

**SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT:
A Response to Critics of "The Israel Lobby"**

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December 12, 2006

On March 23, 2006, we published an article titled “The Israel Lobby” in the *London Review of Books*. A slightly longer, fully documented version titled “The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy” was posted simultaneously on the Faculty Working Paper website of Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. In these two pieces, we argued that unconditional U.S. support for Israel could not be justified on either strategic or moral grounds, and that it was primarily due to the political effectiveness of the loose coalition of groups and individuals that make up the “Israel lobby.” We also argued that the lobby had encouraged the United States to adopt policies that were neither in the America’s national interest nor in Israel’s long-term interest.

We knew that our article would be controversial, because it addressed a set of important issues that few mainstream scholars or journalists had examined. We also knew it would be criticized, because it challenged a number of powerful individuals and organizations and cast doubt on a set of historical claims and policy positions to which these individuals and organizations are strongly committed. We also thought it likely that we would be personally attacked, because we were critical of Israeli policy and of Washington’s unconditional support for Israel, and we had observed what had happened to others who had taken similar positions in the past.

We have followed the criticisms closely and have provided brief responses to some of them in two letters to the *London Review of Books* (May 11 and May 25, 2006), a symposium on the Israel lobby in *Foreign Policy* (July / August 2006) and a letter on that symposium in *Foreign Policy* (September / October 2006). We also published a slightly revised version of the original Harvard Working Paper in the Fall 2006 issue of the journal *Middle East Policy*. This clarified our position on several points, but our main position was unaltered.

To date, however, we have not provided a single, detailed response to the major criticisms leveled against our piece. Our aim in this essay is to do just that. Although we cannot be certain that we have answered every charge that has been directed at our work, this response does cover the most significant criticisms that we have encountered to date. We also address a host of minor charges. We believe we can show that almost all of these criticisms are mistaken. We also reply to those criticisms that we believe are justified and indicate why they do not, in our opinion, significantly affect our main arguments.

Before turning to the specific charges, it may be useful to describe the basic strategy behind many of our critics’ arguments. On the whole, our critics employed three main approaches.

First, a number of prominent critics resorted to unsupported *ad hominem* attacks. We were accused of being “anti-Semites” or “liars,” and our piece was explicitly described as an updated version of the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Critics also linked us with racists like David Duke and falsely claimed that we obtained much of our source material from neo-Nazi websites. This line of attack sought to portray us as bigots and extremists, in order to discourage people from taking our arguments seriously.¹

We were not surprised by this tactic, because such accusations have been an all too common response to anyone who criticizes Israel, questions U.S. support for Israel, or challenges the lobby itself. Indeed, we discussed this tendency at some length in our article, noting that the charge of anti-Semitism is routinely employed to silence or discredit anyone who questions Israel's actions or expresses reservations about the merits of unconditional U.S. support for Israel. This tactic was also to be expected whenever someone did not have good substantive arguments to make. If facts and logic were on their side, these critics would not have to use character assassination to discredit our article. As we show in detail below, however, the weight of evidence strongly supports our position. As a result, some of our critics had little choice but to try to smear us.

Second, many critics have misrepresented our views, either by accusing us of making arguments that we did not make, or by ignoring important points that we explicitly made. For example, we have been repeatedly accused of portraying the lobby as a cabal or conspiracy when, in fact, we went out of our way to make clear that we were making no such accusation. This tactic is also unsurprising: if you cannot refute what we actually wrote and believe, then it makes sense to invent an argument you can attack and accuse us of saying that instead.

Third, a number of critics have charged that our work is riddled with errors of fact, and that overall, it is sloppy scholarship.² This is false. In common with all scholarship produced by fallible human beings, our article contained a few minor errors of fact. There are also several places where we might have chosen our words more carefully. We address these issues below. We also show how these minor errors of fact and infelicities of expression, while regrettable, do not affect the validity of our conclusions at all.

Moreover, the broad charge that our scholarship was careless or sloppy defies common sense. We have each written three scholarly books and published numerous articles over the past twenty-plus years. Our prior work has been extensively reviewed during the hiring and promotion processes at several prominent universities, both before and after we each received tenure. Had we shown any tendency to do sloppy work, this shortcoming would surely have been noticed by now. Given that we knew that writing about the Israel lobby is the metaphorical equivalent of grabbing the third rail, is it likely that we would suddenly choose this moment and this issue to produce our first piece of sloppy scholarship? In fact, we went over the piece many times and had research assistants check numerous facts. We also asked seven scholars with great knowledge about the Middle East, and with varied political views, to scrutinize the manuscript. Finally, the editors and fact checkers at the *London Review* verified the manuscript with great care, as they knew full well that they were publishing a controversial piece. There are obviously areas and issues that remain subject to interpretation and where reasonable people can disagree, but to claim that the paper was sloppy is implausible.

A key part of this last strategy was to challenge us on a large and diverse array of issues—many of which are of secondary importance—in the hope that

the sheer volume of accusations would convince neutral observers that our work was deeply flawed. Not only did this tactic force us to address a seemingly endless set of questions and charges, but it sought to foster the impression that *something* must be fishy about the whole paper. Even when virtually all the charges are false (as they were in this case), critics can create a mutually reinforcing echo chamber simply by repeating each other's accusations. Because many people were unfamiliar with the details of these issues, they were bound to wonder whether there might be some truth to the charge that the article was riddled with errors, simply because so many critics said so and because so many "errors" were alleged. Regrettably, this tactic led a few otherwise sympathetic commentators to conclude that our paper was seriously flawed, even though virtually all the specific allegations of error can easily be refuted.

It is also worth noting that public discussion about our article has often focused on secondary issues (such as the decision to alter the cover page of the Harvard Working Paper, or the timing of Walt's decision to step down as academic dean at the Kennedy School) instead of addressing our arguments. This is regrettable, because our purpose in writing the article was to spark a serious discussion of a critically important foreign policy issue, not to call attention to our own personal circumstances. In addition to distracting people from the real issues at stake for the country, the public discussion of these insignificant issues was often inaccurate.

To be sure, a number of critics did offer serious commentaries on our analysis, and their comments identified issues worthy of further discussion. A few critics also pointed out a small number of minor factual errors. We welcome this sort of criticism, and we have learned from some of these responses even when we were ultimately not convinced by them. We wrote our article in part to foster a more open discussion of this topic, and we are grateful that a number of people were willing to challenge us in a serious and scholarly fashion.

In the pages that follow, we identify the charges or counterarguments that have been leveled at our original article and we show why we think these criticisms do not stand up. We begin by identifying and responding to the major charges that critics who are strong supporters of Israel (or the lobby) have raised since our paper was published. (These criticisms are not advanced by every pro-Israel individual or organization, of course, because one can be "pro-Israel" and still believe that the lobby's influence is misguided or excessive.) We then turn to a detailed discussion of Benny Morris's claim that our article contains numerous historical errors. We devote particular attention to Morris because he is a serious historian whose past work is extremely valuable and because others have cited his criticism as a telling blow against our piece. We then address several criticisms that have been offered by critics such as Noam Chomsky, Joseph Massad, and Norman Finkelstein, who are themselves deeply critical of U.S. and Israeli policy. Finally, we respond to a number of minor criticisms and identify the areas where corrections are needed. We conclude with a few reflections on the state of the debate.

MAJOR CHARGES BY DEFENDERS OF ISRAEL

Charge 1: M&W portray the Israel lobby as a Jewish conspiracy or cabal that controls U.S. foreign policy. Their piece is effectively an updated version of the vicious anti-Semitic tract, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This line of argument is reflected in an article in *Ha'aretz* called "The Protocols of Harvard and Chicago" as well as the Anti-Defamation League's description of our piece as "a classical conspiratorial anti-Semitic analysis invoking the canards of Jewish power and Jewish control."³

Response: We went to considerable lengths to make clear that we were not talking about a Jewish conspiracy or cabal. We defined the lobby as a loose coalition of individuals and organizations without a central headquarters. Moreover, we emphasized that "the lobby" was not synonymous with American Jewry, both because many American Jews do not support the lobby's positions and because some key elements in the lobby are not Jewish. We also noted that different pro-Israel organizations sometimes disagree about certain issues relating to Israel.

Most important, we explicitly argued that the groups and individuals that make up the lobby are openly engaged in interest group politics and there is nothing conspiratorial or illicit about their behavior. Indeed, there is not much that the Israel lobby does that is not done by other special interest groups like the Cuban-American lobby, the farm lobby, the AARP, the National Rifle Association, or other powerful interest groups.

To reinforce our point, it is worth quoting a paragraph from the Harvard Working Paper:

The Israel Lobby's power flows from its unmatched ability to play this game of interest group politics. In its basic operations, it is no different from interest groups like the Farm Lobby, steel and textile workers, and other ethnic lobbies. What sets the Israel Lobby apart is its extraordinary effectiveness. But there is nothing improper about American Jews and their Christian allies attempting to sway U.S. policy towards Israel. The Lobby's activities are not the sort of conspiracy depicted in anti-Semitic tracts like the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. For the most part, the individuals and groups that comprise the Lobby are doing what other special interest groups do, just much better. Moreover, pro-Arab interest groups are weak to non-existent, which makes the Lobby's task even easier.⁴

Thus, the charge that we portray the lobby as a conspiracy or cabal is not correct, and those who have made this accusation either have not read our article carefully or have misrepresented what we actually wrote.

Charge 2: M&W accuse American Jews who support Israel of dual loyalty, if not treason.

Eliot Cohen says that our piece is anti-Semitic because it accuses American Jews of “disloyalty, subversion or treachery”; Aaron Friedberg maintains that “at a minimum, this is a slanderous and unfalsifiable allegation of treason,” and “at worst, it is an ugly accusation of collective disloyalty, containing the most unsavory of historical echoes.” Gabriel Schoenfeld says our article “is not merely an accusation of dual loyalty; it is the closest possible thing to an accusation of treason.” Similarly, David Gergen claims that we impugned the loyalty of public figures like Dennis Ross and Martin Indyk, and asserts that it is “wrong and unfair to call into question the loyalty of millions of American Jews who have faithfully supported Israel.”⁵

Response: We made no such charges and never would. The original idea of “dual loyalty” was a loathsome anti-Semitic canard in old Europe. It claimed that Jews were perpetual aliens who could not assimilate and be good patriots, because they were loyal only to each other. We reject this view wholeheartedly, and we do not believe that Americans who lobby on Israel’s behalf are disloyal. Rather, we recognize that all Americans have many affinities and commitments—to country, family, church, ethnic groups, etc.—and those sometimes include an attachment to a foreign country. The sources of these attachments vary widely, depending on the individual. They may reflect ancestry, religious affiliations, personal experience (such as overseas study or a Peace Corps assignment), or any number of other sources. In the United States, it is entirely legitimate for this sort of affinity or attachment to manifest itself in politics. Indeed, it is possible for Americans to hold dual citizenship and to serve in foreign armies, and it is certainly legitimate for Americans to advocate for policies intended in part to benefit a foreign country.

Thus, there is nothing wrong with Cohen and Friedberg, as well as other supporters of Israel, working to influence U.S. foreign policy in ways that they believe will benefit Israel. These individuals undoubtedly believe that the policies they advocate will benefit the United States as well. In other words, they see steadfast U.S. support as good for both countries. It is equally legitimate, however, for others to question the wisdom of their recommendations and to point out that some of the individuals who press Israel’s case—both Jews and gentiles—have a commitment to that country that shapes how they think about many issues, including U.S. foreign policy. Why else would Malcolm Hoenlein, the driving force behind the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, describe his job as follows: “I devote myself to the security of the Jewish state”?⁶ There is nothing wrong with pointing out facts such as these, especially when they involve issues that affect U.S. national security

Charge 3: M&W wrote the piece in order to “blame the Jews” for the problems the United States is now facing in the Middle East, and especially the disastrous decision to invade Iraq. This charge is captured in an editorial the *Forward* ran under the headline, “In Dark Times, Blame the Jews.”⁷

Response: We were originally commissioned to write the piece for the *Atlantic* in the fall of 2002, well before the invasion of Iraq and at a point when the Bush administration looked like it could do no wrong in foreign policy. The

neoconservatives were also then at the peak of their influence. These were not dark times for the United States.

Of course, the piece was not published until March 2006, but that was not because we were waiting for the tides to shift against American foreign policy. The particular date of publication was due almost exclusively to the vagaries of the publishing business. We worked closely with the *Atlantic* between November 2002 and January 2005, when its editors reversed course and rejected the piece. We explored several other options but concluded by the late spring of 2005 that the piece was unlikely to be published in a suitable American outlet. We both moved on to other projects. Then—out of the blue—we received a note in the fall of 2005 from a distinguished American professor who had been given a copy of the final version we had submitted to the *Atlantic*. He was impressed by the piece and asked if we would be interested in submitting it to the *London Review of Books*. We said yes and made contact with Mary Kay Wilmers, the editor of the *LRB*, in October 2005. We agreed to get her a new version by January 15, 2006, which we did, and it was published in March 2006.

With respect to the Iraq war itself, we wrote that “it would be wrong to blame the war in Iraq on ‘Jewish influence,’” and we pointed out that the Jewish-American population was less supportive of the decision to go to war than the population at large (52 to 62 percent).⁸ Rather, we said that it was groups in the lobby, and especially a number of prominent neoconservatives, that played key roles in driving the decision for war. As discussed at greater length below, we also emphasized that the lobby was a necessary but not sufficient condition for war, and that it certainly did not cause the war by itself. Thus, those who make this charge have ignored what we actually wrote.

Charge 4: M&W’s piece is revealed to be anti-Semitic because it has been “hailed” by Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke and other unsavory characters.

Both Alan Dershowitz and Eliot Cohen offer prominent examples of this line of criticism. Dershowitz, for example, writes, “The most vocal proponent of their paper so far has been David Duke, but that does not mean that Mearsheimer and Walt are beholden to the Klan Lobby. The better explanation is simply that Walt, Mearsheimer, and Duke happen to have reached the same conclusions, and share the same interest in vilifying Jewish leaders and spouting conspiracy theories about Zionist plots against American interests.” (Note that here Dershowitz is repeating his earlier charge that we see the lobby as a “conspiracy” or as a “Zionist plot.”) Dershowitz also suggests that we are soul mates with Charles Lindbergh, and with former Harvard president A. Lawrence Lowell, “who fought fiercely to keep Jews out of Harvard,” because Lowell thought they cheated.⁹

Response: This is guilt by association, which is a well-established way to try to discredit people whose arguments cannot be refuted on the basis of logic or evidence. By linking us with discredited extremists, or with historical figures who did harbor anti-Semitic views, critics like Dershowitz and Cohen hope to convince readers of our article that we believe the same hateful things that these other individuals did.

We have no control over who likes or dislikes our article, and we regret that Duke exploited it to promote his racist agenda, which we utterly reject. Richard Cohen, a columnist for the *Washington Post*, wrote a piece on this issue that nicely reflects our thinking.

If you think [McCarthyism is] dead, you have not been following the controversy over a long essay about the so-called "Israel Lobby."

On April 5, for instance, The Post ran an op-ed, "Yes, It's Anti-Semitic," by Eliot A. Cohen... . Cohen does not much like a paper on the Israel lobby that was written by John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago and Stephen Walt of Harvard University. He found it anti-Semitic. I did not.

But I did find Cohen's piece to be offensive. It starts by noting that the paper ... had been endorsed by David Duke, the former head of the Ku Klux Klan. It goes on to quote Duke ... as saying the paper is a "modern Declaration of American Independence." If you follow Cohen's reasoning, then you would have to conclude that David Duke and the Founding Fathers have something in common.

To associate Mearsheimer and Walt with hate groups is rank guilt by association and does not in any way rebut the argument made in their paper on the Israel lobby.¹⁰

The full text of Richard Cohen's article is available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/24/AR2006042401396_pf.html.

We categorically reject Lindbergh's views about the influence of Jews on America's entry into World War II, as well as Lowell's views about admitting Jews to Harvard. In any case, both individuals did these things before either of us was born, and they have nothing to do with us or with our article.

Charge 5: M&W got much of their source material from neo-Nazi websites and hate literature.

*Alan Dershowitz is the main proponent of this view. He said on MSNBC, "I never thought I would live to see the day when a Harvard dean would essentially copy from the David Duke Web site. And if you look at the report... there is not a paragraph that is original in it. Every paragraph virtually is copied from a neo-Nazi Web site, from a radical Islamic Web site, from David Duke's Web site. You see parallel citations, parallel arguments. They come from Web sites such as nukeisrael.com, which is a neo Nazi Web site. It's shocking that a dean at Harvard's Kennedy School would publish something with no originality, which just basically parallels and copies the kind of hate speech that one sees on the Internet."*¹¹

Response: Nothing in our piece is drawn from racist sources or "neo-Nazi websites," and Dershowitz offers no evidence to support this absurd charge. In

fact, we provided a fully documented version of the paper so that readers could see for themselves that we used reputable sources. In addition to many scholarly books and articles, we drew heavily from mainstream sources like the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Ha'aretz*, *Forward*, and the *Jerusalem Post*. Because he cannot answer our arguments in a scholarly way, Dershowitz here invents an unfounded accusation.

Charge 6: M&W are hostile to Israel. They are essentially anti-Zionists who ultimately believe that Israel's survival is not important. Jeffrey Herf and Andrei Markovits, for example, interpret us to be saying that Israel's "continued survival" should be of little concern to the United States, while Charles Radin wrote in the *Boston Globe* that our paper "asserts that the moral basis for supporting Israel cited by pro-Israel organizations has never existed."¹²

Response: This charge overlooks what we actually wrote. In fact, we emphasized the exact opposite, repeatedly stating that there is a powerful moral case for Israel's existence. Consider three excerpts from the Harvard Working Paper:

There is a strong moral case for supporting Israel's existence, but that is not in jeopardy.

There is no question that Jews suffered greatly from the despicable legacy of anti-Semitism, and that Israel's creation was an appropriate response to a long record of crimes. This history, as noted, provides a strong moral case for supporting Israel's existence.

Europe's crimes against the Jews provide a clear moral justification for Israel's right to exist.¹³

We also praised Israeli patriotism, organizational ability, and military prowess, and spoke admiringly of the work of courageous Israeli historians and human rights groups. There should be no doubt that we admire many aspects of Israeli society.

Our paper is critical of certain Israeli policies, however, and especially critical of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. We believe that there is a strong moral case for supporting a Palestinian state and that Israel has long been the principal obstacle to achieving that end. For some readers, our recounting of certain aspects of Israeli policy was undoubtedly painful to read, and may have suggested to them that we bore Israel, its leaders, or its people some degree of ill will. This is not the case. We did not suggest that Israel's behavior was especially egregious; we suggested only that its past conduct could not justify unconditional U.S. support. Indeed, we noted that Israel "may not have acted worse than many other countries [including the United States], but it clearly has not acted any better."¹⁴

We are also critical of the present relationship between the United States and Israel. We believe it is time for the United States to treat Israel as a normal

country. In other words, the United States should support Israeli policies when it is in the American national interest to do so, but not support them when these policies hurt the United States. This is not an “anti-Israel” position either; rather, it conveys our sense that Israel is a legitimate state in the international system and should be treated no differently from other fully-legitimate regimes.

To repeat, we firmly support Israel’s existence, and we tried to make that position abundantly clear in our original paper. Unfortunately, some of our critics overlooked or ignored our explicit statements to this effect.

Charge 7: M&W are wrong when they say that “Israel was explicitly founded as a Jewish state and citizenship is based on the principle of blood kinship.”

Alan Dershowitz notes that “in reality, a person of any ethnicity or religion can become an Israeli citizen. In fact, approximately a quarter of Israel’s citizens are not Jewish.” Dershowitz also hints that using the words “blood kinship” is synonymous with making the infamous “blood libel” charge that was leveled against Jews in the past. He writes, “This mendacious emphasis on Jewish ‘blood’ is a favorite of neo-Nazi propaganda.” Benny Morris makes the same charge, writing that, “his is an outrageous assertion, with the worst possible echoes.”¹⁵ In any event, this error shows that Mearsheimer and Walt are not to be trusted on these issues.

Response: A number of points are in order regarding this charge. First, our original wording of this sentence was awkward and easy to misconstrue, and we regret that we did not express this point more clearly. That said, there is no question that Israel *was* founded as a Jewish state and that its leaders—from its founding to the present—have been unequivocally committed to maintaining its Jewish character. The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, explicitly refers to the United Nations’ recognition “of the right of the Jewish people to establish their state,” openly proclaims “the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel,” and later describes the new state as “the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land.”¹⁶ Thus, our claim that “Israel was explicitly founded as a Jewish state” is beyond question, and this feature of Israel’s identity explains why Israel’s leaders are so concerned with maintaining a Jewish majority in the territory under their control.

Second, whether an individual is regarded as Jewish is usually a function of ancestry, especially maternal ancestry. That is another way of saying that blood kinship is the main determinant of whether a person is Jewish. Gentiles may convert to Judaism, of course, but the number of Israeli citizens who have undergone conversion is small.

Third, although Israel is clearly a Jewish state, it is evident from our original article that we understood that one does not have to be Jewish to be a citizen of Israel. Specifically, we wrote: “Israel was explicitly founded as a Jewish state and citizenship is based on the principle of blood kinship. Given this conception of citizenship, it is not surprising that Israel’s 1.3 million Arabs are treated as second-class citizens.”¹⁷ It is obvious that we recognized that there are non-Jewish citizens in Israel, because the very next sentence after the one cited by

Dershowitz refers to Israel's *Arab* citizens. In writing that "citizenship is based on the principle of blood kinship," we thought that it was apparent that we were talking about Jewish citizenship, that is, whether an Israeli citizen is regarded as Jewish or not.

Finally, there is no relationship whatsoever between our comments on Israel's Jewish character and the hideous "blood libel" myth, an ancient anti-Semitic canard that accused Jews of using the blood of Christian children in religious rituals. Dershowitz and Morris are trying to make us sound like hard-core anti-Semites by raising this charge, even though there is no evidence to support their accusation.

In short, our discussion of this issue should have been more carefully worded, but our basic point was correct.

Charge 8: M&W define the lobby too broadly, so as to include virtually anyone who is sympathetic to Israel. Moreover, they do not recognize the many differences among the various pro-Israel individuals and groups.¹⁸

Response: We did define the lobby broadly, but there are good reasons for doing so.¹⁹ First, as noted above, the "lobby" is not a tightly organized movement with a central organization. Rather, it is a loose coalition of individuals and organizations committed to fostering close relations between the United States and Israel, and who are generally committed to making sure that the United States backs Israel no matter what. Nevertheless, we did not define it so broadly as to include virtually anyone with pro-Israel leanings. In fact, we confined "the lobby" to only those individuals and organizations "who actively work to steer U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction."

Second, a broad definition is consistent with our claim that the lobby acts like most other special interest groups. Like these other groups, the lobby has a "core," in this case consisting of organizations (for example, AIPAC, or Christians United for Israel) whose stated purpose is to influence U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction, as well as those individuals who devote a substantial portion of their personal or professional lives to that same end. It also draws support from a penumbra of other individuals and organizations who favor strong U.S. support for Israel but who are not as energetically or consistently active as the core.

Finally, we clearly stated that our definition of the lobby was "not meant to suggest that... individuals [and groups] within it do not disagree on certain issues." We elaborated on this point in the subsequent paragraph:

Jewish Americans also differ on specific Israeli policies. Many of the key organizations in the lobby, such as the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, are run by hardliners who generally support the Likud party's expansionist policies, including its hostility to the Oslo Peace Process. The bulk of U.S. Jewry, meanwhile, is more inclined to make

concessions to the Palestinians, and a few groups—such as Jewish Voice for Peace—strongly advocate such steps. Despite these differences, moderates and hardliners both support giving steadfast support to Israel.

In short, the claim that we see the lobby as a unified monolith misstates our views.

Charge 9: M&W greatly overestimate the power of the lobby. It may have some influence in Washington, but it does not exert nearly as much influence as they suggest.

Several of our critics argue that we see the lobby as “controlling” U.S. foreign policy, and claim that it is nowhere near as influential as we suggest. Dennis Ross says that we see it as “all-powerful,” while Shlomo Ben-Ami describes our portrayal of its influence as “grossly overblown,” even referring to the lobby as “mythological.” The lobby, these critics maintain, does not always get its way with Washington. For example, Ross notes, “It failed to prevent several major arms sales to Arab nations. It has failed to get the U.S. embassy in Israel moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. It failed to prevent the Clinton administration from crafting a peace proposal that would have divided Jerusalem in two.” Similarly, David Gergen suggests the lobby is not very significant, claiming that our paper is “at variance” with what he personally observed in the White House and asserting that he “can’t remember any president even talking about an Israeli lobby.”²⁰

Response: This charge partly misrepresents what we wrote, because we never said that the lobby was “all-powerful” and did not imply that it gets its way on every issue. In essence, this charge creates a false standard; it implies we would be correct only if the lobby had total control over every aspect of U.S. Middle East policy.

We recognize that the lobby was unable to prevent the United States from selling arms to key U.S. allies such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, although these defeats date from the late 1970s and early 1980s. Its efforts to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem have failed as well, but that is a secondary issue that does not affect the continued provision of material aid or diplomatic backing. Indeed, it is an issue that the Israeli government has never pushed strongly. More importantly, the lobby has grown increasingly powerful with time and it rarely loses on important issues nowadays. Although the lobby could not prevent the Clinton administration from presenting a peace proposal on Jerusalem that Israeli leaders did not like, the lobby made it difficult to impossible for Clinton to pressure Israel to accept his proposal, which eventually died a quiet death.

Although the lobby does not always get its way, anyone familiar with U.S. Middle East policy knows it wields great influence. Just take AIPAC, which Bill Clinton described as “stunningly effective” and “better than anyone else lobbying in this town.” House Speaker Newt Gingrich called AIPAC “the most effective general interest group... across the entire planet.” Senator Ernest Hollings noted on leaving office that “you can’t have an Israeli policy other than what AIPAC gives you around here.” Readers who are still in doubt should

consult Michael Massing's article "The Storm over the Israel Lobby," which offers additional evidence of AIPAC's operations and reach.²¹

Even some of our critics acknowledge that the lobby wields great power in shaping U.S. Middle East policy. For example, Christopher Hitchens, who strongly implied that our article was anti-Semitic, said that not only was our main argument about the influence of the lobby correct, but we did not go far enough for his tastes. Specifically:

Everybody knows that the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and other Jewish organizations exert a vast influence over Middle East policy, especially on Capitol Hill. The influence is not as total, perhaps, as that exerted by Cuban exiles over Cuba policy, but it is an impressive demonstration of strength by an ethnic minority. Almost everybody also concedes that the Israeli occupation has been a moral and political catastrophe and has implicated the United States in a sordid and costly morass. I would have gone further than Mearsheimer and Walt and pointed up the role of Israel in supporting apartheid in South Africa, in providing arms and training for dictators in Congo and Guatemala, and helping reactionary circles in America do their dirty work—most notably during the Iran-Contra assault on the Constitution and in the emergence of the alliance between Likud and the Christian right. Counterarguments concerning Israel's help in the Cold War and in the region do not really outweigh these points.²²

Similarly, even Alan Dershowitz, who has been one of our severest critics, recognizes the impressive power of the Israel lobby. Indeed, he is quite proud of it. Referring to his "generation of Jews" in his book *Chutzpah*, Dershowitz wrote "We became part of what is perhaps the most effective lobbying and fund-raising effort in the history of democracy. We did a truly great job, as far as we allowed ourselves, and were allowed, to go."²³

As for Gergen's claim that he "can't remember" any president mentioning an Israel lobby and "never once saw a decision in the Oval Office to tilt U.S. foreign policy in favor of Israel at the expense of America's interest," one must first recognize that he was not an important player in the formation of U.S. Middle East policy. This fact may explain why the Middle East is barely mentioned in *Eyewitness to Power*, his memoir of his White House experiences. Second, we can easily believe that presidents and their advisers do not sit around saying, "Let's do something that we believe is not in the U.S. national interest in order to accommodate some special interest group." Instead, interest groups achieve their aims by constraining what presidents are willing to contemplate, forcing them to take steps they might otherwise avoid (but will then pretend to favor), making it harder for them to sustain initiatives that these groups oppose, and shaping perceptions so that key officials will willingly favor the policies that these interest groups are pushing.

In fact, there is considerable evidence that the lobby was a powerful force during Gergen's years in the White House and that important policy makers

knew it. Consider an incident recalled by former Secretary of State George Shultz, who *was* intimately engaged in U.S. Middle East diplomacy during the Reagan years:

In early December [1982]... I got word that a supplement was moving through the lame-duck session of Congress to provide a \$250 million increase in the amount of U.S. military assistance to be granted to Israel: this in the face of Israel's invasion of Lebanon, its use of cluster bombs, and its complicity in the Sabra and Shatila massacres! We fought the supplement and fought it hard. President Reagan and I weighed in personally, making numerous calls to senators and congressmen. On December 9, I added a formal letter of opposition saying that the supplement appeared "to endorse and reward Israel's policies." Foreign Minister Shamir called President Reagan's opposition "an unfriendly act," and said that "it endangers the peace process."

The supplement sailed right by us and was approved by Congress as though President Reagan and I had not even been there. I was astonished and disheartened. This brought home to me vividly Israel's leverage in our Congress. I saw that I must work carefully with the Israelis if I was to have any handle on Congressional action that might affect Israel and if I was to maintain congressional support for my efforts to make progress in the Middle East.²⁴

In short, Secretary Shultz knew from the start that the lobby was a potent force that he had to take into account when formulating U.S. Middle East policy. Gerald Ford could have told Shultz (or Gergen) the same thing, after his own attempt to pressure Israel in 1975 over stalled peace talks was derailed when seventy-six senators signed an AIPAC-sponsored letter demanding that the administration maintain its economic and military aid to Israel.²⁵ One would get a similar reading from former President George H. W. Bush. During the fight over a \$10 billion loan guarantee for Israel in 1992, Bush told reporters that he "was up against some powerful political forces... very strong and effective... I heard today that there were something like a thousand lobbyists on the Hill working for the loan. We've got one lonely little guy down here working against it."²⁶

To summarize: The fact that the lobby doesn't win on all issues does not undercut our core claim that it is extremely effective at ensuring that the United States continues to provide generous economic, military, and diplomatic support to Israel no matter what it does. Why? Because Israel is backed by a powerful special interest group that can usually convince American leaders that it is not worth the trouble to make U.S. support more conditional.

Charge 10: M&W are wrong to say that Israel has become a "strategic liability." In fact, Israel remains a vital strategic asset, and the United States would undoubtedly give it the same level of support even if AIPAC and other groups in the lobby did not exist.

According to Martin Kramer, “American support for Israel—indeed, the illusion of its unconditionality—underpins the pax Americana in the eastern Mediterranean,” which he contrasts with the unstable situation in the Persian Gulf. He writes, “From a realist point of view, supporting Israel has been a low-cost way of keeping order in part of the Middle East, managed by the United States from offshore and without the commitment of any force.” He adds that Israel “does not need the whole array of organizations that claim to work on its behalf... If the institutions of the lobby were to disappear tomorrow, it is quite likely that American and other Western support would continue unabated.”²⁷

Response: Kramer’s defense of Israel’s strategic value exaggerates the benefits to the United States and understates the costs. First, he bases much of his case on the Cold War, and we agree that Israel may have been a strategic asset in this period. (Indeed, we said this explicitly in our original paper.²⁸) The real question is whether Israel is still a strategic asset in the post Cold War world, especially in the aftermath of 9/11. We argued that it is not.

Second, one should not exaggerate the value of “stability in the eastern Mediterranean.” It is obviously desirable, of course, but it is not a vital U.S. strategic interest. The Persian Gulf, by contrast, is a vital strategic region for the United States, because it contains a large percentage of the world’s oil supply.

Third, if Israel’s strategic value rests on its enforcing a Pax Americana in the eastern Mediterranean, it is doing a poor job. Its invasion of Lebanon in 1982 made the region less stable and led directly to the formation of Hezbollah, which has in turn complicated U.S. dealings with Iran. Israel’s actions also forced the Reagan administration to send U.S. marines to Lebanon in 1982, where 241 were subsequently killed in a suicide bombing. Israel’s prolonged campaign to colonize the West Bank and Gaza (indirectly subsidized by U.S. aid) has produced two major uprisings in which thousands of Palestinians and Israelis were killed or wounded.

This past summer, Israel’s ill-conceived and disproportionate response to the killing and kidnapping of several Israel Defense Forces soldiers near the Israeli-Lebanese border produced well over a thousand deaths in Lebanon, did massive damage to Lebanon’s infrastructure, and jeopardized Lebanon’s own democratic transition. In addition to further tarnishing the U.S. image in the region, it inflamed Shia anger throughout the Middle East, thereby compromising U.S. efforts in Iraq. These negative developments did not occur because the United States was trying to be “even-handed”; on the contrary, they occurred in part because the lobby convinced Congress and the Bush administration to back Israel to the hilt. As in so many other cases, the result was bad for the United States and Israel alike.

Finally, U.S. support for Israeli expansionism has driven America’s popularity in the region to unprecedented lows and helped fuel the rise of militant terrorist groups like al Qaeda. Kramer says that he does not know any “unbiased” terrorism expert who subscribes to the latter notion, and he argues that al Qaeda et al. emerged only after the United States stationed troops in the Gulf following the 1990-1991 Gulf war. As we make clear in our response to the

next charge, there is abundant evidence that Osama bin Laden was powerfully motivated by the plight of the Palestinians, and this fact is well-known to respected terrorism experts. (Kramer's use of the qualifier "unbiased" when referring to terrorism experts is revealing; he seems to think that anyone who believes there is a link between U.S. aid to Israel and anti-American terrorism must be "biased.") Furthermore, Kramer neglects to mention that the United States stationed troops in the Gulf throughout the 1990s because it had abandoned its earlier strategy of "offshore balancing" and adopted a policy of "dual containment" of both Iraq and Iran. This flawed strategy was the brainchild of Washington Institute for Near East Policy cofounder Martin Indyk and strongly encouraged by groups in the lobby.

Kramer correctly notes that the Persian Gulf is much more important than the eastern Mediterranean, to U.S. strategic interests but as we argued in our original paper (and as Kramer implicitly admits), Israel is not an asset in dealing with the Gulf. Uncritical support for Israel hurts America's image in virtually all other countries in the Middle East and make it harder for friendly governments in this region to back us openly. Kramer is also deeply worried about Iran's nuclear ambitions, but Israel's own refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its sizeable nuclear arsenal both encourage states like Iran to want nukes of their own and makes the United States look hypocritical when it presses Tehran to abandon its nuclear ambitions. The various challenges that the United States faces in this region would not disappear were it less closely tied to Israel, but U.S. policy would be more flexible and effective and our capacity to protect vital U.S. interests would increase.

Finally, we obviously do not agree with Kramer's claim that U.S. policy would not change "if the institutions of the lobby were to disappear tomorrow." If he truly believes this, why has he devoted so much of his career to challenging virtually anyone who questions Israel's actions or U.S. support for them? If he is correct, then the people who bankroll AIPAC and Washington Institute for Near Eastern Policy and other like-minded organizations are wasting their money, and Kramer himself is wasting his time. Kramer claims that all this effort is unnecessary, but his own behavior suggests otherwise.

Charge 11: M&W are wrong to claim that Osama bin Laden's anger with the United States is motivated by either Israeli behavior or American support for Israel. Dershowitz writes, for example, "Prior to September 11, Israel was barely on bin Laden's radar screen."²⁹ Moreover, some pro-Israel commentators routinely argue that bin Laden seized on the plight of the Palestinians only after September 11, because he realized it was an excellent recruiting tool.

Response: This charge is false. There is abundant evidence that since the time bin Laden was a young man, he was deeply committed to the Palestinian cause and that he was also angry at the United States for backing Israel to the hilt. According to Michael Scheuer, the former head of the CIA's intelligence unit on bin Laden, the young bin Laden was gentle and well-behaved, with one notable exception: "Not surprisingly, an exception to Osama's well-mannered,

nonconfrontational demeanor was his support for the Palestinians and negative attitude towards the United States and Israel."³⁰ Moreover, bin Laden's first public statement intended for a wider audience—released December 29, 1994—directly addressed the Palestinian issue. As Bruce Lawrence, compiler of bin Laden's public statements, explains, "The letter makes it plain that Palestine, far from being a late addition to bin Laden's agenda, was at the centre of it from the start."³¹

Bin Laden also condemned the United States on several occasions prior to 9/11 for its support of Israel against the Palestinians and called for jihad against America on this basis. For example, in March 1997, when CNN reporter Peter Arnett asked him why he declared jihad against the United States, bin Laden replied, "We declared jihad against the US government, because the US government is unjust, criminal, and tyrannical. It has committed acts that are extremely unjust, hideous, and criminal, whether directly or through its support of the Israeli occupation of the Land of the Prophet's Night Journey [Palestine]. And we believe the US is directly responsible for those who were killed in Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq."³² These comments are hardly anomalous. Indeed, as Max Rodenbeck writes in his review of two important books about bin Laden in the *New York Review of Books*: "Of all these themes, the notion of payback for injustices suffered by the Palestinians is perhaps the most powerfully recurrent in bin Laden's speeches."³³

The 9/11 Commission Report, as we emphasized in our original article, makes clear that bin Laden and other key al Qaeda members strongly resented Israel's behavior toward the Palestinians as well as U.S. support for Israel. Bin Laden was determined to move up the date of the attack in the fall of 2000 "after Israeli opposition party leader Ariel Sharon caused an outcry in the Middle East by visiting a sensitive and contested holy site in Jerusalem that is sacred to both Muslims and Jews. Although bin Laden recognized that [Mohamed] Atta and the other pilots had only just arrived in the United States to begin their flight training, the al Qaeda leader wanted to punish the United States for supporting Israel."³⁴ The following year, "when bin Laden learned from the media that Sharon would be visiting the White House in June or July 2001, he attempted once more to accelerate the operation."³⁵ In addition to informing the timing of the 9/11 attacks, bin Laden's grievance against the United States for backing Israel also had implications for the choice of targets. The initial plans discussed in the first meeting between Atta, the mission leader, and bin Laden in late 1999 called for hitting the U.S. Capitol, "the perceived source of U.S. policy in support of Israel."³⁶ Although this target plan was later abandoned, it offers additional evidence of the priority that bin Laden has placed on the issue of Palestine. *The 9/11 Commission Report* also noted that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, whom it described as "the principal architect of the 9/11 attacks," was primarily inspired by the Palestinian issue. In the Commission's words, "By his own account, KSM's animus toward the United States stemmed not from his experiences there as a student, but rather from his violent disagreement with U.S. foreign policy favoring Israel."³⁷

These reports all show that our original assertion about the priority bin Laden placed on the Palestinian issue was correct. But even if bin Laden himself were not personally engaged by this issue, it still provides him with an effective recruiting tool. Separate studies by the State Department, the Defense Science Board, and independent pollsters confirm that the issue of Palestine helps drive anti-Americanism throughout the Arab and Islamic world, and this broad concern undoubtedly makes it easier for jihadis to draw new recruits into their ranks.³⁸

Charge #12: Instead of performing a comparative analysis, M&W single out Israel for criticism and ignore the bad behavior of other states. Israel may have flaws, but Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, etc., are all much worse.³⁹

Response: We did focus on Israeli behavior, not because we have any animus toward Israel but because the United States provides it with a level of material and diplomatic support that is substantially greater than what it gives to other states. Our aim was to determine whether Israel deserves this special treatment because it behaves significantly *better* than other states do. We concluded that it does not; rather, Israel behaves like most other states, especially in its foreign policy.

Still, we admire many features of Israeli society. Israel has an impressive scientific establishment, a lively and freewheeling civil society, a penchant for open debate, a talented array of writers, artists, and musicians, an increasingly sophisticated economy, and many other positive features. Yet these features cannot explain why the United States gives it so much economic, military, and diplomatic support. Many other democracies possess equally positive features, but none receives the backing that Israel gets.

Charge 13: M&W are wrong to argue that the lobby is the main reason why the United States gives so much support to Israel. The real basis of U.S. support for Israel is the American people's enduring identification with the Jewish state—and especially its democratic values.

A number of critics argue that U.S. politicians are not overly influenced by the lobby; rather, they are merely reflecting basic attitudes in U.S. public opinion. Thus Bret Stephens of the Wall Street Journal asks: "If Israel is so damaging to U.S. interests, why do consistent and broad majorities of Americans support it?"⁴⁰ Similarly, Jeff Jacoby of the Boston Globe writes that "solidarity with Israel is an abiding feature of American public opinion. Because the American people are pro-Israel, the American government is pro-Israel. And because Americans so strongly support Israel in its conflict with the Arabs, American policy in the Middle East is committed to Israel's defense."⁴¹

Another related line of criticism states that the lobby matters little because Israel's "values command genuine support among the American public." Herf and Markovits maintain that there is substantial support for Israel in military and diplomatic circles within the United States. Similarly, Yitzhak Laor doubts that American Middle East policy would be any different in the absence of AIPAC.⁴²

Response: This criticism sounds convincing, but does not stand up to close inspection. To be sure, there is a degree of cultural affinity between the United States and Israel, based in part on the shared Judeo-Christian tradition, but that tradition has hardly been a reliable source of amity in the past. The main reason there is strong public support for Israel in America is that the lobby is so successful at stifling criticism of Israel while simultaneously portraying it in a favorable light. If there were a more open and candid discussion about what the Israelis are doing in the Occupied Territories, for example, there would be much less sympathy for Israel in the American public. This is the principal reason why Israel's supporters go to great lengths to silence critics of Israeli policy toward the Palestinians. A more candid discussion would not lead the United States to abandon Israel, but U.S. support would be more conditional and more in keeping with broader U.S. interests.

Moreover, the degree of public support for Israel—and for specific Israeli policies—should not be overstated. In particular, public opinion surveys show that the American people are much less supportive of Israel than U.S. politicians are. Although the American people broadly support Israel and favor the existence of a Jewish state, they are considerably more critical of some Israeli actions and would be surprisingly willing to countenance a hard nosed approach to Israel, including making U.S. aid conditional on Israeli cooperation in the peace process and on other issues. For example, a May 2003 survey by the University of Maryland's Program on International Policy Attitudes found that more than 60 percent of Americans were willing to withhold aid to Israel if it resisted U.S. pressure to settle the conflict, and that number rose to 70 percent among "politically active" Americans. Indeed, 73 percent said the United States should not favor either side.⁴³ Thus, the generally favorable opinion of Israel held by most Americans does not account for the largely unconditional nature of U.S. support.

The Israel lobby is not the sole driving force behind U.S. support for Israel. But it is largely responsible for the unconditional nature of that support—the fact that our support continues regardless of what Israel does. There are a variety of reasons why Americans tend to look favorably on the Jewish state, and we agree with a number of them. The lobby's goal, however, is to make as many Americans as possible think that Israeli and U.S. interests are identical and to make it politically costly for anyone who suggests that they are not or who tries to distance the United States from Israel.

Charge 14: M&W ignore the other interest groups and social forces that play a key role in shaping U.S. Middle East policy.

One version of this argument says that there are "plenty of countervailing centres of power, such as paleoconservatives, Arab and Islamic advocacy groups... and the diplomatic establishment."⁴⁴ Another version emphasizes the importance of oil and the so-called oil lobby (either in the form of oil companies or wealthy Arab oil producers). Thus, Herf and Markovits claim that "oil, not Israel is the real centerpiece of U.S. policy in the Middle East," and Martin Peretz declares that "Israel's friends -- foreign affairs idealists and realists, rightists, leftists, centrists, Christians, Jews, nonbelievers -- know

the power of this oil lobby, with which they have tangled to ensure that the United States supports an ally against its many unworthy enemies.”⁴⁵ As discussed below, this criticism is popular with a number of prominent critics of Israel as well.

Response: We recognize that there are other interest groups that work to shape U.S. policy in the Middle East, but these groups are no match—alone or in combination—for the Israel lobby. Although there are a few pro-Arab or pro-Palestinian political groups in the United States, they are small, not nearly as well funded, and not very effective. There is no well-organized and politically potent “Arab lobby” and little evidence that U.S. politicians ever feel much pressure from pro-Arab groups.⁴⁶ Similarly, there is little or no evidence to support the widespread belief that U.S. oil companies were actively pushing the Bush administration to invade Iraq. Oil companies and arms manufacturers occasionally lobby to protect their own commercial objectives, but they generally do not try to exert a broad influence on U.S. Middle East policy. The effects of this imbalance on American policy are clear. If the oil lobby, arms dealers, and Arab petrodollars were driving U.S. policy, one would expect to see the United States distancing itself from Israel and working to help the Palestinians, while seeking to curry favor with big oil producers like Iraq or the Islamic Republic of Iran. But because these groups are much weaker than the lobby, U.S. policy leans heavily the other way. Oil producers like Saudi Arabia do hire public relations firms to enhance their image (especially after events like the September 11 attacks), but these efforts exert little influence over the broad direction of U.S. policy. Former AIPAC executive director Morris Amitay explained why in the early 1980s: “When oil interests and other corporate interests lobby, 99 percent of the time they are acting in what they perceive to be their own self-interest—they lobby on tax bills... We very rarely see them lobbying on foreign policy issues... In a sense, we have the field to ourselves.”⁴⁷

Charge 15: M&W make a monocausal argument, in essence arguing that the lobby is solely responsible for America’s terrorism problem in the Arab and Islamic world, and that “the lobby alone” caused the Iraq war. M&W also believe that anti-Americanism in the region is due only to U.S. support for Israel. Thus, political scientist Daniel Drezner refers to our article as “piss-poor, monocausal social science,” and Christopher Hitchens attributes to us the idea “that Israel is the root cause of the emergence of al-Qaida.”⁴⁸

Response: This charge misstates what we said. We emphasized that U.S. support for Israeli policy in the Occupied Territories is a very important cause of anti-Americanism in the region, but we explicitly stated that is hardly the only such cause. Moreover, we made it clear that Osama bin Laden had other grievances against the United States besides the Palestinian issue, but as discussed earlier, this matter was one of his major concerns.⁴⁹

Regarding Iraq, we argued that the lobby—and especially the neoconservatives—had been pushing hard for a war against Iraq from early 1998 on. But the neoconservatives were unable to convince the Clinton administration to use military force to topple Saddam. They were also unable to sell the case for war to the Bush administration in its first few months in office.

After September 11, however, President Bush and Vice President Cheney fundamentally altered their thinking about Iraq and concluded that war made good strategic sense. The neoconservatives certainly helped push Bush and Cheney to that conclusion, as they had a well-developed set of arguments to justify the war—even though Saddam Hussein had nothing to do with September 11. In short, our argument is that the lobby by itself could not push the United States to attack Iraq. It needed help, and September 11 provided the catalyst that helped convince Bush and Cheney. Thus, the lobby's efforts were a necessary but not sufficient condition for war. Absent the lobby, it would have been much less likely, but absent September 11, the neoconservatives might never have persuaded President Bush to order an invasion. We also showed that key organizations in the lobby were strong supporters of the war, even though Jewish Americans were less supportive of the war than the population as a whole.⁵⁰

Charge 16: M&W's claim that Israel pushed the United States to invade Iraq is wrong. Instead, Israel considered Iran the greater threat.

A number of Israel's defenders—most notably Martin Kramer—have challenged our claim that Israel and the lobby encouraged the United States to attack Iraq. In Kramer's words, "This is simply a falsehood, and has no foundation in fact. It is not difficult to show that in the year preceding the Iraq war, Israel time and again disagreed with the United States, arguing that Iran posed the greater threat."⁵¹

Response: We explicitly stated in our article that many Israelis considered Iran the greater threat and noted how they had highlighted the danger to U.S. officials. Specifically:

Israelis tend to describe every threat in the starkest terms, but Iran is widely seen as their most dangerous enemy because it is the most likely adversary to acquire nuclear weapons. Virtually all Israelis regard an Islamic country in the Middle East with nuclear weapons as an existential threat. As Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer remarked one...[year] before the Iraq war: "Iraq is a problem... . But you should understand, if you ask me, today Iran is more dangerous than Iraq."⁵²

Although Iran was seen as the greater threat, Israel and the lobby still pushed the United States to attack Iraq. Israeli officials may have preferred the United States to have gone after Tehran first instead of Baghdad, but as Kramer admits, they were not sorry that the United States decided to topple Saddam and they never tried to halt the march to war. Quite the opposite, in fact. As we documented in our paper, former Israeli prime ministers Benjamin Netanyahu and Ehud Barak both published op-eds in leading U.S. newspapers (the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*) openly advocating a war to topple Saddam, and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told reporters in September 2002 that "the campaign against Saddam Hussein is a must."⁵³ These events occurred months before Secretary of State Colin Powell's infamous briefing to the UN Security Council and prior to the congressional vote to authorize the use

of force. Also, Bill Clinton has recently recounted that “every Israeli politician I knew” believed that Saddam Hussein was so great a threat that he should be removed even if he did not have WMD.⁵⁴ Israeli public opinion strongly favored the war, and the *Washington Post*, *Ha’aretz*, and the *Wall Street Journal* all published articles describing the strong support that the war enjoyed among Israel’s political and military elite. Israel’s endorsement was hardly the only reason why the United States went to war, of course, but to say that Israel did not encourage it is wrong.

Charge 17: M&W maintain that “the creation of Israel entailed a moral crime.” But, says Dershowitz, they “invert cause and effect by presenting Israel’s founding, without any historical context, as the *cause* of a great crime, rather than the *reaction* to one.” That great crime is European anti-Semitism, and especially the legacy of the Holocaust.”⁵⁵

Response: We made clear in our article that Israel’s founding was directly linked to “the despicable legacy of anti-Semitism in Europe, and that Israel’s creation was an appropriate response to a long record of crimes.” Moreover, we said “this history... provides a strong moral case for supporting Israel’s existence.” At another point we said, “Europe’s crimes against the Jews provide a clear moral justification for Israel’s right to exist.”

Nevertheless, we also pointed out that “the creation of Israel involved additional crimes against a largely innocent third party: the Palestinians.”⁵⁶ In particular, it was virtually impossible for the Zionists to create a Jewish state in a land filled with Palestinians without committing crimes against them. The Palestinians, after all, were not going to voluntarily give up their homes and their land to the Jews coming from Europe. Thus, the Zionists had little choice but to take the Palestinians’ property by force and expel huge numbers of them from the land that would comprise the new Jewish state. Israel’s founding fathers recognized, as Menachem Begin put it, that “out of evil ... good came,” at least for them.⁵⁷

Charge 18: Contrary to the claims of M&W, Palestinian leaders did encourage their people to flee Palestine in the early stages of the 1948 war.

Dershowitz challenges our claim that “careful scholarship (much of it by Israeli historians like [Benny] Morris)” has “demolished the myth” that the Arabs fled in 1948 “because their leaders told them to.” He argues that there is “no such academic consensus” on this “complex” issue “and that some Arab leaders did urge Palestinians to flee their homes in Israel.” Dershowitz cites a quote from Benny Morris to support his point: “In some areas Arab commanders ordered the villagers to evacuate to clear the ground for military purposes or to prevent surrender.”⁵⁸

Response: The myth that we referred to is the famous claim that the Palestinians voluntarily fled from Palestine and that they did so because their leaders in institutions like the Arab Higher Committee asked them to leave. The leaders’ alleged aim in ordering this flight was to clear the way for the attacking Arab militaries to destroy the fledgling Jewish state. Once that task was completed, the

Palestinians would be able to return to their homeland. The Israeli government and its defenders have advanced this story repeatedly over the past six decades for one obvious reason: it implies that the Zionists and the Israelis were not responsible for the Palestinian exodus of 1948.⁵⁹ Not only does this version of the events of 1948 maintain that the Palestinians left voluntarily, it also suggests that they did so as part of a strategy to eliminate the Jews from Palestine.

As we said in our article, this account of the Palestinian flight is a myth that has by now been thoroughly discredited.⁶⁰ No serious scholar accepts it, and certainly not Benny Morris, who played a key role in setting the record straight about these events. To be sure, some Arab commanders did instruct Palestinian civilians to evacuate their homes during the fighting, either to make sure that they did not get caught in a firefight or to ensure that they were not killed by those Zionist forces who were engaged in ethnically cleansing Palestinians.⁶¹ (Fear of death at the hands of the Jews was an especially powerful motive to evacuate villages after the infamous massacre at Deir Yassin on April 9, 1948. As Morris reports, “The IDF Intelligence Service called Deir Yassin ‘a decisive accelerating factor’ in the general Arab exodus.”⁶²) Orders to evacuate of this kind are what Morris is talking about in the quote that Dershowitz cites. However, they are not related to the myth of a voluntary or elite-directed evacuation that we discussed in our article.

Charge 19: In their paper, M&W inaccurately quote Philip Zelikow, a former member of the president’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and now counselor to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. According to Zelikow, he never said that the war in Iraq was fought in part to bolster Israel’s security.

In a letter to the London Review of Books, Philip Zelikow disputed our claim that he told an audience at the University of Virginia in September 2002 that the impending war in Iraq was motivated in good part by concerns about Israel’s security. His letter implies that our reference to his remarks came from unreliable sources and that we “misused” his comments to give a false impression of what he really said. He maintained that he was talking mainly about the 1990-91 Gulf War, not the U.S. decision to invade Iraq in March 2003. He also declared that he “expressed no view” on “whether or when the US ought to go to war with Iraq” in his public remarks at the university.⁶³

Response: None of Zelikow’s assertions are true. He gave a public presentation at the University of Virginia to mark the anniversary of September 11. His appearance was covered by Emad Mekay, a well-regarded journalist who worked for Reuters and the *New York Times* before moving to Inter Press Service, a legitimate news agency. Mekay’s story was released by Inter Press and subsequently published in *Asia Times Online*. He did not rely on “local reports” in writing his story, but had access to a complete and unimpeachable record of Zelikow’s talk. Moreover, Mekay repeatedly tried to contact Zelikow while writing his story, but his inquiries were not returned.

We have the full text of Zelikow’s remarks about Iraq on September 10, 2002 and the key passages are excerpted below. These passages show that: 1) Zelikow was focusing on the possibility of war with Iraq in 2002-2003, not the

first Gulf War; 2) he supported a new war with Iraq; and 3) he believed Iraq was an imminent threat to Israel, but not to the United States.

Zelikow first told his audience that he wanted to make some points concerning Iraq that were not “being made by either side in the current debate.” (Empasis added.)

Third. The unstated threat. And here I criticize the [Bush] administration a little, because the argument that they make over and over again is that this is about a threat to the United States. And then everybody says: “Show me an imminent threat from Iraq to America. Show me, why would Iraq attack America or use nuclear weapons against us?” So I’ll tell you what I think the real threat is, and actually has been since 1990. It’s the threat against Israel. And this is the threat that dare not speak its name, because the Europeans don’t care deeply about that threat, I will tell you frankly. And the American government doesn’t want to lean too hard on it rhetorically, because it’s not a popular sell.

(4)

Now... if the danger is a biological weapon handed to Hamas, then what’s the American alternative then? ... Don’t look at the ties between Iraq and al Qaeda, but then ask yourself the question: “Gee, is Iraq tied to Hamas, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the people who are carrying out suicide bombings in Israel?” Easy question to answer, and the evidence is abundant.

Yes, there are a lot of other problems in the world... . My view, by the way, is the more you examine these other problems and try to put together a comprehensive strategy for America and the Middle East, the more I’m driven to the conclusion that it’s better for us to deal with Iraq sooner rather than later... . And the Iraq problem is a peculiar combination at the moment, of being exceptionally dangerous at a time when Iraq is exceptionally weak militarily. Now that’s an appealing combination for immediate action... . But ... if we wait two years, and then there’s another major terrorist attack against the United States, does it then become easier to act against Iraq, even though the terrorist attack didn’t come from Iraq? No... .

In sum, it is Zelikow, not us, who is trying to rewrite history. He was admirably candid in 2002, but not in 2006.

A fuller version of Zelikow’s remarks can be found in the LRB letters we exchanged with him: <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n10/letters.html>

Summary: Virtually all of the major charges that have been leveled at our article by Israel’s defenders, or at us personally, are unconvincing. We turn now to the array of charges leveled at us by Israeli historian Benny Morris, as presented in a lengthy article in the May 8, 2006, issue of the *New Republic*.⁶⁴

THE MORRIS CRITIQUE

At first glance, Morris's critique of our article seems especially damning, both because he is a respected historian and because we cited a number of his works in making our own case. If one of the scholars on whom we rely is so critical of our article, doesn't that suggest that something must be seriously wrong with it?

The answer is no. To begin with, the bulk of his charges do not address our main arguments about the lobby or its impact. Instead, he concentrates primarily on various historical issues, issues that are part of the background to our analysis but not central to our core claims. In theory, we could concede most of his charges and our core claims about the lobby would be unaffected. (As will soon become clear, there is no need for us to make any such concession.) By raising these secondary historical points, however, Morris seeks to cast doubt on our overall reliability as scholars. If he could show that we were wrong about what happened in the 1930s or 1940s, or in the distant past, then others might be much less likely to take our central claims seriously.

In his attempt to challenge our case, Morris makes five major charges and a handful of lesser ones. When examined carefully, however, none of his charges stands up. Indeed, his own past writings provide compelling evidence that directly contradicts his criticisms of our work today.⁶⁵

Morris's First Charge: M&W are wrong about the Arab-Israeli military balance. In particular, they are wrong to suggest that Israel has always been stronger than its Arab adversaries.

Morris challenges our claim that Israel has been stronger than its Arab adversaries in all of its wars, including the 1947-49 conflict that led to Israel's independence. We wrote in the London Review of Books that "Israel is often portrayed as David confronted by Goliath, but the converse is closer to the truth." He argues, however, that an honest assessment of the balance of forces shows "that Israel is the weaker party in the conflict."⁶⁶

Morris's case on this issue has three components, and we address each in turn.

1. *He notes that Israel is surrounded by a vast Arab world that has a population much greater than Israel's and that possesses material resources that are "infinitely larger than Israel's." The clear implication is that looking at this big picture tells you a great deal about the actual balance of military forces.*

Response: Comparing the population and the material resources of Israel and the Arab world tells you little about the balance of military power between them. Why? Because the Arab states have been remarkably ineffective at

translating those latent resources into actual military power. Israel, by contrast, has been especially effective at doing so.

Morris himself has made this very point in his earlier writings. In *1948 and After*, for example, he wrote: “The atlas map showing a minuscule Israel and a giant surrounding Arab sea did not, and, indeed, for the time being, still does not, accurately reflect the true balance of military power in the region. Nor do the comparative population figures; in 1948, the Yishuv numbered some 650,000 souls—as opposed to 1.2 million Palestinian Arabs and some 30 million Arabs in the surrounding states (including Iraq)” (p. 14).

Morris appears to acknowledge this point in his *New Republic* piece, when he writes that “Israel’s ‘organizational ability’ has enabled it to concentrate and focus its resources where they count in wartime... with far greater efficiency than the Arabs.” He is correct, and it means that comparing population size and wealth tells you little about the balance of forces, which is the subject under debate. Thus, both Morris’s past work and this particular admission contradict the first element of this charge.

2. Morris points out that the Egyptians and the Syrians outnumbered the Israeli forces in the 1973 October War. Yet Israel “won that war because of superior ‘grit’ and better quality of troops and organization.”

Response: We did not say that the IDF had greater *numbers* than its adversaries in the 1973 War, since we were well aware that it did not.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, the Israelis were clearly the *militarily superior* force in that conflict, as Morris and others have made clear in their writings. Consider, for example, what Morris writes in *Righteous Victims* about the air and armor balances, which were of critical importance for determining the outcome of the 1973 conflict: “The IDF’s machines, both in the air and on the ground, were simply superior. So was its manpower: Israeli pilots, maintenance and ground control staffs, tank officers, and men were far better trained and led than their Arab counterparts” (p. 393). Although the Israelis were caught almost completely by surprise on October 6, 1973, it is not surprising that they were able to recover quickly and rout both the Egyptian and Syrian armies.

3. Morris devotes the most space to a discussion of the balance of forces in the 1947-49 war. Specifically, he writes, “As regards the War of 1948, the picture is more complex, but it is certainly not the picture painted by Mearsheimer and Walt of flat Israeli superiority.”

Some background on the 1947-49 war is in order before turning to Morris’ specific claims about manpower and weaponry. That war was actually composed of two separate conflicts: a civil war between the Jews and the Palestinians, which started on November 29, 1947 (the date of the UN decision to partition Mandate Palestine) and ran until May 14, 1948 (the day Israel became an independent state), and an international war between Israel and five Arab armies, which began on May 15, 1948, and ended on January 7, 1949.

The international conflict is usually divided into five phases:

- *May 15- June 10, 1948: first phase of fighting*
- *June 11- July 8, 1948: first truce*
- *July 8- July 18, 1948: second phase of fighting*
- *July 19-October 15, 1948: second truce*
- *October 15- January 7, 1949: third and final phase of fighting*

Morris challenges us on the balance of manpower during the civil war, arguing that the Palestinians had an edge. He writes, "Except in the last few weeks of the civil war, the Arabs probably had an overall edge in men-under-arms -- say 15,000--30,000 to the Yishuv's 15,000--25,000." With regard to the balance of manpower during the subsequent international conflict, he maintains that the situation "remains somewhat murky." Turning to the balance of weapons, he notes that the Arabs had an advantage in weaponry during the first phase of fighting in the international conflict.

Response: The fact is that Israel had clear superiority over its Arab opponents in the 1947-49 war and Morris says so at some length in his earlier work. For example, he writes in *1948 and After*, "One of the most tenacious myths relating to 1948 is that of 'David and Goliath'—that the Arabs were overwhelmingly stronger militarily than the Yishuv ... But the truth—as conveyed by Milstein, Shlaim, Pappé, and my own work, and several recent Israeli military histories—is that the stronger side, in fact, won" (pp. 13-14).⁶⁸

Let us look in more detail at the situation, starting with the civil war.

Regarding the balance of manpower, the Zionists had a decisive advantage over the Palestinians, mainly because the Palestinian forces had been decimated by the British during the 1936-39 revolt and they had not recovered by 1948.⁶⁹ The Zionists were also much better armed than the Palestinians. In addition to having greater numbers of soldiers and arms, the quality of the Jewish fighting forces was much higher than the Palestinians and the Zionists were far better organized for the conflict. Morris agrees with this assessment in his scholarly writings. For example, he writes in *1948 and After*:

During the first half of the war, from December 1947 to 14 May 1948, which was an admixture of a guerrilla and civil war, the Yishuv was better armed, and had more professional officers and better trained "soldiers" than the Palestinians, whose forces were beefed up by several thousand "volunteers" (some of them with military training from the surrounding Arab states). The Haganah's superior organization, command, and control during these first months of the war meant that at almost every decisive point of battle, the Jews fielded larger, better-armed, and better-trained formations than their Palestinian antagonists (p. 14).

The Israelis also had a clear advantage in *manpower* against the five Arab armies between May 15, 1948, and January 7, 1949. Morris makes this point clearly in *1948 and After*: "In mid-May, the Haganah fielded some 35,000 armed troops as compared with the 25-30,000 of the Arab invading armies. By the time

of Operation Dani, in July, the IDF had 65,000 men under arms and by December, close to 90,000 men under arms—at each stage significantly outnumbering the combined strength of the Arab armies ranged against them in Palestine” (p. 15). We might add that the manpower numbers that Morris employs in his *New Republic* article seem to show Israel with an advantage at every point after May 15, 1948.

Regarding the balance of *weaponry* in the international conflict, Morris is correct that the Arab armies had an advantage during the first phase of fighting from May 15 to June 10, 1948. But the Israelis gained the upper hand in weaponry during the first truce and never lost it again.

The bottom line is that the Zionists/Israelis had an advantage in manpower throughout both the civil war and the international war. They also had an advantage in weaponry throughout the entire civil war and during all of the international war, save for those twenty-five days during the first phase of fighting. The quality of the Jewish/Israeli fighting forces was far superior to that of their adversaries, and they were much better organized as well. Morris agrees with this assessment in his earlier writings. He writes, for example, in *1948 and After*, “During both the unconventional war before 15 May, and the renewed hostilities after the First Truce, it was superior Jewish firepower, manpower, organization, and command and control that determined the outcome of battle” Pg. 15). Israel won the war because it was stronger than its Arab adversaries, just as we said in our article.

Morris’ Second Charge: M&W are wrong to accuse Israel of “brutal” behavior during the Second Intifada. In fact, Israel has behaved with great restraint, even though the Palestinians started the fighting.

Morris challenges our claim that Israeli behavior toward the Palestinians during the Second Intifada has been brutal. Although Israel has a huge firepower advantage over the Palestinians, Morris argues that it has been remarkably restrained in its actions. Indeed, he maintains that the IDF has taken “great operational care to avoid civilian casualties,” and not surprisingly, “most of the Arabs killed in the intifada... were armed fighters, not civilians.”

Regarding the “famous battle of the Jenin refugee camp in spring 2002,” he says that this is an example of how “the IDF has perfected its modus operandi and become more careful.” He talks about the charge that Israel slaughtered Palestinians in Jenin and says that it did not happen and that “Human Rights Watch and other non-partisan bodies subsequently upheld the Israeli version” of events at Jenin. Finally, Morris maintains that regardless of how Israel behaved during the Second Intifada, the Palestinians started this conflict.⁷⁰

Response: Israel did behave brutally toward the Palestinians during the Second Intifada. This fact has been documented at length by numerous human rights organizations, including prominent Israeli groups like *B’Tselem*. Moreover, many Israelis have spoken out about Israel’s heavy-handed behavior in the Occupied Territories. As we noted in the Harvard Working Paper, “Four former

officials of Shin Bet (the Israeli domestic security organization) condemned Israel's conduct during the Second Intifada in November 2003. One of them declared 'we are behaving disgracefully,' and another termed Israel's conduct 'patently immoral'.⁷¹ Morris is correct when he says that Israel could have been even more brutal, given the tremendous firepower advantage that it had over the Palestinians. But that does contradict the well-documented fact that Israel behaved very harshly toward the Palestinians in the Second Intifada.

Morris is wrong when he says that most of the Palestinians killed by Israel during the Second Intifada were armed fighters, not civilians. According to *B'Tselem*, 3,386 Palestinians were killed by the Israelis between September 29, 2000, and December 31, 2005. Of those 3,386 deaths, 1,815 were bystanders, 1,008 were killed while fighting the Israelis, and the circumstances of 563 deaths are unknown.⁷²

Morris's account of Jenin is also wrong, as Peter Bouckaert, the emergencies director for Human Rights Watch, made clear in a letter to the *New Republic*:

Morris mischaracterizes the findings of Human Rights Watch (HRW) when he claims that it "and other non-partisan bodies ... upheld the Israeli version" of what happened in the Jenin refugee camp in April 2002. ... As one of the authors of that report, I take strong exception to Morris's description. HRW concluded that the army committed serious violations of the laws of war during its Jenin operation – some of them amounting to prima facie war crimes. Our research established that at least 22 civilians – including young, elderly and disabled persons – were killed during the IDF operation, not the "five or six" Morris tries to attribute to our research. Some of those killings amounted to summary execution of civilians clearly under the control of IDF soldiers. HRW concluded that "many [of the civilian deaths] could have been avoided if the IDF had taken proper precautions to protect civilian life during its military operation, as required by international humanitarian law."

HRW's report pulls no punches in criticizing the actions of the Palestinian militants [who fought fiercely in Jenin], and it objectively describes the challenges the IDF faces in fighting these militants in a densely populated refugee camp. But Morris is completely off the mark when he claims that our detailed report upholds the Israeli version of what happened in Jenin—unless the IDF has come around to admitting that its soldiers committed war crimes and killed nearly two dozen civilians during their Jenin operation.⁷³

The full text of Bouckaert's letter and Morris's reply is available at:
<http://www.tnr.com/doc.mhtml?i=20060619&s=correspondence061906twp>

Morris's claim that the Second Intifada "was launched by the Palestinians" also does not stand up against the evidence. There is no evidence that Arafat started the Second Intifada.⁷⁴ He continued negotiating with the Israelis and the Americans after Camp David, and he even visited Prime Minister Ehud Barak's

home a few nights before the violence broke out. The two leaders were uncharacteristically friendly and optimistic about the negotiations that evening. Moreover, the former head of Shin Bet, Ami Ayalon, and other Israeli intelligence figures have stated that they have seen no evidence that Arafat planned the Second Intifada.⁷⁵ The so-called Mitchell Commission (headed by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell and charged with restarting the peace process) reached the same conclusion.⁷⁶

The Second Intifada broke out shortly after Ariel Sharon's controversial visit to the Temple Mount on September 28, 2000. But that provocative move was the precipitating cause, not the root cause of the violence. Trouble had been brewing among the Palestinians well before Sharon's visit, and key individuals on both sides recognized the danger. In fact, Palestinian leaders asked American and Israeli officials to bar Sharon's visit precisely because they anticipated a violent reaction and wanted to prevent it.⁷⁷

Part of the problem was the Palestinians' growing dissatisfaction with Arafat, whose corrupt leadership did little to improve their lives, much less deliver a state. But the main cause was Israel's provocative policies in the Occupied Territories, compounded by its harsh response to the demonstrations that immediately followed Sharon's visit.⁷⁸ Between the start of the Oslo peace process in September 1993 and the outbreak of the Second Intifada seven years later, Israel confiscated more than 40,000 acres of Palestinian land, built 250 miles of bypass and security roads, established 30 new settlements, and increased the settler population in the West Bank and Gaza by almost 100,000, which effectively doubled that population.⁷⁹ The Israelis also reneged on promises to transfer territory back to the Palestinians and created a system of checkpoints that sharply reduced the Palestinians' freedom of movement and badly damaged their economy. Not surprisingly, the Palestinians were primed to explode by 2000, and when they did, the Israelis unleashed their superior firepower with scant restraint. The IDF, in fact, fired more than a million bullets in the first few days of the uprising.⁸⁰ One can perhaps debate whether this response was warranted, but Morris is wrong to suggest that Israel has not acted with great brutality.

Morris's Third Charge: M&W mischaracterize the Zionist leadership's views on partition in the 1930s and 1940s.

Morris challenges our claim that "the mainstream Zionist leadership was not interested in... accepting a permanent partition of Palestine," which effectively means accepting a Palestinian state. He writes in "And Now for some Facts": "Mearsheimer and Walt imply that down to (and maybe even beyond) 1948, the Zionist leadership rejected the partition of Palestine. This is simply false, no matter what misleading quotations they cull from eminent historians." He agrees with our point that Israel had no interest in a bi-national state, "but the acceptance or non-acceptance of partition is another matter" (pp. 25-26).

To be more specific, Morris concedes that "until 1936-37, certainly, the Zionist mainstream sought to establish a Jewish state over all of Palestine." However, he argues

that Zionist thinking began to change during the Arab Revolt of 1936-39. Very importantly, the famous Peel Commission recommended that Palestine be partitioned in 1937. Morris says that the Zionist mainstream accepted that recommendation “as a basis for further negotiation” after a “ferocious debate.” He seems to imply that the Zionists accepted partition as a viable outcome: “the Zionist leadership ended up formally accepting the principle of partition.” He is referring here to David Ben-Gurion and Chaim Weizmann. He does admit, however, that Ben-Gurion harbored hopes of further “expansion throughout Palestine” and saw partition as the “first step” (p. 26).

Nevertheless, Morris now claims that the years after 1937 “sobered Zionism and changed the movement’s thinking. The movement’s formal acceptance of the principle of partition was gradually digested and incorporated into the mentality of the Zionist mainstream.” He goes on to say that, “by November 1947, the Zionists’ reconciliation to a partial realization of their dreams was complete (except on the fringes of the movement), and Zionism’s mainstream, led by Ben-Gurion and Weizmann, once and for all internalized the necessity of partition and accepted the U.N. partition resolution. The 1948 war was fought by Israel with a partitionist outlook, and it ended in partition...” At another point, he says that “the Zionist leadership accepted the [UN] partition plan [1947], which provided for a Jewish state in 55 percent of Palestine with 550,000 Jews and between 400,000 and 500,000 Arabs” (pp. 26-28).

Finally, he maintains that, “During the following two decades, down to June 1967, there was a general acceptance by the Israeli mainstream of the fact, and the permanence of partition.” He adds: “As is well known, the Israeli victory and conquests of 1967 re-awakened the controversy about partition... .” (p. 26).

Response: Morris’s claims about partition are wrong, as the scholarly literature on that subject now makes clear. Indeed, Morris’s own writings about Zionist thinking on partition in 1937, 1937-47, the 1948 war, and 1947-67, directly contradict his claims in the *New Republic* and support our claims about partition.

Contrary to what Morris says, the Zionists did not accept the “principle of partition” in 1937, except as a tactical step on the road to full control of all of Palestine. Ben-Gurion was barely able to get his fellow Zionists to accept the Peel Commission’s recommendations on partition, as they wanted all of Mandate Palestine for the Jewish state; he persuaded them to accept the Commission’s recommendations only because it was widely recognized that he had no intention of accepting a *permanent* partition. He intended to take all of the land of Palestine in due course, leaving the Palestinians without a state. Morris makes this point clearly in *1948 and After*:

The original goal of Zionism was the establishment of a Jewish state in the whole of Palestine. The acceptance of partition, in the mid-1930s as in 1947, was tactical, not a change in the Zionist dream. “I don’t regard a state in part of Palestine as the final aim of Zionism, but as a means towards that aim,” Ben-Gurion wrote in 1938. A few months earlier, Ben-Gurion told the Jewish Agency Executive that he supported partition “on the basis of the assumption that after we constitute a large force following the establishment of the state—we will cancel the partition of the country and

we will expand throughout the Land of Israel." To his wife, Paula, Ben-Gurion wrote: "Establish a Jewish state at once, even if it is not in the whole land. The rest will come in the course of time. It must come." (p.9).

Furthermore, the Zionists remained committed to incorporating all of Palestine into their new state, and they certainly had no intention of allowing the creation of a Palestinian state. Although they publicly stated that they accepted the UN partition plan of November 29, 1947, in fact, the Zionists did not accept it as a permanent outcome and were already working to negate it. In particular, they worked out a deal to divide Palestine with Transjordan and deny the Palestinians a state.⁸¹ But even that was only a tactical move, as they intended to gain all of Palestine at some future point. Remember what Morris said in the previous quote from his writings: "The acceptance of partition in the mid-1930s as in 1947 ... was tactical, not a change in the Zionist dream."

Ben-Gurion made a number of comments in the first half of 1947 that show he still wanted all of Palestine. According to Uri Ben-Eliezer:

On May 13, 1947, Ben-Gurion told a meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive which was held in the United States: "We want the Land of Israel in its entirety. That was the original intention." A week later, speaking to the Elected Assembly in Jerusalem, the leader of the Yishuv wondered: "Does anyone among us disagree that the original intention of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, and the original intention of the hopes harbored by generations of the Jewish people, was finally to establish a Jewish state in the whole Land of Israel?" Speaking to the Mapai Secretariat in June, Ben-Gurion stated that it would be a mistake to forgo any part of the land. We have no right to do that, he said, and there is no need for it.⁸²

Not surprisingly, Ben-Gurion spoke the same language after November 29, 1947. As Ben-Eliezer describes it:

Thus Ben-Gurion promised the Histadrut Actions Committee in early December 1947: "There are no final arrangements in history, there are no eternal borders, and there are no ultimate political claims. Changes and transformations will still occur in the world." A week later, at a meeting of the Mapai Secretariat, Ben-Gurion said he agreed with the complaints being voiced in his party that the partition plan was a setback to the aspirations of the Zionist movement and that the proposed borders were unsound politically and militarily. He also assured his listeners that the boundaries of the Jewish Independence were not final. The importance of these statements is that they anticipated any substantial confrontation with the Palestinians. They were intended to prepare the ground for the possible use of military force as a means to obtain control over the entire Land of Israel and to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state in any part of that country.⁸³

It is clear from Morris' scholarly writings that he too recognized that the Zionists had no intention of accepting the UN partition plan as written and that instead they conspired with Transjordan to deny the Palestinians a state of their own. He writes, for example, in *1948 and After*: "The Yishuv and the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan, [Avi] Shlaim and [Uri] Bar-Joseph persuasively argue, had conspired from 1946 to early 1948 to nip the impending UN partition resolution in the bud and to thwart the emergence of a Palestinian Arab state. It was to be partition, but between Israel and Transjordan" (p.10).⁸⁴

Last, these various statements were not simply rhetoric designed to mollify political opponents, and the Israeli elite did not reconcile itself to partition in the period between 1947 and 1967, as Morris asserts in the *New Republic*. The following lengthy passage from his book, *Israel's Border Wars 1949-56*, makes this point abundantly clear:

Zionist mainstream thought had always regarded a Jewish state from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River as its ultimate goal. *The vision of "Greater Israel" as Zionism's ultimate objective did not end with the 1948 war.* The politicians of the Right, primarily from the Revisionist Herut Party, led by Menachem Begin, continued through 1949 and the early and mid-1950s to clamour publicly for conquest of the West Bank.

More mutedly, politicians of the socialist Tnu'ah LeAhdut Ha'Avoda, who, like those in Herut, believed in Greater Israel (or the "Whole Land of Israel") as the necessary fulfillment of the Zionist vision, also continued to speak of an "opportunity" that might yet enable Israel to conquer the West Bank. *Ahdut Ha'Avoda's leaders, including Israel Galili and Yisrael Bar-Yehuda, made no bones about their desire to see Israel expand eastwards to the River Jordan, through peaceful means or by war (they usually spoke of such conquest as resulting from an Arab-initiated war).*

These ideological expansionists were joined by those who espoused expansion for (mainly) strategic reasons. Officer in Command (OC) Southern Command Yigal Allon, an Ahdut 'Avoda-affiliated general, in March 1949 (long after the effective termination of Israeli-Jordanian hostilities, though before the signing of the armistice agreement), formally proposed to Ben-Gurion the conquest of the West Bank.

Moshe Dayan, Ben-Gurion's favorite general, was open about his strategic inclinations:

[He] does not give great weight to formal peace with the Arab states... Dayan believes that the first battle in the process of the establishment of Israel as an independent state has not yet been completed because we have not yet determined whether the spatial character of today's state is final. The state must decide if our existing borders satisfy us and will remain as they are in the future ... During the [1948] war, a view prevailed that if we moved eastwards towards the Jordan [River] we would have to face the British. General Dayan

is not sure that this view was well founded and he believes that our time is still open to changes.

A year earlier, in 1949, Dayan had been more explicit: "Boundaries – Frontier of Israel should be on Jordan... Present boundaries ridiculous from all points of view." He added that Israel was willing to absorb the West Bank "with its Arab population, including refugees." He qualified this by adding that this "expansion" would be "by evolution and not... fighting." But Dayan did not always express himself in "evolutionary" terms. In September 1952 he told a US diplomat that the "boundaries [with Jordan] will be changed by war," unless some form of political settlement, involving an Israeli-Palestinian confederation, was reached.

Such talk in the IDG General Staff was not limited to Dayan. For example, in late 1953 Lieutenant-Colonel Mattityahu Peled (IDF Quartermaster-General in 1967 and a left-wing Knesset Member in the 1970s) also proposed such a course. According to acting Prime Minister Sharett, Peled implied that the IDF regarded the border with Jordan as "absolutely impossible" and wanted it changed to a "straight line" and was "aiming for a war in order to conquer the rest of western Palestine [i.e. the West Bank]."

Of course, the IDF General Staff, while highly influential, did not determine government policy. Nor did Herut, in opposition throughout 1949--56, or Ahdut Ha'Avoda, in opposition until November 1955 and only a minor member of the governing coalition thereafter. The ruling Mapai Party never adopted a platform advocating conquest of the West Bank and neither of Mapai's leaders, Ben-Gurion or Sharett, ever publicly proposed or spoke about the need to conquer the West Bank (though Ben-Gurion in private occasionally proposed conquest of parts of the West Bank as an anti-infiltration measure) (pp. 11-12).

A few additional words about Ben-Gurion's views after 1948 are in order. Although he never publicly proposed conquering the West Bank and creating a "Greater Israel," we now know—thanks in part to Morris's earlier work—that Ben-Gurion's original intention in starting the 1956 war was to pursue that grandiose scheme. Morris writes in his seminal book, *Righteous Victims*:

Ben-Gurion at first presented a grandiose scheme for the complete reordering of the Middle East: Jordan would be "dissolved," with Iraq annexing the East Bank, and Israel, in effect, acquiring the West Bank; Lebanon would divest itself of some of its heavily Muslim eastern and southern provinces and reconstitute itself as an overwhelmingly Christian republic, aligned with Israel, while Israel would annex southern Lebanon up to the Litani River and retain at least a strip of eastern Sinai down to and including Sharm ash-Sheikh. The French gently brought Ben-Gurion down to earth and suggested that they focus on Egypt, promising ships to guard Israel's coastline and aircraft to guard its skies to alleviate his fear of aerial bombardment (p. 290).

In sum, there is hardly any difference between what we said about partition in our piece and what Morris has said about that subject in the past. Much of what Morris says about partition in the *New Republic* is at odds with his extensive prior writings as well as the work of numerous other first-rate scholars who have written on the matter. Morris is certainly free to disagree with us today, but only by repudiating his prior scholarship.

Morris' Fourth Charge: M&W are wrong about the Zionists' views on a possible expulsion of the Palestinian Arab population, and they misrepresent the Zionist leadership's thinking (and especially David Ben-Gurion's) on this important historical issue. Expulsion did occur, but only because the Palestinians forced the Zionists to take this unfortunate step during the 1947-48 war.

In "Now for some Facts," Morris challenges our arguments on "the issue of transfer and expulsion." He maintains that this is a complicated matter and that "this complexity has proved too great for Mearsheimer and Walt to handle." He employs two main lines of argument against us. First, he attempts to minimize the importance of expulsion in Zionist thinking about how to deal with the Palestinians. For example, he writes that "Zionist leaders, from Herzl through Ben-Gurion and Weizmann, between 1881 and the mid-1940s, occasionally expressed support for the 'transfer' of Arabs... out of territory of the future Jewish state." In fact, he argues that the Zionists believed that "a Jewish majority would be achieved... by means of massive Jewish immigration." Moreover, he points out that expulsion was never made "part of the movement's political platform."

Second, he mainly blames the Palestinians for forcing the Zionists to employ expulsion as a strategy. For example, he maintains that Zionist leaders pushed transfer only "at moments of acute crisis, in response to waves of violence that seemed to vitiate the possibility of Arab-Jewish co-existence in a single state [which he correctly said the Zionists had no interest in], and in response to waves of European anti-Semitic violence." Although he gives us credit for pointing out the Irgun's terrorism in the late 1930s, he says that it was "in response to Arab terrorism." Finally, he argues that the Yishuv had no interest in transfer between November 1947 and April 1948. It was only in late March, when the Haganah was in serious trouble, that the Zionists "went over to the offensive." But even then, "Israel never adopted a general policy of expulsion" (pp. 26-28).

Response: Once again, Morris' scholarly writings are at odds with the two lines of argument that he now employs against us. The key to understanding the issue of transfer is to recognize that there were many more Arabs than Jews in Palestine in the decades before Israel was created in 1948. As a result, there was no way to partition Palestine so that the Jews would have a state where they were the clear majority. And there was certainly no way that a Jewish state could be created in all of Palestine in which the Jews outnumbered the Arabs. This is why the Peel Commission's plan to partition Palestine called for population transfer. Morris clearly recognizes this point in "Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948":

The problem with partition, however, was that any way one divided the country – unless one declared the minute area of Tel Aviv and its immediate environs a Jewish state – the state that emerged would necessarily contain an Arab majority or at least a very large Arab minority subversive of and hostile to the Jewish polity to which it had been consigned. Indeed, the Jewish state faced such a problem in the UN Partition Plan of November 1947: it would have had 55 percent Jews and 40-45 percent Arabs. Any way one cut it, partition would be extremely problematic, to say the least. How, for instance, the new state would have dealt with its enormous Arab minority in 1948, had there been no war and no refugee problem, is a good question (p. 40).

There was no serious possibility that this demographic problem would be solved by Jewish immigration into Palestine. Most European Jews preferred going to America rather than Palestine and the British put limits on how many Jews could enter Palestine. Expulsion or transfer was the only real solution to the problem. Morris says just that in “Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948”: “The last and, let me say obvious and most logical, solution to the Zionists’ demographic problem lay the way of transfer: you could create a homogenous Jewish state or at least a state with an overwhelming Jewish majority by moving or transferring all or most of the Arabs out of its prospective territory. And this, in fact, is what happened in 1948” (p. 40).

Given that expulsion was “the obvious and most logical” way to solve the Zionist demographic problem, it is not surprising that it was a constant topic of conversation since the earliest days of the Zionist movement. Morris says in the *New Republic* that the Zionists only “occasionally” talked about transfer before 1937, but that is not what he said in “Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948,” where he wrote:

My conclusion was and remains that thinking about the transfer of all or part of Palestine’s Arabs out of the prospective Jewish state was pervasive among Zionist leadership circles long before 1937, when Lord Peel recommended transfer alongside partition as the only possible solution to the conflict, and continued to exercise the Zionist imagination during the following decade... As [Nur] Masalha has shown, many if not most of Zionism’s mainstream leaders expressed at least passing support for the idea of transfer during the movement’s first decades. True, as the subject was sensitive, they did not often or usually state this in public (pp. 40-41).

There was even greater enthusiasm for transfer among the Zionists in the wake of the Peel Commission, as Morris writes in “Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948”:

But the July 1937 publication of the Peel Commission report—and its endorsement in principle by the British government—seemed to open the floodgates to a more open, if not quite public, discussion of the idea. Peel’s recommendation to transfer at least some 225,000 Arabs out of the

lowlands of the proposed Jewish state propelled some of the Zionist leaders into transports of enthusiasm (p.41).

Morris goes on to say that “subsequently, the matter of transfer repeatedly cropped up at the meetings of the Jewish Agency Executive (JAE), the ‘government’ of the Yishuv and the leading body of the Zionist Organization... The consensus or near-consensus in support of transfer—voluntary if possible, compulsory if necessary—was clear,” (p. 44).

One might think that the horrors that occurred to Europe’s civilian populations in World War II would have dampened the Zionists’ enthusiasm for expelling the Arabs from Palestine. But they did not, as Morris makes clear in “Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948”: “Nor did the onset of World War II do much to dampen Ben-Gurion’s enthusiasm for transfer. Rather the opposite. Nazi persecution of the Jews only heightened his appreciation of the urgent need for more empty land in Palestine on which to settle Jewish immigrants” (p. 45). In “Refabricating 1948,” Morris writes: “At no point during the 1930s and 1940s did Ben-Gurion ever go on record against the idea or policy of transfer. On the contrary, Ben-Gurion left a paper trail a mile long as to his actual thinking, and no amount of ignoring, twisting and turning, manipulation, contortion, and distortion can blow it away” (p. 85). Morris also notes in “Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus” that “Ben-Gurion was not the only Zionist leader who kept anxiously, not to say obsessively, mulling over the possibilities of transfer. Chaim Weizmann, president of the Zionist Organization and the movement’s liberal elder statesman, repeatedly pressed the idea on various interlocutors,” (p. 46).

Morris is correct when he notes that expulsion was never part of the Zionist’s political platform. But that is hardly surprising; expulsion is a horrible and controversial strategy, and it makes no sense for any group contemplating the transfer of a rival population to announce its intentions to the world. Indeed, it makes sense to say as little as possible in public about the matter, which is exactly what the Zionists did, according to Morris’s scholarly writings. For example, he writes in “Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948”:

Despite the fact that the notion of transfer had been proposed by a royal commission and that Ben-Gurion had seen fit to speak of it in the plenum of the Zionist Congress, the subject was still very sensitive. Indeed, a gauge of its continuing sensitivity is to be found in the fact that the Jewish press reports about the Congress’ proceedings generally failed to mention that Ben-Gurion, or anyone else, had come out strongly in favor of transfer or indeed had even raised the subject (p. 43).

Morris goes on to say that, “the issue was highly sensitive – and it was common practice in Zionist bodies to order stenographers to ‘take a break’ and thus to exclude from the record discussion on such matters,” (p. 44).

Morris’ second line of argument—that the Palestinians’ murderous behavior forced the Zionists to pursue expulsion—also does not stand up to

careful examination. The evidence we presented above makes it clear that the Zionists recognized from very early in the conflict that expulsion was the only viable way to build a Jewish state in a land heavily populated with Arabs. Otherwise, Arabs would outnumber Jews, making it impossible to have a Jewish state. Simple demographics, not the victims, forced the Zionists to turn to the idea of transfer. Morris clearly recognized this point in a 2004 interview: “Of course, Ben-Gurion was a transferist. He understood that there could be no Jewish state with a large and hostile Arab minority in its midst.” He went on to say, “Ben-Gurion was right. If he had not done what he did, a state would not have come into being. That has to be clear. It is impossible to evade it. Without the uprooting of the Palestinians, a Jewish state would not have arisen here.”⁸⁵

Furthermore, the evidence presented above also contradicts Morris’s claim that the Zionists thought seriously about expulsion only during crises. The fact is that they often thought about transfer, especially after 1937, and thus they were primed to expel the Palestinians when the opportunity presented itself in 1948. Morris actually makes this very point in “Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948”:

The haphazard thinking about transfer before 1937 and the virtual consensus in support of the notion from 1937 on contributed to what happened in 1948 in the sense that they conditioned the Zionist leadership, and below it, the officials and officers who managed the new state’s civilian and military agencies, for the transfer that took place. To one degree or another, these men all arrived at 1948, in no small measure owing to the continuous anti-Zionist Arab violence which played out against the growing persecution of Diaspora Jewry in central and eastern Europe, with a mindset which was open to the idea and implementation of transfer and expulsion. And the transfer that occurred—which encountered almost no serious opposition from any part of the Yishuv—transpired smoothly in large measure because of this pre-conditioning. (p. 48)

The historical record also undercuts Morris’s claim in his *New Republic* essay that “the Yishuv had no interest in transfer between November 1947 and April 1948.” Ben-Gurion, for example, told the Central Committee of the Histadrut on December 30, 1947:

In the area allocated to the Jewish state there are not more than 520,000 Jews and about 350,000 non-Jews, mostly Arabs. Together with the Jews of Jerusalem, the total population of the Jewish state at the time of its establishment, will be about a million, including almost 40 percent non-Jews. Such a [population] composition does not provide a stable basis for a Jewish state. This [demographic] fact must be viewed in all its clarity and acuteness. With such a [population] composition, there cannot even be absolute certainty that control will remain in the hands of the Jewish majority ... There can be no stable and strong Jewish state so long as it has a Jewish majority of only 60 percent.⁸⁶

In the concluding paragraph of his discussion of transfer, Morris writes that “what befell the Palestinians was not ‘a moral crime,’ whatever that might mean; it was something the Palestinians brought down on themselves.” We agree that the Palestinians bear some responsibility for what has happened to them, having played their hand poorly on numerous occasions over the past hundred years. But as Ben-Gurion admitted, the Jews came from Europe into Palestine and built formidable political and military institutions that eventually allowed them to evict hundreds of thousands of Arabs from their homes and take their land to make the state of Israel. Given the terrible history of anti-Semitism in Europe, we believe that it is appropriate for the Jewish people to have their own state. But there is no escaping the fact that creating Israel required the commission of a serious crime against the Palestinians, who had little history of anti-Semitism themselves.

Morris’s Fifth Charge: M&W’s description of the Barak government’s offer at Camp David is wrong. This was a generous offer, and the so-called Clinton parameters in December 2000 improved the terms even more. Israel accepted Clinton’s proposals, but the Palestinians rejected them. Thus, the Oslo peace process failed because the Palestinian leadership—and especially PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat—chose to reject the offer of a state and turned to violence instead.

Turning to more recent events, Morris maintains that we misrepresent the “generous” terms that Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered the Palestinians in 2000.) Specifically, Morris claims in “Now for some Facts” that the Palestinians were offered a deal at Camp David in July 2000 where they would have gotten 90 to 91 percent of the West Bank, 100 percent of Gaza, and control over parts of East Jerusalem. Morris implies in his comments that the West Bank would not have been divided into separate enclaves by Israeli settlements and connector roads. Arafat, however, said no to this generous offer and “the Palestinians launched the second intifada.” Morris goes on to say that in December 2000, Israel “improved the deal, offering the Palestinians 94 to 96 percent of the West Bank (with territorial compensation elsewhere for the 4 to 6 percent lost)... . Again the Palestinians said no, and continued shooting. The Israeli cabinet, with a heavy heart, endorsed the Clinton parameters.”(pp. 28-29).

Response: Morris’s account of the peace process during the critical year of 2000 conforms to the conventional wisdom on this matter in both Israel and the United States. Not surprisingly, a number of our other critics (for example, Dennis Ross and Alan Dershowitz) have made this charge as well. Nevertheless, this version of events is largely a myth. Although Barak deserves credit for being the first (and only) Israeli leader to offer the Palestinians their own state, the terms he offered them at Camp David were hardly “generous.” Morris is correct that Barak’s best offer at Camp David promised to eventually give the Palestinians 91 percent of the West Bank.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, there were major problems with this offer from the Palestinians’ perspective. Israel planned to keep control of the Jordan River Valley (roughly 10 percent of the land) for between six and twenty-one years, which meant that the Palestinians would be given immediate control over 81 percent of the West Bank, not 91 percent. The Palestinians, of course, could not be sure that Israel would ever relinquish control

of the Jordan River Valley. In addition, the Palestinians had a slightly more expansive definition of what constituted the West Bank than the Israelis. This difference, which amounted to roughly 5 percent of the territory in question, meant that the Palestinians saw themselves immediately getting 76 percent of the West Bank and maybe 86 percent at some future date. What made this deal especially difficult for the Palestinians to accept was the fact that they had already agreed (in the original Oslo Accords) to recognize Israeli sovereignty over 78 percent of the original British Mandate. From their perspective, they were now being asked to make another major concession and accept at best 86 percent of the remaining 22 percent.

Furthermore, the final Israeli proposal at Camp David would not have given the Palestinians a continuous piece of sovereign territory in the West Bank. The Palestinians maintain that the West Bank would have been divided into three cantons. Israelis invariably dispute this claim, but Barak himself acknowledges that Israel would have maintained control of a “razor-thin” wedge of territory running from Jerusalem to the Jordan River Valley.⁸⁸ This wedge, which would completely bisect the West Bank, was essential to Israel’s plan to retain control of the Jordan River Valley for another six to twenty years. Barak’s proposal to divide Jerusalem was a major step in the right direction, but the Palestinians were not offered full sovereignty in a number of Arab neighborhoods in East Jerusalem. Israel would also have kept control over the new Palestinian state’s borders, its airspace, and its water resources, and the Palestinians would be permanently barred from building an army to defend themselves. It is hard to imagine any leader accepting these terms. Certainly no other state in the world has such curtailed sovereignty, or faces so many obstacles to building a workable economy and society. Given all this, it is not surprising that Barak’s former foreign minister, Shlomo Ben-Ami, who was a key participant at Camp David, later told an interviewer, “If I were a Palestinian I would have rejected Camp David, as well.”⁸⁹

As previously discussed, the available evidence does not support the charge that Arafat and the Palestinian National Authority started the Second Intifada in the fall of 2000. Nor did Arafat reject Clinton’s December 2000 proposals. White House spokesman Jake Siewert announced on January 3, 2001, that “both sides have now accepted the President’s ideas with some reservations,” and Clinton confirmed this point in a speech to the Israel Policy Forum four days later.⁹⁰ Indeed, negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians continued at Taba, Egypt, until late January 2001, when Ehud Barak, not Arafat, broke off the talks. Barak’s successor, Ariel Sharon, refused to resume them, and with the lobby’s backing, he eventually persuaded the Bush administration to support Israel’s attempt to impose a unilateral solution that would keep large parts of the West Bank under Israeli control.

Morris’s Minor Charges

In addition to his five major charges, Morris challenges us on a host of minor historical points. First, he disputes our claim that “the British favored the Zionists over the Palestinians during the period of the British Mandate (1919-1948).” He

says that this was true up until 1936 but not the case between 1938 and 1948.⁹¹ He notes, for example, that in 1939, the British “published a White Paper that portended and backed the establishment in Palestine of an Arab-majority state.” Plus, the British abstained when the UN voted in 1947 to partition Palestine and create a Jewish state.

There is no question that Britain and the Zionists clashed on a number of important issues between 1938 and 1948, in good part because of the exigencies of World War II. Although Britain adopted a number of policies that the Zionists deplored, they were not able to hinder the creation of a Jewish state in any significant way. In fact, the British did much in those years that helped the Zionists achieve a state. More important, one must remember that we were not talking about whether or not British policy was pro-Zionist. Our argument was that “the British favored the Zionists over the Palestinians,” which was clearly the case.

The British, for example, suppressed the Arab Revolt in 1938 and 1939, the first two years of the period in dispute. Britain’s victory, which was achieved with the help of the Zionists, crippled the Palestinians so badly that they could not put up a serious fight against the Zionists in 1948. The 1939 White Paper actually had little effect on the Zionist enterprise, as Morris himself points out in *Righteous Victims*: “While it alienated the Yishuv, the White Paper failed during the subsequent war years to cramp its development.... The White Paper had little effect. Palestine’s Arabs remained a mortally stricken community. The Yishuv continued to develop apace,” (p. 159). During World War II, Zionists fought side by side with the British, developing military skills that would come in handy during 1948. The Palestinians, on the other hand, sat on the sidelines. Also remember that Britain’s prime minister during World War II was Winston Churchill, who was highly sympathetic to the Zionists and quite hostile to the Palestinians, as Morris makes clear.⁹² The British might have abstained from the UN vote to partition Palestine, but they cooperated with the Zionists at the expense of the Palestinians after that historic vote. Specifically, Britain gave the Zionists and King Abdullah a green light to ignore the U.N. partition plan and divide up Palestine between Israel and Transjordan, leaving the Palestinians without a state.⁹³ In sum, British actions during the entire period of the Mandate favored the Zionists over the Palestinians.

Second, Morris maintains that 1919 is a “meaningless date” to use for the start of the British Mandate.⁹⁴ He prefers 1917 or 1920. The former date makes sense, he argues, because that was when Britain conquered Palestine and the “Mandate began de facto.” The case for the latter date rests on the fact that in 1920 the British installed a civilian administration in Palestine, and “the San Remo conference endorsed the Mandate.” There are reasonable grounds for any of these dates, and we chose 1919 because that was the year in which the League of Nations was created, the Mandate system was established, and Britain was given de facto control by the league over what would become Mandate Palestine. We did not use 1917, because there was no League of Nations or Mandate system at that time, although Britain controlled Palestine at that point. Thus, it did not seem to make good sense to talk about a “British Mandate” in 1917. We did not

use 1920, because Britain had de facto control over Palestine well before 1920, and thus that date seemed a bit too late. So, we settled on 1919, the first year after the war, when the Mandate system was put in place and future British control over Palestine was widely recognized and accepted. Again, we are not arguing that this is unquestionably the correct date; we are simply saying that in our judgment, it is the best of three plausible starting dates. This is obviously not a very important issue.

Third, Morris disputes our claim that Israel's retaliatory policy in the early 1950s was "actually part of a broader effort to expand Israel's borders."⁹⁵ Furthermore, he argues that if we had used his book *Israel's Border Wars* honestly, we would not have reached that conclusion. We disagree. In the opening section of Morris' book, which is entitled "The Borders," he emphasizes that Israeli leaders believed that Israel's borders were not firmly fixed after 1948, and that they were not "natural" borders. Furthermore, he notes that "between 1949 and 1956 these frontiers were plagued by violence," some of it involving the demilitarized zones (DMZs) separating Israel from Egypt and Syria. Sovereignty over these DMZs was disputed, which gave Israel and the Arabs a strong incentive to expand into them. "Given the superiority of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)," he writes, "Israel eventually ... incorporated most of the zones into its territory."⁹⁶

Later in the book in a section entitled "Expelling Border Communities and Nudging Back the Borders" Morris writes: "Also connected with the struggle against the infiltrators, was Israel's effort to push the border with Jordan eastwards, especially in the Hebron foothills."⁹⁷ He also makes it clear throughout the book that most Israeli leaders were bent on expanding Israel's borders. For example, he writes: "Throughout the early 1950s Dayan ... spoke of the inevitability of a Second Round; of the need for a pre-emptive strike; and of a necessary re-drawing of the frontiers. Other senior staff officers occasionally echoed Dayan's expansionist philosophy. Periodically during the early and mid-1950s, the defense establishment Activists pressed the government to exploit this or that circumstance to conquer Arab territory, and not just along the Jordanian frontier."⁹⁸ Morris also notes that after Moshe Sharett replaced Ben-Gurion as prime minister in 1953, "It took all of Sharett's powers to restrain ... [the generals] from offensives aimed at conquering Arab territory, in southern Lebanon, the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and along the border with Egypt"⁹⁹

Finally, Morris makes clear that Israeli operations against Egypt in the mid-1950s, culminating in the 1956 War, were designed to expand Israel's borders. He writes, for example, "The years 1955-6 witnessed the highly combustible confluence of an Israeli defense minister and prime minister who sought an opportunity to expand Israel's borders (and an at least equally expansionist CGS who was spoiling for a fight), with an Arab leader who was not averse to taking chances."¹⁰⁰ Morris says that the ensuing 1956 War -- which aimed at re-drawing Israel's borders -- was "in a sense the ultimate and largest retaliatory strike."¹⁰¹ The bottom line: there is considerable evidence in *Israel's Border Wars* that Israel's retaliatory policy from 1949 to 1956 was linked with Israel's effort to expand its borders.

Fourth, Morris challenges our claim that the Arabs had been in “continuous possession” of Palestine for 1300 years.¹⁰² We are not sure why he disputes the point, as it is neither central to our argument nor especially controversial. Still, we believe our claim is correct. The area that came to be called Palestine was controlled by the Roman and Byzantine Empires until the middle of the 7th century, when it fell to Muslim armies from the Arabian Peninsula. It remained in Arab hands for more than 400 years, during which time most of the population converted to Islam and adopted an Arab identity. Palestine was subsequently ruled by Seljuk Turks, Crusaders, Mongols, Mameluks, Ottoman Turks, and the British. Although Palestine has had a variety of different rulers since the 7th century, the resident population did not change much. The Ottoman and British Empires, for example, did not expel the indigenous population and move in their own people. Instead, they brought a small number of administrators to Palestine to rule over a people whose core culture was Arab and Muslim, and who had been there for many centuries. This history is the basis of our claim on this minor issue, which, like all of Morris’ other minor points, has little bearing on our core arguments about the lobby.

Viewed as a whole, Morris’ critique is laboring against insurmountable odds, because he is trying to make a case that is both contrary to the facts and inconsistent with his own scholarship. The result, not surprisingly, is somewhat confused. In any case, his criticisms do not damage either our core arguments or our scholarly reliability in any significant way.

MAJOR CHARGES FROM CRITICS OF ISRAEL

In addition to the predictable criticisms from individuals and organizations in the lobby, we have also been challenged by a number of commentators who are themselves critical of U.S. and/or Israeli policy. To their credit, these critics of our article have focused almost entirely on questions of substance, and have refrained from *ad hominem* attacks or other smear tactics. In some cases, their criticisms reflect deeply-held views about the nature of contemporary capitalism and its role in shaping U.S. foreign policy; in other cases, they echo criticisms made by Israel’s defenders. Critics of Israel raise five basic objections to our article.

Charge #1: M&W misunderstand the relationship between Israel and the United States. They believe that Israel is the tail that wags the dog, but in reality, the interests of each state are closely aligned. It may even be more accurate to call Israel an American “client state.”

Norman Finkelstein argues that Israel’s national interest “largely coincides” with the U.S. national interest.¹⁰³ In effect, Israel and the United States act as a tag team and there is no need for either side to pressure the other to do its bidding. For example, Finkelstein argues that “Israel is the only stable and secure base for projecting US power in this region,” and that Israel’s “overwhelming military power” helps to make it “a unique and irreplaceable asset in the Middle East.” (Note that Finkelstein’s argument is similar to Martin Kramer’s claim that Israel is a strategic asset, which we

dealt with above.) Some of these critics go even further, however, and argue that Israel is actually an American client state. In this view, Israel is the junior partner in the relationship and essentially a tool that American imperialism employs to divide and oppress people in the Arab and Islamic world.¹⁰⁴

Response: There is no question that U.S. and Israeli interests sometimes coincide. For example, both countries have an interest in making sure that Iran does not acquire nuclear weapons. As previously acknowledged in our paper and in this response, a case can also be made that Israel was a strategic asset during the Cold War. Still, there were times during the Cold War when U.S. and Israeli interests diverged, and that has certainly been the case since the Cold War ended. And when American and Israeli interests conflict, the lobby ensures that Israel usually wins.

Israel's ability to win assent for its policies from Washington is most apparent on the Palestinian issue. The United States has a deep-seated interest in ending Israel's occupation of the West Bank and creating a viable Palestinian state, because it would improve America's standing in the Arab and Islamic world and make it easier to defeat terrorist organizations and other extremists. It is also the morally correct thing to do. Every time the United States leans on Israel to change its policies vis-à-vis the Palestinians, however, the lobby goes into action and forces the administration in power to back off. We documented, for example, how President Bush tried to pressure Ariel Sharon to alter his policy toward the Palestinians in the fall of 2001 and again in the spring of 2002.¹⁰⁵ He was forced to back down both times because enormous political pressure was brought to bear on him by the lobby. After Sharon humiliated Bush in the spring of 2002, Spain's leading daily, *El Pais*, expressed the view of many observers when it commented: "If a country's weight is measured by its influence on events, the superpower is not the USA, but Israel."¹⁰⁶

Finkelstein recognizes that Israel and the United States have fundamentally different views on the Palestinian issue and that Israel invariably gets its way to the detriment of the United States on that critically important matter. Specifically, he writes that, "U.S. elite policy in the Israel-Palestine conflict would almost certainly *not* be the same without the lobby. What does the U.S.A. gain from the Israeli settlements and occupation? In terms of alienating the Arab world, it's had something to lose." He goes on to say that, "Without the lobby and in the face of widespread Arab resentment, the U.S. would perhaps have ordered Israel to end the occupation by now, sparing Palestinians much suffering."¹⁰⁷ We agree, but we think that this is solid evidence that the tail is wagging the dog.

As for the claim that Israel is the instrument by which the United States dominates the region, the fact is that the United States has never been able to use Israel as a base for projecting power in the region. As we noted in our article, the United States could not station military forces in Israel when the Iranian Revolution in 1979 raised serious concerns about the security of Persian Gulf oil supplies. Instead, Washington had to create its own "Rapid Deployment Force." Furthermore, the United States could not deploy forces out of Israel in either the

first war against Iraq (1991) or the second one (2003).¹⁰⁸ Also, it is hard to see how Israel's military might works to America's advantage. The two wars against Iraq show that Israel must remain on the sidelines in any war that the United States fights in the Middle East. And even when the Israelis fight by themselves, they often fight ineffectively and damage America's position in the region. For example, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was a debacle, as was Israel's recent war in Lebanon. The IDF has also failed to subdue the Palestinian insurgency in the Occupied Territories, even though it has an overwhelming military advantage and frequently uses brutal and indiscriminate tactics. Israeli military prowess—and its contribution to U.S. security—should not be overstated.

Charge #2: M&W see the lobby as a powerful independent influence on U.S. foreign policy, but it is actually closely aligned with U.S. corporate interests, and with key ruling elites.

The lobby is "extremely powerful," writes Joseph Massad, "more powerful than any other foreign policy lobby on Capitol Hill."¹⁰⁹ But he thinks it is powerful because it is pushing an agenda that suits the interests of the governing elites in Washington as well as corporate America. In effect, the lobby is pushing on an open door, because key elites are already sympathetic to its policy proposals. (Note: this critique resembles the lobby's claim that the United States backs Israel not because of the lobby, but because there is widespread support for Israel in the American body politic.)

Response: We agree that the lobby is powerful, but we do not agree that its power derives from the fact that its agenda is the same as the governing elites' agenda. There are cases where this is true, but there are also a number of important cases where the lobby went head to head with the governing elites. We have already mentioned the cases from the fall of 2001 and the spring of 2002 when the lobby forced Bush to retreat on the Palestinian issue. More generally, every American President since Lyndon Johnson has opposed Israel's policy of building settlements in the Occupied Territories, but because of the lobby, no President has been willing to confront Israel in a serious way over the settlements.

The lobby also clashed with the Carter Administration in 1978 over selling arms to Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and with the Reagan Administration in 1981 over selling arms to Saudi Arabia. As noted earlier, the lobby also convinced Congress to pass a \$250 million military aid package for Israel in December 1982, following the invasion of Lebanon, over the strong objections of President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz. The Bush Administration was opposed to the Syria Accountability Act, but the lobby worked hard in Congress to get it passed and Bush reluctantly signed it into law. In short, there is often conflict between the lobby's agenda and the U.S. government's view of the U.S. national interest, which is why Richard Gephardt, the former House Minority Leader, told AIPAC that "Without [your] constant support ... and all your fighting on a daily basis to strengthen the relationship [between America and Israel], it would not be."¹¹⁰

It is also worth noting that this line of argument seems to fail the common-sense test. Specifically, if the lobby's efforts are largely redundant, because the United States would do what the lobby wants anyway, why is there a need for a powerful lobby working assiduously to promote Israel's interests? It would seem to be unnecessary, or at least superfluous. Similarly, one might again ask why groups and individuals in the lobby go to great lengths to stifle elite debate about Israeli policy and the U.S.-Israeli relationship. The answer to both questions is that the lobby's goals (and Israel's goals) are often at odds with the goals of America's governing elites, and the absence of pressure or a more open debate would lead to different U.S. policies.

Charge #3: M&W overstate the lobby's influence, because they do not recognize that powerful corporate interests are the real forces that drive U.S. foreign policy.

According to Noam Chomsky and Stephen Zunes, the main driving forces behind U.S. foreign policy are powerful corporate interests—not the Israel lobby—and especially U.S. oil companies and the “military-industrial complex.”¹¹¹ From this perspective, the United States backs Israel in order to keep the Arab world divided and weak, which in turn advances the interests of large American corporations. Chomsky and Zunes also point out that the United States pursues brutal policies in many places where the lobby is not involved, which suggests that its impact on U.S. foreign policy is slight. As Zunes puts it, “If the United States can pursue such policies elsewhere in the world without pressure from the Israel lobby, why is its presence necessary to explain U.S. policies in the Middle East?”¹¹²

Response: We have already provided a considerable body of evidence showing that pro-Israel forces play a powerful role in shaping American foreign policy, and we have addressed the claim that oil interests play a much more important role than the Israel lobby in determining what the United States does or does not do in the Middle East. Although it is an intuitively attractive argument, the evidence does not support it. Nor is there much evidence that “the military-industrial complex” is a major driving force behind U.S. Middle East policy.

The claim that the lobby must be weak because the United States acts badly all over the world is also unconvincing, because it does not allow for the considerable variation that characterizes U.S. foreign policy. Although the United States has sometimes acted ruthlessly or stupidly in particular regions at particular times, that is not always the case. For example, American policy in Europe for the past sixty years has generally been smart and rather benign. That is not true of U.S. Middle East policy, especially in recent years. Furthermore, we do not claim, as Massad suggests, that the United States “would be the Arabs’ and the Palestinians’ best ally and friend” if there was no lobby. That is drawing too rosy a picture. We do believe, however, that U.S. policy would be different and not only would it be more in line with America’s national interest, it would also be much more benign for the Palestinians, who have suffered enormously because of the lobby’s influence in Washington.

Charge #4: M&W exaggerate the degree to which key members of the lobby—and especially the neoconservatives—are devoted to Israel. Most of these individuals are not religious, and do not have a powerful attachment to the Jewish state.

Zunes and Norman Finkelstein maintain that many of the key players that we placed in the lobby are not deeply committed to Israel's welfare. Finkelstein writes that, "The historical record strongly suggests that neither Jewish neo-conservatives in particular nor mainstream Jewish intellectuals generally have a primary allegiance to Israel—in fact, any allegiance to Israel."¹¹³ He maintains that these pro-Israel individuals are driven by opportunism, not Zionism. Zunes argues that the fact that many of Israel's supporters are not religious is evidence that their commitment to the Jewish state is weak.¹¹⁴

Response: There is an abundance of evidence that the individuals who comprise the lobby are deeply committed to Israel. Douglas Feith, Richard Perle, and David Wurmser, for example, wrote the famous "Clean Break" study for Benjamin Netanyahu because they were seriously worried that pursuing the Oslo Peace Process would jeopardize Israel's security and therefore it was time for the Jewish state to radically alter its foreign policy. One can question the wisdom of their thinking, but it is hard to question their devotion to Israel. The same is true with Dennis Ross and Paul Wolfowitz. Ross's recent book, *The Missing Peace*, makes its abundantly clear that he feels a deep affinity for Israel. As we said in our original article, the *Forward* once described Wolfowitz as "the most hawkishly pro-Israel voice in the administration," while the *Jerusalem Post*, in naming him "Man of the Year" in 2003 described him as "devoutly pro-Israel."¹¹⁵ We could point to many other examples of prominent American Jews who feel a strong attachment to Israel. We emphasize again that we see nothing wrong with this, as all Americans are entitled to such attachments and are free to express them in political life.

Finally, the fact that many of Israel's supporters are not religious is hardly evidence of a weak commitment to Israel. Zionism is a secular ideology and one never had to be a religious Jew to be a Zionist. Indeed, many of the early Zionist leaders were not religious, and neither are many prominent Israelis today.

Charge #5: By blaming the lobby for America's misguided policies, M&W absolve the U.S. government of any culpability for its strategically foolish and morally bankrupt behavior in the Middle East.¹¹⁶ As Chomsky writes, M&W's argument about the lobby's influence "leaves the US government untouched on its high pinnacle of nobility."¹¹⁷

Response: We made no effort to defend past administrations for their blunders in the Middle East. In our view, these administrations should have stood up to the lobby rather than caved into its pressure. Furthermore, we do not believe that the lobby is responsible for every mistake that the United States has made in the Middle East. For example, the lobby had nothing to do with the Eisenhower Administration's foolish decision to overthrow the Mossadegh government in Iran in 1953. We are realists and we understand that lobbies and other special

interest groups are not the only reasons why states act brutally or mistakenly. Our main point, however, is that overall the United States would have pursued a smarter Middle East strategy if the lobby had been weaker, or if the lobby favored a different agenda.

MINOR CHARGES

As discussed in the introduction to this essay, our various critics have also leveled a diverse array of secondary charges against us and against our article. Many of these criticisms deal with minor issues, and would not damage our thesis very much even if they were correct. They are not. For the sake of completeness, we offer brief responses to them here.

Minor Charge #1: M&W, according to Dershowitz, show their bias against Israel when discussing the wars of 1948, 1967, and 1973. Specifically, they mention those wars “to cite evidence of Israeli military superiority, but they never mention *why* the wars were fought in the first place. In other words, there is absolutely no indication that on all three occasions, Arab countries attacked Israel in order ... to ‘drive the Jews into the Sea’.”¹¹⁸

Response: Contrary to what Dershowitz says, the Arabs were not trying to “drive the Jews into the Sea” in any of those three wars. This is hardly surprising, since the Arabs never had the capability to defeat Israel decisively. Israel was more powerful than its adversaries in every war it has fought, sometimes considerably more powerful. There is no question that some Arab leaders *talked* about “driving the Jews into the Sea” during the 1948 war, but this was mainly rhetoric designed to appease their publics. In fact, the Arab leaders were mainly concerned about gaining territory for themselves at the expense of the Palestinians. Benny Morris, for example, writes:

What ensued, once Israel declared its independence on 14 May 1948 and the Arab states invaded on 15 May, was ‘a general land grab’, with everyone -- Israel, Transjordan, Syria, Egypt, and even Lebanon -- bent on preventing the birth of a Palestinian Arab state and carving out chunks of Palestine for themselves. Contrary to the old historiography, Abdullah’s invasion of eastern Palestine was clearly designed to conquer territory for his kingdom -- at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs -- rather than to destroy the Jewish state. Indeed, the Arab Legion stuck meticulously, throughout the war, to its non-aggressive stance *vis-à-vis* the Yishuv and the Jewish state’s territory.... It is not at all clear that Abdullah and Glubb would have been happy to see the collapse in May 1948 of the fledgling Jewish republic. Certainly Abdullah was far more troubled by the prospects of the emergence of a Palestinian Arab state and of an expanded Syria and an expanded Egypt on his frontiers than by the emergence of a small Jewish state.¹¹⁹

And Abdullah, as Morris notes, was the only Arab leader who “committed the full weight” of his military power to attacking Israel, “indicating either inefficiency or, perhaps, a less than wholehearted seriousness about the declared

aim of driving the Jews into the sea.” Shlomo Ben-Ami has a similar view of Arab goals in the 1948 War:

Ill prepared and poorly co-ordinated, the Arab armies were dragged into the war by popular pressure in their home states, and because their leaders each had his own agenda of territorial expansion. Securing the establishment of a Palestinian state ... was less of a motive for the Arab leaders who sent their armies to Palestine than establishing their own territorial claims or thwarting those of their rivals in the Arab coalition.¹²⁰

Regarding the 1967 War, it is clear from the release of new documents about the war that the Arabs did not intend to initiate a war against Israel in the late spring of 1967, much less try to “drive the Jews into the Sea.”¹²¹ Avi Shlaim, for example, writes, “There is general agreement among commentators that Nasser neither wanted nor planned to go to war with Israel.”¹²² In fact, Israel bears considerable responsibility for the outbreak of the war. Shlaim writes that, “Israel’s strategy of escalation on the Syrian front was probably the single most important factor in dragging the Middle East to war in June 1967, despite the conventional wisdom on the subject that singles out Syrian aggression as the principal cause of war.”¹²³ Again, contrary to the conventional wisdom, Israel was not pre-empting an imminent Arab attack when it struck the first blow on June 4, 1967. Instead, Israel was launching a preventive war or as Menachem Begin put it, a “war of choice.” In his words, “We must be honest with ourselves. We decided to attack him [Egyptian President Nasser].”¹²⁴

The Egyptians and the Syrians did attack Israel in October 1973, but it is a well-established fact that both Arab armies were pursuing a limited aims strategy. The Egyptians hoped to conquer a slice of territory in the Sinai Peninsula and then bargain with Israel for the return of the rest of the Sinai, while the Syrians hoped to re-capture the Golan Heights. Neither the Egyptians nor the Syrians intended to invade Israel, much less try to decisively defeat the Israelis, who not only had the most formidable army in the region, but also had nuclear weapons. Benny Morris puts the point well: “Presidents Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Hafez Assad of Syria sought to regain the territories lost in 1967. Neither aimed to destroy Israel.”¹²⁵ Indeed, key decision-makers in both Cairo and Damascus recognized that they were pursuing an especially risky strategy by picking a fight with the mighty IDF. And they were correct, because the IDF, after recovering from the surprise attack, routed both of its opponents.

Minor Charge #2: M&W unfairly criticized the Brookings Institution, specifically, its Saban Center for Middle East Studies, for being pro-Israel in its orientation. According to Strobe Talbott, the President of Brookings, the Saban Center does “independent non-partisan research of the highest quality” on the Middle East. “Even a cursory look at the Brookings website would reveal an extraordinary diversity of scholars, programs and products, notably including the Saban Center’s work on the Middle East.”¹²⁶

Response: The Saban Center was established in 2002 with a \$13 million grant from Haim Saban, an ardent Zionist who the *New York Times* describes “as

perhaps the most politically connected mogul in Hollywood, throwing his weight and money around Washington and, increasingly, the world, trying to influence all things Israel."¹²⁷ This "tireless cheerleader for Israel" told the *Times*, "I'm a one-issue guy and my issue is Israel." Moreover, he "regularly" spent hours on the phone talking to former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who said of Saban: "To me he will always be a dear personal friend. Haim Saban is a great American citizen and a man who always stood by Israel and the Jewish people in times of need. His contribution to strengthening ties between Israel and American political leaders from all parties has been quite remarkable and outstanding."

The man chosen to run the Saban Center was Martin Indyk, one of the most prominent figures in the Israel lobby. He previously served as AIPAC's deputy director of research and he helped co-found the pro-Israel Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP) in 1985. He also served in various high-level positions during the Clinton Administration, including Ambassador to Israel. He is widely recognized as one of Israel's strongest supporters in Washington, D.C.

It is hard to imagine that a research institute funded by Haim Saban and directed by Martin Indyk is going to be anything but pro-Israel. This is not to deny that the Saban Center occasionally hosts Arab scholars and tolerates some diversity of opinion. But Saban Center publications never question U.S. support for Israel and rarely, if ever, offer significant criticisms of key Israeli policies. In short, when it comes to the Middle East, Brookings has moved in a decidedly pro-Israel direction over time.

Minor Charge #3: M&W falsely claim that anti-Semitism is on the decline in France. According to Alan Dershowitz, "The fact is that anti-Semitism is on the rise in France, as evidenced by a recent poll showing that sixty-four percent of French citizens themselves ... 'think anti-semitism is on the rise in France'."¹²⁸

Response: Dershowitz is correct that a March 2006 poll showed that 64 percent of French citizens thought that anti-Semitism is on the rise. The issue in dispute, however, is not French *perceptions* of anti-Semitism, but whether anti-Semitism *is* actually rising in France. In fact, the French government released data at about the same time the March poll was taken which showed that French anti-Semitism was declining. This point is clearly reflected in an article about the poll Dershowitz cites that appeared in the *European Jewish Press* on March 9, 2006. Yossi Lempkowicz wrote: "Two thirds of French people think that anti-Semitism is on the rise in France, despite recently released government statistics illustrating a downturn."¹²⁹ This report is also consistent with other surveys showing declining anti-semitism in Europe, including a prominent study conducted by the Anti-Defamation League.¹³⁰ In short, the poll Dershowitz references does not contradict our basic point about declining anti-Semitism in France.

Minor Charge #4: M&W, according to Dershowitz, cite Norman Finkelstein "for the absurd proposition that Israel essentially started the War of Independence in order to ethnically cleanse its land of Palestinians."¹³¹

Response: We did not say that Israel started the War of Independence, as we do not believe that; nor does Norman Finkelstein say anywhere in his writings that the Israelis initiated that conflict. Our reference to Finkelstein was unrelated to the question of who initiated the War of Independence.¹³² Instead, we were discussing the expulsion of the Palestinians in 1948, about which we wrote: "The only remaining debate of real significance regarding the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland is whether it was 'born of war,' as Morris argues, or by design, as Norman Finkelstein argues in *Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict* (London: Verso, 1995), chapter 3."

Minor Charge #5: M&W, says Dershowitz, claim that American diplomacy at the end of the 1973 War was to Israel's advantage, when it was not.¹³³

Response: There were three key diplomatic episodes toward the end of the 1973 War. In each case, the United States, mainly in the person of Henry Kissinger, took actions that worked to Israel's advantage.¹³⁴ Kissinger engaged in a round of serious talks with Soviet leaders in Moscow on October 21, 1973. According to Kenneth Stein, "The American-compiled minutes of the three meetings that Kissinger attended with Brezhnev unequivocally show that he accurately and repeatedly represented Israeli interests to Moscow, almost totally contrary to Nixon's preferences."¹³⁵ The talks led to a ceasefire proposal that Kissinger was clearly in no hurry to present to the U.N. Security Council. Nevertheless, at 12:50 am on October 22, the U.N. adopted Resolution 338 calling for a ceasefire. The fighting was to stop within twelve hours. We now know from documents released by the National Security Archive in October 2003 that "Kissinger secretly gave Israeli authorities a green light to breach [the] ceasefire agreement." His aim was "to buy time for Israeli military advances despite the impending ceasefire deadline."¹³⁶

Taking advantage of this opportunity, the IDF surrounded Egypt's Third Army, which, in turn led to a dangerous crisis between Moscow and Washington. The Soviets threatened to intervene militarily in the conflict at this point, and the United States responded by putting its forces on a higher alert level. Kissinger then went to work to defuse the crisis before it spun out of control. This meant telling Israel that it could not destroy the Third Army. As much as Israeli leaders might have wanted to finish off that army -- and who can blame them? -- Kissinger's efforts to shut down the war before the superpowers got dragged into the fight were clearly in Israel's interest (as well as America's). In short, the United States was looking out for Israel's interests throughout the negotiations that first prolonged and then shut down the 1973 War, and Kissinger's diplomacy did not disadvantage Israel.

Minor Charge #6: M&W, according to Dershowitz, "quote ... as Gospel" a column by Israeli journalist Gideon Levy, which says that "no one in Israel opposed the Iraq war -- a ridiculous and easily falsifiable claim."¹³⁷

Response: Gideon Levy is a distinguished Israeli journalist and would never be so foolish as to say that nobody in Israel opposed the 2003 Iraq war. In fact, he

simply said, as we reported, that “Israel is the only country in the West whose leaders support the war unreservedly and where no alternative opinion is voiced.” As noted previously, former President Bill Clinton has recently said that “every Israeli politician I knew” believed that Saddam Hussein was so great a threat that he should be removed even if he did not have WMD. Regardless of what Levy wrote, we made it clear that not every Israeli favored the Iraq war. Specifically, we cited a February 2003 poll which reported that 77.5 percent of Israelis—not 100 percent—wanted the United States to attack Iraq.¹³⁸

Minor Charge #7: M&W’s discussion of “Jewish rape during the 1948 war” is deeply flawed, according to Dershowitz. First, they provide no evidence whatsoever that the Israeli army adopted rape as either an official or unofficial policy.” Second, they provide little evidence of “rapes by Jews.” Thus, M&W’s treatment of this issue is “not only bizarre and unsettling, but also completely unwarranted.”¹³⁹

Response: We never claimed that rape was either official or unofficial policy during the 1948 war. We simply wrote “Israeli scholarship ... reveals that the creation of Israel in 1947-48 involved explicit acts of ethnic cleansing, including executions, massacres, and rapes by Jews.”¹⁴⁰ For example, in describing Zionist atrocities in 1948, Benny Morris writes: “There were also several dozen cases of rape, a crime viewed with particular horror in Arab and Muslim societies. The fear of rape apparently figured large in the Arab imagination, and this may in part account for the dispatch of women and girls out of active or potential combat zones and, in some measure, for the headlong flight of villages and urban neighborhoods from April on.”¹⁴¹ We also noted that Morris “maintains that the reported cases of rape that he knows about are ‘just the tip of the iceberg’.”¹⁴²

Minor Charge #8: M&W cite a *Washington Post* headline from February 2003 which said that President George Bush and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had “nearly identical” Middle East policies. Dershowitz maintains that M&W “make the most basic of all logical fallacies—they confuse correlation with causation.” Specifically, they attribute this symmetry to Sharon duping Bush, rather than “the more likely explanation: that Bush and Sharon shared the same worldview and vision for the Middle East.”¹⁴³

Response: We did show causation. We showed in considerable detail that Bush did not always share Sharon’s worldview, and that it was pressure from the lobby that forced Bush to adopt Sharon’s views on how to approach the Middle East. Our reference to the February 2003 *Washington Post* headline comes at the beginning of a section entitled “Demonizing the Palestinians.” We said in that section that President Bush had actually tried to change Israeli behavior towards the Palestinians early in his tenure (2001-2002), but that he failed and eventually “ended up backing Israel’s hard-line approach.” We argued that, “The main reason for this switch is the lobby.” In the very next sentence we wrote: “The story begins in late September 2001 when President Bush began pressuring Israeli Prime Minister Sharon to show restraint in the occupied territories.” We then spent roughly four pages describing how the lobby -- over the course of

2002 -- caused Bush to abandon his efforts to pressure Israel, thus creating circumstances in early 2003 where it made perfect sense for the *Washington Post* to write that Bush and Sharon had “nearly identical” views on the Middle East.¹⁴⁴

Minor Charge #9: M&W’s treatment of the lobby is superficial, because they relied on secondary sources and did not address key issues about how it operates.

A number of commentators complained that we relied too heavily on secondary sources and did not conduct “field research” (i.e., interviews) of our own. As Michael Massing wrote in the New York Review of Books: “Overall, the lack of firsthand research in ‘The Israel Lobby’ gives it a secondhand feel. Mearsheimer and Walt provide little sense of how AIPAC and other lobbying groups work, how they seek to influence policy, and what people in government have to say about them. The authors seem to have concluded that in view of the sensitivity of the subject, few people would talk frankly about it. In fact, many people are fed up with the lobby and eager to explain why (though often not on the record). Federal campaign documents offer another important source of information that the authors have ignored.”¹⁴⁵

Response: Massing and others are correct that we did not do field interviews, but it is not correct to say that we relied only on “secondary sources.” We employed a wide range of materials, including scholarly monographs, academic and popular journal articles, mainstream press sources like the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Forward*, *Ha’aretz*, *Jerusalem Post*, etc., as well as verifiable on-line sources. The evidentiary basis for our arguments is apparent to anyone who looks at the endnotes to the Harvard Working Paper. We relied on these sources because they contained a wealth of information about the lobby and its workings, and because much of our article dealt with contemporary events for which archival information is not yet available.

As with any work of scholarship, there are undoubtedly other steps that could have been taken. We would like to have conducted interviews, but we felt we already had sufficient information about the lobby’s operations and we had to spend considerable time researching less well-known aspects of the story. We were also constrained by space limitations, even in an article that was lengthy by normal publishing standards. An analysis of campaign finance records would undoubtedly have been fruitful as well, and we are glad that Massing and others have delved into these sources.

The key point, however, is that these additional steps would not have altered our conclusions. The charge that we used secondary sources would be damning if these sources had led us to the wrong conclusions, but as Massing’s own assessment shows, interviews and campaign finance records provide a complementary body of evidence that confirms and reinforces our core claims. In his words, “on their central point—the power of the Israel lobby and the negative effect it has had on US policy—Mearsheimer and Walt are entirely correct.”¹⁴⁶

Minor Charge #10: M&W did not publish their article in a peer-reviewed journal.¹⁴⁷

Response: This charge is a red herring. Peer review is a valuable practice in academic publishing, and both of us have published extensively in peer-reviewed journals throughout our careers. Peer review is no guarantee of accuracy, however, and peer-reviewed journals often print articles that are subsequently shown to be wrong. Equally important, few, if any, refereed journals in political science would publish a nearly 15,000-word article, and given that we sought to stimulate a more open public debate, we wanted to make sure the article received attention outside the academic world. If taken literally, this charge suggests that academics should only address their fellow scholars in peer-reviewed journals, and scrupulously refrain from addressing lay audiences. We obviously disagree with this view. For our purposes, the *London Review of Books* was an appropriate venue. Given that its format does not allow for extensive documentation, we simultaneously posted a fully-referenced version so that readers could examine the evidentiary basis for our arguments.

In any case, the issue is not where an article appears; what matters is whether its arguments stand up to fair-minded scrutiny. Thus, the charge that our work is flawed because it did not appear in a “peer-reviewed” journal is spurious.

Minor Charge #11: M&W’s piece was so bad that Harvard distanced itself from the article, and forced Walt to step down as academic dean of the Kennedy School.

*A number of journalistic accounts reported that the Kennedy School of Government had removed its logo from the Working Paper in order to “distance itself” from the paper. A few sources also reported that Walt had been forced to step down from his position as academic dean as a result of this controversy.*¹⁴⁸

Response: These reports are either false or badly misleading. Walt made the decision to remove the Kennedy School logo and alter the disclaimer himself, after several news accounts had mistakenly referred to the Working Paper as “the Harvard study” and had mistakenly reported that both authors were Harvard faculty members. The purpose of these actions was to clarify that the paper represented the work of the two authors—as with any work of scholarship—and did not reflect the “official” views of the Kennedy School, Harvard, or the University of Chicago.

In retrospect, the decision to alter the logo and disclaimer was a mistake, because it was so easily misunderstood or misconstrued. Ironically, commentators at either extreme seemed enamored with this story: critics of the paper saw it as evidence that Harvard was disavowing the research, while critics of the lobby saw the story as a sign of the lobby’s influence. Neither interpretation was correct, and the entire incident merely illustrates the familiar notion that “no good deed goes unpunished.”

As for Walt's term as academic dean, he began a three-year term in July 2002, but was then asked to remain in the post by KSG Dean David Ellwood. He agreed, but made it clear at the time that he would extend his term only until June 2006. A formal announcement of his decision to step down was e-mailed to all KSG faculty well before the article appeared in March 2006, asking the faculty to propose possible successors. There was no connection whatsoever between the publication of the article and the end of Walt's term as academic dean.

Minor Charge #12: M&W quote David Ben-Gurion selectively and "out of context" to make it sound like he favored using force (or "brutal compulsion") to expel the Arab population and establish a Jewish state in all of Palestine.

*Alan Dershowitz claims that we misrepresented Ben-Gurion's views on the need to use force to build a Jewish state in all of Palestine. Specifically, he claims that we either overlooked or deliberately omitted Ben-Gurion's statement that expulsion would be done not by force but "through mutual understanding and Jewish-Arab agreement," and his later statement that although "it is impossible to imagine general evacuation" of the Arab population of Palestine "without compulsion, and brutal compulsion," the Zionists "should in no way make it part of our programme." He interprets these statements as evidence that Ben-Gurion rejected the use of force and was willing to accept partition as a permanent solution. He also implies that we got these quotations from "hard-left" sources or "hate sites."*¹⁴⁹

Response: We have already dealt with these issues in our response to Benny Morris' third and fourth major charges, and in our response to Dershowitz's claim that we used neo-Nazi websites in our research. A few additional comments are in order, however. As Israeli historians have shown, Ben-Gurion made numerous statements about the need to use force (or the threat of overwhelming force) to create a Jewish state in all of Palestine. In October 1937, for example, he wrote his son Amos that the future Jewish state "shall organize a modern defense force... and then I am certain that we will not be prevented from settling in other parts of the country, either by mutual agreement and understanding with our Arab neighbors, or by some other means".¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, common sense says that there was no other way to achieve that goal, because the Palestinians were hardly likely to give up their homeland voluntarily. Ben-Gurion was a sophisticated strategist and he understood that it would be unwise for the Zionists to talk openly about their long-term ambitions or for the need for "brutal compulsion." According to Ben-Gurion's biographer, Shabtai Teveth, Ben-Gurion was understandably reticent about declaring his aims too openly. In Teveth's words, "Mass immigration and military strength would serve still another purpose, at which Ben-Gurion only hinted. Only initiates knew that Ben-Gurion regarded the creation of a Jewish state in part of Palestine as a stage in the longer process toward a Jewish state in all of Palestine... . And so Ben-Gurion spoke in ambiguous tones about a state being but a step toward 'a complete solution for the Jewish people and a powerful instrument for the total fulfillment of Zionism'..."¹⁵¹

In our article, we quote a memorandum Ben-Gurion wrote prior to the Extraordinary Zionist Conference at New York's Biltmore Hotel in May 1942.

He wrote that “it is impossible to imagine general evacuation” of the Arab population of Palestine “without compulsion, and brutal compulsion.” Dershowitz claims that Ben-Gurion’s subsequent statement -- “we should in no way make it part of our programme” -- shows that he opposed the transfer of the Arab population and the “brutal compulsion” it would entail. But Ben-Gurion was not rejecting this policy; he was simply noting that the Zionists should not openly proclaim it. As we recounted in our earlier discussion of Benny Morris, the Zionist leadership understood the sensitivity of this topic and thus did their best to keep these views amongst themselves. Thus, Ben-Gurion said that they should not “discourage other people, British or American, who favour transfer from advocating this course, but we should in no way make it part of our programme.”¹⁵²

Ben Gurion would no doubt have preferred to consolidate Jewish control over all of Palestine through an agreement with the Arabs, but he knew this was unlikely and that the Zionists would have to acquire a strong military force to achieve their aims. As he wrote Moshe Sharett in June 1937, “Were I an Arab... an Arab politically, nationally minded... I would rebel even more vigorously, bitterly, and desperately against the immigration that will one day turn Palestine and all its Arab residents over to Jewish rule.”¹⁵³

In sum, the charge that we mischaracterized Ben-Gurion’s views is false.

Minor Charge #13: M&W are wrong to say that Israel gave some of the intelligence it obtained from convicted spy Jonathan Pollard to the Soviet Union, in exchange for additional exit visas for Soviet Jews. Both Dershowitz and Morris have challenged this claim, which was contained in a section of our paper that noted Israel “frequently does not act like a loyal ally.”¹⁵⁴

Response: Dershowitz and Morris do not dispute that convicted spy Jonathan Pollard gave Israel large amounts of classified information; the only question is whether Israel then passed some of this information on to the Soviet Union. Our source for this assertion is prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh, who stands by his original story.¹⁵⁵ Recognizing that this was not an air-tight claim when we wrote our original article, we qualified it by saying that Pollard “gave Israel large quantities of classified material in the early 1980s (which Israel reportedly passed onto the Soviet Union to gain more exit visas for Soviet Jews).”¹⁵⁶ We admit that we do not know for certain what happened here, but neither do our critics. We should therefore reserve final judgment on this particular point until more evidence is available. In any case, our central claim in this section—that Israel conducts wide-ranging espionage activities against its principal patron—remains valid.

Minor Charge #14: M&W are wrong to say that pro-Israel organizations are trying to limit criticism of Israel on college campuses. Specifically, Dershowitz says our claim that pro-Israel groups are trying “to eliminate criticism of Israel from college campuses” is “absurd,” and says our paper illustrates the “powerful culture of anti-Israeli animus on college campuses.”¹⁵⁷

Response: Dershowitz offers no evidence to support either of these assertions. By contrast, our paper documented a number of prominent cases where the lobby sought to shape discourse on campus in a pro-Israel direction.¹⁵⁸ These examples include: 1) the tripling of AIPAC's spending on university activities following the outbreak of the Second Intifada; 2) the establishment of Campus Watch, an organization that monitors what professors write and teach and that encourages students to report comments or behavior that might be considered hostile to Israel; 3) the creation of the "Israel on Campus Coalition" in July 2002, whose purpose, as its website states, is "to become the central coordinating and strategic body to address campus issues and intelligently impact a pro-active pro-Israel agenda on campus"¹⁵⁹; 4) the activities of the David Project, a Boston-based organization that produced a propaganda film alleging anti-Semitism at Columbia University; 5) the attempt by several pro-Israel groups to press Congress to establish mechanisms to monitor what professors say about Israel; 6) the efforts by a number of philanthropists to establish Israel Studies programs intended, as one of them put it, to counter the "Arabic [sic] point of view"; and 7) the effort to derail the appointment of Rashid Khalidi to a tenured position at Princeton. Other efforts to shape campus attitudes include the recent campaign to deny historian Juan Cole a tenured appointment at Yale.¹⁶⁰

We noted in our original paper that these efforts have not succeeded in eliminating all criticism on college campuses. This is because academic freedom is an important principle at U.S. universities, tenured faculty are difficult to silence, and academia remains a realm where evidence matters and where open discourse is prized. Thus, American universities show a wider range of opinion than the U.S. Congress does, but they are hardly hotbeds of anti-semitism or even anti-Israel attitudes. Instead, they are communities that include both apologists like Dershowitz and critics like us. (And to repeat a point made earlier: we agree with Dershowitz that Israel should exist and that the United States should help if its survival is threatened, but we believe many of the policies encouraged by the lobby are neither in America's nor Israel's interest.)

Minor Charge #15: M&W are scholars whose primary writings are "realist" in orientation. Realists think states act strategically to pursue their national interests, and that domestic politics is a minor influence on their behavior. Yet in this article, they allege that a domestic special interest group has led the United States to act contrary to its interests.¹⁶¹

Response: We concede that the phenomenon described in "The Israel Lobby" is not consistent with realism, but three comments are in order. First, no social science theory explains all phenomena; there are always important exceptions that must be explained on other grounds. Second, because realism portrays international politics as a competitive realm where mistakes are penalized, it implies states that are overly swayed by narrow interest groups are likely to undertake policies that turn out to be costly. Realism cannot explain the lobby's impact, but it helps us understand its effects. Third, America's enormous material power and favorable geopolitical position give it the latitude to act contrary to its interests, even though it would clearly be better off if it behaved

differently. Thus, although realism does not include factors like domestic lobbies, it does help us understand some of the circumstances that give them greater influence. In any case, whether this particular article was consistent with all of our prior work is not the critical issue at hand, which is whether our claims about the lobby's influence and its negative impact are correct.

Minor Charge #16: Dershowitz says that M&W are wrong to argue that Jews comprise less than 3 percent of the American population. In fact, they comprise less than 2 percent.¹⁶²

Response: It is difficult to establish exactly how many Jews there are in the United States, because the number depends on the criteria one employs to define a person as Jewish. The title of an article that appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* on October 9, 2002, captures the essence of the problem. It reads: "A Clouded View of U.S. Jews: One Study Finds Numbers Falling; Another Finds Growth. The Results Raise Divisive Questions."¹⁶³ Specifically, the National Jewish Population Survey of 2000-01 found that there were 5.2 million Jews in the United States. At roughly the same time, the President of the Institute for Jewish and Community Research released a study which concluded that there were 6.7 million Jews in the United States.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were about 281 million people living in the United States that year. If one accepts the claim that there are 5.2 million American Jews, they would represent about 1.9 percent of the population, and thus it would make sense to say that Jews are less than 2 percent of the overall population. But if one believes that there are 6.7 million American Jews, they would represent 2.4 percent of the population, and thus it would make sense to say that they are less than 3 percent of the overall population. We could not decide which number was correct, but we saw a simple solution to our problem: use the 3 percent figure, because anything less than 2 percent is also less than 3 percent.

Minor Charge #17: M&W, according to Dershowitz, do not mention "the several partition plans—Balfour (1917), Peel (1937), and the UN (1947)—that the Arabs rejected but that the Jewish leadership accepted so that it might establish peaceful sovereignty alongside its neighbors"¹⁶⁴

Response: We don't know what Dershowitz is talking about when he refers to a partition plan linked with the Balfour Declaration of 1917. That famous declaration simply said that the British government supported the creation of a Jewish "national home" in Palestine. There was no mention of a partition plan, which would have been unthinkable at the time. Although we did discuss the issue of partition, we did not talk explicitly about the Peel Commission's partition plan of 1937 or the U.N. partition plan of November 1947 for one simple reason: space constraints. As our earlier response to Morris makes clear, however, it is wrong to suggest that the Zionists "accepted" partition while the Arabs "rejected" it, because the Zionists saw partition as merely a tactical step towards the ultimate goal of controlling all of Palestine.

OUR MISTAKES

No piece of scholarship is perfect, and we freely admit that there are a number of places where our original article and Working Paper should be amended. As noted above, there are places where our choice of words could have been clearer or more nuanced. Similarly, although we went to some lengths to demonstrate that we harbor no animus towards Israel or its more ardent defenders here in America, it is possible that some of our discussion did not make this point as forcefully as we would have liked.

First and foremost, we regret having capitalized the word “Lobby” in our original article. Capitalizing this term ran counter to our explicit claim that the lobby was a “loose coalition” but not a unified or centralized organization. (The term is not capitalized in Walt’s 2005 book, *Taming American Power*, which contained a brief summary of some of the core arguments in our paper.) In any case, to capitalize this term was an error and we have used a lower-case “l” in our subsequent writings.

We also erred in attributing the founding of the pro-Israel watchdog group Campus Watch to both Daniel Pipes and Martin Kramer. Kramer was not involved in creating Campus Watch, although: 1) Pipes invoked Kramer’s book, *Ivory Towers of Sand*, “as inspiration for the project”; 2) Kramer’s endorsement of Campus Watch appeared in its initial press release; and 3) Kramer handled the many phone calls from journalists that followed that first press release, because Pipes was traveling in Canada at the time.¹⁶⁵ We regret the error.

Third, Benny Morris has pointed out that our figure for the Jewish population in Palestine in 1882 requires amendment. We wrote “there were slightly more than 15,000 Jews in Palestine in 1882.”¹⁶⁶ Our source was an authoritative study by Justin McCarthy entitled *The Population of Palestine: Population History and Statistics of the Late Ottoman Period and the Mandate*. Morris notes that McCarthy relied on the Ottoman census, which did not include Jews in Palestine who were not Ottoman citizens. Accordingly, McCarthy’s figures understate the true Jewish population, although the difference is small. McCarthy acknowledges this discrepancy in his study, saying that his numbers exclude “an unknown number of Jews,” which he estimates at “between one and two thousand.” We should therefore have used a larger estimate (e.g., perhaps 17,000), and we are grateful to Morris for the correction. This change does not affect our central point, which is that the Arab population of Palestine was much larger than the Jewish population when the Zionists began moving there in the late 1800s.

Fourth, Martin Kramer has pointed out that we misdated a statement by Israeli Defense Minister Ben-Eliezer, who said “Iraq is a problem But you should understand, if you ask me, today Iran is more dangerous than Iraq.”¹⁶⁷ We said in the text of the paper that he made this statement in February 2003, although in the relevant endnote, we cited a February 2002 article in the *Washington Post*.¹⁶⁸ As the date of the reference suggests, Ben-Eliezer made the statement in February 2002, not February 2003. This error does not affect our basic point

about Israel's views on Iraq and Iran. We do not know how it occurred, but we acknowledge and correct the error here.

Even a relatively long article cannot address all the relevant topics, and there are a number of issues that we wish we had included, or dealt with at greater length. Had we additional time and space, we would have included a more complete discussion of our definition of the lobby, and discussed the different strands of thought and policy disagreements among various pro-Israel organizations. We would also have provided a lengthier discussion of the important phenomenon of "Christian Zionism," and described the tactical alliance that has emerged in recent years between the Israeli government, organizations like AIPAC, and various evangelical groups. We would also have liked to discuss the historical evolution of U.S. policy, in order to show that American policymakers were less susceptible to the lobby's influence in the past than they are today. Finally, we did not have much opportunity to discuss steps that might be taken to improve U.S. Middle East policy (both for our benefit and for the benefit of all the peoples in the region—Israelis included). We hope to address these issues in our subsequent writings.

CONCLUSION

Although our article has been challenged on numerous grounds, none of our critics have successfully refuted its central claims. In particular, as we have demonstrated above, the charge that our work was marred by serious errors does not stand up to examination. Although reasonable people can debate the implications of our arguments, we believe that our central claims about the lobby's impact on U.S. Middle East policy were and are substantially correct. Moreover, recent events like America's support for Israel's ill-fated assault on Lebanon—a policy the lobby worked hard to ensure—have reaffirmed our belief that the lobby's influence hurts Israel as well as the United States.

We wrote "The Israel Lobby" to encourage a more open debate on U.S. Middle East policy. The ferocity of the attacks directed at the article, and against us personally, offers additional evidence of the lobby's efforts to create a climate that discourages questioning of its actions, Israeli policies, or the U.S.-Israeli relationship. This situation is not healthy for American democracy. The United States faces many challenges in the Middle East, and Americans need to be able to discuss all of the forces that shape U.S. policy in this region in a candid and serious way. We are gratified that this conversation is now occurring, although we have been disappointed that much of the discussion has shed more heat than light. That tendency seems to be fading, which is all to the good. What America needs is a sober and calm discussion of these issues, as opposed to a conversation filled with name-calling and character assassination.

This response may strike some readers as excessive, and there are times when we wished we could dispense with the effort. In the end, however, we felt it was important to set the record straight as comprehensively as possible, so that future discussions of these issues rest on logic and evidence rather than on myths or misconceptions.

ENDNOTES

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² "In Dark Times, Blame the Jews," Editorial, *Forward*, March 24, 2006; Anti-Defamation League (ADL), "Mearsheimer and Walt's Anti-Israel Screed: A Relentless Assault in Scholarly Guise," *ADL.org*, March 24, 2006; Alan Dershowitz, "Debunking the Newest -- and Oldest -- Jewish Conspiracy: A Reply to the Mearsheimer-Walt 'Working Paper'," John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty Research Working Paper, Harvard University, April 2006, p. 5.

³ ADL, "Mearsheimer and Walt's Anti-Israel Screed"; Eliot Cohen, "Yes, It's Anti-Semitic," *Washington Post*, April 5, 2006; Dershowitz, "Debunking"; Tom Segev, "The Protocols of Harvard and Chicago," *Ha'aretz*, March 23, 2006.

⁴ John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," John F. Kennedy School of Government Faculty Research Working Paper RWP06-011, Harvard University, March 2006, p. 15.

⁵ Cohen, "Yes, It's Anti-Semitic"; Aaron Friedberg, "An Uncivilized Argument," *Foreign Policy*, No. 155 (July / August 2006), p. 60; Gabriel Schoenfeld, "Dual Loyalty and the 'Israel Lobby'," *Commentary* (November 2006); David Gergen, "An Unfair Attack," *U.S. News and World Report*, April 3, 2006, p. 68.

⁶ Quoted in Michael Massing, "Deal Breakers," *The American Prospect*, Vol. 13, No. 5 (March 11, 2002).

⁷ "In Dark Times," *Forward*.

⁸ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," pp. 30-31.

⁹ Cohen, "Yes, It's Anti-Semitic"; Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 4, 27, 39. Also see Eli Lake, "David Duke Claims to Be Vindicated by a Harvard Dean," *New York Sun*, March 20, 2006.

¹⁰ Richard Cohen, "No, It's Not Anti-Semitic," *Washington Post*, April 25, 2006. Also see Zbigniew Brzezinski, "A Dangerous Exemption," *Foreign Policy*, No. 155 (July / August 2006), p. 63; Tony Judt, "A Lobby, Not A Conspiracy," *New York Times*, April 19, 2006.

¹¹ Alan Dershowitz Interview with Joe Scarborough, "Scarborough Country," MSNBC, March 21, 2006. Also see Meghan Clyne, "Harvard's Paper on Israel Drew from Neo-Nazi Sites." *New York Sun*, March 24, 2006; Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 20-21.

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- ¹² Jeffrey Herf and Andrei Markovits, Letter, *London Review of Books*, Vol. 28, No. 7 (April 6, 2006); Charles A. Radin, "Harvard Dean Opens Faculty Papers to Rebuttal," *Boston Globe*, March 31, 2006.
- ¹³ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," pp. 7-10.
- ¹⁴ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 13.
- ¹⁵ Dershowitz, "Debunking," p. 25; Benny Morris, "And Now for Some Facts: The Ignorance at the Heart of an Innuendo," *New Republic*, May 8, 2006, p. 29.
- ¹⁶ "Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel, May 14, 1948," in John Norton Moore, ed., *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Readings and Documents* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 934-937.
- ¹⁷ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 8.
- ¹⁸ Eric Alterman, "AIPAC's Complaint," *The Nation*, May 1, 2006; Max Boot, "Policy Analysis -- Paranoid Style," *Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 2006; Ned Lazarus, "Playing Pin the War on the Lobby," *Forum* (Berkeley Electronic Press), Vol. 4, Issue 1, Article 5 (2006); Frank Solomon, Letter, *London Review of Books*, Vol. 28, No. 8 (April 20, 2006); Bret Stephens, "The Israel Conspiracy," *Wall Street Journal*, March 25-26, 2006.
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- ²⁰ Shlomo Ben-Ami, "The Complex Truth," *Foreign Policy*, No. 155 (July-August 2006), p. 62; Dennis Ross, "The Mind-Set Matters," in *ibid.*, pp. 60-61; Gergen, "An Unfair Attack."
- ²¹ Clinton and Gingrich quotations downloaded from the AIPAC website on January 14, 2005 [www.aipac.org/documents/whoweare.html#say]; "Sen. Hollings Floor Statement Setting the Record Straight on His Mideast Newspaper Column," May 20, 2004, originally posted on the former Senator's web site (now defunct) but still available at www.shalomctr.org/node/620; Michael Massing, "The Storm over the Israel Lobby," *New York Review of Books*, Vol. 53, No. 10 (June 8, 2006), pp. 64-73. Also see Paul Findley, *They Dare to Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby*, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill Books, 2003); Michael Lind, "The Israel Lobby," *Prospect*, No. 73 (April 2002).
- ²² Christopher Hitchens, "Overstating Jewish Power," *Slate*, March 27, 2006.
- ²³ Alan M. Dershowitz, *Chutzpah* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1991), p. 16.
- ²⁴ See George W. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), p. 112.

²⁵ On the fate of Ford's "reassessment," see William B. Quandt, *Decade of Decisions: American Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 267-71; Edward Tivnan, *The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), p. 89. Tivnan quotes Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI) remarking that "it's easier to sign one letter than to answer 5000," and Senator John Culver (D-IA) admitting "the pressure was just too great. I caved." Further testimony to the direct role the lobby played in the "Letter of 76" is provided by former Senator Charles Mathias in his article "Ethnic Groups in Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 59, No. 5 (Summer 1981). Even Steven Spiegel, who downplays the impact of domestic politics on U.S. Middle East policy, says "The letter [from the 76 senators] shockingly undercut the entire thrust of the administration's 'reassessment'." See *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America's Middle East Policy from Truman to Reagan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), p. 296.

²⁶ Quoted in Glenn Frankel, *Beyond the Promised Land: Jews and Arabs on a Hard Road to a New Israel* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 304. Bush's remarks came in the context of his attempt to withhold \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees to Israel, guarantees for loans intended to construct housing for arriving Jewish émigrés from the Soviet Union. Bush wanted to delay the loan guarantees until the Shamir government agreed to halt settlement construction and attend a peace conference, and he managed to override the lobby's opposition temporarily. It may have been a pyrrhic victory, however, as it galvanized key elements in the American Jewish community and probably contributed to Bush's defeat in the 1992 election. See J. J. Goldberg, *Jewish Power: Inside the American Jewish Establishment* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1996), pp. xv-xxvi. Equally important, settlement construction did not end and the United States eventually provided the loan guarantees after Shamir fell from power and was replaced by Yitzhak Rabin.

²⁷ Martin Kramer, "The American Interest," *Azure*, No. 26 (Fall 2006).

²⁸ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 4.

²⁹ Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 27-28; Marc Landy, "Zealous Realism: Comments on Mearsheimer and Walt," *The Forum* (Berkeley Electronic Press), Vol. 4, Issue 1, Article 6 (2006); Steven Simon, "Here's Where 'The Israel Lobby' is Wrong," *The Daily Star*, May 4, 2006.

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³¹ Bruce Lawrence, "The Betrayal of Palestine," *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden* (London: Verso, 2005), p. 4.

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was in cahoots with Israel, see "Declaration of Jihad," (August 23, 1996), in *ibid.*, p. 30; "From Somalia to Afghanistan" (March 1997), in *ibid.*, pp. 47-51; "The World Islamic Front" (February 23, 1998), in *ibid.*, pp. 60-61; and "A Muslim Bomb" (December 1998), in *ibid.*, pp. 66-70.

³³ Max Rodenbeck, "Their Master's Voice," *New York Review of Books*, March 9, 2006, p. 8. The books under review were Peter L. Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of al Qaeda's Leader* (New York: Free Press, 2006); Lawrence, *Messages to the World*.

³⁴ "Outline of the 9/11 Plot" Staff Statement No. 16, The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, June 16, 2004, p. 18.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁷ *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2004), pp. 145, 147.

³⁸ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 5.

³⁹ Richard Baehr and Ed Lasky, "Stephen Walt's War with Israel," *The American Thinker*, March 20, 2006; Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 26-27; Adam Glantz, Letter, *London Review of Books*, Vol. 28, No. 7 (April 6, 2006).

⁴⁰ Stephens, "The Israel Conspiracy." Also see Ruth R. Wisse, "Israel Lobby," *Wall Street Journal*, March 22, 2006.

⁴¹ Jeff Jacoby, "America Takes Side of Israel," *Boston Globe*, March 26, 2006. Also see Martin Peretz, "Oil and Vinegar: Surveying the Israel Lobby," *New Republic*, April 10, 2006.

⁴² Glantz, Letter; Herf and Markovits, Letter; Yitzhak Laor, Letter, *London Review of Books*, Vol. 28, No. 8 (April 20, 2006).

⁴³ Steven Kull (Principal Investigator), *Americans on the Middle East Road Map* (Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, May 30, 2003), pp. 9-11, 18-19. Also see Steven Kull et al., *Americans on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Program on International Policy Attitudes, University of Maryland, May 6, 2002). A 2005 Anti-Defamation Leagues public opinion survey found that 78 percent of Americans believe that their government should favor neither Israel nor the Palestinians. "American Attitudes toward Israel and the Middle East," Survey conducted on March 18-25, and June 19-23, 2005 by the Marttila Communications for the Anti-Defamation League.

⁴⁴ Glantz, Letter; Also see Baehr and Lasky, "Stephen Walt's War with Israel."

⁴⁵ Herf and Markovits, Letter; Peretz, "Oil and Vinegar." Also see Michelle Goldberg, "Is the 'Israel lobby' Distorting America's Mideast Policies?" *salon.com*, April 18, 2006; Lazarus, "Playing Pin the War on the Lobby."

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⁴⁷ Quoted in Tivnan, *The Lobby*, p. 194.

⁴⁸ Daniel Drezner, "A Follow-up on the Israel Lobby," March 21, 2006, downloaded from www.danieldrezner.com/archives/002642.html; Hitchens, "Overstating Jewish Power."

⁴⁹ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 5.

⁵⁰ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," pp. 29-34.

⁵¹ Kramer, "The American Interest." Also see Baehr and Lasky, "Stephen Walt's War with Israel."

⁵² Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 37.

⁵³ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," pp. 29-30.

⁵⁴ James Bennet, "Clinton Redux," *The Atlantic @Aspen*, July 8, 2006.

⁵⁵ Dershowitz, "Debunking," p. 24.

⁵⁶ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," pp. 9-10.

⁵⁷ Cited in Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: the Israeli-Arab Tragedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 44.

⁵⁸ Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 29-30.

⁵⁹ Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 2.

⁶⁰ Simha Flapan, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), pp. 81-118; Morris, *Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*; Christopher Hitchens, "Broadcasts," in Edward W. Said and Christopher Hitchens, eds., *Blaming the Victim: Spurious Scholarship and the Palestinian Question* (London: Verso, 1988), pp. 73-83.

⁶¹ Although Dershowitz does not quote this line from our article, we noted that "fear of violent death at the hands of Zionist forces led most of ... [the

Palestinians] to flee" in 1948. Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 9.

⁶² Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1999), p. 209.

⁶³ For a full discussion of Zelikow's charge and our response, see Letters, *London Review of Books*, Vol. 28, No. 10 (May 25, 2006).

⁶⁴ Morris, "And Now for Some Facts," pp. 23-29.

⁶⁵ Morris' scholarly works that we draw upon include: *1948 and After: Israel and the Palestinians*, rev. and expanded ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); *Righteous Victims*; *Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*; *Israel's Border Wars, 1949-1956* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); "Revisiting the Palestinian Exodus of 1948," in Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim, eds., *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 37-56; "Refabricating 1948," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Winter 1998), pp. 81-95.

⁶⁶ Morris, "And Now for Some Facts," pp. 23-24.

⁶⁷ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 7.

⁶⁸ Morris, *1948 and After*, pp. 13-14. Also see Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, pp. 189-199.

⁶⁹ It appears that in assessing the manpower balance during the civil war, Morris counts the surrounding Arab armies together with the Palestinians, which makes it look like balance between the Zionists and the Palestinians was roughly equal, if not favorable for the Palestinians. "And Now for Some Facts," p. 24. But those Arab armies did not go to war against Israel until May 15, 1948, and thus should not be counted in the manpower balance during the civil war.

⁷⁰ Morris, "And Now for Some Facts," pp. 24-25.

⁷¹ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 12.

⁷² *B'tselem* press release, January 4, 2006.

⁷³ Peter Bouckaert, Letter, *New Republic*, June 19, 2006, pp. 4-5.

⁷⁴ It is worth noting that there is no evidence that Arafat started the First Intifada either, a point that Morris recognizes. See *Righteous Victims*, p. 561. Indeed, he writes that "The main energizing force of the Intifada was the frustration of the national aspirations of the 650,000 inhabitants of the Gaza Strip, 900,000 of the West Bank, and 130,000 of East Jerusalem, who wanted to live in a Palestinian state and not as stateless inhabitants under a brutal, foreign military occupation." *Righteous Victims*, p. 562. This same line of reasoning, of course, could be applied

to the Second Intifada as well. Shlomo Ben-Ami puts the point well, when he writes that the Second Intifada “did not start merely as a tactical move. It erupted out of the accumulated rage and frustration of the Palestinian masses at the colossal failure of the peace process since the early days of Oslo to offer them a life of dignity and well-being, and at the incompetence and corruption of their own leaders in the Palestinian Authority.” *Scars of War*, p. 264.

⁷⁵ Akiva Eldar, “Popular Misconceptions,” *Ha’aretz*, June 11, 2004; Henry Siegman, “Partners for War,” *New York Review of Books*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (January 16, 2003), p. 24.

⁷⁶ Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, *Final Report*, April 30, 2001, p. 7.

⁷⁷ Sharm El-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, *Final Report*, p. 5.

⁷⁸ Ian S. Lustick, “Through Blood and Fire Shall Peace Arise,” *Tikkun*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (May/June 2002), pp. 13-19; Jeremy Pressman, “The Second Intifada: Background and Causes of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” *Journal of Conflict Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall 2003), pp. 114-141; Sara Roy, “Why Peace Failed: An Oslo Autopsy,” *Current History*, Vol. 101, No. 651 (January 2002), pp. 8-16; Idem, “Ending the Palestinian Economy,” *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (December 2002), pp. 1-44.

⁷⁹ These figures are from Roy, “Why Peace Failed,” p. 9.

⁸⁰ Reuvan Pedatzur, “More than a Million Bullets,” *Ha’aretz*, June 29, 2004.

⁸¹ Avi Shlaim, *The Politics of Partition: King Abdullah, the Zionists, and Palestine, 1921-1951* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). Also see Flapan, *The Birth of Israel*, pp. 13-53; Ilan Pappé, *Britain and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1951* (London: Macmillan, 1988).

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⁸³ Ben-Eliezer, *Making of Israeli Militarism*, p. 151.

⁸⁴ Morris, *1948 and After*, p. 10. Also see Morris, “Refabricating 1948,” pp. 87-90.

⁸⁵ Ari Shavit, “Survival of the Fittest,” *Ha’aretz*, January 9, 2004.

⁸⁶ Quoted in Nur Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of “Transfer” in Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992), p. 176.

⁸⁷ The figures in this paragraph are drawn from Jeremy Pressman, “Visions in Collision: What Happened at Camp David and Taba?” *International Security*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Fall 2003), pp. 16-18. Also see Hussein Agha and Robert Malley,

“Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors,” *New York Review of Books*, Vol. 48, No. 13 (August 9, 2001), pp. 59-65; Charles Enderlein, *Shattered Dreams: The Failure of the Peace Process in the Middle East, 1995-2002*, trans. Susan Fairfield (New York: Other Press, 2003); Ron Pundak, “From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?,” *Survival*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Autumn 2001), pp. 31-46; Jerome Slater, “What Went Wrong?: The Collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 2 (July 2001), pp. 171-199; Deborah Sontag, “Quest for Mideast Peace: How and Why It Failed,” *New York Times*, July 26, 2001; Clayton E. Swisher, *The Truth about Camp David: The Untold Story about the Collapse of the Peace Process* (New York: Nation Books, 2004). Barak’s offer also included a 1 percent land swap outside the West Bank, so some commentators describe his offer as being 92 percent rather than 91 percent.

⁸⁸ Benny Morris, “Camp David and After: An Exchange (1. An Interview with Ehud Barak)”, *New York Review of Books*, Vol. 49, No. 10 (June 13, 2002), p. 44. Also see the map in Pundak, “From Oslo to Taba,” p. 46.

⁸⁹ See “Norman Finkelstein & Former Israeli Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami Debate: Complete Transcript,” *Democracy Now!* Radio and TV broadcast, February 14, 2006.

⁹⁰ “Excerpts: White House Spokesman on Clinton-Arafat Talks,” Issued by Press Section, U.S. Embassy in Israel, January 3, 2001; Transcript of “Clinton Speech on Mideast Peace Parameters (January 7, 2001),” Office of the White House Press Secretary, January 8, 2001.

⁹¹ Morris, “And Now for Some Facts,” p. 29.

⁹² Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 166-171.

⁹³ Shlaim, *Politics of Partition*, pp. 110-114.

⁹⁴ Morris, “And Now for Some Facts,” p. 29.

⁹⁵ Morris, “And Now for Some Facts,” p. 29. The *Forward* levels a similar charge against us, writing that “They state, incredibly and without substantiation, that Israel's counter-terrorism raids in the 1950s were aimed at territorial expansion.” “In Dark Times, Blame the Jews.”

⁹⁶ Morris, *Israel's Border Wars*, pp. 1-2.

⁹⁷ Morris, *Israel's Border Wars*, pp. 148-153.

⁹⁸ Morris, *Israel's Border Wars*, p. 242.

⁹⁹ Morris, *Israel's Border Wars*, p. 441.

¹⁰⁰ Morris, *Israel's Border Wars*, p. 443.

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- ¹⁰¹ Morris, *Israel's Border Wars*, p. 437.
- ¹⁰² Morris, "And Now for Some Facts," p. 29.
- ¹⁰³ Norman G. Finkelstein, "It's Not Either/Or: The Israel Lobby," *CounterPunch.com*, May 1, 2006.
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- ¹¹⁶ This is a key theme in Massad, "Blaming the lobby."
- ¹¹⁷ Chomsky, "The Israel Lobby."
- ¹¹⁸ Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 21-22; also see p. 17, note 76.
- ¹¹⁹ Morris, *1948 and After*, pp. 11-12.
- ¹²⁰ Ben-Ami, *Scars of War*, pp. 35-36. Also see Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, pp. 121-152.

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¹²² Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (New York: Norton, 2000), p. 237. Also see Stephen S. Rosenfeld, "Israel and Syria: Correcting the Record," *Washington Post*, December 24, 1999.

¹²³ Shlaim, *Iron Wall*, p. 235.

¹²⁴ Quoted in Ben-Ami, *Scars of War*, pp. 76-77.

¹²⁵ Morris, *Righteous Victims*, p. 387.

¹²⁶ Strobe Talbott, "Attack on Brookings without Substance," Letter to *Financial Times*, March 30, 2006. Also see Guy Dinmore, "Storm Intensifies over Israel Lobby Paper," *Financial Times*, March 27, 2006.

¹²⁷ Andrew Ross Sorkin, "Schlepping to Moguldom," *New York Times*, September 5, 2004.

¹²⁸ Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 14-15.

¹²⁹ Yossi Lempkowicz, "Poll Shows French Believe in Anti-Semitism Rise," *European Jewish Press*, March 9, 2006.

¹³⁰ Anti-Defamation League (ADL) "Attitudes toward Jews, Israel and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict in Ten European Countries," April 2004; The Pew Global Attitudes Project, *A Year After Iraq War: Mistrust of American in Europe Even Higher, Muslim Anger Persists* (The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, March 16, 2004); Shlomo Shamir, "Poll Shows Decrease in Anti-Semitic Views in Europe," *Ha'aretz*, April 27, 2004.

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¹³² Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 49, note 35.

¹³³ Dershowitz, "Debunking," p. 22.

¹³⁴ See William Burr, ed., *The October War and U.S. Policy* (Washington, DC: National Security Archive, October 7, 2003); Kenneth W. Stein, *Heroic Diplomacy: Sadat, Kissinger, Carter, Begin, and the Quest for Arab-Israeli Peace* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

¹³⁵ Stein, *Heroic Diplomacy*, p. 86.

¹³⁶ "Kissinger Gave Green Light for Israeli Offensive Violating 1973 Cease-Fire," National Security Archive Press Release, October 7, 2003.

¹³⁷ Dershowitz, "Debunking," p. 36.

¹³⁸ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 68, note 147.

¹³⁹ Dershowitz, "Debunking," p. 2.

¹⁴⁰ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," pp. 10-11.

¹⁴¹ Morris, *Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 592.

¹⁴² Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 51, note 43.

¹⁴³ Dershowitz, "Debunking," p. 37.

¹⁴⁴ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," pp. 25-28.

¹⁴⁵ Massing, "Storm over the Israel Lobby," pp. 65-66.

¹⁴⁶ Massing, "Storm over the Israel Lobby," p. 66.

¹⁴⁷ A number of journalists have raised this issue with us, and it has also been raised on several blogs.

¹⁴⁸ See Paras D. Bhayani, "KSG Seeks Distance from Paper," *Harvard Crimson*, March 24, 2006; Meghan Clyne, "A Harvard School Distances Itself from Dean's Paper," *New York Sun*, March 23, 2006; Shmuel Rosner, "Harvard Distances Itself from Criticism of Israel Lobby," *Haaretz*, March 24, 2006.

¹⁴⁹ Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 19-21.

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in Michael Bar-Zohar, *Facing a Cruel Mirror: Israel's Moment of Truth* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1990), p. 16 (emphasis added).

¹⁵¹ Shabtai Teveth, *Ben-Gurion and the Palestinian Arabs: From Peace to War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 187-188.

¹⁵² Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, p. 128; Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 168-169.

¹⁵³ Quoted in Shabtai Teveth, *Ben-Gurion: The Burning Ground, 1886-1948* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), p. 544.

¹⁵⁴ Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 41-42; Morris, "And Now for Some Facts," p. 29.

¹⁵⁵ Seymour M. Hersh, *The Samson Option: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1991), pp. 285-305; Idem, "Why Pollard Should Never Be Released," *The New Yorker*, January 18, 1999, pp. 26-33.

¹⁵⁶ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 6.

¹⁵⁷ Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 34-35.

¹⁵⁸ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," pp. 21-23.

¹⁵⁹ Downloaded from www.israeloncampuscoalition.org/aboutus.htm on October 16, 2006.

¹⁶⁰ Juan Cole is a distinguished expert on Shi'ism and professor of history at the University of Michigan. He is also the author of a prize-winning weblog ("Informed Comment") and has been critical of a number of Israeli policies over the years. After the departments of history and sociology at Yale voted to hire him, the decision was attacked by pro-Israel columnists in the *Wall Street Journal* and *Washington Times* and the newspaper *Jewish Week* reported that several prominent Jewish donors had called Yale officials to protest the appointment. Cole's appointment was subsequently turned down by the university's appointments committee. The impact of this alleged donor pressure is unknown, but the incident suggests the importance that Israel's supporters attach to shaping discourse on campus. See Liel Leibovitz, "Middle East Wars Flare Up at Yale," *Jewish Week*, June 2, 2006; Philip Weiss, "Burning Cole," *The Nation*, July 3, 2006.

¹⁶¹ Mackubin T. Owens, Letters, *Foreign Policy*, No. 156 (September-October 2006); Robert Pfaltzgraff, Letter, *London Review of Books*, Vol. 28, No. 8 (April 20, 2006).

¹⁶² Dershowitz, "Debunking," p. 39.

¹⁶³ Teresa Watanabe, "A Clouded View of U.S. Jews: One Study Finds Numbers Falling; Another Finds Growth. The Results Raise Divisive Questions," *Los Angeles Times*, October 9, 2002. The description of the two surveys in this paragraph is taken from this article.

¹⁶⁴ Dershowitz, "Debunking," pp. 23, 31.

¹⁶⁵ Martin Kramer, "Campus Watch, a Year Later," posted on *The History News Network*, September 22, 2003. Also see Martin Kramer, "Qui custodiet ipsos custodes? Campus Watch," posted on *Sandstorm* (Kramer's weblog), September 18, 2002.

¹⁶⁶ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 48, note 29.

¹⁶⁷ Martin Kramer, "Israel and the Iraq War," posted on *Sandstorm* (Kramer's weblog), April 12, 2006.

¹⁶⁸ Mearsheimer and Walt, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 37, p. 78, note 203.