

9. *The New Lobbying Game: Grass Roots Pressure and PAC Money*

Democracy is not a spectator sport. God damn, it's a hands-on sport to help those that help us.

—Tom Korologos, lobbyist

When I came to Washington as a reporter in the early 1960s, one of the most powerful influences on Congress was the pro-Israeli lobby. Those were years when Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser kept threatening Israel, and the Arab cause was unpopular on Capitol Hill. But in the late 1970s, the political situation changed, first with the dramatic journey to Jerusalem in November 1977 of Anwar Sadat and the 1978 Camp David accords that led to a peace treaty between Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Second, things changed with the skyrocketing prices of oil and the Western impulse to secure a flow of oil from the Persian Gulf through better relations with Saudi Arabia and other Arab states. Third, they changed dramatically with the fall of the Shah of Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979.

Sadat projected a friendly, peaceful Arab face to Americans, and his willingness to make peace with Israel gave Egypt what seemed a moral claim, almost on a par with Israel's for huge volumes of American aid. The steady production of oil for the West by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia persuaded President Carter in 1978 to promise the Saudis F-15 jet

fighters as a sign of gratitude and friendship. That sent shivers through the pro-Israeli lobby which claimed the jets could be used against Israel. Then in 1981, the new Reagan administration decided to sell the Saudis several enormously expensive and valuable airborne radar command posts, known as AWACS for Air Warning and Control System. The pro-Israeli lobby fought that sale bitterly, and lost—a loss which suggested to many that the political balance on Arab-Israeli issues had tipped.

But that is not the end of the story; it is actually the beginning. In the next four years, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), leading edge of the pro-Israeli lobby working Congress, literally transformed itself and gained greater power than ever before. The loss on AWACS jolted AIPAC into a new political strategy, and it became a superlobby. Its budget shot up eightfold in nine years, its membership multiplied from nine thousand households in 1978 to fifty-five thousand in 1987, its staff grew from twenty-five to eighty-five. By the mid-eighties, its leadership was steering roughly \$4 million in campaign contributions to friendly candidates and punishing political foes, and AIPAC's lobbying became more bipartisan.

One policy payoff was that American aid to Israel rocketed from \$93.4 million in 1962, to nearly \$3.8 billion in 1986. Most importantly, AIPAC gained so much political muscle that by 1985, AIPAC and its allies could force President Reagan to renege on an arms deal he had promised King Hussein. By 1986, the pro-Israeli lobby could stop Reagan from making another jet-fighter deal with Saudi Arabia; and Secretary of State George Shultz had to sit down with AIPAC's executive director—not congressional leaders—to find out what level of arms sales to the Saudis AIPAC would tolerate. In 1987, AIPAC's lobbying blocked the sale of sixteen hundred Maverick missiles to Saudi Arabia.

The story of how AIPAC reversed its fortunes in the mid-1980s is not only an insight into this one lobby, but a revealing case study of how all lobbying has changed in the new Washington power game. AIPAC's evolution is a microcosm of a larger phenomenon. Its leaders were sharp enough to respond to the dispersal of power triggered by the political earthquake of 1974, breaking up the old power structure. The new lobbying game patterned itself after the new politics of Congress and the new breed; the old inside game of lobbying was upstaged by the new outside game of lobbying. Intensive private lobbying was often less potent than extensive mass lobbying.

Shrewd lobbyists understood that they could no longer focus on a few committee barons to push their issues, but they had to chase

virtually every member of the House and Senate, certainly every member of key committees. Lobby groups could no longer bank on some pricey Washington superlawyer to make their pitch in private; they had to generate grass-roots movements to pressure scores of legislators. That meant turning increasingly to the techniques of political campaigns and campaign organizers, pollsters and direct mail specialists to tap and manipulate public opinion.

By now, it is a cliché that lobbies have more power than two decades ago, but not everyone understands why. The fragmented power game, fostered by the 1974 power earthquake, played into the hands of lobbies. It not only helped AIPAC block President Reagan on Arab arms deals, but the more open power game enabled the bank lobby to resist a tax law backed by the president and leaders of both houses of Congress, by stimulating such a popular groundswell that congressional members turned against their political leaders. Those episodes reflect the new politics and the new lobbying game.

For the fact is that lobbies have increasingly filled a vacuum left by the loose structure of political parties. The parties used to provide the most essential organization, money, and endorsement that politicians needed. Parties and their leaders weighed the competing demands of interest groups, sorted out priorities, struck compromises and then provided what politicians call "cover" for the votes of individual Congress members: taking the political heat for unpopular votes and delivering bad news to groups that were not satisfied. Oddly, national political parties now contribute larger sums of money than ever to political campaigns, but overall they have not recovered their old power.

For survival, members of Congress rely primarily on personal organizations and their ties with well-organized constituencies—which they are loath to antagonize. That means incumbents, relying heavily on special interest groups for political support and campaign funds, are dependent on these groups and more susceptible to their pressures. Clever lobby groups understand the symbiotic relationship and exploit it, careful to hedge their political bets by spreading favors and support with far more officeholders than was necessary in the old power game.

This sprawling new lobbying game has raised the price of playing. Campaigns targeted on one single legislative issue and costing in the millions are common. AIPAC's budget, for example, shot up from \$750,000 in 1978 to \$6.1 million in 1987 just to cover pro-Israeli issues. Business and right-to-work groups spent \$5 million in 1978 killing what organized labor called "labor law reform," and the unions spent \$2.5

million to try to win better organizing rights. The insurance industry spent \$5 million in 1985 to protect billions of dollars in tax exemptions. Blue Cross-Blue Shield spent another \$4 million just to protect its tax-exempt nonprofit status. The trucking industry spent \$3 million in 1979 trying to stave off deregulation. Lobbying changed from an insiders' game to an industry.

AIPAC: Before and After

The AIPAC case is a before-and-after story. The first episode begins on September 28, 1980, less than a year after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and six days after the border skirmishes between Iran and Iraq exploded into full-scale war. On that day, General David Jones, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, flew into Saudi Arabia. The outbreak of war at the head of the Persian Gulf had set off alarms in Washington and had given the royal house of Saud an extreme case of jitters.

When Jones landed, he was grabbed by Prince Fahd bin Abdullah, director of operations for the Saudi Air Force, and Prince Bandar bin Sultan, an American-trained Saudi Air Force major and son of the defense minister. "We want AWACS immediately," they told him. "We want AWACS for twenty-four-hour surveillance of the gulf. We need it. We can't protect the kingdom without it. Can you get it for us?"¹

AWACS, an Airborne Warning and Control System, the epitome of modern weaponry, is a large Boeing 707 with a dish radar on its fuselage, chock-full of high-tech electronics to monitor an entire battle region. It is a symbol of modern air might and sophistication. The Saudi monarchy wanted temporary loan of American AWACS planes with American crews as a signal to Ayatollah Khomeini's warlike Iran that Saudi Arabia enjoyed American protection.

For years, the U.S. Air Force had been encouraging the Saudis to buy AWACS, partly to provide rationale for American-built air bases in Saudi Arabia that American planes could use in a Middle East crisis. Jones, an AWACS zealot, sensed an opening; he immediately messaged Washington and pushed the Pentagon and Carter White House to send AWACS planes. Carter's advisers, near the climax of the 1980 campaign, feared voter backlash. They balked, but Jones nursed Carter into agreement. Within two days, four American AWACS landed in Saudi Arabia on a "temporary training mission" that would operate around the clock 365 days a year. (They were still there seven years later

when an Iraqi warplane hit the American frigate *Stark* in the Persian Gulf in May 1987.) In gratitude, the Saudi monarchy told Jones it was stepping up Saudi oil production.

Very soon, the Saudi government asked the explosive question: Would the Carter administration conclude a whopping \$8.4 billion arms sale—five AWACS planes plus seven huge KC-135 tankers, some F-15 jet fighters, and other equipment? That request was political dynamite: Israel feared a modern Saudi Air Force, and Congress had been promised in 1978 that the Saudis would not be allowed to buy AWACS. Even so, Defense Secretary Harold Brown informed the Saudis that Carter was “favorably disposed” to sell AWACS. After Reagan won the 1980 election, Carter urged him to carry out the deal, and Reagan entered the White House “believing we should do it,” according to Jim Baker, his Chief of Staff.² Saudi expectations had been raised and the Air Force wanted to sell the AWACS planes, as General Jones told me, “to keep the production line open”—meaning that Boeing, AWACS’s maker, needed a big customer. The Saudis would share the plane’s heavy development costs.

When formal announcement of the deal came on April 21, 1981, the Israelis and their allies in Congress erupted, bent on persuading Congress to prevent the AWACS sale. It became a pitched battle of powerful lobbies, a test of Israeli and Arab influence. Prime Minister Menachem Begin, who had previously written Reagan privately condemning the deal, now openly denounced it, in apocalyptic terms, as a threat to Israel.

In Congress, the opposition got an early jump. By late June, Senator Bob Packwood, the Oregon Republican, had teamed up with Tom Dine, AIPAC’s Executive Director, to line up fifty-four senators and 224 House members to write President Reagan opposing the arms sale. In July, AIPAC declared its goal “to keep the package from ever being submitted” to Congress for a required vote of approval (majorities in both houses could block the deal). Indeed, fearing a political disaster that would derail the Reagan economic program, Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker got the White House to put off the AWACS vote from April to October. And when President Reagan sent formal notice to Congress on October 1, Baker warned the president that the outlook was bad. “We’ve got twelve votes, and that’s counting me,” Baker told Reagan, “and I don’t want to vote for it.”³

But Reagan, riding the crest of his budget and tax victories, pressed ahead. In the House, the AWACS sale was voted down 301–11. Ad-

ministration efforts focussed on the Senate. It was a classic inside-the-beltway battle.

First, the old Iron Triangle went to work. Powerful corporations, some with links to the Air Force and to Saudi arms sales, got behind the deal. The American Businessmen’s Group of Riyadh, including some top Fortune 500 companies such as Citibank, American Express, A&P, Merrill Lynch International, Mobil, Northrop, and Boeing, called on its members (heavy campaign contributors in 1980) to tell Congress “how important your business in Saudi Arabia is to your company.” The oil industry, huge grain companies and rice millers, and construction firms such as the Bechtel Corporation went after western and southwestern senators and congressmen. Omaha Banks and the Union Pacific Railroad put pressure on Democratic senators James Exon and Edward Zorinsky of Nebraska.

The Israeli government hurt its own cause. While the Saudi leadership promulgated a Middle East peace plan and provided more oil, Prime Minister Begin clashed with the Reagan administration, first over Israel’s air raid against an Iraqi nuclear reactor and then over bombing missions that caused heavy civilian casualties around Beirut. In September, Begin infuriated the White House by lobbying personally on Capitol Hill against the AWACS deal, challenging the president on his home court. Fred Dutton, a former Kennedy White House official and a Saudi lobbyist, cleverly framed the choice: “Reagan or Begin.”

The pro-Israeli coalition, a narrow majority of fifty-four, was wobbly. One by one, senators were stolen away; the coalition lacked strong popular underpinnings in many states. Utah’s Orrin Hatch used the assassination of Anwar Sadat to assert the need for helping other moderate Arab states. Other senators, especially freshmen Republicans, were cleverly peeled away by White House strategists Jim Baker and his deputy, Richard Darman. They crafted a letter offering Reagan’s assurances that AWACS planes would be used only by American and Saudi personnel—not by other Arabs; that AWACS intelligence could not be shared with any other nation unless Washington approved; and that AWACS would be protected against falling into hostile hands. For wavering senators, said Jim Baker, “the letter gave ’em a legitimate out, an excuse” to go along with the deal.

Reagan personally talked with forty-four senators; quite a few succumbed, among them Iowa Republican Roger Jepsen. His loss was a hard blow to AIPAC because Jepsen had been in the core of original AWACS foes. Jepsen, racked by conflicting pressures, literally broke

down crying as he told other Republicans that "highly classified" White House information and his desire not to hurt Reagan's prestige had switched his vote. That broke loose others. Reagan ultimately prevailed 52-48, and the AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia went through.

The underlying message to AIPAC and the pro-Israel lobby was that its ties to many senators were too weak.

And so begins the "after" half of the story: modernization and reshaping of AIPAC. As if there were some Newtonian law of politics, the AWACS triumph triggered a powerful reaction that came back to haunt Reagan four years later.

AIPAC had suffered a severe jolt. It had nearly stopped the president, but ultimately it had failed. And failure galvanized it into a more national strategy, targeted at the grass roots. For years AIPAC had ridden on an outspoken, committed, activist constituency based mainly in the big cities of the Northeast and Midwest. That constituency had always given it commanding strength in the House. But AIPAC was now compelled to go after the more conservative Senate in new ways, in order to marshal unassailable majorities in Reagan's second term.

In 1985, for example, after President Reagan had personally promised modern arms to King Hussein as inducement to negotiate with Israel, AIPAC and its allies lined up seventy-four senators to cosponsor a resolution to block a \$1.5 billion arms package to Jordan. The number of Senators was critical: a jump of twenty senators above the high point against AWACS in 1981. The White House could not peel off a few wavering senators and win. By early 1986, Reagan had to renege on his promise to Hussein; he withdrew the Jordanian arms package without a vote, demonstrating AIPAC's power to deter presidential initiatives. "The best vote is a vote avoided," Doug Bloomfield, AIPAC's legislative director, commented to me. "If you can win and avoid a confrontation, everyone is better off. In a political community, you have to live for another day, so it doesn't pay to rub anybody's nose in defeat."⁴

Again in 1985, after the Saudis had submitted a new \$3 billion arms request, President Reagan promised King Fahd more F-15 fighter aircraft. The congressional climate was so hostile that Reagan had to withdraw the offer; instead, the Saudis spent their billions on British jets. Gradually, the administration whittled down the Saudi shopping list, dropping M-1 tanks and Black Hawk helicopters, looking for a package that Congress—and AIPAC—would accept.

Finally, on February 28, 1986, Secretary of State George Shultz called in Tom Dine, AIPAC's executive director, to find out what the

administration could get through Congress. Normally, in the Jewish community's lobbying, AIPAC lobbies Congress, while the executive branch is handled by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. Shultz's meeting with Dine was a measure of AIPAC's increased clout.

Over the years, AIPAC had developed from a pro-Israel public affairs forum in the 1950s to a fifty-five-thousand-member lobby to which scores of senators and congressmen turn for authoritative guidance. AIPAC is an American lobby, not a registered foreign agent, but it has close ties with the Israeli government. Its political tally sheets and strategy reports wind up in the Israeli prime minister's office, I was told. Some Israeli journalists jokingly refer to AIPAC as "our embassy." And Tom Dine, a Kennedy Democrat with ten years of staff experience in Congress, is not above pulling a card from his wallet to show that he carries the Israeli prime minister's twenty-four-hour phone number. Other American Jewish lobbyists, such as Dave Brody of B'nai B'rith and Hyman Bookbinder of the American Jewish Committee, have proclaimed their independence from AIPAC. But many Jewish political activists get their cues from AIPAC.

In October 1985, for example, Senator Howard Metzenbaum, an Ohio Democrat and spokesman for a pro-Israel coalition, was negotiating with Majority Leader Robert Dole on terms of a legislative compromise postponing the Jordan arms sale. At times, Metzenbaum would shuttle down the hall to a Capitol hideaway to talk to Tom Dine. Republican Senate staffers intimately involved told me AIPAC was literally writing the resolution for Metzenbaum. AIPAC officials confirmed that Metzenbaum wanted their "sign-off" before striking a deal with Dole. Then, the AIPAC-approved bargain was circulated to other key senators.

So in February 1986, Shultz was acknowledging AIPAC's central role when he invited Dine to discuss the Saudi arms deal, which AIPAC was then vigorously opposing. For a couple of hours the two men sat by a roaring fire in Shultz's spacious office on the seventh floor of the State Department.

As Shultz talked, his own change of heart became clear to Dine. When Shultz had entered the administration in 1982, the Israelis feared he would be pro-Arab because he had been president of the Bechtel Corporation, a firm with big construction projects in Saudi Arabia. Indeed, Shultz drafted a framework for Middle East peace in September 1982 that angered Prime Minister Begin because it called for Palestinian autonomy and West Bank affiliation with Jordan. But

Shultz had become disillusioned with the Arabs after seeing Lebanon—under Syrian pressure—wriggle out of the Lebanon-Israel agreement that Shultz had mediated in May 1983. Since then, Shultz had worked to increase aid to Israel, and he had come to bank on the Israeli relationship—so much so that he told Dine he wanted to insulate American-Israeli relations from political ups and downs.

But on that February afternoon, Shultz also wanted to protect American influence with moderate Arabs. He argued that the Saudi arms deal was necessary. He wanted to send a message that would “reverberate” in Tehran. Moreover, Shultz reasoned, President Reagan had been snubbed by Congress on the Jordanian arms package and badly needed some show of support to bolster his standing in the Middle East. Shultz proposed to sell the Saudis a modest \$354 million package of Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, Harpoon naval missiles, and Stinger antiaircraft missiles. Although Dine told me that Shultz did not offer any direct quid pro quo, a deal seemed implicit. Shultz said that if this package passed, there would not be any more important arms sales to the Saudis in 1986.⁵

Dine was interested, but he cautioned Shultz that to get it through Congress, “You’re going to have to eliminate the Stingers.” They were an explosive item because of Israeli and American congressional fears that Saudi Stingers would get into the hands of Arab terrorists and be used against American airlines. Shultz did not heed the advice.

Dine went off to consult important senators and Jewish leaders such as Bob Asher, the Chicago businessman who is AIPAC’s president, and Kenneth Bialkin, then president of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations. A senior AIPAC official told me that Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, signaled through private channels that he did not oppose a modest Saudi arms package. This gave AIPAC a chance to have things both ways. Its opposition to the Saudi arms package was already on record; AIPAC could now afford to accommodate Shultz. On March 20, Dine called on Shultz. “I’ve got good news for you,” he said. “We won’t fight the Saudi missile deal.”

But momentum against the deal had developed beyond AIPAC’s control. Prominent pro-Israel politicians such as Senator Alan Cranston and Representative Mel Levine, both California Democrats, kept Congress whipped up against the deal. The House trounced the missile package, and the Senate voted 73–22 against it. Both votes occurred while President Reagan was away in Tokyo. When Reagan came home, he vetoed the resolution of disapproval. It took his all-out effort to get

his veto sustained in the Senate—but only after he dropped the eight hundred Stinger missiles. The final package was worth about \$250 million, less than one tenth of the original Saudi request.

This outcome was a measure of how dramatically the climate had shifted since the 1981 AWACS deal. It pointed up stunning changes in the Middle East. In the intervening five years, Congress had become deeply disillusioned with the peace process. With the TWA airliner hijacking, the *Achille Lauro* hijacking, and European airport bombings, Congress and the country were obsessed with Arab terrorism. Some Senators and House members put blame on Saudi Arabia, for they suspected the Saudis of bankrolling Palestinian and Syrian-backed terrorism. Moreover, the Saudi “oil weapon” had lost its sting with the steep drop in oil prices from thirty-six dollars a barrel in 1981 to fifteen dollars a barrel in 1986. Finally, Prime Minister Shimon Peres was a much smoother salesman for Israel than Menachem Begin had been.

AIPAC Organizing the Sunbelt

But AIPAC was not merely riding a favorable tide; it had undergone a transformation. It was not only capable of blocking major Arab arms deals, but it had promoted a quantum jump in aid to the ailing Israeli economy, from \$2.1 billion in 1980, mostly loans, to \$3.8 billion in 1986, all outright grants.

AIPAC was not omnipotent, of course. In early 1986, for example, its leaders contemplated trying to block actual delivery of the AWACS planes approved in 1981; they found that politically impossible. But AIPAC’s increased political leverage was undeniable. It had adapted to the new power game: to the dispersal of power in Congress, to the increasing importance of grass-roots lobbying, to the conservative mood of the country, and to six years of Republican control of the Senate. Those changes, coupled with migration of voters from the Snowbelt to the Sunbelt, dictated a new, nationally oriented AIPAC strategy. The old cozy relationships no longer sufficed.

“In the old days,” Tom Dine recalled, “Sy Kenen [who founded AIPAC] used to work with a couple of recognized leaders—Hubert Humphrey on the Democratic side and Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania on the Republican side. At the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War [in 1967], we drafted a resolution for Sy to take to Humphrey and Scott, and that’s all he had to do. You couldn’t do that today. You initiate an idea. You go to somebody to hopefully persuade them of it. I don’t care if he’s got a title, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations

Committee, minority leader, majority leader, he has to sell it to everybody else. There are now 535 potential secretaries of State."⁶

That power dispersion has forced AIPAC to spread its power base. For two decades, it banked on the political and financial muscle of large Jewish communities in the big states: New York, California, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan, Florida, New Jersey, Massachusetts. What the 1981 AWACS vote drove home was the weakness of the pro-Israel lobby in twenty-five states of the Southeast, Southwest, Prairie, and Rocky Mountain regions, especially among conservative Republicans.

"Where were we outlobbied by the administration in '81, and why?" Dine asked aloud, his brown eyes intent. "We were thin. You can't win with just the big-state senators. We have worked on the premise that votes are won or lost at the grass roots. We have to go not where the Jews are, but where the votes are."

At first glance, Dine seems an odd choice to revamp a traditionally Democratic lobby in a conservative Republican era. He is a tall foreign-policy intellectual in his mid-forties who would be at home teaching political science. All his political mentors were liberal Democrats. As a scared twenty-six-year-old, he was the congressional liaison for the Peace Corps in the Johnson administration, then went to India as special assistant to Ambassador Chester Bowles. He returned in 1969 to work five years for Senator Frank Church, then under Senator Edmund Muskie on the budget committee, and finally as a defense issues specialist for Ted Kennedy's abortive 1980 presidential campaign. After the 1981 AWACS defeat, some conservative Senate Republicans urged AIPAC board members to put a Republican superior over Dine and more Republicans on AIPAC's board. The board was broadened, but Dine was kept in charge.

What fit Dine for the task of reorienting AIPAC's strategy was his new creed of lobbying and his instinct for grass-roots work. Two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Philippines had given Dine a zest for community action. That was his prescription for the pro-Israel lobby: Spread the power base. Go to the grass roots. Get involved in the political process.

Some Jewish migration to the Sunbelt helped. As Doug Bloomfield, AIPAC's legislative director, put it, Jewish leaders feared that "as Jews go from the Rust Belt to the Sunbelt, they would leave their Jewishness in New York because it was easy to be a Jew there." Instead, Bloomfield said AIPAC found that under-forty "jumpies" (Jewish upwardly mobile professionals) "are taking their political activism with them into the Sunbelt. I found in Sarasota, Florida, there were two Jewish communi-

ties. There's one over fifty, and they have a synagogue there and a Jewish community. Along comes the under-forty generation. They're not intimidated. They're a much more self-confident generation. They start Jewish PACs and community-relations councils and day schools and country clubs. There's no fear that, Gosh, if people know I'm Jewish, it's going to hurt business, or I won't get a job."⁷

Dine and Bloomfield followed the migration to the Southwest. In 1983, AIPAC opened its first regional office in Austin, Texas; later it opened three others. From Austin—the cornerstone of Dine's strategy—AIPAC covered six states: Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona (where AIPAC had always done poorly). In 1981, only four of the twelve senators from these six states opposed the AWACS sale and only about one third of the region's fifty-three House members had a record of voting for aid to Israel. AIPAC's objective was to change this record by activating grass-roots organizing in local Jewish communities, running political workshops, and getting local leaders to make personal contact with senators and congressmen.

In Seminole, Oklahoma, Dine located six Jews who had grown up with Senator David Boren. Dine flew to Seminole and had lunch with them, urging all six, now successful businessmen, to get back in touch with Boren. Exposed to a pro-Israel message, Boren moved from opposing AIPAC in 1981 to voting with it four years later. In rural northeast Texas, AIPAC found three local Jews who knew Congressman Sam Hall. At AIPAC's urging, they met with him and asked why he had always opposed foreign aid, including aid to Israel. "You never asked me to vote for it," Hall replied. "If we ask you, will you vote for it?" they inquired. "If it's important to you, sure," Hall said. He voted for foreign aid for the first time in 1984.

These patient, piecemeal efforts by AIPAC, Dine said, produced a "sea change" in that six-state region. By 1985, nine of its twelve senators lined up with AIPAC against the Jordan arms sale and seven against the new Saudi sale. Support for aid to Israel in the House doubled.

AIPAC has not done as well in the Rocky Mountain and Prairie regions, or in the Southeast, but it is making headway in selected states, such as Virginia. It has even courted old foes such as Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina. In 1984, it tried to defeat Helms and then, having failed, helped arrange for him to visit Jerusalem. Later, AIPAC officials claimed Helms had been "sensitized" by his travels, showing more understanding of Israel and occasionally voting with AIPAC.

AIPAC's political tactics have changed in other important ways. During six years of Senate domination by Republicans, AIPAC has become more bipartisan, helping incumbent Republicans. It has also backed non-Jewish incumbents against Jewish challengers. Both the bipartisan approach and the proincumbent bias reflect the new style of lobbying and have raised hackles among AIPAC's traditional allies. Some Democratic politicians, accustomed to AIPAC's previous pro-Democratic traditions, bristled at seeing increased support and campaign money from pro-Israel lobbies going to Republican incumbents. In 1982, for example, Missouri State Senator Harriet Woods, a liberal Democrat and a Jew, was challenging incumbent Republican Senator Jack Danforth. AIPAC advised the Jewish community to back Danforth, who had stood with AIPAC on the AWACS vote. "Years ago, you would automatically support one of the *meshpucha*, the family, meaning a Jew," an AIPAC activist told me. "But just because Harriet Woods is Jewish and Jack Danforth is not, doesn't mean you support Harriet. This was an important test of the sophistication of the community. You stick with your friends, and it pays off."

In 1986, Dine discouraged Ron Wyden, a Jewish Democratic congressman with an excellent pro-Israeli voting record, from running against Republican Bob Packwood in Oregon. Dine argued that Packwood had a strong record as a friend of Israel, the Jewish community was already backing him to the hilt, and Wyden stood little chance of getting Jewish financial backing. Dine and Bob Asher, AIPAC's president, who is a Republican, also discouraged Dan Glickman of Kansas, another Democratic congressman who is Jewish, from running against Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole. AIPAC officials told me Glickman was angered, in part because Dole's voting record was not as strongly pro-Israel as Glickman's. But AIPAC's reasoning was that Dole had been as friendly as he could be, in his leadership position, and AIPAC did not want to antagonize him when Glickman had little chance of winning. Some Democratic senators, bent on regaining control of the Senate in 1986, were also upset over AIPAC's warm political endorsements of the pro-Israel records of Republican conservatives such as Alfonse D'Amato in New York and Robert Kasten in Wisconsin. AIPAC discouraged more than one prominent New York Democrat from opposing D'Amato. As Bob Asher explained, AIPAC's position is to "stick with friends who have been up-front and out-front for Israel." With more incumbent Republican senators running in 1986 than in twenty-five years, AIPAC was inevitably more in the Republican column than before, Asher said.⁸

AIPAC also reflects the new lobbying trends in the way it plays the political money game. Its officers make a point that AIPAC is not a political action committee but a public-affairs committee that does not make campaign contributions. But many leaders in the "Jewish community" as politically active American Jews refer to themselves, talk freely of the political guidance AIPAC provides to more than eighty pro-Israel PACs set up by Jewish organizations or community groups to raise and funnel campaign funds to friendly candidates. Most pro-Israeli PACs have innocuous names like National PAC, Joint Action Committee, Florida Congressional Committee, Hudson Valley PAC or St. Louisans for Better Government. Those pro-Israel PACs donated roughly \$4 million to candidates in 1986, according to Federal Election Commission Records.⁹

AIPAC keeps close tally on every congressional vote and provides the pro-Israeli PACs with thumbs-up or thumbs-down on Senators or House members. AIPAC follows one determining issue—American policy toward Israel and issues that affect Israel's interest—and it cares little about other issues of concern to Jews. But on that one touchstone, AIPAC rewards friends and goes after adversaries. AIPAC's guidance is reinforced by interlocking leadership in the pro-Israel groups; many of its leaders and activists are founders and leaders of the pro-Israel PACs. For example, Morris Amitay, who was AIPAC's executive director from 1974 to 1980 and who still sits on AIPAC's executive committee, is treasurer of the second largest pro-Israel PAC, the Washington Political Action Committee, and puts out a newsletter describing various senators as "down-the-line supporters" of Israel and others, such as Daniel J. Evans of Washington as "the most negative member of the Foreign Relations Committee."

One sign of AIPAC's increased leverage has been its ability to punish adversaries. In 1982, its prime candidate for reprisal was Representative Paul Findlay, a ten-term Republican from Illinois. AIPAC attacked Findlay as a friend of Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat. According to Dine, Jews donated ninety percent of the campaign funds raised by Richard Durbin, the Democrat who beat Findlay. In 1984, more than forty percent of the \$3.2 million contributed by Jewish PACs to Senate races went to Democratic opponents of five Republicans who voted for the AWACS sale. One of its top targets was Senator Roger Jepsen of Iowa—"J for Judas," one AIPAC official sneered.

AIPAC officials make no secret that AIPAC's prime target in 1984 was Charles Percy of Illinois, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations

Committee, whom AIPAC had tabbed as the most influential pro-Arab member of Congress. Jewish PAC's gave \$274,144 to Paul Simon, Percy's ultimately victorious Democratic opponent. In addition, Michael Goland, a Jewish businessman from California, spent more than \$1 million in negative advertising against Percy. In a lawsuit, Percy charged that Goland was operating with guidance from former AIPAC executive director Morris Amitay. But Goland, AIPAC, Amitay, and Simon's campaign all contended that Goland was operating independently.

Even so, Tom Dine claimed after the election that Jewish efforts and money had beaten Percy and helped tip other races. "Like an Indian elephant, we don't forget," Dine boasted to a Jewish audience in Toronto. Both Percy and Jepsen lost close races that were affected by many factors; but unquestionably strong Jewish opposition hurt them. In 1986, another AIPAC executive told me that the "Percy factor" and the "Jepsen factor"—that is, memories of AIPAC's opposition to them in 1984—had swayed senators against the Jordan and Saudi arms sales, especially among Republicans facing reelection in 1986. Speaking to the Council of Jewish Federations in Chicago in November, 1986, Tom Dine rated the newly elected Senate as more supportive than the former Senate (he said eight of thirteen newly elected senators were more friendly to Israel than their predecessors). More to the point, Dine urged the Jewish community to remember the "friends" of Israel running for reelection in 1988—and he mentioned eighteen of them by name.

Sometimes, the political arm-twisting goes too far and backfires. When the Saudi arms sale came to a Senate vote on May 6, 1986, Senator Rudy Boschwitz, one of AIPAC's leading allies, called two Republicans, Phil Gramm of Texas and Daniel Evans of Washington, off the Senate floor during the vote to meet Michael Goland, who had put \$1 million into defeating Percy. In that vote, the Saudi arms package still included Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, and Goland suggested to Evans that the Saudis might let these get to Palestinian terrorists.

As Evans recalled their encounter, Goland asked, "What would you think about someone using an ad that would start—" Goland described the ad very vividly: the senator raising his hand, voting aye on this arms sale, and then a picture of an Arab in a kaffiyeh headdress, assembling a Stinger, an airplane taking off, an explosion, crosses in a graveyard, and reading off a list of names. "So he had it well thought out," Evans said, "or at least he had a picture of what might be done. And when

he asked me, 'Well, what do you think?' I said, 'Well, I think that it would be an inappropriate and outrageous way to campaign.' But I said that I think that in my state, people are too smart to be taken in by something like that."¹⁰

Both Evans and Gramm voted for the Saudi sale despite Goland's threat. Tom Dine told me that the incident had been a grave embarrassment because "it fits the stereotype of how the pro-Israel lobby really works." Dine insisted that it had been done by Boschwitz on his own. "It's a disaster," Dine said. "The whole thing hurts. It's everything that I disagree with. In no way were we involved with Goland. He was a lone ranger."

Whatever the case, plenty of senators and House members regard AIPAC's political clout as awesome. Overall, AIPAC has gathered strength and gained muscle by adapting to the New Washington politics: the spread of power in Congress, the potency of grass-roots lobbying, the need to be bipartisan, and the importance of throwing financial support to friends and against enemies, and then advertising the results. That is the way the new lobbying game is played.

Old-Breed Lobbying

In the abstract, lobbying kindles an image of wickedness only barely less disreputable than the skullduggery of the Mafia. It conjures up Upton Sinclair's exposés of the beef and sugar trusts or Thomas Nast's oils of robber barons closeted in back rooms, their corpulent figures framed in thick black strokes against a backdrop in red. It has the illicit aroma of cigar smoke, booze, and money delivered in brown envelopes. Or it smacks of big labor muscling congressional minions. But that is a caricature, for lobbying has changed immensely with the rise of mass citizen protests in the 1960s over civil rights and the Vietnam War. It changed further with the breakup of the old power baronies, the arrival of new-breed politicians, and the intrusion of campaign techniques.

Of course, plenty of lobbyists still practice old-fashioned lobbying. At heart, the old-breed game is inside politics. That is why so many lobbyists are former members of Congress, former White House officials, former legislative staff aides, former cabinet officers. Their game thrives on the clubbiness of the old-boy network. It turns on the camaraderie of personal friendships, on expertise born of experience. It taps old loyalties and well-practiced access. It draws on the common bond of old battles and the certain knowledge that you may lose on this