
American Jews—More Right than Left on the Peace Process

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The best data on the positions of American Jews on the peace process show that they are more on the “right” side of the political spectrum than is often claimed regarding such issues as the two-state solution, basic Arab goals, the future status of Jerusalem, and the settlements, and this pattern has been consistent over the last decade. Moreover, the more attached American Jews feel to Israel and the more importance they attribute to their Jewishness, the more likely they are to take positions on the right.

It is often claimed that on the issues of the peace process the Jews in America are to the “left” of most Israelis and of the current Israeli government. What differentiates the “Right” and the “Left,” of course, is not their desire for peace. Everybody wants peace. (It would be interesting to trace how it came about that the Left captured the term peace.) What the Right and the Left (the quotation marks will usually be omitted from now on) differ about is their view of what is more likely actually to bring peace. From the perspective of the Left, peace is more likely if Israel concedes more of what the Palestinian Arabs seek. From the perspective of the Right, an effective and durable agreement is unattainable in the present circumstances and, therefore, a peaceful situation is more likely to prevail if Israel shows more determination and yields less.

The question of whether American Jews should express their opinions on peace process issues is the subject of an ongoing debate that will not be considered here. The question to be addressed is: exactly where do American Jews stand? Is it true, as often claimed, that most Jews in America would wish that Israel were more accommodating to Palestinian Arab positions? What do American Jews really think about peace process issues? Obviously, American Jews are not all of one mind, but what is the balance and what proportions of which Jews hold which positions?

BIASED SURVEYS ON LEFT AND RIGHT

Many polls of Jewish opinion are taken. Almost every few days another poll is reported in the press, and most of them tend to confirm the positions of their respective sponsoring organizations. As one headline announced, for example, “ADL poll shows higher support for Israel than did survey by dovish J Street.”

How does the sponsorship of a poll make its effect felt? A cursory examination of the polling methods used shows that it is not the sampling frame or the choice of statistics used in analysis, but more often the wording of the questions that biases the outcome, and this tends to be true of studies sponsored both by the Left and by the Right. A few examples will make this clear.

The November 2010 J Street survey¹ reported that 53% of American Jews supported “the United States playing an active role in helping the parties to resolve the Arab-Israel conflict if it meant the United States exerting pressure on Israel to make the compromises necessary to achieve peace.” It is surprising that a majority of Jews would want the U.S. government to pressure the Israeli government to act in ways that the Israelis thought unwise. The question immediately preceding the question above was identical except, instead of asking about pressure on Israel, it asked about pressure “on both the Israelis and Arabs.” Sixty-five percent supported such pressure. Having agreed to pressure on “both the Israelis and the Arabs,” most then agreed to “pressure on Israel.” The question was put in a context that made agreement more likely than would have been the case otherwise.

In another example, a study done jointly by Americans for Peace Now and the Arab American Institute² reported that 87% of Jewish Americans support a negotiated two-state solution. Here is the question that was asked: “Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose, a negotiated peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians that included the establishment of an independent secure Palestinian state, alongside an independent secure Israeli state, and resolved final status issues of Jerusalem, refugees, and borders?” In effect, respondents were asked whether they would go along if Israelis and Palestinian Arabs settled everything and Israel were secure. It is not surprising that, under those circumstances, 87% of America’s Jews would agree.

This same study reported that 70% of American Jews support the Arab League peace initiative. Here is what was asked: “The Arab League recently reaffirmed its commitment to the 2002 Arab League peace initiative. This initiative offers Israel full diplomatic relations with all Arab countries, in exchange for an agreed-on comprehensive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose this initiative as a basis for negotiations?” The question omits the Arab League initiative’s stipulation of complete withdrawal to the June 1967 lines including redivision of Jerusalem as well as a “just solution” of the Palestinian refugee problem that allows

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return to their earlier homes for those who so opt. Inclusion of these stipulations in the question would no doubt have very substantially reduced the level of support among Jews.

There are also examples of this kind of bias in surveys conducted on the Right. Luntz Global Studies³ reported that 77% of American Jews believe that Palestinian incitement in a culture of hatred is the real cause of the conflict. Here is the question: “‘Incitement’ is the name given by some to the practice of Palestinian media, mosques, schools and civic activity that promote extreme anti-Israel and anti-Jewish activity, such as honoring suicide bombers as heroes for young people to emulate. Others have used the phrase ‘*Culture of Hatred*’ [emphasis in the original]. Which do you think is a greater obstacle to peace?” The three alternative answers provided were: “Palestinian incitement/culture of hatred,” “Israeli occupation of Palestinian land,” and “Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.”

The same study asks: “The Palestinian Authority, which governs the West Bank under the Fatah Party, and Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip, have announced plans to formally reconcile and join together as one Palestinian government. Hamas is recognized as a terrorist organization, not just by Israel but also by the European Union and the United States. Their official charter calls for them to *fight and kill the Jews*’ [emphasis in the original]. If Hamas is a major part of the Palestinian government, should Israel...?” The two alternatives provided are: “refuse to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority until Hamas renounces terrorism and officially recognizes Israel’s right to exist” and “begin negotiations with the Palestinian coalition regardless of Hamas’ record of terrorism and continuing calls for Israel’s destruction.” Seventy-seven percent chose the first alternative.

One last example of a poll that generated results more resonant with positions on the Right (for “balance” two studies from each side are cited here) is a recent national survey reported by Secure America Now,⁴ which asked: “Should Israel be forced to return to its pre-1967 borders which were susceptible to attack at points where the country was only eight miles wide?” This question reflects a major dilemma of public opinion polls. On one hand, providing context supplies information that respondents are likely to consider important in deciding their views. On the other hand, critics might say that context makes the item a leading question. In any case, this poll showed that 81% of respondents opposed forcing Israel back to the 1967 lines.⁵

THE AJC SURVEYS

Are there any good data that are free of obvious bias and reliably give a sense of how American Jews feel? Most good research on American Jews, when it deals with Israel at all, studies other aspects of the Israel-Diaspora relationship: feel-

ing of closeness to Israel, travel to Israel, importance of Israel as part of Jewish identity, and so on. The only regularly conducted survey that asks American Jews their opinions specifically on peace process issues is the “Annual Survey of American Jewish Opinion” done by the American Jewish Committee (AJC).⁶ For more than a decade, that survey has almost always included questions about the central peace process issues—the two-state solution, Jerusalem, settlements, and the fundamental goal of the Arabs in the conflict. The questions have been appropriately worded, not leading respondents to answer one way or the other, and, since the questions have been repeated almost every year, one can get an indication of their reliability and consistency.

The sample sizes are good, about a thousand through the year 2007, eight hundred in more recent years. The AJC uses Synovate, a market research firm, to gather the data. Synovate has a market research panel that it periodically refurbishes and from which it gathers data on a regular basis. The AJC buys into Synovate’s surveys as valid.

The AJC’s questions are asked of members of the Synovate panel, who identify themselves as Jewish in response to a screening question about their religion. It is likely that two groups of Jews are underrepresented—*haredim* and Jews who no longer consider themselves Jewish. Since their inclusion would not change the results by more than a percentage point or two, their underrepresentation does not invalidate the findings reported here.

Theoretically, an independent sample would be preferable. However, and this is what matters, there is no reason to believe that Synovate panels have been created with a systematic bias regarding positions on the peace process. The characteristics that may affect a person’s willingness to be part of a market research panel seem to be irrelevant to the issues of the peace process. Moreover, the Synovate panels were compared with one another and to the National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) of 2000–2001 on such measures as religious denominational preferences, political identification, preferred political party, and feeling of closeness to Israel. On all of these variables the Synovate samples were consistent and close to the NJPS sample. It can be concluded, then, that the samples are good for present purposes.⁷

Table 1 summarizes the distribution of American Jews’ positions on peace process issues over the last decade. While more American Jews favored than opposed the establishment of a Palestinian state during the earlier part of the decade, the difference narrowed dramatically starting in 2007, and in the most recent survey (2011) significantly more of the respondents opposed than favored the two-state solution. The assertion, so often made in the media, that American Jews are overwhelmingly in favor of the two-state solution simply does not hold.

On the question about Jerusalem a clear majority of American Jews opposed compromise on its status as a united city under Israeli sovereignty, even in the

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Table 1. Percentage Distributions of Responses to Questions Regarding the “Peace Process,” 2001–2010

	Year										
	2011	Fall 2010	Spring 2010	2009	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001

In the current situation, do you favor or oppose the establishment of a Palestinian state?

Favor	38	48	48	49	46	54	56	57	54	49	53
Oppose	55	45	45	41	43	38	38	37	41	47	39
Not sure	8	6	7	1	12	9	6	6	5	5	8
Total	101	99	100	+	101	101	100	100	100	99	100

In the framework of a permanent peace with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to compromise on the status of Jerusalem as a united city under Israeli jurisdiction?

Yes	37	35	35	37	36	40	36	42	42	41	44
No	59	60	61	58	58	52	60	53	54	55	50
Not sure	4	5	4	6	7	7	4	5	4	4	6
Total	100	100	100	101	101	99	100	100	100	100	100

As part of a permanent settlement with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to dismantle all, some, or none of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank?

All	8	6	8	8	*	*	15	121	12	10	9
Some	51	56	56	52			46	57	57	55	53
None	39	37	34	37			36	29	29	34	34
Not sure	2	2	2	2			3	2	2	2	4
Total	100	101	100	99			100	100	100	101	100

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? “The goal of the Arabs is not the return of occupied territories but rather the destruction of Israel.”

Agree	76	76	75	75	82	81	78	84	81	82	73
Disagree	19	20	20	19	12	13	18	13	16	15	23
Not sure	6	4	5	5	6	6	4	3	3	4	4
Total	101	100	100	99	100	100	100	100	100	101	100

Do you think there will or will not come a time when Israel and its Arab neighbors will be able to settle their differences and live in peace?

Will	*	*	*	*	37	38	*	*	*	*	*
Will not					55	56					
Not sure					8	6					
Total					100	100					

Percentages sometimes add up to 99 or 101 due to rounding.

* Question was not asked in this year’s survey. None of these questions was asked in 2008.

+ The percentages on this question for 2009 do not add up to 100. The figures here are those reported by the American Jewish Committee, both as furnished to the North American Jewish Data Bank and on the American Jewish Committee’s own website. This would seem to be a typographical error. My hunch is that the 41 should be 51, which would make the total correct and be consistent with other findings, but we cannot be certain.

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framework of a permanent peace with the Palestinian Arabs. This position has been remarkably consistent throughout the decade.

It is often reported that American Jews are against the settlements. The samples were asked: “As part of a permanent peace settlement with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to dismantle all, some or none of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank?” It is important to note that action regarding the settlements was put in the context of a permanent peace agreement—not before it and not as a condition for negotiations, but as part of the agreement itself. The most frequent answer, as would be expected, was that “some” settlements should be dismantled. That is the likeliest answer because it is broadest and least definitive. It can mean anything from “almost all” to “almost none.” What is more significant is the comparison between those who responded “none” and those who preferred “all.” Many more American Jews said that no settlements should be dismantled than said that all settlements should be dismantled. That difference has been consistent and has even grown by a small amount over the decade.

Finally, respondents were asked whether they agreed that “The goal of the Arabs is not the return of occupied territories but, rather, the destruction of Israel.” American Jews overwhelmingly agreed that the real goal of the Arabs is Israel’s destruction. Here, too, the figures are consistent and stable over the ten-year period.

In light of their understanding of the Arab goal, it is not surprising that the sample was not optimistic about peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. In 2006 and 2007 the sample was asked: “Do you think that there will or will not come a time when Israel and its Arab neighbors will be able to settle their differences?” A clear majority did not expect such an outcome.

A RIGHTWARD TURN

It is often suggested that two events at the turn of the century are likely to have significantly changed the perspectives of American Jews on peace process issues. One occurred when Yasser Arafat left Camp David in July 2000 after rejecting Israel’s most generous offer to date, thus bringing about the collapse of the negotiations followed by the outbreak of the Second Intifada in September. The second event was the 9/11 destruction of the Twin Towers simultaneously with the attack on the Pentagon and the planned attack on the Capitol.

The four questions on peace process issues that were asked regularly in the first decade of the twenty-first century were also included in some of the surveys in 2000 and the 1990s. The findings for those years are given in Table 2. It emerges that the failure of Camp David and the 9/11 attack did not produce changes in American Jews’ positions on the specific issues of the peace process—Palestinian state, Jerusalem, and settlements. American Jews felt the same way about these is-

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Table 2. Percentage Distributions of Responses to Questions Regarding the “Peace Process,” 1993–2000

	2000	1998	1995	1994	1993
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Given the current situation, do you favor or oppose the establishment of a Palestinian state?

Favor	*	42	46	53	57
Oppose		49	39	34	30
Not sure		9	15	13	13
		100	100	100	100

In the framework of a permanent peace with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to compromise on the status of Jerusalem as a united city under Israeli jurisdiction?

Yes	36	33	33	32	30
No	57	61	62	60	62
Not sure	7	5	5	8	8
Total	100	9	100	100	100

As part of a permanent settlement with the Palestinians, should Israel be willing to dismantle all, some, or none of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank?

All	*	5	5	*	*
Some		52	52		
None		40	39		
Not sure		3	5		
Total		100	101		

The goal of the Arabs is not the return of occupied territories but rather the destruction of Israel.

Agree	69	68	56	51	42
Disagree	23	24	37	41	50
Not sure	8	7	7	8	9
Total	100	99	100	100	101

issues in the 1990s as in the 2000s. With minor variations (a few percentage points here and there), American Jewish attitudes on these issues have been remarkably stable. What did change after Camp David and 9/11 is that significantly more American Jews came to see the Arabs’ real goal as the destruction of Israel. This process began in the late 1990s and increased at the beginning of the last decade.⁸

It is clear that more American Jews hold positions on the Right than on the Left regarding the issues that Israel deals with in the peace process. But how are these positions distributed, and which kinds of Jews are more likely to take which positions?

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Since the AJC's reports include only the overall frequency distributions of answers, these questions can be answered only through a secondary analysis of the raw data. The latest year for which the data have been deposited in the North American Jewish Data Bank—the recognized repository of most data sets from communal and organizational studies of Jewish samples—is 2005. The AJC has not provided the Data Bank with the data of later surveys and declined to make them available for the purposes of this article. Hence the analysis that follows is based on the 2005 survey, and, in order to see whether the patterns were atypical, a similar analysis was done with the 2001 data.

The immediate question is whether analyses of data more than five and ten years old are of value. Of course, knowledge about Jews in 2001 and 2005 is worthwhile in itself for historical understanding. More to the point, the relationships among variables are much more likely to be stable than are positions on the individual variables. It is a commonplace of social science research that the patterns among characteristics usually stay the same even as the individual characteristics wax or wane in the overall population.

A "Left/Right" scale was developed using responses on peace process issues. The scale ranged from 0, meaning the Left position on all issues, to 100, meaning the Right position on all issues. The scores were divided into Left, Right, and Center on the following basis: scores between 0 and 33 were classified as on the Left, scores between 67 and 100 were deemed to be on the Right, and scores between 33 and 67 were considered Center. In other words, the Left, Right, and Center are not relative; they are absolute descriptions of the respondents' positions.

Table 3 shows clearly that more of American Jewry is on the Right than on the Left. Between 2001 and 2005 the Right remained stable (40% to 39%), but the Left lost about a third of its numbers to the Center. The Left declined by 9% and the Center grew by 10%.

Gender had no relationship to the issues studied in this research. There were no significant differences between men and women on any of the variables examined.

Age, on the other hand, showed a very interesting pattern. It is often claimed that young Jews are becoming alienated from Israel because most young Jews are

Table 3. Percentage Distribution and Mean Left/Right Scores

	2005	2001
Left	16	25
Center	45	35
Right	39	40
Total	100	100
Mean L/R score	60	58

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on the Left while Israel increasingly takes positions on the Right. There are four assertions in that claim: that most young Jews are on the Left, that Israel is increasingly on the Right, that young Jews are generally becoming alienated from Israel, and that the political disparity between young Jews and Israel is the cause. Each of these assertions needs more and better research than has been done so far. Interestingly, as shown in Table 4, respondents under thirty in 2005, as well as in 2001, were more to the Right on peace process issues than any other age group. They have the largest percentage on the Right, and they have a much higher Left/Right score than do the older age categories. The youngest group is the farthest to the Right in both years, and more so in 2005 than in 2001.

One possible explanation for that finding is that the youngest group has the highest proportion of Orthodox, and, in fact, that is the case. Twenty-one percent of the under-thirty age group identified themselves as Orthodox, as did 16% of respondents in their thirties. For people in their forties, fifties, and sixties the percentage of Orthodox comes to the usual 6% or 7%, with 11% for those seventy and above. Other recent studies also show higher proportions of Orthodox among younger Jews. For example, in the 2000–2001 NJPS, 10.5% of the total sample identified themselves as Orthodox, but among those under thirty years of age 18.5% said that they were Orthodox.

The Orthodox are more likely to be on the political Right than are other Jews. However, that does not explain why young Jews are more on the Right on peace process issues. When respondents in the AJC survey were asked to identify themselves as “extremely liberal, liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, slightly conservative, conservative, or extremely conservative,” 55% of those under thirty placed

Table 4. Percentage Distribution of Left/Right Scores, by Age

2005						
	<30	30–39	40–49	50–59	60–69	70+
Left	7	17	17	17	11	18
Center	32	49	42	47	49	47
Right	61	35	41	37	40	35
Total	100	101	100	101	100	100
Mean L/R score	71	59	62	57	61	57

2001						
	<30	30–39	40–49	50–59	60–69	70+
Left	25	20	26	26	24	28
Center	18	36	34	37	38	38
Right	57	44	40	37	38	34
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Mean L/R score	66	62	58	56	58	55

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themselves on the liberal side of the continuum, as compared to between 39% and 49% of the other age groups. Sixteen percent of the under-thirty group considered themselves “extremely liberal,” compared to between 6% and 8% of the other age categories. In other words, the youngest respondents may be more Orthodox, but they are also more liberal. Their Orthodoxy may be a factor, but not because it makes them more politically conservative in general.

As would be expected, the respondents’ positions on the peace process moved from Left to Right as their political self-identification moved from more liberal to more conservative. What is unexpected is that even among those who placed themselves on the liberal side of the political spectrum in 2005, more were on the Right (28%) on peace process issues than on the Left (22%). As shown in Table 5, respondents who identified themselves as “extremely liberal” had an average Left/Right score of 45, very much in the Center on peace process issues. The same pattern characterized the 2001 data. Even Jews who are liberal on other issues tend to prefer Center or Right positions on the issues of the peace process.

ATTACHMENT TO ISRAEL AND POLITICAL POSITION

A question often debated is whether one’s level of attachment to Israel is related to one’s position on peace process issues. The Right often asserts that Jews who are more deeply Jewish and more attached to Israel are more likely to be on the Right. The Left claims that Jews on the Left are just as strongly Jewish and just as committed to Israel.

There were three questions in the 2005 and 2001 surveys on ties to Israel and one question on the importance of Jewishness. Respondents were asked how close they felt to Israel, whether caring about Israel was a very important part of their

Table 5. Mean Left/Right Scores, by Political Identification

	Mean Left/Right score	
	2005	2001
“Extremely liberal”	45	52
“Liberal”	53	52
“Slightly liberal”	55	55
“Moderate, middle of the road”	60	58
“Slightly conservative”	72	67
“Conservative”	72	66
“Extremely conservative”	75	71

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being a Jew, and whether they had been to Israel. The question on Jewishness was “How important would you say being Jewish is in your own life?”

The results, given in Table 6, show a clear pattern. On all of the measures, the closer people are to Israel, the more they are to the Right, and the more important they consider their Jewishness, the more they are to the Right. The differences are both consistent and substantial.

The three questions about relationship to Israel were combined into an overall scale of attachment to Israel, which was divided into three categories: strong, medium, and weak attachment to Israel. As shown in Table 7, of those with strong

Table 6. Mean Left/Right Scores, by Aspects of Connection to Israel and Jewish Identity

	2005	2001
“How close do you feel to Israel?”		
Very close	70	68
Fairly close	58	56
Fairly distant	46	51
Very distant	47	49
“Caring about Israel is a very important part of my being a Jew.”		
Agree	63	62
Disagree	47	48
“Have you ever been to Israel?”		
No	56	
Yes—once	62	
Yes—more than once	69	
“How important would you say being Jewish is in your own life?”		
Very important	66	65
Fairly important	53	54
Not very important	49	47

Table 7. Percentage Distribution and Mean Left/Right Scores, by Overall Attachment to Israel

	Attachment to Israel					
	2005			2001		
	Strong	Medium	Weak	Strong	Medium	Weak
Left	6	18	26	12	25	41
Center	42	46	51	33	37	34
Right	52	36	23	55	39	26
Total	100	100	100	100	101	101
Mean L/R score	70	57	48	69	58	48

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attachment to Israel in 2005 only 6% were on the Left, compared to 52% on the Right. Among those with weak attachment to Israel, Left and Right are virtually equal in size. At all three levels of attachment to Israel, the Right remained roughly stable (declining by only 3%) while the Left lost significantly to the Center between 2001 and 2005. Both the percentage distributions and the mean Left/Right scores show the same unmistakable and significant pattern: the stronger their attachment to Israel, the more likely Jews are to be on the Right.

It would have been interesting to study in more detail those respondents who had strong attachment to Israel and were on the Left, but there were only twenty-two such people in the 2005 sample, too small a group for a separate analysis. Extrapolating, that means that only about 2.2% of the American Jewish population is strongly attached to Israel and on the Left regarding peace process issues. Even in the unlikely case that this number should be a little higher given the vagaries of random sampling, it is still a small group that has both strong attachment to Israel and holds positions on the Left on peace process issues. If the public media give us a different impression, that may be the result of differential access to the media by leaders of the Left and of the Right.

The data for Reform Jews are especially interesting. The public statements of leaders of the Reform movement are usually on the Left on peace process issues. As Table 8 shows, it is true that Jews who identify themselves as Reform are more likely to be on the Left than are people in the other movements—20% in 2005 compared to 11% of the Conservative and 3% of the Orthodox, with those who identify themselves as “Just Jewish” having 20% on the Left. The figures for 2001 show the same pattern, except that the Left lost support in all movements between 2001 and 2005. The Reform movement is more Left than the other movements, but more of the Reform movement is on the Right than on the Left. This is true for both 2005 and 2001, with the disparity larger in the later year.

Table 8. Percentage Distribution and Mean Left/Right Scores, by Religious Movement

	Religious Movement							
	2005				2001			
	Ortho- dox	Conser- vative	Re- form	“Just Jewish”	Ortho- dox	Conser- vative	Re- form	“Just Jewish”
Left	3	11	20	20	8	17	29	34
Center	20	49	48	47	13	40	37	33
Right	77	41	31	33	79	43	34	33
Total	100	101	99	100	100	100	100	100
Mean L/R score	84	63	54	55	82	61	54	53

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The same pattern is found when considering the responses on each issue. Not only on the whole, but also issue by issue, while Reform Jews are more on the Left than Conservative or Orthodox Jews, they are nevertheless still more on the Right than they are on the Left. Asked whether they agree that Israel should “be willing to compromise on Jerusalem as a unified Jewish city under Israeli jurisdiction,” 43% of Reform respondents answered yes and 50% said no. On the question of settlements, 47% of Reform respondents said that some settlements should be removed, and although 19% said all should be removed (a larger percentage than in other movements), 31% said that none should be. In other words, there would seem to be a gap between the typical public statements of Reform leaders and the views of people who consider themselves Reform Jews.

CONCLUSIONS

In 1994 Daniel J. Elazar noted that “[t]he majority of the American Jewish leadership has been in favor of territorial compromise all along, by about 2 to 1. However, the Jewish public in the United States has not been, even if they now have moved more in that direction.”⁹ There is often a real gap between what American Jewish leaders say about the peace process and what American Jews on the whole believe. That was true when Elazar wrote it eighteen years ago, and it is still true now.

Why there should be that disparity is an important subject for future research. A wide range of factors—individual and structural, socioeconomic and ideological, internal and external—need to be examined individually and in their dynamic interrelationships.

In any case, it is clear that those who want to know where American Jews stand on the issues confronting Israel in its negotiations with the Palestinian Arabs should listen less to what American Jewish leaders proclaim and more to what the Jews themselves believe.

NOTES

1. Gerstein/Agne Strategic Communications, “J Street National Survey of American Jews,” November 2, 2010, http://jstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/images/J_Street_National_Survey_Results.pdf.
2. Americans for Peace Now and Arab American Institute, “Seeing Eye to Eye: A Survey of Jewish American and Arab American Public Opinion,” Zogby International, 2007, http://aai.3cdn.net/8ec1590ead8d91637d_hdm6bh9x6.pdf.
3. Luntz Global, “American Jews on Israel and the Middle East,” May 16–17, 2011, http://www.camera.org/images_user/pdf/luntz.camera%20poll.results.final.pdf.

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4. McLaughlin Associates and Caddell Associates, "National Survey American Jewish Voters," Secure American Now, July 2011, http://secureamericanow.s3.amazonaws.com/68/57/b/113/national_jewish_0611_website_graphs_new_07-14-11.pdf.
5. It is sometimes argued that people's opinions may change when they know the relevant facts and that those facts should therefore be provided as the context in which a survey's questions are framed. However, what part of an issue's context is most relevant is often exactly what people with different positions disagree about. Also, people's attitudes exist in whatever context *they* bring to the question.
6. The AJC's studies are available on the Committee's website or on that of the North American Jewish Data Bank.
7. For a full discussion of the sampling used in the AJC's annual surveys, see Joel Perlmann, "The American Jewish Committee's Annual Opinion Surveys: An Assessment of Sample Quality," The Levy Institute of Bard College, Working Paper No. 508, July 2007.
8. For a fuller analysis of the AJC's Annual Surveys for 1993–1998, see Yale M. Zussman, "How Much Do American Jews Support the Peace Process?" *Middle East Quarterly*, December 1998, 3–12.
9. Daniel J. Elazar, "Israel-Diaspora Relations and the Peace Process," *Jerusalem Letter/Viewpoints*, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, January 16, 1994.