

Has the Israel Lobby Destroyed Americans' First Amendment Rights?

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The Israel Lobby has shown its power over Americans' perceptions and ability to exercise free speech via its influence in media, entertainment and ability to block university tenure appointments, such as those of Norman Finkelstein and Steven Salaita. Indeed, the power of the Israel Lobby is today so widely recognized and feared that editors, producers, and tenure committees anticipate the lobby's objections in advance and avoid writers, subjects, and professors judged unacceptable to the lobby.

The latest example is The American Conservative's [firing](#) of former CIA case officer Philip Giraldi. Giraldi wrote an article for the Unz Review about Israel's [influence](#) over American foreign policy in the Middle East. The article didn't say anything that the Israeli newspaper Haaretz hadn't said already. The editor of The American Conservative, where Giraldi had been a contributor for a decade and a half, was terrified that the magazine was associated with a critic of Israel and quickly terminated the relationship. Such abject cowardice as the editor of The American Conservative showed is a true measure of the power of the Israel Lobby.

Many seasoned experts believe that without the influence of the Israel Lobby, particularly as exerted by the Jewish Neoconservatives, the United States would not have been at war in the Middle East and North Africa for the last 16 years. These wars have done nothing for the US but harm, and they have cost taxpayers trillions of dollars and caused extensive death and destruction in seven countries and a massive refugee flow into Europe.

For a superpower such as the United States not to be in control of its own foreign policy is a serious matter. Giraldi is correct and patriotic to raise this concern. Giraldi makes sensible recommendations for correcting Washington's lack of control over its own policy. But instead of analysis and debate the result is Giraldi's punishment by an editor of a conservative publication anticipating the Israel Lobby's wishes.

Americans should think about the fact that *Israel is the only country on earth that it is impermissible to criticize*. Anyone who criticizes Israeli policy, especially toward the Palestinians, or remarks on Israel's influence, is branded an "anti-Semite." Even mild critics who are trying to steer Israel away from making mistakes, such as former President Jimmy Carter, are branded "anti-Semites."

The Israel Lobby's purpose in labeling a critic an "anti-Semite" is to discredit the criticism as an expression of dislike or hatred of Jews. In other words, the criticism is presented as merely an expression of the person's aversion to Jewishness. A persistent critic is likely to be

charged with trying to incite a new holocaust.

It is possible to criticize the policy of Germany, France, Spain, UK, Italy, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, China, Iran, the US, indeed, every other country without being called anti-German, Anti-French, Anti-British, Anti-American, etc., although US policy in the Middle East is so closely aligned with Israel's that the Israel Lobby regards critics of US Middle East policy as hostile to Israel. Despite the failures of US policy, it is getting more and more difficult to criticize it without the risk of being branded "unpatriotic," and possibly even a "Muslim sympathizer" and "anti-Semite."



Screengrab: Trump speaks before the American Israel Public Affairs Committee
(Source: The American Conservative)

The power of the Israel Lobby is seen in many places. For example, the US Congress demands that RT, a news service, register as a Russian agent, but AIPAC, before whom every year the US Congress pays its homage and submission, does not have to register as an Israeli agent.

The many anomalies in the Israel Lobby's power pass unremarked. For example, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) defines criticism of Israeli policies as defamation and brands critics "anti-Semites." In other words, the ADL itself is set up in the business of defamation or name-calling. The incongruity of an organization created to oppose defamation engaging in defamation as its sole purpose passes unremarked.

Israel is very proud of its power over the United States. Israeli political leaders have a history of bragging about their power over America. But if an American complains about it, he is a Jew-hater. The only safe way for an American to call attention to the power Israel has over the US is to brag about it. It is OK to acknowledge Israel's power if you put it in a good light, but not if you complain about it.

So, let me put it this way: Israel's unique ability to discredit all criticism of its policies as a mere expression of anti-Jewish sentiment is the greatest public relations success in the history of PR. The stupidity of the goy is easily overcome by the more capable Jew. Hats off to Israel for outwitting the dumbshit Americans and taking over their foreign policy. Perhaps Israel should take over US domestic policy as well. Or have they already? It has been 30 years since the Federal Reserve has had a non-Jewish Chairman, and for the past three years Stanley Fischer, the former chairman of the Central Bank of Israel, has been Vice Chairman of the Federal Reserve. Since the Clinton regime, the Treasury Secretaries have been predominately Jewish. We can say that their financial talent makes them natural

candidates for these positions, but it is disingenuous to deny the influence of this small minority in American life. This influence becomes a problem when it is used to silence free speech.?

Here is Giraldi:

How I Got Fired

October 03, 2017 "The Unz Review" -

Two weeks ago, I wrote for Unz.com an article entitled "America's Jews Are Driving America's Wars." It sought to make several points concerning the consequences of Jewish political power vis-à-vis some aspects of U.S. foreign policy. It noted that some individual American Jews and organizations with close ties to Israel, whom I named and identified, are greatly disproportionately represented in the government, media, foundations, think tanks and lobbying that is part and parcel of the deliberations that lead to formulation of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Inevitably, those policies are skewed to represent Israeli interests and do serious damage to genuine American equities in the region. This tilt should not necessarily surprise anyone who has been paying attention and was noted by Nathan Glazer, among others, as long ago as 1976.

The end result of Israel centric policymaking in Washington is to produce negotiators like Dennis Ross, who consistently supported Israeli positions in peace talks, so much so that he was referred to as "Israel's lawyer." It also can result in wars, which is of particular concern given the current level of hostility being generated by these same individuals and organizations relating to Iran. This group of Israel advocates is as responsible as any other body in the United States for the deaths of thousands of Americans and literally millions of mostly Muslim foreigners in unnecessary wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria. It has also turned the U.S. into an active accomplice in the brutal suppression of the Palestinians. That they have never expressed any remorse or regret and the fact that the deaths and suffering don't seem to matter to them are clear indictments of the sheer inhumanity of the positions they embrace.

The claims that America's Middle Eastern wars have been fought for Israel are not an anti-Semitic delusion. Some observers, including former high government official Philip Zelikow, believe that Iraq was attacked by the U.S. in 2003 to protect Israel. On April 3rd, just as the war was starting, the Israeli newspaper Haaretz headlined "The war in Iraq was conceived by 25 neoconservative intellectuals, most of them Jewish, who are pushing President Bush to change the course of history." It then went on to describe how "In the course of the past year, a new belief has emerged in [Washington]: the belief in war against Iraq. That ardent faith was disseminated by a small group of 25 or 30 neoconservatives, almost all of them Jewish, almost all of them intellectuals (a partial list: Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, William Kristol, Eliot Abrams, Charles Krauthammer), people who are mutual friends and cultivate one another."

And the deference to a Jewish proprietary interest in Middle Eastern policy produces U.S. Ambassadors to Israel who are more comfortable explaining Israeli positions than in supporting American interests. David Friedman, the current Ambassador, spoke last week

defending illegal Israeli settlements, which are contrary to official U.S. policy, arguing that they represented only 2% of the West Bank. He did not mention that the land controlled by Israel, to include a security zone, actually represents 60% of the total area.

My suggestion for countering the overrepresentation of a special interest in policy formulation was to avoid putting Jewish government officials in that position by, insofar as possible, not giving them assignments relating to policy in the Middle East. As I noted in my article, that was, in fact, the norm regarding Ambassadors and senior foreign service assignments to Israel prior to 1995, when Bill Clinton broke precedent by appointing Australian citizen Martin Indyk to the position. I think, on balance, it is eminently sensible to avoid putting people in jobs where they will likely have conflicts of interest.

Another solution that I suggested for American Jews who are strongly attached to Israel and find themselves in a position that considers policy for that country and its neighbors would be to recuse themselves from the deliberations, just as a judge who finds himself personally involved in a judicial proceeding might withdraw. It would seem to me that, depending on the official's actual relationship with Israel, it would be a clear conflict of interest to do otherwise.

The argument that such an individual could protect American interests while also having a high level of concern for a foreign nation with contrary interests is at best questionable. As George Washington observed in his farewell address, "...a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter without adequate inducement or justification..."

My article proved to be quite popular, particularly after former CIA officer Valerie Plame tweeted her approval of it and was viciously and repeatedly attacked, resulting in a string of abject apologies on her part. As a reasonably well-known public figure, Plame attracted a torrent of negative press, in which I, as the author of the piece being tweeted, was also identified and excoriated. In every corner of the mainstream media I was called "a well-known anti-Semite," "a long time anti-Israel fanatic," and, ironically, "a somewhat obscure character."

The widespread criticism actually proved to be excellent in terms of generating real interest in my article. Many people apparently wanted to read it even though some of the attacks against me and Plame deliberately did not provide a link to it to discourage such activity. As of this writing, it has been opened and viewed 130,000 times and commented on 1,250 times. Most of the comments were favorable. Some of my older pieces, including *The Dancing Israelis* and *Why I Still Dislike Israel* have also found a new and significant readership as a result of the furor.

One of the implications of my original article was that Jewish advocacy groups in the United States are disproportionately powerful, capable of using easy access to the media and to compliant politicians to shape policies that are driven by tribal considerations and not necessarily by the interests of most of the American people. Professors John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago and Stephen Walt of Harvard, in their groundbreaking book *"The Israel Lobby"*, observed how the billions of dollars given to Israel annually "cannot be fully explained on either strategic or moral grounds... {and} is due largely to the activities of the Israel lobby—a loose coalition of individuals and organizations who openly work to push U.S.

foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction.”

Those same powerful interests are systematically protected from criticism or reprisal by constantly renewed claims of historic and seemingly perpetual victimhood. But within the Jewish community and media, that same Jewish power is frequently exalted. It manifests itself in boasting about the many Jews who have obtained high office or who have achieved notoriety in the professions and in business. In a recent speech, Harvard Law School Professor Alan Dershowitz put it this way, “People say Jews are too powerful, too strong, too rich, we control the media, we’ve too much this, too much that and we often apologetically deny our strength and our power. Don’t do that! We have earned the right to influence public debate, we have earned the right to be heard, we have contributed disproportionately to success of this country.” He has also discussed punishing critics of Israel, “Anyone that does [that] has to be treated with economic consequences. We have to hit them in the pocketbook. Don’t ever, ever be embarrassed about using Jewish power. Jewish power, whether it be intellectual, academic, economic, political- in the interest of justice is the right thing to do.”

My article, in fact, began with an explanation of that one aspect of Jewish power, its ability to promote Israeli interests freely and even openly while simultaneously silencing critics. I described how any individual or “any organization that aspires to be heard on foreign policy knows that to touch the live wire of Israel and American Jews guarantees a quick trip to obscurity. Jewish groups and deep pocket individual donors not only control the politicians, they own and run the media and entertainment industries, meaning that no one will hear about or from the offending party ever again.”

With that in mind, I should have expected that there would be a move made to “silence” me. It came three days after my article appeared. The Editor of The American Conservative (TAC) magazine and website, where I have been a regular and highly rated contributor for nearly 15 years, called me and abruptly announced that even though my article had appeared on another site, it had been deemed unacceptable and TAC would have to sever its relationship with me. I called him a coward and he replied that he was not.

I do not know exactly who on the TAC board decided to go after me. Several board members who are good friends apparently were not even informed about what was going on when firing me was under consideration. I do not know whether someone coming from outside the board applied pressure in any way, but there is certainly a long history of friends of Israel being able to remove individuals who have offended against the established narrative, recently exemplified by the hounding of now-ex-Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel who had the temerity to state that “the Jewish lobby intimidates lots of people” in Washington. As Gilad Atzmon has observed one of the most notable features of Jewish power is the ability to stifle any discussion of Jewish power by gentiles.

But the defenestration by TAC, which I will survive, also contains a certain irony. The magazine was co-founded in 2002 by Pat Buchanan and the article by him that effectively launched the publication in the following year was something called “Whose War?” Buchanan’s initial paragraphs tell the tale:

“The War Party may have gotten its war. But it has also gotten something it did not bargain for. Its membership lists and associations have been exposed and its motives challenged. In a rare moment in U.S. journalism, Tim Russert put this question directly to Richard Perle: ‘Can you assure American viewers ... that we’re in this situation against Saddam Hussein

and his removal for American security interests? And what would be the link in terms of Israel?' Suddenly, the Israeli connection is on the table, and the War Party is not amused. Finding themselves in an unanticipated firefight, our neoconservative friends are doing what comes naturally, seeking student deferments from political combat by claiming the status of a persecuted minority group. People who claim to be writing the foreign policy of the world superpower, one would think, would be a little more manly in the schoolyard of politics. Not so. Former Wall Street Journal editor Max Boot kicked off the campaign. When these 'Buchananites toss around neoconservative—and cite names like Wolfowitz and Cohen—it sometimes sounds as if what they really mean is 'Jewish conservative.' Yet Boot readily concedes that a passionate attachment to Israel is a 'key tenet of neoconservatism.' He also claims that the National Security Strategy of President Bush 'sounds as if it could have come straight out from the pages of Commentary magazine, the neocon bible.' (For the uninitiated, Commentary, the bible in which Boot seeks divine guidance, is the monthly of the American Jewish Committee.)"

Pat is right on the money. He was pretty much describing the same group that I have written about and raising the same concern, i.e. that the process had led to an unnecessary war and will lead to more unless it is stopped by exposing and marginalizing those behind it. Pat was, like me, called an anti-Semite and even worse for his candor. And guess what? The group that started the war that has since been deemed the greatest foreign policy disaster in American history is still around and they are singing the same old song.

And TAC has not always been so sensitive to certain apparently unacceptable viewpoints, even in my case. I write frequently about Israel because I believe it and its supporters to be a malign influence on the United States and a threat to national security. In June 2008, I wrote a piece called "The Spy Who Loves Us" about Israeli espionage against the U.S. It was featured on the cover of the magazine and it included a comment about the tribal instincts of some American Jews: "In 1996, ten years after the agreement that concluded the [Jonathan] Pollard [Israeli spying] affair, the Pentagon's Defense Investigative Service warned defense contractors that Israel had 'espionage intentions and capabilities' here and was aggressively trying to steal military and intelligence secrets. It also cited a security threat posed by individuals who have 'strong ethnic ties' to Israel, stating that 'Placing Israeli nationals in key industries is a technique utilized with great success.'"

Three days later, another shoe dropped. I was supposed to speak at a panel discussion critical of Saudi Arabia on October 2nd. The organizer, the Frontiers of Freedom foundation, emailed me to say my services would no longer be required because "the conference will not be a success if we get sidetracked into debating, discussing, or defending the substance of your writings on Israel."

Last Saturday morning, Facebook blocked access to my article for a time because it "contained a banned word." I can safely assume that such blockages will continue and that invitations to speak at anti-war or foreign policy events will be in short supply from now on as fearful organizers avoid any possible confrontation with Israel's many friends.

Would I do something different if I were to write my article again today? Yes. I would have made clearer that I was not writing about all or most American Jews, many of whom are active in the peace movement and, like my good friend Jeff Blankfort and Glenn Greenwald, even figure among the leading critics of Israel. My target was the individuals and Jewish "establishment" groups I specifically named, that I consider to be the activists for war. And I refer to them as "Jews" rather than neoconservatives or Zionists as some of them don't

identify by those political labels while to blame developments on Zios or neocons is a bit of an evasion in any event. Writing “neoconservatives” suggests some kind of fringe or marginal group, but we are actually talking about nearly all major Jewish organizations and many community leaders.

Many, possibly even most, Jewish organizations in the United States openly state that they represent the interests of the state of Israel. The crowd stoking fears of Iran is largely Jewish and is, without exception, responsive to the frequently expressed desires of the self-defined Jewish state to have the United States initiate hostilities. This often means supporting the false claim that Tehran poses a serious threat against the U.S. as a pretext for armed conflict. Shouldn’t that “Jewish” reality be on the table for consideration when one is discussing the issue of war versus peace in America?

When all is said and done the punishment that has been meted out to me and Valerie Plame proves my point. The friends of Israel rule by coercion, intimidation and through fear. If we suffer through a catastrophic war with Iran fought to placate Benjamin Netanyahu many people might begin to ask “Why?” But identifying the real cause would involve criticism of what some American Jews have been doing, which is not only fraught with consequences, but is something that also will possibly become illegal thanks to Congressional attempts to criminalize such activity. We Americans will stand by mutely as we begin to wonder what has happened to our country. And some who are more perceptive will even begin to ask why a tiny client state has been allowed to manipulate and bring ruin on the world’s only super power. Unfortunately, at that point, it will be too late to do anything about it.

Philip Giraldi is a former counter-terrorism specialist and military intelligence officer of the United States Central Intelligence Agency.

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