
Dual Loyalty and the “Israel Lobby”

Gabriel Schoenfeld

IN LATE August, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) hosted an event in Washington, D.C. entitled “The Israel Lobby and the U.S. Response to the War in Lebanon.” It featured two political scientists, John J. Mearsheimer, a professor at the University of Chicago, and Stephen M. Walt, a professor at Harvard and former academic dean of the university’s Kennedy School of Government. Back in March, the two men, both of whom are identified with the “realist” school in foreign policy, had stirred an intense controversy with an article in the *London Review of Books* entitled “The Israel Lobby,” which they then also published as a “working paper” on the Kennedy School’s website.

The paper—a massive 82 pages in length buttressed by 211 dense footnotes—argued that America’s special relationship with Israel, arguably an asset to the United States during the cold war, has become a “strategic liability” now that the Soviet Union is no more. Today, wrote Mearsheimer and Walt, although Israel is widely perceived as a “crucial ally in the war on terror,” in fact “the United States has a terrorism problem in good part *because* it is so closely allied with Israel” (emphasis added). Nor is Israel of value in the struggle with rogue states in the Middle East, because these states “are not a dire threat to vital U.S. interests, apart from the U.S. commitment to Israel itself.”

GABRIEL SCHOENFELD is senior editor of COMMENTARY and the author of *The Return of Anti-Semitism* (Encounter, 2004).

If the strategic case for American support is flawed, so too, according to Mearsheimer and Walt, is the moral case. As a nation that reserves special privileges for Jews, Israel is “at odds with core American values.” True, Europe’s “long record of crimes” against Jews does add up to a “strong moral case for supporting Israel’s existence,” but that does not “obligate the United States to help Israel no matter what it does today.” Besides, “the creation of Israel involved additional crimes against a largely innocent third party: the Palestinians.” Israel’s horrendous record as a human-rights violator has continued from its inception to the present day.

If both the strategic and moral cases for supporting Israel are so unpersuasive, what then, asked Mearsheimer and Walt, can explain the endurance and intimacy of the tie between it and the United States? The answer “lies in the unmatched power of the Israel Lobby”—a body mostly comprising “American Jews making a significant effort in their daily lives to bend U.S. foreign policy so that it advances Israel’s interests.” And their “significant effort” is successful. In a “situation [that] has no equal in American political history,” the ability of this domestic pressure-lobby to “manipulate the American political system” has managed to “skew” American policy in ways congruent with its own narrow loyalties—but severely detrimental to our national security.

So much for the key points of the paper. At the CAIR event in August, held at the National Press

Club and televised on C-SPAN, the two men applied their analysis to the recent war in Lebanon. “You can’t really understand what happened there,” Walt asserted, “if you don’t understand the political power of pro-Israel groups in the United States.” Mearsheimer, elaborating, then debunked the conventional view of how the Lebanon war erupted. The real *casus belli*, he explained, was not the July 12 incident in which Hizballah operatives crossed Israel’s northern frontier, kidnapped two Israeli soldiers, and killed a total of eight; that was merely a “pretext.” Rather, Mearsheimer informed the CAIR audience, “Israel had been planning to strike at Hizballah at an opportune moment”; months earlier, “key Israelis had briefed the administration about their intentions.” What is more, in those briefings the Bush administration had “enthusiastically endorsed Israel’s plans for war.” In the end, moving all the way up Washington’s chain of command, the plan even “got Bush’s endorsement.”

As for why the administration should have given Israel a green light to behave in this blatantly aggressive way toward Lebanon—a country whose new government, formed in the democratic “cedar revolution” of 2005, the U.S. was avidly supporting—an answer was not far to seek. It could be found, Mearsheimer asserted, in the facts put forward in the two men’s Kennedy School paper. For, in Lebanon as elsewhere, the “Israel Lobby,” using all the varied instruments of influence at its disposal, had “worked overtime from start to finish” to ensure that U.S. and Israeli policies were perfectly aligned.

WHATEVER ELSE can be said of the CAIR event, and of Mearsheimer and Walt’s performance at it, their view of the Lebanon war as the product of extensive collusion between Jerusalem and Washington, a collusion masterminded by the “Israel Lobby,” was certainly a novel one. Indeed, in the question period following his presentation, Mearsheimer was asked to spell out precisely what “hard evidence” existed for his startling allegation. His response: “I think from everything we know that is in the public record at this point in time, it seems quite clear that Israel had planned this event—this offensive—before July 12th.”

But this was only a restatement of his initial charge, and a partial one at that. Neither at the CAIR event nor subsequently did Mearsheimer adduce any hard evidence—or any evidence at all—in support of his claims. Nor could he, since there is nothing in the “public record” to show that Israelis briefed U.S. officials on a plan to bomb or invade Lebanon in the weeks and months before July 12.

No reputable news agency carried such a story, let alone any report of an Israeli war plan reaching all the way to the oval office and the desk of George W. Bush.

In short, the picture of collusion painted by Mearsheimer and Walt was not a correction of the historical record; it was a historical fabrication. And not merely a fabrication: it was also a slander, and one with several targets. The Bush administration was defamed, made to appear a ready pawn of forces compelling it to act in ways counter to American interests. The state of Israel was defamed, made to appear an aggressor when it acted in self-defense. Organized American Jewry was defamed, made to appear all too eager to place the interests of a foreign power—the state of Israel—ahead of those of the United States—in a word, made to appear disloyal.

But the CAIR event hardly marked the end of Walt and Mearsheimer’s recent inventions. In late September, speaking to a packed hall at New York’s Cooper Union, Mearsheimer once again put his authority as a scholar behind a central proposition laid out in his and Walt’s original paper—namely, that the “Israel Lobby” in America was “one of the principal driving forces behind” the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, and one in whose absence “we probably would not have had a war.” Not only that, he now added, but even the attacks of September 11, 2001 could be laid at the feet of this powerful domestic force. There is, Mearsheimer claimed at Cooper Union, “a considerable amount of evidence that there is a linkage between” the Islamist attacks on 9/11 and the American support for Israel ginned up by the “Lobby.”

Once again, no “considerable amount of evidence” was forthcoming for these statements, which gave the impression, instead, of passions increasingly removed from reality. But this raises the question of what, in the case of Walt and Mearsheimer, we are dealing with: objective analysis, or a species of prejudice so extreme as to border on obsession?

Interestingly enough, this is a question that they themselves were careful to address in their original paper. For, as they well recognized, the idea of out-sized Jewish influence working toward disreputable ends is a historically venerable one, and one that over the centuries has frequently been put to incendiary uses. For that very reason, they were at pains to define their own work as something entirely different, and entirely legitimate.

Thus, they blandly pointed out, it is indisputable that American Jews play an influential role in our political system and have worked through lobbying organizations like the American-Israel Public Af-

fairs Committee (AIPAC) to shape U.S. policy toward the Middle East. But, they hastened to stipulate, there is nothing wrong with that; "individuals and groups that comprise the Lobby are doing what other special-interest groups do, just much better." In choosing to tackle this particular "special-interest" group, they were insinuating "nothing improper" about its activities. They were certainly not suggesting that those activities amounted to "the sort of conspiracy depicted in anti-Semitic tracts like *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*."

Having thus disingenuously lowered the bar of legitimate criticism—it would be hard to deny that "The Israel Lobby" falls somewhat short of the *Protocols*—Mearsheimer and Walt may or may not have been prepared for the negative reaction to their paper by those, like the military historian Eliot Cohen, who did indeed brand their work as anti-Semitic, or who judged it (in the words of the strategic analyst Aaron L. Friedberg) as "an ugly accusation of collective disloyalty, containing the most unsavory of historical echoes." But whether they expected this reaction or not, they were ready for it. The charge of anti-Semitism, they parried, was itself one of the "most powerful weapons" of the "Israel Lobby," deployed precisely as a "Great Silencer" of objective criticism.

So, to ask again, what are we dealing with here: disinterested academic analysis or "an ugly accusation of collective disloyalty"? And how can we tell the difference? Glimmerings of an answer were visible in statements made at the CAIR event in August and at Cooper Union in September. But before deciding the issue on that basis alone, let us examine some relevant history.

AS A PLURALISTIC society, the United States has long wrestled with the issue posed by the foreign ties of its citizens—the issue, in short, of dual or divided loyalty. In the realm of foreign policy in particular, there has been a perennial fear that domestic interest groups will distort American priorities. In his Farewell Address, George Washington warned against "[s]ympathy for the favorite [foreign] nation facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest where no real common interest exists."

Even though the United States has proved over two centuries to be a great engine of assimilation, such fears are not *ipso facto* illegitimate. Today, the political scientist Samuel Huntington has again worried about a weakening of America's national identity through an upsurge of seemingly unassimilable elements. Latin American immigrants, partic-

ularly from Mexico, may be leading us, Huntington writes, toward a "demographic *'reconquista'* of areas Americans took from Mexico by force in the 1830's and 1840's." He points to data suggesting that Muslims, too, particularly Arab Muslims, "seem slow to assimilate compared to earlier groups" and, in one study of attitudes in Los Angeles, "do not have close ties or loyalty to the United States."

Where do American Jews, an assimilated ethnic group par excellence, fit in this picture? It is undeniable that a considerable number—the proportion in polls hovers around 75 percent—feel a strong or very strong emotional pull toward Israel. Some are drawn by the significance, after millennia of exile, of a great return to the heartland of the Jewish religion and nation; others by gratitude for the existence of a secure refuge in the wake of the Nazi cataclysm; others by simple kinship with relatives living in the Jewish state; still others by the historical-religious-cultural bond that links all Jews everywhere into a single community.

Does this pull differ in kind from that which Armenian-Americans feel toward Armenia, or Filipino-Americans toward the Philippines? Does it differ from the pull—if that is the right word—that Catholics feel toward the Vatican or Muslims toward Mecca and Medina and their co-religionists abroad? It would hardly seem so. Virtually all American citizens carry bundles of loyalties, some of them sometimes in conflict with each other, others not. The Chinese-American novelist Lan Samantha Chang, writing in the middle of the Wen Ho Lee espionage affair, quoted her father: "I love China. . . . But I am a citizen of the United States." Funeraria Latina, an American subsidiary of Service Corporation International, ships 80 percent of its Hispanic cadavers out of the United States for burial abroad. When Jerold S. Auerbach, a professor at Wellesley College, says that "my body is in the United States; my heart and soul are in Jerusalem," he is thus giving voice to a wholly American sentiment.

Of course, what bothers Mearsheimer and Walt is something more specific and much graver than sentiment—namely, the possibility (which they call a fact) that Jewish Americans have turned Israel into a "favorite nation" at the expense of the general good. In saying this, they claim to be courageously breaking a taboo. In truth, they are plowing ground that has long been finely tilled by others—some with honest intent, many out of frankly malevolent motive. Among those preoccupied with the issue have been, significantly, American Jews themselves.

AT THE beginning of the 20th century, with the growth of the Zionist movement, American Jews argued bitterly over the implications of a prospective Jewish state for Jews living in the Diaspora. Some Jewish anti-Zionists were concerned that support for a re-born Israel, even if it did not constitute treason in and of itself, would inevitably lead to allegations of dual loyalty—already well understood as a barometer of deeper anti-Jewish hostilities. Jacob Schiff, one of the wealthiest American Jews, warned that Zionist activity in the U.S. would cause Jews to be regarded “as an entirely separate class, whose interests are different than those of the American people.”

On the other side stood vigorous defenders of the idea that Zionism and Americanism were not in conflict at all. One of them was the philanthropist Cyrus L. Sulzberger, whose 1904 essay on the subject would be reissued posthumously in the middle of World War II under the title *Patriotism and Zionism: A Father's Reply To His Son*. (The son in question was the then-publisher of the *New York Times*.) In 1915, Louis D. Brandeis, not yet on the Supreme Court but already a rising star in the country's intellectual and legal firmament, added his own defense: “Let no American imagine that Zionism is inconsistent with Patriotism. Multiple loyalties are objectionable only if they are inconsistent.”

Theoretical for decades, the issue became truly joined with the birth of the Jewish state in 1948. Consider a March 1950 article in COMMENTARY, which bore the provocative title “Israeli Ties and U.S. Citizenship: America Demands A Single Loyalty.” Its author was Dorothy Thompson, a non-Jew and one of America's preeminent journalists. Her position was unequivocal.

“Each immigrant to these shores,” wrote Thompson, “came as an individual, prepared to cast off his former nationhood and enter with good faith into a new nationhood, as well as a new statehood.” Maintaining loyalty to this new collectivity, and extinguishing loyalties to previous ones, were the essence of assimilation. But now the perennial danger posed by the recrudescence of such old loyalties applied with particular force to American Jews:

The American of Jewish religion has always been, and as long as this nation holds to its basic and Constitutional principles will always be, accepted as a full and equal citizen. But sooner or later the Jewish nationalist, which today means the Israeli nationalist, will have to choose allegiances. “One cannot,” says an old Jewish proverb, “sit on one chair at two weddings.” There is no room in American nation-

ality for two citizenships or two nationalities. To say it extremely brutally: no one can be a member of the American nation and of the Jewish nation—in Palestine or out of it—any more than he can be a member of the American nation and the British or German nation.

This starkly-posed perspective was, however, only one side of the discussion. The historian Oscar Handlin, responding to Thompson in the same issue of COMMENTARY, found her argument perilously misleading. True, the xenophobia stirred by World War I had made something of a bogeyman out of the notion of a “hyphenated-American” identity. But a different American tradition was far better and more deeply established. “We never pretended,” Handlin wrote, “that any group of Americans would lack special sympathy for the country of its antecedents, that emigration would dissolve the ties of home and kin and ancient aspirations.” In this context, he continued, the fact that “Israel shares with the United States the loyalty of American Zionists is not a departure from the American pattern.”

As for American foreign policy, Handlin insisted that neither the founding fathers nor the American people ever expected it to be “significantly free of democratic control.” Quite the opposite: “the main line of American thought has recognized that foreign, like domestic, policy could produce *legitimate differences of opinion, and that the most effective way of resolving those differences is through open debate*” (emphasis in the original). Political advocacy by American Jewry in this sphere was thus fundamentally no different from similar advocacy by Italian and Irish Americans:

In all these cases particular groups of Americans sustained and supported a country with which they had hereditary ties of some sort. But they did so in terms of standards that had universal currency among all their fellow citizens—the spread of democracy through the world, the self-determination of nations, international action for peace, the desirability of aiding small peoples against great oppressors. One did not have to be a Jew or an Irishman or an Italian to find justice in these arguments.

GIVEN THEIR contemporary resonance, the contrasting ideas put forward in the Thompson-Handlin debate provide a rich intellectual background for thinking about the current controversy. Or at least they would, if Mearsheimer and Walt shared the same universe of discourse as did

Thompson and Handlin. For, whatever one might have made of Dorothy Thompson's ideas about Zionism or the place of ethnic groups in American society, she came to this debate with credentials that compelled respect. In the 1930's, she had been among the first and most consistent voices warning against the menace unfolding in Europe, and the first American correspondent to be expelled from Germany by the Nazis. Moreover, her criticisms of Zionism and American Jewry were articulated with demonstrable sympathy for the object of her admonitions. As she herself put it, she was writing in the "ardent and absolutely sincere hope that Israel will flourish and give expression to the deepest moral instincts and intellectual gifts of the Jewish religion and of Jewish cultural possibilities." In answering Thompson, Handlin for his part was acting on the principle that "honest errors are capable of rational correction."

Unfortunately, one cannot presume this of every disputant in the matter of Jewish loyalties. One could certainly not presume it when Thompson and Handlin were writing, and one cannot presume it today.¹ In the United States, as to a much greater degree in Europe, there has always lingered a strain of thought betraying a festering suspicion and hatred of Jews, a strain hardly open to "rational correction" or even to rational discussion.

In this country, to be sure, Jews enjoyed from the beginning a toleration and liberty extending far beyond anything known in Europe. Nevertheless, negative conceptions ultimately theological in nature, and with roots in New Testament teachings, continued to shape how they were regarded and treated. In the words of the radical abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, America's Jews were to be seen as "the lineal descendant of the monsters who nailed Jesus to the cross."

Frequently accompanying this major theme was a minor one, of no less antique vintage. In Garrison's disparaging words, Jews were loyal only to the "tribe of Shylock"—that is, themselves. This notion of Jewish exclusiveness and self-segregation resonated widely in pamphlets and newspapers of 19th-century America. The Jews "do not appear identified with those of the communities in which they live," wrote one complainant. Another observed that the Jew "commingles but never becomes one with; he associates but never in sufficiently intimate relations to fuse and amalgamate."

Incorrigible outsiders, Jews were also viewed, to revert to Garrison's "Shylock" image—as driven by greed and as master manipulators. "The aggregate money power of the Jews all over the world," re-

ported a reputable Catholic journal in 1889, "is something incredible. In all the leading banking institutions of the world the Jews hold the reins." This concentrated financial leverage held staggering implications for national governments: "The power of the Rothschilds, the Bleichroeders, and a host of others is so great that modern governments are practically dependent upon them in foreign policy."

EACH OF these themes was to be hugely magnified in the early and mid-20th century. For several years in the 1920's, the *Dearborn Independent*, a newspaper that Henry Ford had bought in order to peddle his ideas about the "International Jew," undertook to expose the alleged domination of Jews in many areas of American life. Such notions traced in large part to the tract from which Mearsheimer and Walt fastidiously distance themselves: the then widely circulated czarist forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. They found a receptive audience. As the historian Leonard Dinnerstein writes, "People from all walks of life, including college professors, illiterates, and large numbers of Christian ministers, sent money to Ford, praised him for his attacks on Jews, and requested additional materials for their own use."

By the 1930's, economic collapse at home and the rise of fascism abroad served to whet the appetite for such conspiracy-mongering. A note consistently struck was that the Jews were running the U.S. government from behind the curtain. The radio broadcasts of Father Charles E. Coughlin, listened to avidly by millions, were rife with denunciations of "the Frankfurters and the rest of the Jews" surrounding and allegedly controlling Franklin D. Roosevelt. A Catholic newspaper summed up:

Today there is a highly organized minority of the war party in our country. It is vocal, it is tyrannical in smearing patriotic Americans who disagree with its program. Jewry in certain aspects is a very highly organized minority. It possesses great wealth and extraordinary influence . . . and seems committed to a war program for our country.

The isolationist America First Committee, which formed in 1940 and counted Ford, Father Coughlin, and Charles Lindbergh among its backers, was to trumpet these ideas ever more loudly. Speaking on September 11, 1941 at a rally in Des Moines,

¹ It is necessary to add that, in her later writings about Israel, Thompson revealed herself to be in the grip of darker impulses.

Iowa, Lindbergh accused American Jews of trying to thrust the U.S. into a war with Germany: "Their greatest danger to this country lies in their large ownership and influence in our motion pictures, our press, our radio, and our government."

By this point, however, with portions of Europe already reduced to cinder, public receptiveness to such notions had sharply waned. Lindbergh's remarks in Des Moines were roundly denounced even in isolationist publications like Colonel Robert McCormick's *Chicago Tribune*. Three months later, the attack on Pearl Harbor put a near-total end, overnight, to the America First Committee and to anti-Semitic diatribes alike. For the duration of the war, and for decades after the revelation of the horrors committed by the Nazis, the American public seemed inoculated against any recurrence of 30's-style anti-Semitism.

In particular, after an initial flurry of concern accompanying the establishment of an actual Jewish state in the Middle East—and reflected in the 1950 debate in COMMENTARY—the charge of dual loyalty also seemed to have lost much if not all of its potency. At least, it did until fairly recent times. Thus, in the early 1980's, the novelist Gore Vidal accused American Jews of forming a Fifth Column on behalf of Israel, a "predatory people . . . busy stealing other people's land in the name of an alien theocracy." A decade later, at the time of the first Gulf war, the television personality and author Patrick J. Buchanan denounced American Jews as Israel's "amen corner" in the U.S. To this libel the columnist Joseph Sobran nodded many amens of his own.

But for the most part these were fringe phenomena. Nor did Vidal or Buchanan or Sobran ever offer any elaborate formulation of their charge of dual loyalty. A more systematic effort was that of Paul Findley, a former U.S. Congressman whose 1985 *They Dare to Speak Out*, a broadside against the "Israel lobby," became a best-seller. In it, Findley maintained that many American Jews felt that they, like the state of Israel, were "at war," and that "extraordinary measures" were therefore justified, including "tactics which stifle dissent in their own communities and throughout America." Findley went on to link organized American Jewry to the "extensive operations that Mossad, Israel's foreign-intelligence service, undertakes throughout the United States."

THIS BRINGS us back to our two "realists." Clearly mindful of the disreputable connotations of the ideas they propound, not to mention the disreputable company they thereby put them-

selves in, Mearsheimer and Walt are careful, as I noted at the outset, to cover their enterprise with a whole series of disclaimers. Identifying themselves as members of the mainstream foreign-policy establishment, with "impeccable, even boring, middle-of-the-road credentials," they assure us that they "recognize that all of us have many commitments and affinities," and they concede that it is "entirely permissible for those different commitments and attachments to manifest themselves in politics." Categorically rejecting the charge that they are in any way anti-Semitic, they have gone so far as to write in the British *Guardian* that "both of us are philo-Semites and strongly support the existence of Israel."

But if all this is so, why, in late August, did they appear at a conference to put forward an inflammatory, blatantly concocted, and slanderous history of the war in Lebanon? And why choose CAIR, of all organizations, as a venue for putting these slanders into circulation? A matter of affinity? After all, officials of this lobby are already on record blaming Israel for drawing the U.S. into the war in Iraq, not to mention organizing the Islamist attacks of September 11.² In introducing Mearsheimer and Walt, moreover, CAIR's executive director, Nihad Awad, showered praise on none other than Paul Findley, lauded by Awad for his "groundbreaking" and "eye-opening" books. At the event, Findley himself (speaking of disreputable company) was in attendance.

BUT NEVER mind their choice of friends; Mearsheimer and Walt deserve to be judged by their words. Others among their critics, notably Alex Safian and Alan Dershowitz, have dug deep through their original paper to unearth the factual errors, the pervasive use of double standards in argumentation, the rich array of logical fallacies, and above all the distortions, malignant insinuations, and outright falsehoods, both about the historical conduct of America's Jews and about the historical conduct of American foreign policy, at its heart.³

For our part, one might also call attention to the sources on which Mearsheimer and Walt are not too fastidious to rely, which include not only Findley but also the rabidly anti-American and anti-Israel Noam Chomsky, and the crackpot anti-Semitic

² Employees and board members of CAIR have also been directly inculcated in terrorism-related charges; the organization has sponsored events at which Jews have been declared the "descendants of apes"; it has invited neo-Nazis to speak at its gatherings; and it remains financially and institutionally linked to Islamists of various stripes.

³ See <http://tinyurl.com/gt2fm> for Safian's analysis and <http://tinyurl.com/m79xp> for Dershowitz's.

ic Jew Norman Finkelstein. In their effort to demonstrate the insidious influence of "neoconservatives" on the Bush administration, the authors cite an article from the far-Left website counterpunch.com, that explicitly raises the issue of "Jewish disloyalty," railing against "the double allegiance of those myriad officials at high and middle levels who cannot distinguish U.S. interests from Israeli interests." Such is the well from which Mearsheimer and Walt are not too shy, or, as they might say, not too philo-Semitic, to drink.

Nor is it necessary to exhibit their multifarious perversions of scholarship, or even to tear down their outright and elaborate fabrications, to show that Walt and Mearsheimer are solidly in the tradition exemplified by Henry Ford, Father Coughlin, and Charles Lindbergh. Their own rhetorical tropes, sure signifiers of well-worn themes and accusations, give them away. Thus, these boring, middle-of-the-road scholars speak with something other than scholarly precision of the "stranglehold," no less, that the "Lobby" exercises over Congress; of Jewish "manipulation of the media"; of Israel as the "tail wagging the dog" of the United States; of the "Lobby" working overtime to "squelch debate"; of Jews in the U.S. government "manipulat[ing] intelligence" to steer the U.S. into a war against Iraq on Israel's behalf; of these same Jews pursuing policies that will give Israel a "free hand" while "the United States does most of the fighting, dying, rebuilding, and paying"; and much more of the same.

In this connection, two more words deserve to be singled out, since they constitute the central terms of the authors' research project. The words are "Israel Lobby." What exactly, in Mearsheimer and Walt's thinking, does this entity consist of, and what has it accomplished?

Though the word "lobby" is always capitalized in their work, suggesting, to sinister effect, that it is the formal name of an organization, Mearsheimer and Walt insist that their "convenient short-hand" is only a way of designating "a loose coalition of individuals and organizations." The constituent elements of the "Lobby," as they identify them, are not only such major organizations as AIPAC but a hydra-headed body of influential Jewish Americans who have "deep" but undefined "attachments to Israel." Some of these American Jews occupy "key positions" in the U.S. government. (Speaking before the CAIR audience, Mearsheimer would single out Elliott Abrams and David Wurmser; in the written paper, many others are named.) These officials are joined by other Jews in think tanks and in

the world of journalism—again, many are named—who are adept at "manipulating the media" on Israel's behalf.⁴

As for the achievements of the "Lobby," these, according to Mearsheimer and Walt, have been fully commensurate with its strength, its resources, and its plethora of ingeniously placed supporters. AIPAC alone, even as it has gained its "stranglehold" over Congress, has simultaneously succeeded in exercising "significant leverage" over the executive branch of the U.S. government. The net effect of this concerted activity has been "to divert U.S. foreign policy . . . far from what the American national interest would otherwise suggest." In short, thanks to the "Lobby," the United States has been "willing to set aside its own security in order to advance the interests of another state."

Let me repeat this: because of the lobbying activities of American Jews, the United States has been "willing to set aside its own security in order to advance the interests of another state." Aside from the patent absurdity of the proposition—as if so allegedly self-destructive a policy of friendship could have been sustained over the long-term, enjoying all the while the consistent support of solid majorities of the American people—this is not merely an accusation of dual loyalty; it is the closest possible thing to an accusation of treason.

IN THE END, perhaps, the wonder is not that Coughlinite ideas have come back into circulation in the United States in a moment of high international tension. The wonder is that those ideas, thinly camouflaged in professorial doubletalk, are being seriously peddled not by the likes of Ford and Coughlin but by two highly respected professors from the heart of the American academic establishment. An even greater source of wonder, and of dismay, is that those ideas have met with a large degree of acceptance in the elite circles from which Walt and Mearsheimer hail.

True, a handful of their colleagues in universities and think tanks have spoken out against them. But *Foreign Affairs*, the flagship publication of the Council on Foreign Relations, entered not a word of criticism of their Kennedy School paper, calling it instead an instance of "hardheaded analysis." Nor have they been drummed out of the fraternity of scholars for their outrageous manipulations of fact, their reliance on discredited and discreditable sources, their loose and shabby slurs. Instead, in further testimony to an intellectual atmosphere al-

⁴ Spreading the stain, Mearsheimer and Walt add that "the Lobby also includes prominent Christian evangelicals."

ready poisoned by anti-Israel bias, their colleagues across the country have rushed forward to defend them. In one open attempt at moral blackmail, a petition signed by hundreds of professors warns of an

impression . . . being created that elements in the American Jewish community are hostile to academic freedom of speech and inquiry, and are hostile even to the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. As admirers of the historic role the American Jewish community has played in furthering civil liberties in the United States, we are concerned and saddened at this development.

Concerned and saddened, indeed. Here, adding insult to Mearsheimer and Walt's meretricious attempt to put a scholarly cap and gown on every hoary calumny ever devised about Jewish influence in the affairs of nations, we have the spectacle of their colleagues not only hurrying to drape their scurrilities in the mantle of academic freedom but

preemptively smearing as hostile to the U.S. Constitution any Jewish "elements" audacious enough to exercise their own right of free speech by answering back.

Speaking in Des Moines on September 11, 1941, at a moment when Europe was awash in genocidal anti-Semitism, Charles Lindbergh mounted a brazen effort to introduce age-old gutter concepts about the Jews into mass circulation here at home. Great American hero though he was, he failed. Back then, the center, especially the liberal center, held: Lindbergh was roundly denounced, and terrible world events, beginning with a direct attack on the United States, soon foreclosed further progress along his sinister path. Today we are witnessing something like the reverse. In the wake of terrible world events, including a direct attack on the United States and a global resurgence of anti-Semitism, the citadels of learning—the great and vital center of liberal thought—are hosting and defending the jackals.