American Jews are generally known to possess a “liberal outlook” and they are traditionally identified as a major Democratic voting bloc. But for more than two decades, the issue of Jewish attachment to the Democratic Party has come under close scrutiny. The formation of the National Jewish Coalition (later renamed as the Republican Jewish Coalition) in 1985 seeking Jewish representation in the Republican Party was a significant development in the US domestic politics. The Republican Party has demonstrated that it not only has become the “pro-Israel party,” but it is committed to building and expanding its support in the Jewish community.

This new breed of Jews has gone against the liberal views of their fore-fathers. The divide between Democrats and Republicans has only emerged in response to very dramatic changes in US policy towards Israel. And it is Republican Jews that are taking a stand, Republican Jews that are speaking out, and Republican Jews that unconditionally support Israel. Jewish Republicans tend to have very conservative views on national security, but lean more towards the middle of the road on other issues. The source of their conservative views comes from their concern for Israel. This new breed of Jews has gone against the liberal views of their ancestors. In some places, Republican Jews have been dubbed “Uncle Jacks,” by their liberal brethren. Jews have figured prominently in Republican White Houses since Nixon, the high point being the Reagan administration.

This work is an endeavor to trace the role Republican Jewish Coalition has played formally and informally, in searching for an alternative for the American Jews since 1985. Suddenly the Jewish landscape, based on those developments, it also looks very different. The work is divided into five different chapters.

Chapter One takes into the historical perspective of the topic - the tracing of the formation of the Republican Jewish Coalition (RJC). Before that how a small brand of Jewish neoconservatives built the idea of new ideology since early 1950s. How Jews got entry into the Republican Party. The Jewish community, according to several analyses, is becoming more religious. The Orthodox community, which represents a solid base of
support for Republicans among Jews, is becoming larger within the Jewish community. Earl Raab, co-author of “Jews and the New American Scene,” once put it, “If you scratch an American Jew, you will find a Democratic voter. The complicating news today is that if you scratch somewhat deeper, you will not always find a liberal.” And here what the Republican Party has done in few decades consistently increasing its vote bank to reach out to the ethnic groups other than the White Anglo Sexon Protestants (WASP). Ronald Reagan's early presidency brought a new wave of Jews into the Republican Party; dubbed neo-conservatives, many had been followers of Democratic senators Henry “Scoop” Jackson of Washington

Among the ethnic groups which cohabits the United States of America, Jews are the most visible ones. Be it in politics, finance or culture, Jews have entrenched themselves well. In America, Jews got a foothold; political equality did not emerge immediately. The origin of the Jewish political process started in the nineteenth century, from there onwards, there is no looking back. The chapter Two analyzes the political participation, how from a small player, the Star of David rose in the New Land. In the twenty first century Jewish vote still counts. Why would Jewish vote count, despite their dwindling percentage in terms of American population? Why do lawmakers commonly cite the Jewish vote as a key factor? The Jewish monetary equations – which way they tilt, as funding is very crucial in any of the elections – be it President, Congressional or State elections. It is not only Jewish voters have cast their ballot for the Republican Presidents, but for the last three decades Jews have shown flexibility in the voting behavior of the Congressional election.

Chapter Three gives a description of how Republican Jews follow issues which are antithetical to their outlook. If there is convergence on points like security of Israel, there are also disagreements on issue like – Church-State, Pro-life and Pro-Choice debate. Amid reports of growing intermarriages and shrinking Jewish population, Jewish parents feel that the only way to save their culture is to send children to the day schools, so they can understand more about the Jewish religion and customs. Intermarriage has become a big issue of debate in the American Jewish community. The chapter also touches how the
conservative Jews were important players in changing economic outlook of the country. Since Nixon, under different Republican Presidents, the economy change from Keynesian to Milton Friedman's free market economy. For Jews, the security of state of Israel is not only the issue. They consistently follow other foreign policy like any other American. In this chapter, the neocons started devising concepts, how to tackle the Soviets during the Cold War. There were influential Jewish neoconservatives who were instrumental in the shaping up different foreign policy to take head on with the Soviets. More conservative Orthodox community; and recent immigrant populations from Russia, Syria and Iran whose backgrounds lead them to generally support a more hawkish foreign policy.

Americans predominantly supported Israel and valued her as an ally. The Republicans pursue a strong defense of Israel. The unfolding transformation of the Jewish community is coloring the debate over the latest Middle East conflict, Republican and Democratic lawmakers said. Both parties are emphasizing their commitment to Israel and looking for opportunities to portray the opposition as insufficiently supportive. The growing Republican support for Israel mainly started during the Reagan years and again under President George W. Bush, whose hostility toward Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and sympathy for Prime Minister Ariel Sharon won praise from some hardline pro-Israel groups. The Chapter Five also touches issue like association of the Christian Right and the Republican Party which started just before the 1980 presidential election. Many feel that it marked a watershed in the electoral history.

Last Chapter (Five) deals with conclusion, based on the observances in the preceding chapters.

Research Questions

The study attempted to answer important questions about the relations between Jews and the Republican Party:
• How does one define Jewish Republicans? What percentage of Jewish denomination votes for the GOP? How do the Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist view the Republican Party? What is the percentage of Jewish immigrants like Russian, German, Polish and others vote for the GOP?

• How does the Republican Party value Jewish votes despite the presence of the Christian Coalition? Are Republicans responsible for the conservative support for Israel based on the influence of largely Jewish neoconservatives and the rise of the Christian Right, with its belief that the Bible mandates support for Israel?

• Do Jews support the GOP because it insists on lowering tax to the high income brackets?

• Do the younger generations Jewish voters have a different political worldview than their parents or grandparents? Do they vote differently?

• Do Jewish vote in states such as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Florida, Michigan, California, Texas make difference to the Republican Party’s overall electoral performance?

• How is RJC different in style and function from the National Jewish Democratic Council (NJDC), which claims representation of Jewry within the Democratic Party?

Justification of the Study

The Jewish presence in the Republican Party is not a widely investigated area in the American studies, though different topics on American Jews have been extensively dealt by different scholars. It seems useful to look into a growing trend and examine the factors behind the growth of the RJC. The primary reason for selecting this topic is to study the trend established by the Jewish Republicans.