

Common Strategic Interests or the Israeli Lobby?

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Abstract

The role of Jewish lobbies in US decision-making processes is one of the disputable issues in international relations, which has drawn attention of the politicians, researchers and students. The present paper examines the functions of Jewish lobbies in US decisions-making structure as well as effective factors involved in it. Based on heuristic statistics presented in the current paper, and relying on empirical facts and employing quasi laboratory method, it will be argued that reducing the influence of Jewish lobby to the executive structure of US and exclusive alliance between Washington-Tel Aviv is an incomplete reality. Rather, 'Common Strategic Interests' could help to better understand this relationship which puts the US national interests as pivotal element. Therefore, the main significance of Jewish lobby can be more assessed in domestic policy of America.

Keywords: Jewish Lobby, national interests, rationality, common strategic interests.

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Introduction

The United States of America as an international power and Israel as a regional power have unique relations and still insist on this relation in the international system. Due to lack of political visibility in the last decades of the 18th century, US played a negligible role in the equation of international system. It was not assumed that this region would emerge as the most important political player in the international politics in less than two centuries. Geopolitical position, racial-religious diversity and political system have raised US influences in the global system. Significantly, Israel had no political identity in the world map.

One of the most important issues within the US political system is the complicated process in foreign policy decision-making. In this process not only formal bodies like executive, legislative and judiciary but also NGOs, parties and different groups of minorities are influential in decision-making. Due to decentralized nature of political system, US provided opportunities for engagements of interest groups and NGOs to secure their special interests by employing legal rigs. Furthermore, they influence social, economic and political sectors (Maisel and Others 2010: 40-44). Nevertheless, US government and public opinions stand against those groups whose attempts would endanger national interests. Accordingly, 'pressure group', 'lobby groups' and 'interest groups' try to achieve their main goals with different mechanisms. The main question of this paper is how influential are the Jewish lobbies in the US foreign policy decision-making process? To what extent US national interests are

important for decision makers?

To understand the role of Jewish lobbies and their influences on American foreign decision making, this paper will explain the decision making theory, concept of lobby, function of Jewish lobbies, and its approaches, hypotheses and empirical cases.

I- Conceptual Framework

One level of analysis in the international politics is studying the behaviors of governments based on decisions that policy makers adopt in different aspects. Therefore, decision-making is one of the theoretical frameworks, which can be considered in dealing with international relations. According to systematic analysis, the inputs would be transformed to outputs in the process of interaction between system and environment which finally will lead to decision.

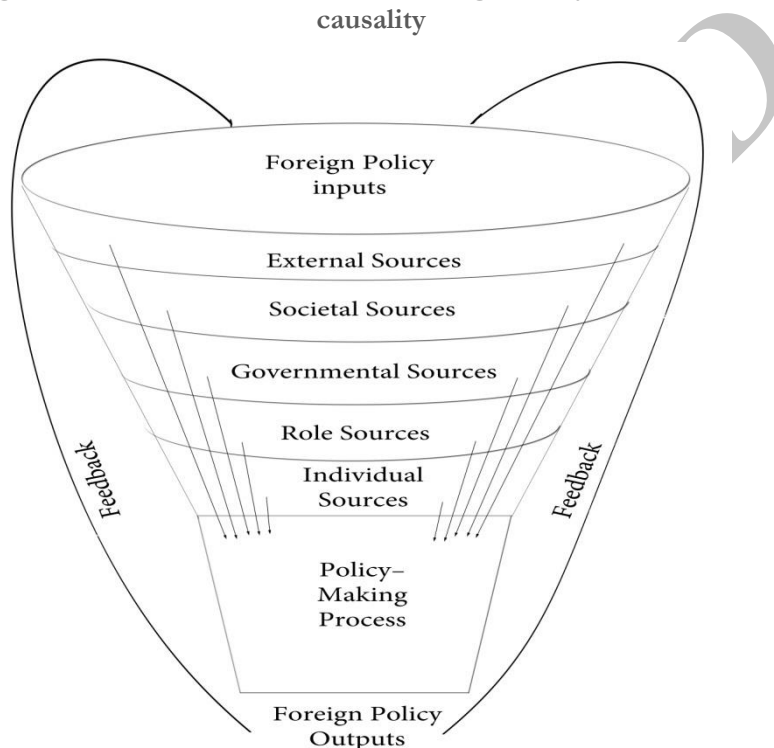
Accordingly, the decision makers embark on decision making based on their power and exogenous-endogenous costs and opportunities. The main yardstick of foreign policy decision making is national interests. So, national interests emerge in different cultural-ideological, social, economic, trade, technological, military as well as political- diplomatic forms (Ghavam, 2010: 239). In David Easton's perspective, decisions are the outputs of political system in which the national values will be authoritatively distributed in the society. Decisions refer to the process of selection among the alternatives (Dougherty and Faltzgraff, 1996: 719). Probably, several institutions will interfere in decision-making process. Due to pluralistic nature of US administration, decisions in the area of foreign policy are influenced by subsidiary groups and institutions but the role of executive power and congress is determinant. Based on 'low risk' stimuli, these formal and informal bodies are trying to maximize the national interests and to realize national purposes of United States. Therefore, the processes of decision-making in US foreign policy are affected by complex relations of different parts of this country. Due to pluralistic nature of its political structure, every decision has to be

considered by different channels. In Henry Kissinger's perspective, politicians are pressured by external (policy, power, foreign states' attempts) and internal (from public opinions to governmental attitudes and bureaucracy) factors. An ideal politician will consider these factors to better manage the pending problems. By estimating politicians' function, he believes that a successful leader is the one who recognizes the limitations and tries to manage them. Contemporary analysts emphasize on the nexus between internal and external policies and treat the politics as two-level game (Russett and Starr, 2002: 244). In fact, despite the linkage between domestic and foreign policy, many American politicians and diplomats emphasize on the independence of foreign policy. In other words, foreign policy needs functional independence and domestic policies should not lead the foreign policy decision makings. In fact, the impact of domestic policies upon foreign policy will minimize the strength and flexibility of diplomacy specially during the international crises (Amini, 2010: 117). Thus, the main occupations of analysts are states' politics, governmental decisions, the processes of decision-making, the attempts of different states and the consequences of their political behaviors. In fact, foreign policy is the output of states at global level (Russett and Starr, 2003: 245).

Therefore, there are two different approaches among foreign policy decision-makers and academic theorists. While politicians are adhering to the short-term affairs, theorists are considering the long-term affairs and the macro developments (Viotti, 2010, 153). The infrastructure of US foreign policy is rested upon the perception that every source of decision-making could be treated as causal factor influencing the features of the relevant country's behavior at international level. This framework supposes 'cause-effect' funnel. The inputs will design the process of foreign decision-making as an external, societal, governmental, role and individual sources of analytical structure. Furthermore, this segment of decision-making will lead US foreign affairs labeling as the outputs of foreign decision

making. So, the behavior of US foreign policy is the set of intertwined factors linking the internal and external elements which will determine the decision and consequences of foreign policy (Kegley and Wittkopf, 2005: 18-19).

Figure 1; The Sources of American Foreign Policy as a Funnel of causality



As it pointed out, the main preference of US is 'national interests' which is at the zenith of its priority. In the lexicon of international relations, national interests include self-preservation, territorial integrity, military security and economic welfare (Plano, Jack & Roy Olton, 1988: 10). In Woodrow Wilson's point of view, national interests lead the behaviors of politicians and legitimize their actions in foreign relations (Clinton, 1999:84). Thus, international system is built on national interests.



The concepts of 'interests' and 'power' include abstract dimension mixed up with values. Power and its components influence on behaviors and positions of governments' foreign policy as well as providing more interests. Accordingly, more powerful and influential states extend their national boundaries and globally seek for national interests. For instance, after Monroe Doctrine (1823- 1945), United States expanded its national interests from the Caribbean region to the Far East, from the Persian Gulf to the Horn of Africa and other regions (Ghavam, 2010: 28-123). Based on US National Security Strategy, the most important principle of national security relies on national interests, which needs to be protected and continued for the welfare of society. According to Morgenthau, the concept of national interests is the guideline of statesmen and politicians, standard of thinking and action formula. According to this approach, the concept of national interests will bridge different states (Morgenthau, 1951: 240). Therefore, national interests have been considered as the most important concept in international relations lexicon. According to this model, the relation between Israel- US could be investigated. Therefore, effective institutions of US foreign policy which are influential in this regard include Congress, State Department, Defense Ministry (Pentagon), Central Information Association (CIA), National Security Council, and media, universities and research centers, elites and think tanks, parties, groups and formal and informal lobbies.

The Concept of Lobby: The concept of 'lobby' and its process of emergence dates back to the 19th century. At that time, individuals tried to influence on the process of decision-making in the corridors of the congress. A number of definitions are offered on the concept of lobbying: 1) It is attributed to chambers or big halls linked to larger rooms used as corridors or waiting room such as entrance of legislation parliament or hall of chambers; 2) Individuals attempts in deal with the designed commitments representatively (Merriam-Webster 2006); and 3) A general expression employing for groups that are geared toward a special task. For instance, 'oil lobby',

‘environmental lobby’ or lobbies trying to change the rules in the congress or parliament (Wikipedia, 2006). Also, ‘lobby making’ is a type of professional action that an individual or group performs to defend public affairs in order to influence on governmental system.

According to the above definitions, lobbies’ major task is to employ some mechanisms to attain special purposes. But pressure and interest groups are those who have common purposes and try to impose them on politicians’ decisions through organized activities at different levels. They try to lead public policies toward their special interests (Birnbaum, 1992: 13). Although, these definitions are not comprehensive and complete, but the common goal of all these groups is to pursue their determined purposes in economic, political, military and other aspects by governmental and non-governmental organizations.

So, the domains of lobbies’ activities are categorizing into: economic groups: These groups will support organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), multinational corporations (MNCs) and national association of producers for advancing exports and free market; social and religious groups: unlike economic groups, social and religious groups emphasize on subjects such as religious and social freedom and human rights. Also US relations with those governments who violate human rights is highly criticized by this group; and racial groups: These groups are including racial minorities in America who possess social bases according to their population proportionality, economic capability, media’s leverage and organizational integration leading to influence on state’s decisions (Abolfath and Gholipoor, 2008: 322; Jentleson, 2000: 44). In this paper, the concept of pro-Israel groups refers to ‘Jewish Lobbies’ whose extent and scale of influence on Washington- Tel Aviv relations will be analyzed.

II- Israeli Lobby

One of the influential groups in America is ‘Jewish lobby’¹. John

Mearsheimer, professor of Chicago University, and Stephen Walt, professor of Harvard University, in their joint work named *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* believe that the basis of all pressure groups in America are similar, but what distinguishes Jewish lobby from other pressure groups is its power of influence (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2006). These lobbies are (in)formally engaged in the structure of US society. Informal groups such as 'B'nai B'rith' and 'Hadassah' group and 'Political Action Committee' will be more active at elections time. But the effects of formal lobbies in general and the 'America- Israel Public Affairs Committee'(AIPAC - as most important lobby in US) are highly important for US foreign policy decision-makers.

The American- Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC):

AIPAC was firstly named as "The American Zionist Committee for Public Affairs" that had been established by 'I. L. Kenen' in 1951. The aim of its foundation was to support Israel. This committee has been changed to 'AIPAC' in 1959. AIPAC was the only organization attempting to influence Washington's foreign policy until the late 1970s. In this sense, 'AIPAC' includes large internal organizations which calibrate some proclamations on Israel and Arabic world. Although these bonds are pretending moderate platform about Middle East but try to advocate Israel (Estiri, 2001:47). This committee tries to promote the strategic cooperation between Washington and Tel Aviv, manage the peace process in the Middle East and advance the awareness of Congress about US-Israel relationships (Right Web Profile 2006). The committee is directed by a powerful executive manager who is responsible for managing routine issues as well as critical situations and acts under supervision of the executive committee of AIPAC and American Jewish community. Until 1980s, AIPAC was more focused on the US Congress whereas in recent decades, it is trying to establish relation with executive and legislature bodies (Tabatabaee, 2003: 25). Their attempts are considerable in appointments processes in executive

branch, bargaining in departmental bureaucracy and administrative institutions. Moreover, with accession to media and public opinions, they play important role.

Lobby of Jew's Peace: US support over Israel's policies has been counterproductive within America's community. For instance, when Israel began extensive settlements in the west border during Isaac Shamir's administration, some Jews questioned this attempt and believed that Israel's security will be well provided by making a stable and peaceful environment in the Middle East. Due to delegation of those Jews who were trying to prepare a suitable cooperative context between Israel- Palestine, this lobby was founded (Izadi, 2003: 188). In 1992, this group asked Congress to block the financial loans to Israel while the settlements in western border are in progress. Furthermore, the main argument of this group was that these attempts will block the negotiation between Palestine and Israel which finally endanger the security and peace in the region. Nevertheless, AIPAC's support for settlement created a serious gap among the Jews in the United States (Izadi, 2003: 189).

American– Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE): The American–Israeli Cooperation Enterprise (AICE) was established in 1993 for reinforcing the relationships between US and Israel based on shared values. The main task of this group was transforming the methods of Israel to US and delivering the new programs of Washington to Tel- Aviv. According to this institution, Israel possessed proficiencies and qualities that could be developed in the US. AICE has published a book named 'Partners for change: How U.S.-Israel cooperation can benefit America?' The book argues that research, study and negotiation about non-militaristic cooperation between Israel- US are the main goals for this institution. So far, the institution has published several reports on cooperation between Israel and 25 local states in US. It has rewritten the history, myths and the facts of the relation between Israel and Arabs. Moreover, it is going to work on the history of ill-treatments toward Americans



during the Second World War. Furthermore, the Jewish virtual library belongs to this institute which is available online.

The Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish American Organizations: The 'Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish American Organization' is one of the Jewish powerful lobby groups in America which comprises important Jewish organizations in various parts of the American society.

Some active Jewish organizations in the United States are 'The Jewish American Committee', 'Zionist Organization of America', 'Simon Wiesenthal' and 'Anti Defamation League' (ADL). These groups are more active in US mass media such as television channels, radio stations, newspapers and magazines (Blankfort, 2006). They use mass media for strengthening the relationships between the United States and Israel. Therefore, Zionist lobbies are regarded among the effective groups in political decision-making in the US and use different methods of influence to serve their own purposes.

The United States of America as a world power and Israel as a regional power have a special and unique relation. As it explained, Jewish lobbies can influence on the quality and type of relationships between the two governments. Through different mechanisms, they influence on the decision-making process with regard to the Middle East and Israel affairs. Although their gravitations on the processes of decision making in Washington is undeniable fact but it's not the complete one.

There are various perspectives among American academics on the exclusive relation between Washington and Tel Aviv which will be considered below. The First group: in their joint publication called 'Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy', John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt expressed the influence of Jewish lobbies on US foreign policy as the main reason of exclusive relationship between Washington- Tel Aviv (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2006). More importantly, Donald Neff believes that America's foreign policy is severely affected by Israel's interests (Neff, 1995: 167- 182). The Second Group: Stephen J. Solarz

and his proponents believe that the main reason for the long-lasting relation between US-Israel is mutual interests and pressure groups. Moreover, Jewish lobbies are not the main actors (Findley, 1998: 101). In this context, some proponents argue that Israel is acting as the US aircraft carrier in the Middle East region. The Third Group: Noam Chomsky, as professor and theorist of Harvard University in his book called *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians*, argues that in analyzing the particular relations of America and Israel, neither undermine the scope of US support toward Israel nor exaggerate the influences of political pressure groups on the processes of decision-making in America (Chomsky, 1983: 8). In Chomsky and Zunes's perspectives, US approach toward the Middle East is similar to its policy in the other parts of the world (Chomsky, 2006: 4). The weakness of Israeli lobby becomes clear when Israel is merely treated as an instrument of expansion of US imperialism in critical situations whereas in normal situation Israel is marginalized. The main driving forces for US Middle Eastern policies are 'big oil companies' and 'military – industrial complex' which are not in line with Jewish lobbies (Petras, 2008: 245).

Based on the dominant policy of the US, Israel is considered as a strategic partner for US hegemony specially in securing resources in the Middle East. The US has supported Israel even before the establishment of AIPAC (Bickerton, 2009:173). As it has been argued, each perspective has its own proponents and expresses parts of reality. It seems that the first two groups provide uni-dimensional description which either exaggerate or reduce the level of US-Israel relationship. Mearsheimer and Walt magnify the influence of Jewish lobby on US foreign policy decision-making. Donald Neff considers US politicians as hostages of Israel. According to his perspective, American decision-makers lack independence and freedom of action and serve Israel's special interests. Also, Solarz claims that Jewish lobbies play no role in US-Israel relations. Apparently, that the first two groups are relatively far from the reality and disregard some



aspects of Washington-Tel Aviv relation, whereas the third perspective is increasingly running the facts of this relationship.

Although the role of Jewish lobbies in US is undeniable but due to presence of various lobbies in America, the relation between US-Israel is not exceptional, because the governments of these pressure groups are not benefited the same relations of Washington- Tel Aviv. The following section will refer to some empirical evidence of active lobbies in US and UK.

III- Comparative Analysis

Irish Lobby Group: After ‘American-Israel Public Affairs Committee’ (AIPAC), Irish lobby is benefited the most influence among American. This minority is living in Northern and Eastern states. A major part of industrial and banking service of littoral states of the Atlantic Ocean are running by the Irish. The Irish have constructed an integrated community in US since 200 years ago. The main political activities of the Irish have been organized in “Northern Irish Aid Committee” (NORAIID). Such engagements have been established following Northern Irish’s autonomy especially after the coalition of North and South of Ireland. Bill Clinton, the US president, under the pressures of NORAIID in Congress and White House offered a peace plan for Northern Ireland to London and liberating army of Northern Irish by George Michael as previous Senator. Success of the mentioned plan led to autonomy of Northern Ireland and receding of England military forces from the North of Ireland and finally contract a peace treaty between Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom (Abolfath and Gholipoor, 2008: 323). Despite the cooperation between Northern Ireland and US government and its significant influence on US political structure, the relation between Northern Ireland and United States is not comparable to the relation between America and Israel. Today, the autonomous government of Northern Ireland is facing with some problems in its relations with United States on different issues such as

immigration, extradition and etc. As an evidence, the following section will explain the influences of Jewish lobby in other country except United States.

Jewish Group in England: Jews' engagements in UK have long history. Jews succeeded to enjoy total political rights by attracting legislators' confidence in UK parliament in 1830. During Benjamin Disraeli's administration, Jews nominated as the candidate of parliament and consequently received one seat in UK parliament. Following this movement, Disraeli was introduced as the elected Prime Minister. Since the Edward VII (1901- 1910), King George and Queen Mary and during the WWI till today, Jews are influential in industry, economy and politics of the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the UK had an important role and influence during the construction and the establishment of Israel (Baxter, 1995). Furthermore, the authorities of both governments are enjoying good relationships, but these relations have never been similar to the US – Israel relations. In addition to Jewish and Irish lobbies in the United States, there are other lobbies such as Italian, African, Cuban, Vietnamese, Japanese, Turkish, Arabic, German, Slovenians, and Iranian. By establishing and uniting pressure groups, these nationalities are trying to affect US the foreign policy and manage their national interests (Abolfath and Gholipoor, 2008:323).

In the United States as decentralized and pluralistic system, different groups including political and economic elites and think tanks are contributing in decision-making processes. Engagements of these groups are oriented toward national interests (Maisel, Sandy and Berry 2010: 454). Therefore, the United States is the main locus of foreign countries' lobby. In fact, even some small countries and foreign trade companies are lobbying to approve or disapprove special law. Significantly, while the national interests are safeguarded, the US government provides the freedom of action for different groups. Even largest pressure groups are not able to coerce politicians or the Congress to act against US interests.



Some pundits and experts believe that the elites, intellectuals and authorities in the US are subjected to the Jewish lobby. It seems that many of them rely on emulation of artificial opinions irrespective of deep analysis of the relations between the two states especially US national interests.

Arab Leaders' Perspective: Many Arab leaders believe that the Jewish lobby is the main actor in US-Israel relationships. This interpretation might be an attempt to conceal the failures and weaknesses of their political structures. On the other hand, some US decision-makers may exploit the Jewish lobby as an instrument to achieve their interests in the Middle East (Estiri, 2001:65). According to Chomsky, introducing Israel lobby as the most important actor is an abstract attitude toward politics. This perspective is prevalent and many Arab leaders treat this viewpoint as a fact that has been extended all over the world even in the US (Chomsky and Jilber, 2009: 117). Also, this attitude is rampant among some well-known authors. However, such analysis is not persuasive. Moreover, this is not realistic to argue that Jews are running the U.S system and Americans are passive while only 2.5 percent of Jewish populations will clarify the U.S orientations.

Despite Jews influence on the US government, how the policies of US for Israel could be analyzed? For instance, during Eisenhower's presidency in 1956, America had forced Israel to withdraw from Egypt (Suez Canal) to safeguard its own national interests; and despite his anti- Jewish attitudes, Nixon's administration had prevented the defeat of Israel in 1973 war; during the Bush administration, US compelled the Shamir's administration to stop the settlements on one hand and participate in Madrid peace conference in 1991 on the other hand. Furthermore, US has rejected the participation of Israel in the Gulf war and even has persuaded Israel to hold up the reactions against the invasion of Iraq to Israel in 1991 (Helal, 1994:16). In fact, during the radical tension between Israel and United States, maintaining US hegemony over the Middle East was the main

intention of the Bush administration. Also, Bill Clinton as the US democratic president inflicted huge pressures on Tel-Aviv to cancel the contract of radar system of airborne Falcon with China in 2000. Ironically Israeli lobbies could not react against this order (Chomsky and Ashkar, 2009:116).

Those who are exaggerating the influence of Jewish lobby during US presidential elections (Webber, 2007) have met with opposite results. For example, US supported Balfour treaty in 1917 when Jewish votes did not affect on the election of Woodrow Wilson. Moreover, Harry Truman who formally recognized the territorial division of Palestine in 1947 and supported the establishment of Israel in 1948, gained only 20 percent of Jews' votes (Helal, 2004:16). As Republican president of the US, Nixon had the most important strategic relations with Israel during his presidency. He gained 15 percent of Jews' votes. Moreover, 80 percent of Jews did not vote for George W. Bush in 2000 election and only 19 percent of the Jews voted for him (NRI, 2004: 5). But it seems that the durability of relationships between Bush administration and Israel's government was benefited more importance than previous presidents in US.

The struggle over arm selling in 1981 is considered as the biggest, longest and hardest conflict between AIPAC and the White House. In this year, president Reagan decided to sell 5 well-advanced airplanes (airborne warning and control system)(AWACS) with a value of \$ 8.5 billion to Saudi Arabia. AIPAC and Israel tried to prevent this transaction by imposing pressures on US Congressmen and Senators, which was unsuccessful. Accordingly, Reagan said, "it is not related to other countries to determine the foreign policy of United States" (Fendley, 1998: 105; Uslaner, 1986: 374). Consequently, the AWACS has been delivered to Riyadh.

The most recent strategic controversy between US and Israel emerged over the lengthy negotiations between Iran and P5+1 on nuclear program which was concluded with a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA on July 14, 2015)(Katzman & Kerr, 2015: x).



Disagreement over threat perception, divergent worldviews and regional assessments and lack of trust are among the challenges between Israeli and US officials. The US perceives Iran via the lens of global power. Accordingly, US does not feel direct threat from Iran rather treats Iran as a threat to US interests and its allies in the region. By contrast, Israel views Iran from the perspective of regional power. According to this perspective, Iran is considered as the most serious and direct strategic threat. Facing with such enemy, Israel conceives greater risks and tends to attach more weight to these risks than to potential opportunities (Herzog, 2015:1-2). Israel regards the Lausanne framework as essentially legitimizing Iran's status as a nuclear-threshold state. In this regard, while Benjamin Netanyahu calls JCPOA and nuclear deal as "historic mistake" (Zanotti, 2015), Obama considers the deal with Iran as a "historic opportunity" that could be his legacy in foreign policy of his administration.

Accordingly, Barack Obama's speech at American University in Washington DC on 6 August 2015 marks a historic turning point in the US relations with Israel. He declared that Israel is alone and isolated in its official opposition to US-Iran rapprochement (Aronson,2015: 1). The dispute over Iran has opened a chasm - detaching the strategic assessments adopted in the US from those in Israel. With ratification of the agreement and the resolution of 2231 UNSC now seemingly inevitable, some analysts believe that it could hurt AIPAC's standing on Capitol Hill. So this summer, when AIPAC met with hundreds of lawmakers and spent millions of dollars on TV, in an attempt to block the agreement, some thought the group might thwart the president. But during the recent scramble to support Iran deal, J Street as a rival pro-Israel lobby that supports the nuclear deal has become an influential player and liberal alternative, despite a budget that is a fraction of AIPAC's: "The illusion that there's some form of wall-to-wall unity and unanimity on these issues in the Jewish political community has probably been put to rest by this fight," says J Street President Jeremy Ben-Ami (Broder,2015:1-2). The battle

between US president and AIPAC in which the latter defeated is not unprecedented. In 1978, the lobby failed to stop the Congress and sale out the advanced warplanes to Egypt and Saudi Arabia in Jimmy Carter's administration. In 1981, AIPAC lost its bid to block Ronald Reagan selling surveillance aircraft to the Saudis. Moreover, the group fell short in its effort in 1991 to win loan guarantees for Israel because of George H.W. Bush's concerns that the money would be used in the West Bank settlements.

So, the most important concern of US in the Middle East is to secure its national interests. In doing so, Washington will even remove its traditional allies. According to this model, Washington has unilaterally intervened in Iraq. In 2003 and during the US military invasion in Iraq, France opposition to the decision of America caused to sanction against Paris. Consequently, irrespective of the opposition of US allies, Saddam's regime was toppled. Thus, the US foreign policy strategy is not based on 'stable ally or enemy' but built on 'stable national interests'.

Conclusion

Lobby groups are effective in directing foreign policy's preferences. However this influence is determinant factor in the most political decisions. In spite of different perspectives on the extend of influence of pressure groups and lobbies, the policies of the US administrations especially after the WWII demonstrate how the White House, National Security Council, the Pentagon and State Secretary are acting according national interests' priorities (Estiri, 2001: 63). Therefore, in foreign policy making theories, if the significance of the decision making decreases, the influence of the pressure groups on the result of decision will increases. On the other hand, if the importance of decision making in foreign policy increases, the influence of the pressure groups will decrease (Barber & Smith, 1994: 188).

Therefore, as the Congress and the White House play important role in foreign policy decisions, it can be argued that Jewish lobbies



would not be able to persuade the members of these institutions instrumentally and financially for approving a special rule. Otherwise, the foundations and infrastructures of US democracy will be challenged and US public opinion is sensitive on this matter. It has been argued that the Congress reacted against the illegal attempts of a number of American presidents drastically.

On the other hand, Jewish lobbies and their financial support is not exclusive to the Jews in the US, because 1- there are different political groups in the United States who are competing with each other. 2- there are many investors who are not Jewish. 3- the nature of liberal democratic and pluralistic system of US will provide the contexts of freedom even for opposition groups (Alshanghiti, 2003: 203). Moreover, based on the US Commission of National Security, "United States is not a dependent country but is absolutely and relatively more powerful and richer than other countries. However, it is improbable that a new global rival would be emerged as the competitor of America during next 25 years. Thus, minimalist judgement about the first global power and describe it as a protégé subjecting to small group of Jewish is not adaptable to the literatures of international relations. Moreover, accusing a country with theorists and politicians who are oblivious to everything except national interests to be subjected to a small group is incompatible with the rationality of the US society. Although it is possible that the engagements of Jewish lobby could be enhanced on special matters or in particular situations but US national interests is the unbreakable and pivotal principle for US policy-makers.

Therefore, analyzing the hypothesis of those who advocate the importance of Israel in the US reveals that though this hypothesis is important, it ignores other factors which consequently will challenge the independence of US decision-makers, its rationality and democratic system. On the whole, the appearance of international events are not uni-causal rather are caused by several factors. Basically, historical backgrounds, common values and cultures, the

influences of Jewish lobbies and common strategic interests are engaging in the exclusive relations of Washington- Tel Aviv.

Finally, all of the mentioned hypotheses are important. The main aim of this paper is not to overlook or refute them but also believes that none of them is capable of explaining the alliance of America-Israel individually. The first hypothesis plays important role in creating value coalition between Washington- Tel Aviv. The second hypothesis is influential in political decision makings but its importance is higher in domestic policies. The third hypothesis emphasizes upon the “common strategic interests” complementing the first and second hypothesis. Furthermore, the third hypothesis is more compatible with the logic of international relations and theories of realism and neo-realism.

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Note

1. It is necessary to explain that many Jews who believe in religious rules of Jewish and Tora, do not consider Zionism as Jewish and severely criticize the radical lobbies for their contradiction with Tora principles (Milesian 2010).

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منافع مشترک استراتژیک یا نفوذ لابی اسرائیل

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نقش لابی‌های یهودی در روند تصمیم‌گیری در آمریکا یکی از بحث‌برانگیزترین موضوعات روابط بین‌الملل است که توجه بسیاری از سیاست‌مداران، محققان و دانشجویان را به خود جلب کرده است. مقاله پیش‌رو به بررسی عملکرد لابی‌های یهودی در ساختار تصمیم‌گیری آمریکا و عوامل تاثیرگذار بر آن می‌پردازد. براساس آمارهای بدست آمده در این پژوهش و با توجه به حقایق تجربی و کاهش تاثیر لابی‌های یهودی در ساختار اجرایی آمریکا و روابط ویژه میان واشنگتن و تل‌آویو غیر محتمل به نظر می‌رسد. مصالح استراتژیک مشترک به درک بهتر این رابطه کمک خواهد کرد. روابطی که مصالح ملی آمریکا را به عنوان عامل محوری مطرح می‌کند. در نتیجه مقصود اصلی لابی‌های یهودی از طریق بررسی سیاست داخلی آمریکا قابل ارزیابی است.

واژه‌های کلیدی: لابی یهودی، مصالح ملی، عقلانیت، مصالح استراتژیک مشترک

