

How the Israeli Lobby Works in the United States

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One of the most influential lobbying groups in America, it is often argued that no politician can be elected into office without AIPAC's support. No president can take the White House without affirming unbreakable allegiance to Israel, and attendance at the annual AIPAC meeting is mandatory. Once in office every member of Congress is expected to act, vote and defend the state of Israel on almost every issue, or face the consequences.

Originally called the American Zionist Committee for Public Affairs, the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) was an offshoot of the American Zionist Council, changing names in 1963. With a sole purpose to advocate for the state of Israel, AIPAC ought to be listed with the US government as a Foreign Agent; instead, the Committee continually denies receiving any funds from Israel.

What are AIPAC's tactics? How do they get away with controlling so much of government of the United States, and thus veto power at the United Nation? Several years ago, I found out how AIPAC worked, directly.

During the 1990s, I was actively involved in a major US symphony orchestra as a financial donor and artistic liaison, having studied classical piano for fifteen years and forever a frustrated pianist. Close to the conductor, main players, and several Board Members, another more significant contributor became a good acquaintance. She, like the conductor, was an ardent Zionist—her family sent to the concentration camps in Austria during the war. Throughout the years my professional involvement in Middle Eastern affairs was never brought up, and despite our opposite views on Israel we nevertheless were on good terms before 9/11.

After 9/11, the atmosphere in America became highly charged. My friend Sarah (not her real name) lost no opportunity in blaming Arabs for every attack in the US, for not only 9/11 but also every violent act before or since. Before we ended our relationship, she explained how AIPAC controlled Congress.

Several years earlier Sarah had been a leading AIPAC representative. Confident in America's ability to 'go after' the Arab terrorists who wanted to destroy Israel and the West, she explained how the wars in the Middle East were due to AIPAC's influence. She knew the system from the inside because she was a part of it.

AIPAC watched every political race in every election, she explained. Whether local or national, AIPAC had dossiers on every candidate, grading each according to their loyalty to the Israeli state.

Once the newly elected moved into their new offices in Washington DC, Sarah would lead a

delegation of AIPAC members to the capital city to pay them a courtesy visit. The new Congressmen and women welcomed the lobby, AIPAC merely expressing good wishes for their new terms. The meeting would last less than twenty minutes, nothing but pleasantries and a photo-op having passed. Upon leaving the team would then add, "Anything you need to know about the Middle East, contact us. We'll provide whatever information you need. Here is our telephone number, and someone will get back to you right away."

No laws were broken, no monies were exchanged, and no threats were implied. The novice politician had someone to call at anytime day or night to learn about the pressing issues of the Arab world. The ongoing issues of the region meant the new Congress member had to become rapidly informed. If no one else was available—and they never were—AIPAC was at the ready.

Settled in to office, a fortnight later Sarah would bring a second delegation back to Washington to "see how they were getting along". Again, they would offer on-call expertise on the Middle East twenty-four hours a day, and invite them on an all-expenses paid trip to Israel to witness the 'terror' Israelis suffered every day. Upon their departure, this time AIPAC would present a check for a few thousand dollars 'as a donation' to the Congressman's office.

At this point, strict lobbying rules would kick in and every contribution would have to be carefully noted. However, the implicit message was left that there would always be more money where that sweetener came from.

The more allied they were to the Jewish state, the more benefits the politicians would receive. It was easy to deliver promising post-Congressional careers to those who were overtly pro-Israeli, but the harder work went to the more neutral members. With no counter-efforts by any Arab or Muslim groups, AIPAC's massaging of the message on the Middle East dominated: they were highly reactive to calls, instantly available, ready to provide support, and receptive to all requests for analysis. AIPAC has an almost exclusive ability to control the narrative because until there is an equally well organised, heavily staffed, dedicated and immediately responsive alternative, empty words and promises leave any contrary explanations far behind.

"After our second visit, an AIPAC member would then follow-up every week to remind the Congressman that we were available," Sarah continued. "We were constant, polite, and as regular as clockwork." The methodology so well crafted, AIPAC could not fail.

After a few months, a third visit raised the stakes. Senior AIPAC delegates would visit the office, this time with a metaphorical gun in one hand and cash in the other. Funds could never be presented directly lest laws be broken. Instead, having studied the Congressman's family, friends, hobbies, chosen causes and voting record, AIPAC would add financial incentives to make the more reluctant 'see the light' for its services.

"Your eldest daughter is going to college next year isn't she? That's expensive. Perhaps a full scholarship could be arranged," Sarah illustrated. Or, "Your wife lost her position last year? Maybe we can help secure a new career for her" in a law-firm, think-tank or other environment where AIPAC maintained leverage. If not direct, other benefits important to the Congressman would be dangled. The point was lost on no one.

Skirting laws, AIPAC's largesse was provided with heavy expectations. A Congressman knew

that if he did not vote in favour of Israel in the next Bill, his perquisites would be dropped. Moreover, it was evident that support for his re-election bid was either guaranteed, or—if not pro-Israel enough—not only withdrawn but an organised campaign would ensue to make sure he was defeated.

ALPAC works with a heavy but quiet fist. It has been using propaganda and threats for decades because it works. Having tried unsuccessfully to influence the British government in the 1940s, the Zionist body switched to manipulating the US Congress because it was an easier more malleable target, as the officials admitted themselves.

Thanks to the multi-million dollar multi-generational policy of organisation couple with implied blackmail, every US Senator and Representative will at the very least look the other way when Israel continues to violate international laws, occupy and steal Palestinian territory, illegally blockade Palestinians, and bomb innocent civilians. The alternative is the end to a political career.

Just ask President Jimmy Carter or Ambassador Charles 'Chas' Freeman.

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