the 1972 election.

Since 1950s, America has always put its ideologies to save its own interests. It does not hesitate sending armies or allying with like-minded countries such as Great Britain as it did during the Cold War to defeat communism and defeat the Islamic fundamentalists in the 1990s. Be it Eisenhower in Korean War or Kennedy – putting America into the space, LBJ – Vietnam War, Nixon – Stockpiling of nuclear arsenals, Reagan – Communism as
an evil-empire, Bush Sr. – Operation Desert Storm, George W. Bush – the end of Saddam Hussein’s regime, each and every President has implemented his foreign policy curriculum to serve America’s interest.

During 1960s, America suffered setbacks from the Soviets in terms of launching mission to the Space. Moreover, there was a loss in the Vietnam War. With the television beaming the bodies of American soldiers who died in the Vietnam War, the public resentment grew. President Johnson’s policies came under fire. They started baying for LBJ’s blood chanting, “Hey, Hey, LBJ, How Many Kids Did you kill today?” With LBJ receiving flak from general audience on both fronts – domestic as well as foreign, and with 1968 presidential election being round the corner, he had no choice but to come on television and say, “I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your president.”

With the American foreign policy shaking in the late 1960s, Nixon came to power armed with new ideas of foreign policy to contain the Soviets. It was the same time when world entered into a new phase of the Cold war. Richard Nixon had a long history of anticommunism, both of the honorable variety (he played a leading role in exposing Alger Hiss’s lies) and of the dishonorable sort (he ran a Red-baiting Senate campaign in California against Helen Gahagan Douglas in 1950, accusing the actress turned – Congresswoman of being “pink right down to her underwear”) (Michlethwait and Wooldridge 2004: 68)

The conservatives and the incipient neoconservatives pushed for a new era of “realism” in foreign policy in the Nixon administration. This led to ouster of US forces from Vietnam. Nixon also shook hands with Mao to defeat the Soviets in its own backyard. With the passage of Jackson – Vanik Amendment in 1973, the rights of Jews in the Soviet Union had become the precondition for US – Soviet economic negotiations.

---

Jackson – Yanik changed the status of the Jewish community in another, more subtle way:

“Jews became the poster children of a renewed Cold War. The credibility of American anti-Communism, crippled by the McCarthy excesses of the 1950s, had been utterly decimated by the Vietnam debacle. Jackson – Yanik gave it new life by giving it a new moral argument. The Jewish lobby, for years a central element in coalitions of the liberal left, now became an important factor on the national – security – minded right. In fact, the Jewish community now assumed a crucial role in Washington: it was one of the only major players with close ties to both the left and the right. Suddenly the Jews were power brokers.” (Michlethwait and Wooldridge: 175)

Nixon saw in the neoconservatives, who wanted strong American defense abroad, more than just an explanation for Jewish unease. (Goldberg 1997: 161) He saw them as a way into the hearts and minds – and the pocketbooks of America’s increasingly affluent and increasingly insecure Jewish community. (Goldberg) The events of 1967 and 1968, so unsettling for many Jews, merely confirmed what the neoconservatives had been saying all along: that the world was a dangerous place; that the most dangerous force in it was Soviet communism; that the conflict between communism and democracy was not a negotiable spat but a war between good and evil; and, that the anti-imperialist struggles of the Third World – including black radicalism in America – were just one more assault on democracy. (Goldberg: 160-161)

The 1972 election was a turning point for neoconservatives to take part in the power game operating from Washington DC. Neoconservatives were pursuing that Nixon administration should favor more internationalist approach. Nixon favored policy of détente with the Soviets and resulted in Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) with the Soviets. The Nixon administration’s policy of détente had accommodated the status quo by relying heavily on a huge build-up of nuclear weapons by both the United States and the USSR to maintain the peace. (Friedman: 137) At the same time Jewish neoconservatives were preparing a policy which would help America stand up in the Cold War with strong hands.
The new President, Gerald Ford, who came to power in 1974 in the wake of Nixon’s resignation, continued the foreign policy more or less in the same way as his predecessor. He let Kissinger continue in the office as the Secretary of the State. Middle East was the pet theme for many Presidents in America. But Ford adopted a different approach to solve the ongoing crisis. He provided aid to both Israel and Egypt, and persuaded both the sides to accept an interim truce agreement. There was a new era of curb of nuclear weapons limitation with former USSR during Ford regime. But it was again with suspicion of a growing Soviet military threat and increased arms buildup plus continuing criticism of the policy of détente caused considerable pressure for greater American defense capability.

In the 1976 election, Ford lost to Jimmy Carter by a narrow margin, which led to a new era of policies. In fact, the policies favored by the Democrats, basically is in contrast to that of the Republicans.

In the late 1970s two things happened: first, the Iran Revolution, which overthrew American support for the Shah Regime, and secondly, the Soviet invasion of the Afghanistan. Both incidents took place at a time when the White House had a Democratic President. Within a year both the incidents had a telling effect on the American presidential election. From 1977 to 1981, during Jimmy Carter’s Presidency, the neocons felt that the outcome of the Cold War was seriously in doubt as America was already bruised in Asia by Iran and Afghanistan events.

Ronald Reagan, who was nominated by the Republican Party in 1980 to contest the presidential election, had a different plan for achieving victory in the Cold War. Reagan knew Soviet Union’s internal weaknesses early on and made every effort to capitalize on them. As early as 1963, he declared that the United States was the most efficient and powerful economic machine in the world and that Russia and China, by contrast were “in the grip of modern-day feudalism.” (Friedman: 152) Reagan started his office with a bang against Soviets during his speech after he entered the White House in 1981. An optimistic Reagan said that in the war against the communists, America would beat the Soviets.
There were liberal writers like Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and John Kenneth Galbraith, who viewed the USSR as a better country and praised it for its management skills. Galbraith even published a glowing appraisal of Soviet economics, explaining, “The Russian system succeeds because, in contrast to the Western industrial economies, it makes full use of its manpower. (Schweizer 1994: xiv) The liberal establishment expressed open angst about Reagan’s intention to build up the U.S. military, including nuclear arsenal. But the Reagan administration was full of thinkers who would always think for giving setback to the Soviets.

When in power, Reagan’s defense build up of the 1980s was an effort to attach social forces with a stake in defense programs to the GOP, while creating a governing apparatus that could supplant institutions of the domestic stake linked to the Democrats. (Ginsberg: 199) With Reagan in office, it was a home treatment for the neocons, as they quickly grabbed the offices, given by the Reagan administration. The defense budget was doubled in 1987 to more than $330 billion. Reagan, with a strong American identity and foreign policy, believed that it would discourage Soviet adventurism. The neocons started devising concepts on how to tackle the Soviets, and influence American policy abroad so as to not to repeat the same mistakes made by the Carter administration.

Paul Nitze, former Under Secretary of State Eugene Rostow and former Treasury Secretary Charles Walker founded the Committee on the Present Danger (CPD). They were heavily funded by Who’s Who of the American defense contractors. A number of Jewish neoconservatives became active in this committee. Prominent among them were Richard Allen, who served as National Security Adviser during Reagan’s first term, William Casey, who was appointed by Reagan to head the Central Intelligence (CIA), and Richard Perle, also a neocon who became Deputy Secretary of Defense and carved a niche in the Pentagon and more so made his department as “little State Department” because it encompassed the full range of policy, from relations with the Soviet Union, NATO, and Europe to economic and strategic issues. (Friedman: 156)
During Reagan’s first term thirty-three CPD members received appointments. With sharp knowledge and volumes of information about the Soviet Union, Richard Perle proposed several plans to contain the Soviets. He laid a plan which included removal of all missiles from Europe by America and the Soviets. His policy was opposed by the State Department; but it had the consent of President Reagan. With the help of a small Reagan “Cell” in the State Department, including world political analyst, John Lenczowski, the United States Information Agency (USIA), the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty were all strengthened.

The neoconservatives who pushed for a strong foreign policy presented forcing foreign policy gospel to Reagan. Reagan’s speech was mainly influenced by the neocons spin-doctors. Friedman (155) analyzed:

“Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), derided by critics as a costly “star wars” (from the science fiction film) fantasy, drew strong support from Perle. Reagan viewed SDI as a population shield that would employ modern technology to destroying incoming missiles. The concept came from Edward Teller, a distinguished, albeit eccentric, nuclear physicist refugee, who shared Reagan’s hard-line views about dealing with the Soviet Union. Reagan pushed the initiative on his own. SDI would never be a perfect shield, but even an imperfect shield was better than nothing.”

Besides Richard Perle, there was another Richard in the Reagan administration. Richard Pipes joined the National Security Council in the Reagan administration, and was the architect of NSD 75. Pipes known as a Scoop Jackson democrat in the 1970s and key anti-Soviet crusader served as the advisory member of the Ford administration. Pipes later formulated a policy- how to tackle and weaken the Soviet Union.

“The NSSD 75 determined that the US had to pursue three objectives: weakening the Soviet economy further, weakening the power and privileged position of its leadership elite, and gradually democratizing the Soviets. By forcing them to compete with us in a military build-up, we would create further pressures on the regime and among its satellites and substantially lower its rate of growth and capital investment. NSSD 75 declared that the Soviets should be denied access to the West’s technology.” (Friedman: 175)
The way neocons in the Regan administration built America's defense abroad caught the attention of the Soviets who made efforts to catch up with America's defense structure, thus making them financially weak. This has a lot to do with the pushing toward the end of the Cold War in the late eighties. The neocons not only scripted such steps with the help of defense contractors but also pressed the policy of 'Democracy' and 'Human Rights' in order to achieve free world and get rid of communism. Reagan's commitment to democracy was not just rhetorical. Dictators like Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines and "Baby Doc" Duvalier of Haiti departed with direct U.S. political help.

The matter of Human Rights Violation on Soviet Jews was actively raised by the Reagan administration. When Theodore Mann returned from his first visit to the Soviet Union as head of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry in 1981, the first call he received in his law office was from Reagan. In his talks with the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Reagan raised the issue of conditions of Jews living in the Soviet Union. Due to the pressure generated by the USA, finally USSR bulked and paved way for emigration of Soviet Jews. Friedman (155) wrote that it was a foreign policy triumph for neocons, but for Max Kampleman, it was a personal:

"Kampleman criticized détente as a one-way street and denounced the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He also took the Russians to task for arresting a "refusenik" leader who had sought to leave the Soviet Union. Like other neocons, Kampleman believed in blunt talk. "Negotiations without confrontation was a charade." Coming from a Jewish background, Kampleman had been active in the CPD, serving as its counsel. Like the other neocons, he believed the Cold War was not to be managed; it had to be won."

Notably it was not that the neocons always achieved success, some policies backfired too. In Iran-Contra Affair, the Reagan administration received flak from all nook and cranny. When the Cold War came to the Western Hemisphere, the Nicaragua case was built up, though with adverse Congress, the Reagan administration could not put the same pressure on Dictator Ortega, as on the Soviets. The Reagan administration wanted to kill two birds with one stone. Basically it was a covert operation to deliver Nicaragua rebels funds by selling arms to Iran and secure American hostages held by pro-Iranian group in Lebanon. But here too, like Iran – Contra affairs, military aid to the Contras in Nicaragua became
public, were criticized and resulted in slowing down efforts in Nicaragua. In 1983, Reagan ordered a strike against Grenada, which was quickly overrun. (Friedman: 173)

But in the end, the Cold War success brought a smile to the US policy, because they studied the process, they were effective in keeping and building pressure against the Soviets, the neocons spin – doctors harnessed their own intellectualism effectively. With Reagan’s help, the marriage was convenient and the end product better. By the second half of the 1980s, the very force of Perle’s ideas, and the fierce energy he exerted in advancing them, made him perhaps the central figure here, save Reagan himself. (Friedman: 160)

However, the completion of the two terms of Reagan did not bring the neoconservative revolution to its logical conclusion. George H.W. Bush entered the White House, riding piggyback on Reagan revolution. His initial days saw a different world – triumph of capitalism over communism, in the form of flattened Berlin Wall and two Germanys united, overthrowing of Communism from the Eastern European countries. Bush Sr. did not need the same energy to pursue as Reagan did, as he was just reaping the fruits of Reagan administration’s hard work in defeating communism.

With the threat of communism gone, America had to face yet another difficult battle in Asia, as Saddam Hussein had captured Kuwait. In 1991, America and allied forces successfully engineered a defeat to Saddam’s forces. Here again the neocons who were scripting the policy for communism defeat, sat down for another challenge. With no opposition like Soviets this time, winning the war was easy. However, a different war cropped up later as ugly heads of fundamentalism raised their heads targeting the United States. After the end of the Cold War, more anti-American sentiments took birth in the Middle East region.

In the 1980s, when the US and Soviets were at loggerheads, Islamic militancy had surfaced, but was not taken seriously then. America ignored the fact during the 1980s and most of 1990s that the hands of Islamic terrorisms were spreading to different parts of the
world in forms of suicide bombing. America was too busy in defeating communism than putting a check on the growth of Islamic terrorism during this period. In the mid-1990s, the post-Cold War debate on America, started taking a definite shape. During Bill Clinton’s first tenure, the issue of Islamic militancy did not catch the same attention as it did during his second term. The 1998 attack by Al-Qaida on the US embassy in Kenya and other African countries led to the new demand of US intervention in terms of Islamic militancy growing under the aegis of al-Qaeda Chief, Osama Bin-Laden.

The Republican Party returned to the White House after a gap of eight long years. The 2000 election was closely contested between Democratic candidate Al Gore and Republican George W. Bush, in which Republicans won by a fraction of votes. With him the neoconservatives were back, who had previously worked with the Reagan and Bush Sr. administration. Initially, neocons were not very active in the administration.

The attack on the 9/11 pushed America into a new war, which was unleashed by the likes of al-Qaeda terrorists. Four planes were hijacked, two hit the twin towers in New York, one the Pentagon building in Virginia. The Americans were shell-shocked, so was the Bush administration. It had to prepare for another fight where enemies were not directly visible and they were fighting with different tactics. The Bush doctrine pushed for greater American involvement, which has been driven by the neocons in and around the administration. These included Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Ken Adelman, Lewis Libby, and Douglas Feith. They were assisted by William Kristol, David Wurmser, Joshua Muravchik and others, who are either publishers or intellectuals in think tanks with close connections to the White House.

9/11 changed the scenario; since then the Bush administration favored more pre-emptive strikes. Soon, the war on Afghanistan was launched with the aim to nab the “big daddy” of all Islamic terrorism – Osama Bin Laden. The success in Afghanistan did not stop Bush administration to think bigger.
In January 2002, President Bush addressed the nation and identified three nations as a part of “axis of evil.” These were Iran, Iraq and North Korea. According to the administration, Iran and Iraq were engineering Islamic militancy and nuclear proliferation, while the case against North Korea was purely proliferation of nuclear weapons. By now, Neocons had gained importance as their influence increased after 9/11. After a brief flurry of activities to win the Arab support for the war on Afghanistan, Bush began to connect America’s struggle against terrorism with Israel’s fight against Palestinian suicide bombers.

In a major speech before the National Endowment for Democracy on November 7, 2003, President Bush again challenged Iran, Syria, and two Middle Eastern allies, Saudi Arabia and Egypt to embark upon democratic reform and to view the overthrow of Saddam Hussein as a watershed event in the global democratic revolution. (Friedman: 239-140) So with the Bush speech, Reaganism possibly made a come back, because it was in his time, when America for the first time, had raised its voice for more Democracy and Human Rights implementation around the world.

The Iraq war started in March 2003 and within a month of falling of the statue of Saddam Hussein; the Iraqi citizens were welcoming and celebrating the end of tyranny. But the actual war continued. The fall of Saddam failed to kill the spirit of Islamic terrorists who targeted American soldiers at different places in Iraq. Cohen (2005: 26) writes launching a war is like rolling a giant stone down a mountain slope strewn with rocks: we cannot predict where the avalanche will go:

“The liberation of Iraq was a good thing in and of itself; the language of freedom that accompanied it has had a salutary effect in Lebanon, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Arab World; and American military prowess, produced good results in Libya. But it is no doubt true that the war increased antipathy to the United States in the Arab World, and in the short run has stimulated the recruitment of terrorists.” (Cohen)

Many American Jews have supported the President Bush’s policies on the ‘war on terror.’ Those who are considered as swing voters and generally do not cast their ballot for the Republicans too have changed. They feel it is the administration’s prerogative that
America should be protected by any kind of evil. Kelly Ramot, a liberal Democrat and a Jew, living in San Francisco, one of the most liberal cities of America does cast her ballot in favor of the Democratic Party. But Ramot (2005: personal interview) supported the Bush administration on the war on terror:

“I absolutely support the war on Iraq and America’s position on the war on terror and Democrats are wrong on this. I absolutely support the war on Iraq because it will help Israel. Saddam Hussein was bad – he was bad for America and for Israel. The world is better placed after he is gone. From that point of view I am very conservative. I think social issues are dividing factor between both the parties right now.

Jews want that the Republican Party should be a little more moderate, so that it captures the imagination of each and every ethnic group living in America. Newton Gingrich’s ‘Contract with America’ surely led to the revival of the Republicans in the House since 1994 and also Senate in the 2000s. Jews who are close to the Republican ideologies and Party’s philosophy throw opposition to those ideas within the party which they do not like or even think are inimical to the group.

But GOP, sure for many reasons, is attracting a number of immigrants into the party. Some shining examples are Bobby Jindal Congressman from Louisiana, Arnold Schwarzenegger – Governor of California, George Pataki - Governor of New York and apart from the Russian Jewish immigrants who put their weight behind the Republican Party. Also, the second-generation immigrants see the Republican Party differently from their parents and grand parents. Whitman (2005: 9) writes Schwarzenegger and Pataki represent nearly one of every five Americans:

“Showcasing them and their brand of moderates isn’t pretending to be something the party isn’t. It is showcasing a vital, and substantial, element of the party without which Republicans would quickly become a marginalized force in the American politics. The popularity of these moderate leaders points the way what more the party can become if it will only commit to making room – real room – in the leadership for moderates.”

Except for the Orthodox Jewish community, most of the Jews who are attached with the Republican Party favor moderates, who have been trying to bring the party back toward
the productive center except for the more assertive foreign policy ideology. But it is the charm of Republicanism and the Republican Party that has helped it occupy the White House most of the times since 1968. For Jews choosing the Republican Party, even though they form only a minority among the Jewish community, they feel the party should not only remain the flag-bearers of the WASP.