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Man in the Middle: Abe Feinberg & US-Israel Relations, 1945-1968

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## Abstract

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This thesis is the first work I know of dedicated to the life of Abraham (Abe) Feinberg. Born and raised in the Bronx, Feinberg amassed a tremendous fortune in the hosiery business. Starting in 1945, Feinberg would play a significant, behind the scenes role in the US-Israel relationship through 1968. Feinberg was a confidant and key financier to three American presidents (Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson) and a useful figure for Israeli prime ministers, ambassadors, and defense officials. The Israelis trusted him to such an extent that he was asked to contribute to the development Israel's most consequential secret—its nuclear weapons program. In his contacts with US presidents on behalf of Israel and the US Jewish community, Feinberg embodied the growing confidence of the American Jewish community that it could act as a political and economic force. As this thesis will show, Feinberg played a role in many of the key events that defined the US-Israel relationship from 1945-1968; from the establishment of the state, to US foreign aid, arms sales to Israel and its Arab neighbors, the June 1967 War, and most importantly—Israel's secret nuclear program. Feinberg's intermediation contributed to the shift in US policy from both stated and practiced neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflict to one that was pro-Israel in practice. The success of his intermediation relied on a number of factors: direct access to the political leaders of the United States and Israel; the personal trust of high-level Israeli and American officials; his money; and genuine friendships he cultivated, especially with President Johnson. Once his credibility and reliability were established, Feinberg was used by both the US and Israel to shape and communicate their views and intentions to one another. In so doing, Feinberg illustrates how American Foreign policy can be shaped by those who have the ear of the president, whether they are government officials or not.

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## Chap. 1: Introduction

In September 1948, President Harry S. Truman's presidential campaign was in dire straits. He was out of money and trailing in the polls. To save his political fortunes, he hoped to run a cross-country whistle-stop tour, speaking directly to the American people. When a group of powerful Democratic donors were asked to donate, the room was silent. "It's over," they thought. "Why give to a lost cause?" The exception: Truman's friend Abe Feinberg, an American Jewish businessman who pledged to donate \$100,000 (\$1.1 million in 2021) on behalf of the Jewish community within two weeks as a gesture of gratitude for Truman's recognition of the State of Israel in May, 1948.<sup>1</sup> "If not for my friend Abe," Truman said, "I couldn't have made the trip and would not have been elected."<sup>2</sup>

By any measure, Abraham (Abe) Feinberg (1908-1998) lived a remarkable life. A private citizen who never served in government, he nevertheless played an important role in shaping the emerging friendship between the United States and Israel between 1945-1968. Feinberg was a confidant and key financier to three American presidents (Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson) and a useful figure for Israeli prime ministers, ambassadors, and defense officials. The Israelis trusted him to such an extent that he knew about and contributed to the development Israel's most consequential secret—its nuclear weapons program. Meanwhile, Feinberg was close enough to President Lyndon Johnson that when Feinberg called, the most powerful man west of the Berlin Wall would pick up.<sup>3</sup>

Feinberg represented the pinnacle of the Jewish political and business elite in post-World-War-II America. He grew up lower middle class in the Bronx, in a family that worked in the garment industry. He went to college and law school at night while working to help his family pay the bills. Through a combination of skill and luck, he amassed significant wealth

during World War II, wealth that would grow steadily in the post-war period. Then, at the darkest hour in Jewish history, when six million Jews were murdered in gas chambers and when the survivors of the Holocaust had nowhere to go, Feinberg saw it as a moral imperative to act. He used his newly acquired wealth and position to help the European survivors and bring them to Palestine despite British opposition. At the same time, he successfully cultivated relationships at the highest level of American politics, including with the White House. He used his money and influence to help establish a Jewish state in Palestine, smuggling weapons to the Haganah and urging American politicians to recognize the new Jewish state as soon as it declared its independence in 1948.

Feinberg moved beyond internal American Zionist debates and aligned himself with Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion. He saw the creation of Israel as vital achievement for the Jewish people but also, indirectly, as a benefit to the United States. Like most American Jews, he had no intention of moving to Israel, but was deeply committed to seeing it prosper economically, militarily, scientifically, and culturally. In the ensuing decades, he organized on behalf of Israel Bonds, the Weizmann Institute, and Democratic politicians.

Feinberg's influence in Washington grew and by the 1960s he occupied an important position, serving as an unofficial intermediary in US-Israel relations. In his contacts with US presidents on behalf of Israel and the US Jewish community, Feinberg embodied the growing confidence of the American Jewish community that it could act as a political and economic force. As this thesis will show, Feinberg played a role in many of the key events that defined the US-Israel relationship from 1945-1968; the establishment of the state, US foreign aid, arms sales to Israel and its Arab neighbors, the June 1967 War, and most importantly—Israel's secret nuclear program. Feinberg's intermediation contributed to the shift in US policy from both stated

and practiced neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflict to one that was pro-Israel in practice. The success of his intermediation relied on a number of factors: direct access to the political leaders of the United States and Israel; the personal trust of high-level Israeli and American officials; his money; and genuine friendships he cultivated, especially with President Johnson. Once his credibility and reliability were established, Feinberg's position was solidified and he was used by both the US and Israel to shape and communicate their views and intentions to one another. In so doing, Feinberg illustrates how American foreign policy can be shaped by those who have the ear of the president, whether they are government officials or not.

Despite Feinberg's contacts at the highest levels of the US-Israel relationship, he was secretive and shunned publicity. He conducted only two extensive interviews detailing his involvement in US-Israel relations, only one of which has been made public. As a life-long Democrat, he had no influence during Republican administrations. Many of the oral histories conducted for the Truman, Kennedy and Johnson Libraries on US-Israel relations hint at his importance, but only in passing. This has left a significant hole in the scholarship regarding a key figure in US-Israel relations from 1945-1968. He has appeared as a background character in Natan Aridan's *Advocating for Israel: Diplomats and Lobbyists from Truman to Nixon* (2017) and Walter Hixson's *Israel's Armor: The Israel Lobby and the First Generation of the Palestine Conflict* (2019). He is also discussed briefly in histories of Israel's nuclear weapons program such as Seymour Hersh's *The Samson Option: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy* (1991), Avner Cohen's authoritative history of Israel's nuclear weapons program *Israel and the Bomb* (1998), and Michael Karpin's journalistic inquiry into Israel's nuclear program, *The Bomb in the Basement* (2007).

This thesis represents the first-ever attempt at a political biography of Feinberg. His minor presence in the historical record to date is completely in character. Despite his many accomplishments, connections, money, and power, he preferred to give the spotlight to others, believing his goals could be best achieved quietly. Former President of Brandeis University, Dr. Jehuda Reinharz, recalls asking Feinberg to fund a new center for ethics in the mid 1990s. When Feinberg agreed, Reinharz proposed calling it the Feinberg Center for Ethics as an inducement to get others to give to the university. Feinberg disagreed, to the point where he told Reinharz that he would provide no funding to the center except anonymously. Feinberg told Reinharz that he doubted whether he had lived a life of sufficient moral rectitude to have his name associated with a center focused on ethics.<sup>4</sup>

Feinberg kept no diary and did not leave his letters for posterity. Many of the family members I interviewed for this thesis regret not asking him more questions about his life. This was, in part, due to his secretive nature, but may have also been due to strained relationships with those closest to him. Feinberg's son, Richard, died two years before he did and did not share his father's interest in politics, business or Israel. Feinberg's daughter, Judy, had a strained relationship with her father, and was kept in the dark about what he regarded as his "business affairs," which included politics and advocacy for Israel. His nephews, Daniel and David, both recall him as an "important man," a "godfather-"like figure who provided for the family's welfare. With that came a distance that did not lend itself to in-depth inquiry about his past. His admiring grandson Steven didn't even realize his grandfather's importance until it was too late.

The one person with whom he was able to build a relationship was his son-in-law, Norbert Weissberg, with whom he maintained a very close friendship later in life. Weissberg explained that Feinberg was "very proactive in keeping his name out of the papers."<sup>5</sup> He did not

want to step on the toes of the powerful people he was influencing. He consciously chose not to be photographed with American presidents doing anything more than shaking their hands.

As Weissberg suggests, Feinberg was calculating and strategic about what he let get published about him and his work. He was hyper-aware of the value of history. He was a donor to the Truman, Kennedy and Johnson Presidential Libraries, whose mission is to preserve accurate records of what transpired during the administrations so that future generations can know what happened. And to the best of his ability, Feinberg, with rare exceptions, tried to shrink his role. “I think the reason he did not want to write his autobiography is because people like me and you would come and look, and he probably thought that some of the stuff would come and damage Israel,” Reinharz told me.

Still, despite his best intentions, it is possible to reconstruct Feinberg’s most important actions, and that is the job I attempt in this thesis. Revealing records can be found in the Brandeis University archives, in the memos written by American government officials now located in the presidential libraries and in records of the *Foreign Relations of the United States*, declassified FBI files, the stories he told his family, and in scattered histories of American Jewish communal activism on behalf of US support for Israel. The rest must be induced from circumstantial evidence, and the reader will notice several places in the thesis where I have been obliged to speculate or to use stories Feinberg told that cannot be cross-checked.

## Chapter 2: The Man in Motion

### **Feinberg's Origins**

Feinberg was born on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1908. The oldest of three children born to Jac and Eva Feinberg, his family lived in what was likely a lower-middle class section of the Bronx. The Bronx was thoroughly Jewish, part of the most Jewish city in the world. By the time Feinberg was 12 years old, New York City had 1.6 million Jewish residents. Jews were a third of the city's total population and its largest single ethnic group.<sup>6</sup>

Feinberg was a second generation American of Lithuanian Jewish origin. While being a Jew born in New York at the tail end of the great Jewish migration from the Pale of Settlement between 1880-1920, Feinberg was born into a self-consciously American household. He was not raised on Yiddish, but English. His progeny recall neither him nor his parents being religious. While surrounded by Jews, Feinberg came of age in a mostly secular family milieu.<sup>7</sup>

Young Feinberg was smart and feverishly committed to his education, a cause he would champion throughout his life. At 12, he was accepted into Townsend Harris High School, a magnet school that required a "straight A" average from primary school to attend. Its course work was rigorous: four years-worth of high school compressed into three. "Intense mathematics, intense English, and intense languages, including obligatory courses in Latin or Greek," Feinberg recalled.<sup>8</sup> Working hard during the school year on his studies, during his summers Feinberg worked a full-time day job to help support his family and his education. At 14, in his last year of high school, he took night classes at City College, which shared a campus with his High School, in order to finish college more quickly.<sup>9</sup>

For the next couple of years, Feinberg would spend his days working and his nights in classes, but he found time to play on the City College night school basketball team.<sup>10</sup> After

completing night school, Feinberg aspired to go to law school. However, his textile employer refused to accommodate his law school hours. Nevertheless, Feinberg needed to continue working to help provide for his family. His father Jac was also in the textile business and offered to accommodate Feinberg's law school class schedule, so Abe Feinberg took a 50% pay cut to work for his father and attended Fordham Law School at night.

Feinberg made this sacrifice in income despite having no intention of practicing law. He felt it would be good preparation for him as a businessman and as a thinker because "a lawyer has to think on both sides of a question." By 1933, after working for his father for about four years and with a law degree in hand, Feinberg became an equal part owner of his father's business, Feinberg and Sons. Although this was the height of the Great Depression they managed to get by as agents for hosiery mills, and eventually were able to open up their own factory.<sup>11</sup>

### **Feinberg's Connection to Judaism**

The mid-1930s would also prove to be a foundational year for Feinberg's reemerging Jewish identity. Growing up, Feinberg went to Hebrew school at his father's encouragement and like most Jewish boys his age, he had a Bar Mitzvah. While his family celebrated the major Jewish holidays, his parents placed little emphasis on Jewish ritual. His primary Jewish influence was his grandfather, David Wolin. Wolin was a Russian immigrant who had come to America in 1865 and settled in the South. Working as a peddler based in Opelousis, Louisiana, Wolin would travel from town to town selling his wares out of the back of a horse-drawn wagon before eventually moving to New York, where he worked for the people from whom he had previously bought his wares.<sup>12</sup> Wolin rejected ritual but like many Reform Jews of his day, he was deeply connected to the Jewish people. He welcomed new immigrants from his old village in Russia to his home for days on end and found them jobs. Wolin's actions were matched by his intimate experiences with the young Feinberg. They walked regularly through the Bronx

Park Zoo after hours, where they engaged in philosophical discussions about the nature of obligations and about the duties to oneself and to one's people.<sup>13</sup>

Yet, for all that his grandfather taught him, Feinberg showed little interest in Jewish affairs of the 1920s. In his sparse writings, he never made mention of the era's grating antisemitism. The 1920s were marked in part by the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan (antagonistic to Jews and Catholics as well as to Black Americans), by Henry Ford spreading the antisemitic fabrication *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in his newspaper, *The Dearborn Independent*, and by the harsh exclusionary immigration laws of 1921 and 1924.<sup>14</sup> Feinberg was likely simply too young and focused his energies on his education, his work, and basketball.

But with grandfather Wolin's passing in 1933 and Hitler's rise to power, the twenty-five-year-old Feinberg was drawn to action. "I realized very quickly that Hitler was a great threat, not only to the world, but particularly to my people because of his announced policies," Feinberg recalled.<sup>15</sup> Feinberg was likely referring to the Nuremberg Laws (Sept. 1935) that stripped Germany's Jews of their citizenship and made them second class citizens. These laws formally separated Jews from Germans and laid the foundation for more draconian antisemitic laws that followed.<sup>16</sup> Jews were excluded from all positions in government. The Nazis began purging Jews from the academy, the army, the legal profession, cinema, and greatly restricted their ability to earn an income as doctors and receive medical care at German hospitals.<sup>17</sup>

These measures made Feinberg "angry."<sup>18</sup> But all he felt he could do in the mid-30s was either raise money or donate money to try and help Jews get out of Germany. So he gave enthusiastically and beyond his then quite modest means to the United Palestine Appeal's hosiery division. The United Palestine Appeal was an organization dedicated to providing for the welfare of Jews in Palestine.<sup>19</sup> To Feinberg, the United Palestine Appeal was the only



organization that was doing the hard work to help the Jews get out of Germany. His disproportionate contributions brought him to the attention of the National Committee of the United Palestine Appeal. It saw a young, energetic, articulate man, who with his own giving record could convince others to give. The National Committee trained him to be a fundraiser, a skill he would rely upon time and again throughout his career. Feinberg's critical insight was, "If someone who could afford to give only \$100 gave \$1000, then someone who could afford to give \$10,000 might even give \$100,000."<sup>20</sup> That it was the Depression and money was tight only honed Feinberg's skills in fundraising.

It is important to recognize the context in which Feinberg was rising in the United Palestine Appeal. The idea of the Jewish return to Zion was not new. It was passed down in Jewish liturgy since the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 CE. However, it was given new life as a political program beginning in the 1880s in Europe. Across the continent, many Jews had been emancipated, but they still faced antisemitism increasingly based on their race rather than their religion, meaning there was nothing they could do to stop hatred. In response, political Zionism, first championed by Theodore Herzl, an Austrian-Jewish journalist, was born. It asserted that it would not be possible for Jews to ever be integrated into European society, and that the only solution to the "Jewish Problem" was for Jews to have their own state in their ancestral homeland, Zion, or what was then called Palestine. Importantly, Zionism was only one solution to the "Jewish Problem." Some saw socialism or communism as the solution.

Others attempted to flee to America. In fact, the vast majority of Jews who left Europe immigrated to the United States, not Palestine. In America, many Jews saw a country devoid of Europe's violent antisemitism. While America did have its own antisemitism as referenced

above, it was much more muted than in Europe. These new immigrants saw America as the answer to the “Jewish Question,” not Zionism. Thus, many immigrants sought to distance themselves from an ideology that could be interpreted as taking away from their Americanness.

Zionism in America was at its lowest point, drawing support from only 1% of American Jews in the mid 1930s.<sup>21</sup> The dominant American Zionist organization of the time, the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) once led by Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, had no political program that received wide support in the Jewish community. Yet, with the rise of the Nazis and an implicit understanding that restrictive US immigration laws could not be changed, organizations like the United Palestine Appeal (UPA) grew by performing what was then considered the “non-Zionist” goal of helping persecuted Jews of Europe. Jews who gave to an organization like the UPA understood that their aid might go to resettling Jews in Palestine. But the impetus, as shown with Feinberg in the 1930s, was to help their persecuted kinsmen. It is for this reason that Feinberg explained, “Either one raised money or one gave money; there was no other function to fill unless one wanted to be a Zionist politico—which didn’t interest me at all.”<sup>22</sup>

Conditions only got worse for German and later European Jewry. German Jews had their property registered in an effort to be segregated out of the economy. Most German Jews lost their jobs and their businesses through “Aryanization.” Much of what was left was destroyed in the *Kristallnacht* pogrom (November 9, 1938) and increasing state-sponsored violence against Jews. Those Nazi policies were only extended further into Europe with the *Anschluss* (the German annexation of Austria on March 12, 1938), and later with the Nazi occupation of Europe in World War II.<sup>23</sup>

## Feinberg Makes his Money

While conditions deteriorated in Europe, Feinberg continued to grow his hosiery business. When World War II began, Feinberg was a solidly middle-class businessman; by the end of the war he was truly wealthy. The circumstances that explain this key development require a certain degree of speculation. His grandson Steven Feinberg said his wealth came from silk<sup>24</sup> while Feinberg's son-in-law was adamant that the growth came from nylon.<sup>25</sup> What follows are two potential hypotheses, one based on silk and one based on nylon.

Up until 1940, silk was the dominant material of which women's stockings and underwear were made. Almost all of the raw silk supply in the US came from China and Japan. Japan's invasion of China in 1937 set off a crisis in the hosiery market. Many American women were horrified by the atrocities the Japanese were committing in China and did not want to feel complicit in those acts by buying Japanese silk, 45,000,000 lbs. of which came from Japan.<sup>26</sup> In response, the *Life Without Silk* boycott movement was born, encouraging women to no longer buy silk hose.<sup>27</sup> This was a grassroots boycott, an expression of consumer activism, not government policy.

However, by 1940 the US government was engaged in aggressive economic warfare against Imperial Japan. It imposed an embargo on all Japanese imports and prohibited any strategic exports from going to Japan. With the government taking significant action against Japan, there was less pressure to not buy Japanese silk because Japan was now being punished materially in the manner in which they were making war.<sup>28</sup> Steven Feinberg believes that his grandfather Abe was given a tip that there would be a full embargo on Japanese silk. He claims that Feinberg made one final enormous bulk purchase and effectively cornered the US silk market, becoming thereafter the only person to sell silk hosiery.<sup>29</sup> FBI files confirm that Jac

Feinberg and Sons (Feinberg's company) was engaged in the manufacture and sale of ladies' hosiery but makes no mention that the company had been granted a government contract to produce war supplies like parachutes or uniforms out of silk.<sup>30</sup>

An alternative theory explaining Feinberg's financial success during this period focuses on nylon. By 1938, word was coming out that Du Pont had created a super-fabric, nylon. It wasn't as heavy as silk and wouldn't tear as easily, while not being as shiny as rayon. It was introduced and popularized at the 1939-1940 World's Fair in New York.<sup>31</sup> When it was released nationally on May 15, 1940, it was an immediate hit. Within one year of being on the market, it was price competitive with silk<sup>32</sup> and 64 million pairs of nylon stockings were sold. While this was impressive for the first year, it paled in comparison to the 700 million pairs of Japanese silk stockings sold in 1938.<sup>33</sup> It is possible that Feinberg became a manufacturer and distributor of nylon. When the federal government took over nylon production for war use, Feinberg's nylon manufacturing plants would have boomed from intense demand from the war. Indeed, FBI records show that Feinberg was employed as a "production specialist" for the Grove Nylon Company in Pennsylvania, implying that he had knowledge of how to work with nylon, perhaps for the war effort.<sup>34</sup> This may, however, have been a temporary arrangement to obtain a military deferment. In fact, the aforementioned FBI records also state that an employee of Grove Nylon Company disputed that Feinberg ever worked there and suggested that this hire was for the purpose of military deferment in order to repay Feinberg for a generous loan.<sup>35</sup>

### **Feinberg Approaches the President**

Whatever the details of his business dealings, Feinberg became a wealthy man during World War II. In 1943, after his father passed away, he moved out of the Bronx and into a new home in Mt. Vernon, New York, an inner suburb of New York City in Westchester County.

Feinberg became the provider for the family. To keep the family close by, he bought his sister Belle and her husband Philip a house right next door. Feinberg, however, was not one to give his family a “free lunch.” He believed that everything in life needed to be earned. He loaned Philip the money on the condition that Philip pay him back by working for him.<sup>36</sup>

While in Mt. Vernon, Feinberg was inspired by his new rabbi, Rabbi Max Maccoby of the Free Synagogue of Westchester, to do more than just give money to Jewish philanthropies that were helping the Jews of Europe during the Holocaust. Jews across Europe had already been stripped of their possessions and segregated into overcrowded ghettos where they were dying of disease, starvation, and shootings.<sup>37</sup> But by 1943, the Nazis were already a year into the “Final Solution;” deporting all the surviving Jews to concentration and death camps. How much Americans in general and Jews in particular knew about the magnitude of the Final Solution has been debated intensely. Feinberg certainly concluded that the time had come to press for a political solution to save the Jews of Europe.

To many people, this would have meant getting involved in local or Zionist politics and working their way up. Feinberg, however, didn’t have the patience to do the “demeaning work” of “ringing... doorbells,... [and] addressing envelopes [because it] was not attractive to people of ambition and intellectual capacity.”<sup>38</sup> He saw himself as better than that.

Instead, Feinberg audaciously tried to go straight to the top, to the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Luckily for Feinberg, he had a client in St. Louis who was friends with Robert Hannegan, then chair of the Democratic National Committee and the man who was responsible for tapping Harry Truman to be Roosevelt’s running mate in 1944.<sup>39</sup> Hannegan and Feinberg quickly established a strong friendship. “We really loved each other,” Feinberg recalls, adding that Hannegan “would do anything I wanted.”<sup>40</sup>

After establishing a strong relationship with the “outgoing Irishman,”<sup>41</sup> Feinberg seized this opportunity to ask Hannegan for a chance to talk with the President in early 1945. He felt that the current tactic employed by the Zionist establishment of mounting political pressure on the President and Secretary of State was counterproductive. Reflective of his legal training, he thought one should approach leaders with reason, attempting to show an understanding of the whole issue. After all, “any President worth his salt will not respond to political blackmail.”<sup>42</sup> Rather than setting up a meeting with the President, Hannegan suggested Feinberg meet with the Vice President, Harry Truman.

Feinberg accepted the arrangement but was frustrated by it. Truman was a new Vice President but was widely seen as being put on the ticket for strictly electoral purposes. The Missouri Senator had made a name for himself by heading the Senate Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program, commonly called the “Truman Committee.” Its goal was to investigate corruption, waste, and war profiteering in war industries. However, the Vice Presidency, up until that point, had been viewed as purely ceremonial. Truman himself referred to it as “a cow’s fifth tit.”<sup>43</sup> FDR also famously kept his Vice Presidents out of the loop on all the aspects of US conduct during the War, from the development of the atomic bomb to his meetings with Joseph Stalin and Winston Churchill. During his 82 days as Vice President, Truman met with Roosevelt only eight times. Nevertheless, he was the Vice President, so Feinberg figured it was “one step further up the rung.”<sup>44</sup>

When Truman was scheduled to give a speech in New York at a fundraiser for the National Jewish Hospital in Denver, in winter 1944-45, Hannegan invited Feinberg to a small cocktail party for Truman at the Savoy Plaza Hotel. With only 15-20 men present, Feinberg had his chance to interact with the Vice President in a more meaningful and intimate manner. Before

Truman walked in, Feinberg noticed that four Secret Service agents were stationed at the corners of the room. That was Feinberg's eureka moment. "In those days the Vice President had no Secret Service detail. It immediately struck me that something was going on and that perhaps Hannegan was smarter than I thought when he said to meet the Vice President," Feinberg recalled. "If they were protecting the Vice President this strongly and under these unusual circumstances, then there must be something wrong with the President."<sup>45</sup> Sure enough, Roosevelt was dead only a couple months later.

Feinberg cleverly slow-played his hand. He chose not to discuss any political issues. Certainly, given the fact that Truman was speaking at a fundraiser for a Jewish hospital, the Holocaust came up. But Feinberg was conscious to discuss "my people, not my objective."<sup>46</sup> He hoped to simply build a friendly relationship with the man whom he was now sure would be the future President. Over the coming months, they stayed in what Feinberg called "modest social contact, ... with more warmth and more friendliness developing."<sup>47</sup>

Shortly after Truman became President, Feinberg approached him with his ask. The War in Europe was over and so was the Nazi extermination of European Jewry. Yet many of Europe's Jews had nowhere to go. All of their possessions had been stolen, their houses were occupied with new residents, and a baseline level of trust was broken with their former neighbors. Meanwhile, the United States was maintaining its low immigration quotas. It, like most Western European countries, was not eager to take in hundreds of thousands of refugees. Many Jews were living in what were called Displaced Persons (DP) camps, sometimes sharing their living quarters with their Nazi oppressors. Many of these camps were the same concentration camps that Nazis put them into.<sup>48</sup> Feinberg and much of the Zionist leadership believed that their best hope lay in migration to Palestine.

Unfortunately, the British, who then controlled Palestine, would have needed to change their immigration laws. After a series of Arab revolts between 1936-1939 against seemingly unrestricted Jewish immigration to Palestine, the British had implemented strict quotas against Jewish immigration to Palestine. The British believed that these restrictions would prevent continued violence in the Mandate. If there was less Jewish immigration, they reasoned, then the Arabs would feel more secure in their land rights and there would be less internal strife. These immigration restrictions persisted throughout World War II and through the time that Feinberg was set to meet with Truman.

Feinberg was granted only fifteen minutes with the President, but Truman allowed him to stay for an hour. Feinberg began his appeal by subtly attacking the Zionist establishment. Under the leadership of Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, an Ohio Republican and friend of Senator Robert Taft (R-Oh) the Zionist Organization of America attempted to pressure the administration into taking a more pro-Zionist approach. It orchestrated mass movements targeted at Members of Congress in the form of letters and telegrams to try and gain their support. It would then try to combine Congressional support with direct appeals to the White House, to take actions in favor of a Jewish State in Palestine, explicitly saying that doing so would lead to more Jewish votes.<sup>49</sup> Feinberg directly contradicted the premise of this strategy, stating, "I don't believe there is such a thing as the Jewish vote." Truman was surprised. "That's a very interesting observation ... particularly because I have been told just the opposite," he said. Feinberg elaborated saying, "I think the Jewish vote is for justice and for the man who does the right thing. But I don't think any president can be sure that just because he does something for the Jews he is going to get their complete support."<sup>50</sup>



In this meeting, Feinberg said a lot. He attempted to be brutally honest with the President. He described the Jewish community as it was, not as it should have been, attempting to explain how there could be Jewish Democrats and Jewish Republicans. Perhaps it was an attempt to encourage the President not to defer to what was considered by Zionists to be a pro-Arab State Department, just because the leading Zionist (Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver) was a Republican. And, he was most likely trying to make a moral argument on behalf of resettling 100,000 Holocaust survivors. His argument was essentially, “Don’t do this to win an election Mr. President, do it because it is the right thing to do.”

This moral argument, coming from a friend, may have had an effect on Truman. Indeed, throughout 1945 and 1946, Truman regularly pushed the British to take in 100,000 Jews to Palestine through public statements affirming his support for that action.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps these statements were made as a result of pressure from the broader Jewish community, as historian Walter Hixson suggests.<sup>52</sup> Perhaps it was because of Feinberg’s persuasive case. Or perhaps Truman was just relying on the advice of Earl G. Harrison, the American official tasked with examining the situation of displaced persons across Europe in summer, 1945, who recommended resettling 100,000 Jewish refugees in Palestine.<sup>53</sup> Maybe it was because circumstances with the British had changed. World War II was over and while retaining the wartime alliance with Britain was important, there was no longer the “security-military’ threat” that came from some modest disagreement over Britain’s colonial policies and how to remake Europe.<sup>54</sup> There was space for the US to push Britain to admit more Jewish refugees into Palestine.

### **Feinberg and the Jews of Palestine**

As Truman encouraged Britain to allow more Holocaust survivors into Palestine, Feinberg continued to establish relationships with high-ranking American officials in the federal

government, New York state government, and New York City government. He also began his formal work with the Yishuv (or the Jewish community) in Palestine from abroad.<sup>55</sup> In 1945, Feinberg met with what he called “spokesmen” for the Haganah, the mainstream Jewish paramilitary organization in British Mandate Palestine.<sup>56</sup> Tensions in Palestine were boiling over. The British were only permitting 1,500 Jews per month to immigrate to Palestine.<sup>57</sup> Feinberg admired what he perceived to be the self-sacrifice of those in the Haganah and wanted to help them in any way he could.<sup>58</sup> Feinberg also met David Ben-Gurion, the de facto leader of the Yishuv, likely in New York. Ben-Gurion told Feinberg and the rest of the small group with whom he was meeting that Jews in Palestine needed two things: arms to protect themselves and a way for persecuted Jews—whether in Europe or in Arab countries—to come to Palestine.<sup>59</sup>

Over the next four years (1945-1949), Feinberg became intimately involved in arms smuggling to Israel. Many of the specifics were left intentionally vague and are difficult to verify. Feinberg himself serves as the only source detailing his specific involvement, thus providing only a partial and an admittedly self-serving account. Everything else must be gleaned from circumstantial evidence. This should not be unexpected, especially from a shadowy figure with high-powered contacts like Feinberg. As we shall see, he all but admitted to breaking the law, but was never caught. Those that knew what he was doing, especially in Israel, have likely actively suppressed what they knew while Feinberg was careful only to leave traces of what he wanted known. Thus, one must understand that while what follows is an attempt to relay the closest approximation to what Feinberg did, it is far from a complete picture.

Shortcomings aside, Feinberg was working with a larger group of American Jews in the New York area to smuggle weapons to the Zionists in Palestine, under the direction of Teddy Kollek, a low ranking Haganah official who would later become Jerusalem’s first mayor.

Feinberg would also work with scrap metal industrialists who had access to weapons lists that were deemed “scrap” and other new companies that were ostensibly repurposing war materials for civilian use but in reality were sending them to Palestine. He may have even been working with the Jewish mafia.<sup>60</sup>

Feinberg’s specific role in these operations varied. Declassified FBI files show him being actively involved with a shell company, Foundry Associates Inc. which was probably responsible for funding some of this operation.<sup>61</sup> Feinberg also stored guns in his basement, linked via an underground tunnel he built to his synagogue.<sup>62</sup> Feinberg likely obtained the guns from the surplus American arms left over after World War II. The US was unable to secure all of the guns it had distributed to its soldiers after the war, and some likely found their way to Feinberg.<sup>63</sup> Once the guns were in Feinberg’s possession, however, they would either be immediately loaded onto boats for Palestine or would be put in a warehouse in New York before being transported to Palestine. He fundraised and donated money for ships full of ammunition to be sent to Palestine, and machinery to make bullets and mortars at a secret underground bullet factory in Israel.<sup>64</sup> He also arranged for eight B-17 bomber planes to be flown illicitly to Palestine during Israel’s War of Independence between 1947-1949.<sup>65</sup>

He also arranged for the purchase and refurbishment of ships to sail from the United States to Europe. Once the ships arrived in Europe, Feinberg worked with the Haganah to have ports at which the ships could dock, and to have a way of shepherding Jews out of the DP camps and onto boats for Palestine. “Most of the American Army, and Eisenhower in particular, were most cooperative in that respect. They closed their eyes. They knew what was going on. The Russians were tough. The British were tough. But wherever the Americans were in charge, it was not too difficult to get the people out,” Feinberg recalled.<sup>66</sup>

Perhaps this was due to the sympathy the American army had for Holocaust survivors. Supreme Allied Commander Dwight Eisenhower himself had made it a point to document and preserve evidence of the Nazi atrocities, and personally visited the concentration camps to see for himself the horrors that had unfolded there. While the Allies had liberated the concentration camps, many survivors remained in what were now repurposed as displaced persons camps. They had nowhere to go.<sup>67</sup> When someone like Feinberg came along and said to the American soldiers, “we will take these people off of your hands and give them a better life,” it is conceivable that they would willingly go along with that. It lessened the administrative, financial and moral burdens of caring for the survivors.

In the summer of 1946, Feinberg made his first trip to Palestine. He had refashioned a Canadian naval vessel to be able take Holocaust survivors from Europe to Palestine by sea. The ship itself was only meant to house thirty sailors. After Feinberg’s men were done with it, to Feinberg’s shock, the captain said it could sleep 400 people. The spaces for each person were only 18 inches wide, with no room even to turn over. Nevertheless, the captain reassured Feinberg saying, “It will only be a four- or five-day trip, and we’ll sleep 200 below [deck] and 200 on deck. They’ll alternate each night, so that we’ll accommodate 400.” Despite the captain’s assurances, Feinberg wanted to see for himself that 400 people actually made it to Palestine.<sup>68</sup>

When he got to Palestine by plane, the ship he sponsored was captured by the British. Feinberg said the British captured the ship on the grounds that there was the black plague aboard.<sup>69</sup> While this may have been the technical justification for its capture, the British were also enforcing their restrictions on Jewish immigration to Palestine. Feinberg demanded to be let on the ship and sent a telegram to President Truman decrying the British policy.<sup>70</sup> Once aboard the ship, Feinberg was astonished by what he saw. Eighteen-hundred people were piled on.

There was only one toilet on board. People waited in line all day for one meal, and the ship was covered in human waste. “Enough pressure [was] raised for the ship to be unloaded” Feinberg recalled, and the refugees were put into a detention camp in the coastal town of Atlit.<sup>71</sup>

Feinberg’s trip only got more eventful. He became close with many in the Zionist leadership. They doubtlessly knew of his connections to the President and saw with their own eyes his commitment to the cause. On the day Feinberg was supposed to leave, June 29, 1946, the British conducted mass arrests of the Zionist leadership and of the various Jewish paramilitary organizations, including the Haganah, the Palmach, the Lechi (Stern Gang) and the Irgun, in what is known as the “Black Sabbath.”<sup>72</sup> There was a piece of intelligence about Syrian military strength that needed to get to Ben-Gurion, who was in Paris, from a man named Moshe Sassoon. However, it was “sewn into a small camel’s skin traveling case as part of my luggage,” Feinberg recalled. He was scheduled to fly through Paris before returning to New York. As part of the Black Sabbath raids, Feinberg and Sassoon were pulled off the plane.

Sassoon was strip-searched, suspected of being a spy. When they found nothing, they attempted to strip search Feinberg himself. “No, you don’t touch me,” the 6’3” Feinberg said. He was an American, an American whom the British knew had connections to the President from his intercepted telegram days earlier. Feinberg demanded that he be searched in the presence of the American Consul. The Consul was nowhere to be found, so Feinberg asked to have his bag sent back to the hotel while he waited on the tarmac. The British let his bag go but threw Feinberg in jail in Ramleh.

While at the hotel, Gideon Rafael, an intelligence officer for the Haganah and later a founder of Israel’s foreign ministry, cut open Feinberg’s suitcase to retrieve the documents and placed them on microfilm. The next day, Rafael returned to the jail to give Feinberg a

replacement suitcase identical to the one in the hotel. The British searched it and found nothing, and for the inconvenience, booked him a flight home. Then Rafael approached Feinberg again. “The information still has to go, and you’re the only one who can bring it,” he said. “Where is it now?” Feinberg asked? Rafael pulled out a cigarette lighter. It was on microfilm hidden inside.<sup>73</sup>

On the British-booked itinerary, Feinberg stopped in Cairo on his way back to New York. In Cairo, Feinberg was met by an Israeli operative whom he gave the lighter to give to Ben-Gurion.<sup>74</sup> Upon his return to the United States, Feinberg met with Truman to brief him on all he had seen in Palestine, what he called a “police state,” and the situation with immigrants to Palestine.<sup>75</sup> In this manner, Feinberg, for the first time, served a pseudo-diplomatic role for the Yishuv. He had access to high ranking Zionist figures in Palestine, was shown the Yishuv’s perspective on how the British treated them, and reported back a personal, on the ground experience to the President. This was a fundamentally different way of explaining a complicated conflict to a President. Truman likely read reports and saw high level diplomatic analyses of the situation from his senior advisors. American Jews made a moral case to Truman, but it could not have been personal as many had not been to Palestine and seen the situation. Feinberg, having been to Palestine, could speak confidently about what he saw and make an impassioned, emotional appeal to the president.

Nonetheless, Feinberg was careful in his public statements not to implicate himself in what he had done during this period. Writing in the Weizmann Institute’s Newsletter in 1974, he said, “although I never bought a gun myself or negotiated the purchase of a ship, many transactions were carried out from my house in Mount Vernon.”<sup>76</sup> This was likely a hedge to state for the record that he had not violated any laws, most notably the Neutrality Act, which prevented US citizens from providing arms to combatants in a war in which the US was neutral.

Nevertheless, such a claim is highly dubious given his economic means and the centrality of his home as a smuggling and decision-making hotspot. Late in life, Feinberg admitted to his friend and former president of Brandeis, Abe Sachar: “If he told the true story of my activities during the pre-state period, I’m damn glad that over forty years have elapsed so that law enforcement authorities can’t get after me.”<sup>77</sup>

Feinberg also claimed to have leveraged his emerging relationships with high ranking US officials to protect the arms shipments he was coordinating. In one case, Feinberg worked with a group that was planning to send over on a British ship material to build machinery that could make mortars. However, one of the drivers forgot a key component in Canada. Worried he would get caught along the border, the driver sped through the checkpoint. At four in the morning, Feinberg was called with this story. Feinberg then claimed to have called Robert Nathan, a close associate of J. Edgar Hoover, then head of the FBI, and told him to convince Hoover that the ship in New York harbor was full of essential “textile machinery” but the piece needed to get aboard. He told Nathan to tell Hoover to prosecute the boy but let the part go, which is what Hoover did.<sup>78</sup>

In another instance, US authorities caught nine individuals who were thought to be smuggling aircraft to Israel. The most notable of them was Adolf “Al” Schwimmer. “With a remarkable lack of resources,” Shimon Peres—the man who oversaw arms procurement from the United States and later became both Prime Minister and President of Israel—recalled, Schwimmer “and his team seemed capable of fixing and flying any plane in any circumstance. ... Whatever planes we purchased in the United States we sent to Al.”<sup>79</sup> In November 1948, Schwimmer was indicted on charges of violating the Neutrality Act, which prohibits providing

arms to a nation at war while the US was neutral.<sup>80</sup> In this case, Israel was at war with her Arab neighbors while the US was neutral.

The Israelis were nervous that the prosecution of Schwimmer would lead to negative publicity.<sup>81</sup> It can also be surmised that, based off of Peres's memoirs, Schwimmer was an incredibly valuable asset to Israel's nascent air force. Therefore, it was of utmost importance that Schwimmer not be put in prison. To that end, the Israeli Embassy contacted Feinberg to "intercede with U.S. Government officials" on this case.<sup>82</sup> Feinberg did, and while Schwimmer was found guilty, he was kept out of prison and fined \$10,000.<sup>83</sup>

A similar story occurred at the local level. An ammunition ship was partially loaded in Hoboken, headed for Palestine. The rest of the materials were in a warehouse in the Bronx. One night, the ship exploded in the harbor. Feinberg believed the ship to have been "sabotaged" and worried that his operation would go public. So he went to see the mayor, Bill O'Dwyer. Feinberg said to the mayor: "Bill, I'm going to put everything on the table. ... There's a warehouse full of this stuff at such an such a place in the Bronx. We've lost what was on the ship." The mayor replied, "what do you want me to do?" Feinberg responded: "I want the detectives guarding the warehouse to be sick for 24 hours. I promise you everything will be out by then." The mayor agreed, and the warehouses were emptied.<sup>84</sup>

### **Feinberg Works with Truman**

During the fall of 1946, the refugee issue became the primary concern for the American Jewish community. Some of its members, principally the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism, wanted Jewish refugees to be allowed into the US while the Zionists pushed hard for them to be permitted to go to Palestine. Truman was already on the record endorsing resettlement in Palestine. He had an eye on keeping New York Democratic. Republican senatorial candidate



Thomas Dewey, who was projected to win in a landslide in the 1948 presidential election, was already planning to endorse refugee resettlement in Palestine. While Truman felt he had done enough on this issue and that the Jewish vote was lost,<sup>85</sup> Feinberg again spoke with Truman, encouraging him to make an endorsement of Jewish resettlement in Palestine on the eve of Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year when almost every Jew would be in synagogue. “If you make the announcement before that night [Yom Kippur], every single Rabbi in every single synagogue will broadcast what you say. Forget the newspapers, forget any other media. You will have word directly to the Jewish people.”<sup>86</sup>

Thus, on October 4th, the day before Yom Kippur, Truman released a heavily edited statement of policy that tacitly endorsed resettling 100,000 refugees in Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish state.<sup>87</sup> Thanks to Feinberg’s advocacy, the key takeaway for the Jewish community was Truman’s support for the establishment of a Jewish State.

Nevertheless, the Republicans swept New York, winning its contested Senate seat and the governor's mansion in the 1946 midterm elections. A majority of New York City voted Republican for the first time since 1928. Truman remained silent on the refugee question for nearly another year. But the British understood the power of Truman’s words and the American Jewish community behind them. When they failed to reach a compromise between the Zionists and the Arabs in February 1947, the British referred the issue of partition to the UN.<sup>88</sup>

Meanwhile, that same winter, Feinberg went back to Europe to “find out whether the DPs [displaced persons] really wanted to go to Israel, if they could go elsewhere.”<sup>89</sup> With the help of the Haganah, Feinberg went to 22 DP camps, and spoke with thousands of refugees. He slept in the camps and during the nights he wasn’t sleeping, he smuggled children out of the camps and to ships in his truck.<sup>90</sup> Of the thousands of refugees Feinberg spoke with, “I would say—I think

without equivocation—that 95-97% of those I talked to wanted to go to Palestine.” They worried about being treated as foreigners elsewhere, received as burdens.<sup>91</sup> This experience recommitted Feinberg to his work supplying ships for displaced persons.

On his way back to the United States, Feinberg met Chaim Weizmann, the head of the World Zionist Organization at its conference in Basle. From Feinberg’s telling, it’s clear that Weizmann knew who Feinberg was before they met. Feinberg had already made a name for himself with the Yishuv. Despite only a brief interaction, Weizmann wanted to schedule a private meeting with him in London shortly thereafter.<sup>92</sup> Weizmann, like Ben-Gurion, likely saw Feinberg as an asset. Unfortunately, neither Norman Rose nor Jehuda Reinharz, Weizmann’s two biographers, mentions the interaction. It was informal and came on the heels of Weizmann losing his presidency of the World Zionist Organization.<sup>93</sup>

Upon Feinberg’s return to the US, he once again briefed Truman on what he saw in the camps.<sup>94</sup> These experiences in Europe enhanced Feinberg’s credibility, both with the Palestinian Zionists and with Truman. To the Palestinian Zionists, Feinberg was no ordinary well-connected wealthy man. He was someone doing the work, a key cog in the Zionist movement to bring refugees to Palestine. He could be trusted. To Truman, Feinberg was providing actionable intelligence. He wasn’t just parroting what he heard in the newspaper or other secondhand sources. He was telling him what he saw. Very few others in the American Zionist movement had this combination of access and on the ground activity.

Feinberg (at Ben Gurion’s urging) also began publishing *The Haganah Speaks*, a propaganda newsletter that was aimed at “educating” American lawmakers about the situation on the ground in Palestine, in order to foster support for the Jewish community in Palestine. At its apex, it was read by over 100,000 people, most importantly Senators, Congressmen, their staffs,

and state officials around the country.<sup>95</sup> The newsletter, however, was also used to “counteract with it, some of the propaganda that might come along around election time from the ZOA people.”<sup>96</sup> Once again, Feinberg skillfully managed to position himself as both a supporter of the Yishuv and a loyal friend of Truman, thereby enhancing his influence.

The next major issue pertaining to Palestine for Truman was the UN partition of Palestine in 1947. Truman privately wanted to maintain it as an Anglo-American trusteeship. Once this became infeasible in 1946, Truman grew detached. However, four factors changed Truman’s mind: heavy pressure from the organized American Zionists, political considerations not to go back on the Yom Kippur Statement of 1946, a recommendation from the United Nations for partition, and pressure from Eleanor Roosevelt to demonstrate the legitimacy of the United Nations to resolve international disputes. Collectively, these factors convinced Truman to support partition.<sup>97</sup> Once Truman’s mind was made up, Feinberg claimed that he was sent to lobby State Department officials to vote in favor of partition by Truman himself.<sup>98</sup>

When the partition plan was passed on November 29th, 1947, Feinberg was in New York for a bar mitzvah at the Waldorf Astoria. As the vote was coming in, Feinberg left the bar mitzvah to listen to the radio broadcast. Chaim Weizmann, the future president of the State of Israel was in town lobbying delegates to vote for partition. Weizmann waited anxiously alone in his hotel room for the votes to come in. When the partition plan passed, Feinberg and his wife Lillian rushed over to Weizmann’s hotel room at the Plaza Hotel to celebrate. Weizmann “actually opened the door himself when we came... I remember it clearly. And the tears were coming down. He just sat down and we said nothing but embraced each other. We were very close friends. My wife gave him a kiss.”<sup>99</sup> Weizmann’s biographer Norman Rose confirms

Feinberg's account that Weizmann was indeed at the Plaza Hotel during the UN partition vote and provides a window within which Feinberg could have seen Weizmann.<sup>100</sup>

With the British deciding to pull out unilaterally on May 14th and the Yishuv ready to announce an independent State of Israel, after much back and forth inside the administration from November 1947-May 1948, Truman announced US recognition of the State of Israel.<sup>101</sup> One of the pens used to sign its recognition was given to his friend, Abe Feinberg.<sup>102</sup> That same day, Teddy Kollek was sworn into the Israeli Defense Forces in Feinberg's backyard.<sup>103</sup>

### **1948 Presidential Election: Feinberg Repays Truman**

As spring turned to summer, Truman's presidential campaign was heating up. Democrats had sustained heavy losses in the 1946 midterms, losing control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Republicans used that control to stymie progress on Truman's attempted progressive reforms and rolled back many New Deal reforms. Meanwhile, Truman's Democratic coalition was falling apart as he faced challenges from the Roosevelt's progressive former Vice President Henry Wallace and a southern, segregationist challenge from the Dixiecrat Strom Thurmond. Some Democrats even called for World War II General Dwight Eisenhower to head the ticket.<sup>104</sup>

Truman was out of money by September. Many thought his campaign was over. But Truman gathered a group of donors to the White House and told them, "Boys, if I can have the money to see people, I am going to win this election. If I had money, I would put my own money in first. Now, you all go back to the Democratic Committee and see what you can do about it."<sup>105</sup> Howard McGrath, the chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) presided over the ensuing fundraising meeting. "We just sat there, the whole group of theoretically powerful Democrats, and nobody said anything," Feinberg recalled. Then McGrath told them of Truman's

plan to make a second trip across the country, this time, 22,000 miles, speaking 16 times a day, but he needed the money to do it.<sup>106</sup> No one said a word, convinced it was a lost cause.

Impatient, Feinberg got up and said, “Howard, the President has done a great deal for my people. I feel we owe him a great deal. We certainly owe him a chance and I will pledge on behalf of Ed Kaufmann and myself that within two weeks, we’ll have \$100,000 towards this trip.”<sup>107</sup> To a round of applause, Feinberg walked out of the room to take the train home.<sup>108</sup>

Feinberg delivered the \$100,000 he promised in two days, not two weeks, from Jewish communities around the country who felt a debt of gratitude to Truman for his recognition of Israel. In all, Feinberg would raise \$250,000 from the Jewish community during the presidential campaign.<sup>109</sup> As the train would move from city to city, Feinberg arranged for representatives from the local Jewish community to come aboard Truman’s train and deliver the donations to pay for the next leg of the trip.<sup>110</sup>

Truman would tell Feinberg, “If not for my friend Abe, I couldn’t have made the trip and would not have been elected.”<sup>111</sup> Feinberg’s contributions were viewed by Truman as essential for his presidency. Equally important, Feinberg’s contributions during the 1948 election cycle solidified himself as an important figure in national Democratic politics and someone whose interests needed to be taken seriously. For the next 20 years, Democratic presidential hopefuls courted his endorsement.

### **Feinberg, Truman, and Aid to Israel**

Given Feinberg’s proven loyalty and ability to deliver meaningful political assistance to Truman and his emerging relationships with high level Israeli officials, Feinberg shifted into a new role into US-Israeli relations. He met regularly with Israeli embassy officials, both at their embassy and in his home in Mt. Vernon to develop policy.<sup>112</sup> Feinberg would also meet with

Truman personally, oftentimes immediately after meeting with embassy officials to ensure that he was parroting Israel's official positions.<sup>113</sup> While many of the details of the early stages of American aid to Israel were negotiated by the State Department, other friends of Israel, and Israeli diplomats, Feinberg did play a role.

In 1949, Israel was in its first year as a country. After losing 1% of its population in the war and in the midst of taking in hundreds of thousands of refugees from Arab countries, it was in dire need of funding. That summer of 1949, before Weizmann, Israel's President could meet with the President, Truman sought Feinberg's counsel. "How much do you think Weizmann will ask for?" Truman asked him. Feinberg had no idea, "so I simply picked a figure out the air and said '\$250 million.'" That was too much for Truman to get through Congress, but he offered \$100 million to Feinberg.<sup>114</sup>

Feinberg then went back to Israel to escort Weizmann to Truman, on Truman's request.<sup>115</sup> Weizmann had never negotiated financial aid before, and he trusted Feinberg who had met with Truman to give him some advice. Publicly, Feinberg told *The Jerusalem Post* that he told Weizmann, "If I were you, whatever Truman says, I'd accept."<sup>116</sup> Weissberg recalls, however, that privately, Feinberg told him that Weizmann was going to ask only for \$10 million. Feinberg responded by saying "If you need \$10 million, ask for \$100 million." Weizmann was aghast. He couldn't even dream of mouthing that number. Yet, when push came to shove, he did. While Truman's \$100 million offer ended up diluted through an Export-Import Bank loan, it became the first aid given to Israel.<sup>117</sup>

### **Feinberg's Power Grows, to the Chagrin of other American Zionists**

This close working relationship with Ben-Gurion and Weizmann in the early years of Israel's establishment made Feinberg a unique Zionist at the time. Much of the old Zionist elite

resented this new-comer who had access to both American and Israeli political leaders. Up until this point, American Zionists firmly felt that they should have a say in what occurred in Israel, just as Ben-Gurion felt he could speak on behalf of world Jewry. American Zionists were part of the movement and therefore expected the Israeli government to listen to and respect their concerns, just as they had before independence. Feinberg was different. Because he arrived on the scene in the mid-to-late 1940s, he understood Zionism firmly as the activity of the Yishuv in Palestine and later of the Israeli government and the Israeli people themselves, independent of ideological squabbles in America. Therefore, he was much more willing to subordinate himself to Israeli preferences than other American Zionists of his time.

Ben-Gurion understood and valued Feinberg's distinctive position as well. It is the reason why he appreciated Feinberg's propaganda newsletter, *The Haganah Speaks* and later *Israel Speaks* while some American Zionists viewed it as "embarrassing" propaganda.<sup>118</sup> It contained Israel's perspective and toed the government's line. In Ben-Gurion's words, Feinberg had "adjusted [himself] to the revolutionary fact that a State of Israel emerged"<sup>119</sup> in a way that the rest of the American Zionists had yet to do. As a result, Feinberg was given preferential treatment and was given information directly from the Israeli government. That he was one of the first people from the "Ben-Gurion crowd" with access to the American President<sup>120</sup> only enhanced Feinberg's distinction as a go-between for the US and Israel.<sup>121</sup>

Feinberg was also paid back for his work for the Israelis. In 1950, he received a letter from Aryeh Manor and Shimon Peres of Israel's Supply Mission, Defense Section, promising to pay Feinberg back \$50,000.<sup>122</sup> The letter does not say what the money was for. It could have been for *Israel Speaks* as historian Natan Aridan suggests.<sup>123</sup> However, given that it was from the defense section, this also could have been repayment for some of the weapons Feinberg was

helping to smuggle into Israel during the 1948 War. Based on this letter, contemporary FBI files, and Manor's future post as the finance minister for Israel, it is likely that Manor was the person in charge of signing off on payments coming out of the defense section. Meanwhile, Peres was running Israel's weapons procurement division inside the United States.<sup>124</sup>

Perhaps because of Feinberg's example, the Israelis recognized that they would have more influence if the pressure being brought on the American government could come from American citizens like Feinberg rather than exclusively from their government in diplomatic channels. Therefore, the Israelis needed a mechanism to coordinate Jewish and Zionist leaders in the United States with Israeli policy to make sure that everyone was on the same page. This led Israeli Ambassador to the US, Abba Eban, to create what would become the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations. This group, of whom Feinberg was a part, would meet at the embassy "on a regular basis and during times of emergency."<sup>125</sup> As a result of Feinberg's presence in this selective working group of eight-to-nine people, he was given privileged access to Israeli information and policy proposals, giving him influence both with the American Zionist community and with the Truman Administration.

### **Feinberg and Truman: One Last Ride**

Truman would call on Feinberg's influence in 1951. As the Congress worked through the most expansive aid package to Israel yet, the Taft-Douglas Bill, pressure on the administration was reaching a fever pitch. The White House was bombarded with letters, telegrams, and phone calls from Zionists expressing their need for a \$150 million-dollar aid package to Israel, a plan that was opposed by the State Department. Feinberg was actually convinced that the bill would pass the house and Senate with no amendments.<sup>126</sup> However, the State Department convinced



Feinberg that there simply wasn't enough aid to give to Israel, the Arabs, and Western Europe to protect them all from Soviet expansion.

However, Feinberg understood the aid bill in political terms. He believed that it was politically detrimental for the Democrats to pass such a large aid bill for which he believed the Republicans would get the lions' share of the credit. So he proposed a compromise bill of equal aid to Arab states and Israel that would be rolled into the mutual security aid program.<sup>127</sup> Thus, historian Walter Hixson explains that "working with [Secretary of State Dean] Acheson, Feinberg became the fixer in the eventual compromise in the debate over the Taft-Douglas bill," a bill that allocated \$65 million to the Israelis and \$65 million to the Arabs.<sup>128</sup> Feinberg's unique trust and loyalty from both Truman and the Israelis put him in the unique position to work out the compromise that was acceptable to all parties. It led the FBI to conclude by the end of Truman's presidency: Feinberg "had been used by the Israelis as a means of influencing United States policy in relation to Israel."<sup>129</sup>

Unfortunately for Feinberg, his access to the president would be cut off by the results of the 1952 presidential election. Much of Feinberg's influence came from his unique position as a friend of Truman and a fundraiser for Democrats. When famed World War II general and newly minted Republican Dwight Eisenhower won the 1952 presidential election by a wide margin over the Democrat Adlai Stevenson, those relationships with high-level decision-makers disappeared. Republicans had their own people with their own connections to Israel and would make policy without Feinberg's input. Until Kennedy's election, Feinberg shifted his energy and advocacy for Israel elsewhere. He increased his involvement with Israel Bonds, serving as the president of the organization for 17 years while staying in regular contact with high ranking Israeli officials.

### Chapter 3: Man with the Money

With Dwight Eisenhower's ascent to the presidency, Feinberg could no longer impact US-Israel relations as an intermediary. For the next eight years he fell back on his original forms of activism; charitable giving, and fundraising. Yet, while he would regain some power during the Kennedy Administration, Feinberg's influence on the US-Israel relationship from 1953-1963 would go only as far as his money could take him.

#### **Feinberg's Business Dealings**

Ever since Feinberg had entered the hosiery industry in the 1930s, he had expanded his small family-run hosiery business until it was powerful politically and philanthropically through the 1960s. His success during World War II allowed him to grow it beyond the small family business of Feinberg and Sons and into a respected hosiery company, Hamilton Hosiery Mills, headquartered in the Empire State building.<sup>130</sup>

However, Feinberg was impatient and constantly striving for more. He had grown accustomed to operating in the same space as world leaders and the wealthiest Jews in America. While he would never admit to being in competition with these men, he certainly held himself in high regard, knew what he was capable of, and wanted to prove to himself that he belonged in this milieu. To solidify his position among this elite echelon of society, Feinberg maneuvered his way onto the board of another hosiery company, Julius Kayser and Company. From there, in 1952, Feinberg used his position on the board to have Julius Kayser and Company buy a set of hosiery companies, Diamond Hosiery Corporation, Hillcrest Factors, Inc. and his own Hamilton Hosiery Mills in order to grow the company, cut costs, and diversify its revenue streams.<sup>131</sup> When Julius Kayser died in 1954, Feinberg became jointly the chair of the board of Kayser and Company and President of Hamilton Hosiery Mills, where he oversaw their completed merger.<sup>132</sup>

The merger, however, did not come without controversy. Kayser and Company's acquisition of Diamond Hosiery Corporation, Hillcrest Factors, Inc. and his own Hamilton Hosiery Mills was subject to a civil antitrust lawsuit. The plaintiffs argued that the merger was not in the best interest of Kayser and Company but only of its board members, of which Feinberg was one. Hamilton Hosiery Mills had bad revenue streams and was operating at a deficit, they argued, so the merger was a way to save Hamilton Hosiery Mills rather than help Kayser and Company.<sup>133</sup> However, the merger ultimately was completed and Feinberg oversaw the larger, more expansive Kayser and Company.

Throughout the mid-1950s, Kayser and Company sold much of its wares under the popular brand name "Fruit of the Loom."<sup>134</sup> While some were undergarments, it also sold women's gloves, swimwear, and stockings, and had become "one of the largest apparel and accessories companies in the entire country."<sup>135</sup> In 1958, Feinberg bought the Chester H. Roth Company and merged it with Kayser and Company, creating Kayser-Roth and thereby making one of the largest apparel and accessories companies even bigger.<sup>136</sup> To ensure a stable transition, Feinberg stayed on with the company for five years, then took most of his earnings and used them to start a bank in 1964. His bank, American Bank and Trust, grew to be one of America's largest banks.<sup>137</sup> The exact details of these mergers are beyond the scope of this thesis, but the result was that Feinberg retained and furthered his wealth throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. That wealth would be key to both his philanthropic and political influence.

### **Israel Bonds**

During the Eisenhower years, the doors to the administration were closed to Feinberg. Eisenhower had his own set of Republican friends of Israel such Republican Senator Jacob Javits, David Sarnoff, and Fred Lazarus.<sup>138</sup> Thus, Feinberg's activism took place primarily in two spaces in which he was already involved: Israel Bonds and higher education. During the Truman

years and working with the Israeli leadership, Feinberg recognized that if Israel was to build itself into the modern, independent country that he hoped it would become, it needed money to be economically independent. He also recognized that Americans had bought war bonds during World War II, both as a demonstration of patriotism and as a financial savings vehicle. Finally, he shared the proud, idealistic, gritty independent ethic that underpinned the Zionist experiment. Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion especially believed the Zionist dream to be complete Israeli independence. Ben-Gurion understood himself to be building a real country and that Israel should not be treated as a charity case.<sup>139</sup>

So, in 1951, Feinberg used his business acumen to organize a strategy conference in Jerusalem to plan how Israel would secure the requisite funding.<sup>140</sup> Out of this three-day conference emerged five vehicles for finance: Israel's own tax base; the creation of the Israel Bonds Organization; direct aid from US citizens themselves through charitable contributions; direct loans from the US government; and outside investment in Israel.<sup>141</sup>

In 1955, Feinberg took over the presidency of the Israel Bonds Organization, primarily a fundraising role.<sup>142</sup> From then until 1972, he used many of the same tactics that had made him an effective fundraiser for political candidates to raise money for Israel Bonds. He called his wealthy friends and business associates and insisted on the importance of the mission. Being in a position of leadership, he gave as much as he could to set an example for others to meet. Feinberg relied on his emerging reputation as a "powerful person" making a sincere request.<sup>143</sup> He would "twist people's arms" if necessary.<sup>144</sup> Yet giving might not be the appropriate word. Feinberg often corrected those who thought of Israel Bonds as charity, explaining that it was an investment.<sup>145</sup>

In 1957, two years into his presidency, Feinberg proudly announced that the Israel Bond Organization raised nearly \$50 million in 1957 alone and had raised \$320 million since 1951 (or nearly \$3 billion in 2021 dollars).<sup>146</sup> Feinberg was pleased to explain that the money funded development projects in Israel including irrigation, new agricultural settlements, manufacturing development, food processing, electrical power, the expansion of transportation and communication facilities, and low cost housing for new immigrants.<sup>147</sup> Through his activism, Feinberg felt he was helping to build the new Jewish state.

1957 was nevertheless tumultuous for Feinberg personally. His 21-year-old daughter Judy, then still in college at Sarah Lawrence College, got engaged to the Hollywood film producer Bert Schneider. Feinberg disapproved of the marriage and refused to attend the wedding. For the rest of his life, Judy and her father would have a strained relationship.<sup>148</sup>

### **The Weizmann Institute of Science**

Education was essential to Feinberg. He viewed it as the key to his success. He had worked tirelessly to put himself through high school, college, and law school. He would later tell his children and grandchildren that he didn't care what they studied as long as they earned the highest degree possible in it. "You want to be a garbage collector? Fine, then I want you to be a doctor of sanitation engineering," Steven recalls his grandfather telling him.<sup>149</sup> Indeed, both of Feinberg's children would go on to receive doctorates, as would two of his grandsons.

Therefore, as part of his state-building activities throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Feinberg played an active role with the Weizmann Institute for Science, one of Israel's two finest higher education institutions focused exclusively on the hard sciences, heading "The American Committee for the Weizmann Institute." He also established the Feinberg Graduate School, a US-accredited graduate school in the Weizmann Institute.<sup>150</sup> Feinberg supported for the

Weizmann Institute specifically for many reasons. He greatly admired Chaim Weizmann the statesman as well as Weizmann the chemist. He believed in the Institute's mission of pure scientific research, but also believed that the advances the Institute was beginning to make into the applied sciences would benefit Israel economically and scientifically.<sup>151</sup> Just as his education enabled him to grow and prosper, so too he felt a first-rate university would allow Israel to develop. His donation to the Weizmann Institute complemented his monetary donations to the state. Not only did he invest physical capital but by giving to the Weizmann Institute, he invested in Israel's human capital.

### **Feinberg Finances Dimona**

It is also possible that Feinberg was intrigued by the future research possibilities of the Weizmann Institute. Recalling one of his reasons for donating to the institute 27 years later, Feinberg wrote: "Dr. Ernest Bergmann, then director of the Institute, was also a very great attraction."<sup>152</sup> Bergmann was the director of the Institute for only four years before he was asked by Chaim Weizmann to step down because he over-emphasized using the Institute for military purposes.<sup>153</sup> Bergmann was a protege of Ben-Gurion who helped make the case throughout the 1950s for Israel's need for an atomic weapons program. He would go on to serve as Ben Gurion's scientific advisor and the head of the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission. When Bergmann over-stretched by trying to control the activities of Israel's few nuclear physicists, they all found homes at the Weizmann Institute. They could then be contracted out to work for the Ministry of Defense later on. Yet, that they had a scientific home and could push forward the field of nuclear physics would only help Israel's nuclear program long term.<sup>154</sup>

This early relationship vis-a-vis Israel's nuclear program is not implausible. The historian Seymour Hersh describes the following scene in Feinberg's back yard during the fall of 1947, the precise period that Feinberg became involved with the Weizmann Institute.

One night over dinner, added Feinberg, "Bergmann's eyes lit up and he said, 'There's uranium in the desert.'" There was no question about the message—the path was now cleared for Israel to develop the atomic bomb. Feinberg was astonished at such indiscreet talk: "I shushed him up."<sup>155</sup>

Thus, as early as 1947, Feinberg knew Israel was exploring a nuclear program. Just as he had been willing to smuggle arms into Israel, so he was willing to help it develop nuclear weapons.

Feinberg's thinking on this issue likely mirrored Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion's. The Jewish people had just emerged from the Holocaust. Feinberg personally was guilt-ridden for not doing more during the Holocaust and Ben-Gurion was terrified by the possibility that another Holocaust could happen. Despite any amount of military strength Israel may have possessed relative to its Arab neighbors, throughout his life Ben-Gurion fixated on the prospect that if unified, the collective armies of Israel's Arab neighbors could destroy Israel and create a second Holocaust. Only an alliance with one or more of the Western powers or a nuclear weapon would allow Israel to maintain a sufficient deterrent.<sup>156</sup>

Perhaps this is why throughout his statements about the value of the Weizmann Institute, Feinberg focused on its forays into applied rather than pure sciences.<sup>157</sup> Israel's nuclear program was, and still is *applied* nuclear physics. Yet, such terminology was also sufficiently inclusive to pertain to other applied sciences like engineering and areas that would promote Israel's economic development.

What is clear, however, is that Feinberg's guilt surrounding the Holocaust and his fear of a second one led him to become involved in funding Israel's nuclear weapons program at Dimona, the deterrent that Ben-Gurion always wanted. Among other people, Ben-Gurion protege

and director general of the Ministry of Defense, Shimon Peres, laid the political foundation to get the nuclear program off the ground. He negotiated an agreement for the French to provide a 24-megawatt nuclear reactor, enriched uranium, and a plutonium extraction plant, the key facility in making a nuclear weapon. In exchange, the Israelis provided intelligence in Algeria,<sup>158</sup> their own expertise in nuclear research, and most importantly, Israel would shoulder the international blame in the Anglo-French-Israeli operation against Egypt in the Suez Canal in 1956. When the deal was officially signed, Israel promised France that the nuclear facility would be for peaceful purposes.<sup>159</sup>

However, acquiring the reactor and enriched uranium from the French, purchasing heavy water from Norway, and building a plutonium processing plant all took a lot of money—money that Ben-Gurion and Peres didn't feel they had. Going nuclear was a contentious issue in Israel, and Ben-Gurion and Peres did not want a debate around nuclear pursuits going public through budget hearings.

Therefore, on October 31, 1958, Ben-Gurion called Feinberg to discuss Dimona. He knew of Feinberg's fundraising prowess as the current head of Israel Bonds and his commitment to arming Israel from his pre-state activities. Shortly thereafter, the secret fundraising campaign for Dimona began. Israeli nuclear historian Michael Karpin asserts that Feinberg was "Ben-Gurion's representative in charge of obtaining donations from the wealthiest Jews in the world."<sup>160</sup> Over the next two years, Feinberg helped raise \$40 million dollars for Dimona from 25-30 Jewish millionaires.<sup>161</sup> It would prove to be enough money for Peres to later claim that "not one penny came from the government budget. The project was financed from contributions I raised from Jewish millionaires who understood the importance of the issue."<sup>162</sup>



While this is an exaggeration—the Israeli government would spend hundreds of millions of dollars on the program in the ensuing years—these donations collected by Feinberg proved to be critical seed money. They would get Dimona off the ground and change the starting point of any upcoming Israeli debate on Dimona from “why fund Dimona” to “we can’t talk about funding Dimona for national security reasons, pass the funding.”<sup>163</sup> Furthermore, Feinberg retrospectively told Seymour Hersh: “He [Peres] came to me often for money. If he gave the assignment to me, I helped him.”<sup>164</sup> Documentary evidence explicitly confirming this story is difficult to locate. Feinberg himself did not leave any documents implicating himself, and any documents that may link him to such financing are likely still classified in the Israeli State Archives, making his statement to Hersh the most definitive on record.

Feinberg’s initiative demonstrated how unique his position truly was. Here was a private US citizen, with a legitimate relationship with the former president of the United States, helping another country obtain a nuclear reactor. In 1958, there was not a law prohibiting that specific act. Furthermore, Feinberg was never asked to register as a foreign agent under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) of 1938 with regards to either his fundraising for Dimona or Israel Bonds, or his connection to the Truman Administration.<sup>165</sup> He also avoided Senator Richard Fulbright’s Senate Foreign Relations investigation into Jewish pro-Israel lobbying of Congress in 1963, making his record clean.<sup>166</sup> Yet, based on all he did on behalf of the Israeli government, that he never registered as a foreign agent under FARA opened him up to the possibility of criminal prosecution, a prosecution he never faced.<sup>167</sup>

Nevertheless, Feinberg’s activities did place him in the dubious position of undermining US national security interests. At the time, only three countries had a nuclear weapons capability: the US, the USSR, and the UK. From the American perspective, limiting nuclear proliferation

was essential to maintaining US hegemony and a balance of power. Fewer nuclear powers for the US to worry about would have made international relations much simpler and easier for the US to secure its global objectives.<sup>168</sup> More nuclear powers meant that the US would have had to be much more careful in its foreign and military policies to avoid nuclear catastrophe. The more countries that had a nuclear weapons capability, the greater the possibility of nuclear annihilation thereby creating a much more dangerous world and a less advantageous global climate for US interests. Indeed, this thinking was demonstrated throughout the 1950s when the US made the conscious decision not to share nuclear weapons technology with the French because they did not trust them enough, causing a significant rift in the NATO alliance.

Feinberg knew the risks. This is likely the reason there is such a minimal record of his involvement and why one can only speculate on who the other donors were. It is also why he never talked about it with anyone. But Feinberg raised the money anyway. That it could prevent a second Holocaust only inspired him more.

From 1958-1960, as construction of the nuclear facility at Dimona was commencing, the US failed to recognize what was occurring. The CIA's aerial intelligence of the site could not prove that it was a nuclear weapons plant, and even if it could, it wasn't shared with the Pentagon or State Department. Israeli public statements on its emerging nuclear technology were conflated with those pertaining to a pre-existing, American-approved and funded research reactor at Nahal Soreq. And, it was difficult to believe that a small, developing country had the capacity to invest in an expensive nuclear weapons program without US assistance.<sup>169</sup> In the one instance President Eisenhower was given the raw aerial intelligence about Dimona, he did nothing.<sup>170</sup>

## The Presidential Election of 1960

Yet, the nuclear issue, as well as Feinberg's involvement with Democratic politics re-emerged in the fall of 1960. In August of 1960, it became clear that Senator John F. Kennedy (D-Mass.) was going to be the Democratic nominee for president. There was "no real important American Jew leading the Jack Kennedy effort," recalls Philip Klutznick, a Chicago real estate developer and friend of Feinberg's—except Abe Ribicoff, the governor of Connecticut.<sup>171</sup> Kennedy, Feinberg, and Ribicoff, each thought it would be beneficial for Kennedy to meet leaders of the American Jewish community. Kennedy hoped to get the "Jewish vote" while Feinberg hoped to establish another relationship with the future president and gain his support for Israel.<sup>172</sup> Importantly, both the Kennedy campaign and Feinberg said the meeting was not a fundraiser, and there were no guaranteed contributions.<sup>173</sup>

Feinberg called up various Jewish leaders and industrialists from around the country for a low publicity meeting in his apartment at the Pierre Hotel in New York, Feinberg's second home that allowed him to be closer to work in Manhattan.<sup>174</sup> Kennedy began the meeting with a 10-15 minute stump speech about his Israel policy, then fielded questions for over an hour.<sup>175</sup> In his answers he stressed the need for a balance of power between Israel and her Arab neighbors and the importance of maintaining free passage through the Suez Canal.<sup>176</sup> The consensus response from those who attended was respectful. Feldman recalled that those present respected Kennedy's poise and honesty in his answers to their questions.<sup>177</sup> The perception was that Kennedy didn't just tell them what they wanted to hear but what he believed.<sup>178</sup>

Fifteen days after the meeting, on August 20, 1960, Feldman sent out a memo to those who had attended the meeting with detailed responses to Kennedy's positions on topics which had not been answered in the meeting. Essentially, they were clarifications of Kennedy's pro-

Israel and pro-Jewish record in Congress.<sup>179</sup> Evidently, this was enough for the group to pledge \$500,000 (or \$4.44 million in 2021) to the Kennedy campaign “on the clear understanding that it would be repaid—and it was.”<sup>180</sup> This campaign donation and the expectation of a quid pro quo were critical components of the Kennedy-Feinberg relationship. “My path to power... was cooperation in terms of what they needed—campaign money,” Feinberg told historian Seymour Hersh thirty years later. Feinberg’s donation and the expectations attached to it created the most transactional of any of his relationships with a president. Kennedy’s acute awareness of this reality<sup>181</sup> could explain why Feinberg perceived that “it was difficult for Kennedy to relate to me on a real warm personal basis.”<sup>182</sup> Nevertheless, while it may have been transactional and less of a friendship, it was no less rewarding to Feinberg, his family, or to Israel.

Kennedy repaid the donation in three ways, both to Feinberg personally and to the pro-Israel community writ large from 1960-1963. The first repayment came in a very pro-Israel speech to the Zionist Organization of America while on the campaign trail on August 26, 1960. In the speech, Kennedy asserted that “Israel is here to stay” and that friendship with Israel “is not a partisan matter. It is a national commitment.”<sup>183</sup> Kennedy treated that speech as “his Bible.”<sup>184</sup> It was his on-the-record commitment to the Jewish community that was kept in a book compiled by the Bureau of the Budget for reference as a mechanism to tie his hands.<sup>185</sup> The rest of Kennedy's repayments came during his presidency.

With that on-the-record commitment from Kennedy, Feinberg would go on to deliver more than just money. He helped push a massive advertising campaign in the Yiddish press to help turn out the Jewish vote. This initiative included editorial support for Kennedy, op-eds from those who knew Kennedy speaking to his character, Kennedy’s and his Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson’s pro-Israel records, and associations between Kennedy and Johnson with presidents

Roosevelt and Truman. Such initiatives proved especially valuable as the Republicans spent little on advertising to Jews through the Yiddish press.<sup>186</sup>

Kennedy's margin of victory also proved critical for Feinberg's influence. Kennedy defeated Republican Vice President Richard Nixon by only 112,000 votes nationwide. In such a close election, exit polling said that Kennedy won almost 81% of the Jewish vote. This meant that Jews supported Kennedy even more than his fellow Catholics (73%).<sup>187</sup> According to Ben-Gurion's biographer Michael Bar-Zohar, Kennedy himself told Ben-Gurion in their 1961 meeting that he owed his presidency to the Jewish vote.<sup>188</sup>

Nevertheless, despite all that Feinberg did for Kennedy's election campaign, his role in the US-Israel relationship under Kennedy is the most opaque and difficult to trace. There is little documentary evidence of it in the Kennedy Library, and Feinberg himself had the coolest relationship with Kennedy of the three presidents with whom he worked. It is in the absence of a friendship that Feinberg's money became the primary factor in the relationship. Yet, the lack of written sources should not undermine the assessment of Feinberg's influence. Feinberg preferred to work behind the scenes and out of public view. He was more focused on results than credit. Furthermore, that Kennedy had a debt to Feinberg should not be underestimated. Thus, tracing American actions taken in concert with Feinberg's and Israel's goals can yield us insights into Feinberg's influence.

### **Family Troubles**

Despite backing the right horse in 1960 presidential election, the fall of 1960 would be painful for Feinberg personally. On September 15, 1960, his son Richard married a French woman, Dorris Strumer. Feinberg distrusted Strumer. He believed her to be interested in his son because he came from wealth, a possibility that Feinberg detested.<sup>189</sup> Abe Feinberg did not attend

his son's wedding.<sup>190</sup> For the second time, a marriage choice complicated his relationships with his child.

It is quite ironic, however, that Feinberg came to this conclusion. While Feinberg did provide much for Richard throughout his life such as a house and for his "economic wellbeing,"<sup>191</sup> Richard was successful in his own right. He eschewed a career in business to found the Bronx Children's Psychiatric Center, a center that provided psychiatric treatment to violent children. He made that decision in part because his father had told him to follow his passion.<sup>192</sup> He would go on to hold teaching appointments at Albert Einstein College of Medicine at Yeshiva University, Rutgers University, St. John's University, Jacobi Medical Center and Montefiore Medical Center.<sup>193</sup> Yet, Richard's choice of wife and the sense that he was the benefactor for his adult son prevented them from having a close relationship. Feinberg never gave himself the opportunity to recover it. He gave the appearance of being too busy in the world of politics, business, and philanthropy to repair the relationship.<sup>194</sup>

### **America Wakes Up to Dimona**

Concurrent with Feinberg's involvement with the Kennedy campaign and his son's wedding, rumors surrounding French involvement in the building of a nuclear complex came to the US Embassy in Israel in August 1960, sparking a renewed commitment by the intelligence community to investigate. US Air Force and Army attaches began to photograph the facility from U-2 spy plane flyovers as well with on-the-ground reconnaissance. Those photos, however, could not be processed until November and their significance was unclear until December. University of Michigan nuclear physicist Henry Gomberg visited Israel at the end of November and reported seeing a French style nuclear facility. Based on his conversations with Israeli nuclear physicists, Gomberg concluded that the Israelis were building a nuclear weapons facility.

By December 1960, after a conversation between US Ambassador to Israel Ogden Reid and Ernest Bergmann, head of Israel's Atomic Energy Commission, the National Security Council (NSC) met and, after re-evaluating all the evidence, determined that Israel was indeed pursuing a nuclear weapons capability.<sup>195</sup>

After that NSC meeting, a series of articles—first in *Time Magazine*, then London's *Daily Express* and finally, on a tip from the head of the American Atomic Energy Commission John McCone, the *New York Times*—ran claiming that Israel was pursuing a nuclear weapons option. While the Israelis tried to tamp down this discussion through statements from their embassy, pressure had gotten so high that Ben-Gurion himself felt compelled to issue a statement to the Knesset (Israel's parliament) publicly saying that the Dimona nuclear facility was to “serve the needs of industry, agriculture, health and science.” He flatly denied that Israel was manufacturing a nuclear weapon.<sup>196</sup>

In the closing days of the Eisenhower Administration, the US cemented the following principles with Israel: a guarantee from Ben-Gurion that Israel was not developing a nuclear weapon; that scientists from friendly nations like the US would be allowed to “visit;” and that plutonium, the key ingredient in creating an atomic bomb, was to be returned to the country that had sold uranium to the Israelis.<sup>197</sup>

### **Feinberg The Nuclear Intermediary**

When Kennedy was sworn in as President, he and his team were briefed by the outgoing administration on the general status of nuclear weapons around the world. Even early in his presidency, Kennedy was “intellectually and emotionally committed to a halt in the spread of nuclear weapons.”<sup>198</sup> His primary area of focus was Israel's nuclear program. More than any other potential proliferator, Israel was an ally of the United States and a country on which the US

perceived itself to have real leverage. It was a small, friendly country outside of the US containment strategy but which was not aspiring to become a world power like China or India. Furthermore, Ben-Gurion himself had previously committed to allowing an American visit to Dimona. While receiving public assurances from the French and Ben-Gurion himself about the peaceful nature of the program, Kennedy, in his desire to contain nuclear proliferation, hoped to verify its peaceful nature with a visit to Dimona by American scientists.<sup>199</sup>

From February 1961-April 1961, a pattern emerged of the US pushing through various diplomatic channels to set a date for the visit to Dimona and Ben-Gurion dodging it. First, Ben-Gurion claimed that his internal domestic troubles occupied all of his time and he could not be bothered to deal with this issue. Then he claimed that the spring Jewish holidays were getting in the way. Ultimately, however, when Special Assistant to the President (and Kennedy's formal liaison to the Jewish community) Mike Feldman and Abe Feinberg visited Ben-Gurion at the end of March 1961, Ben-Gurion agreed to schedule a visit. According to Ben-Gurion's diary, he was persuaded by Feinberg and Feldman that a meeting with Kennedy would save the program.<sup>200</sup>

Feinberg was likely the key persuader here. Karpin argues that Feldman was treated as an American representative but that Ben-Gurion regarded Feinberg as "one of us."<sup>201</sup> Feinberg had assisted the Haganah in the pre-state period. Feinberg also knew the true purpose of what was going on at Dimona. He had funded it! Thus, when he came to Ben-Gurion and said, "the President needs a visit, it will save the program," it had much more influence than any other American envoy requesting a visit, even if, like Feldman, he was also the liaison for the American Jewish community.<sup>202</sup>

That Feinberg promised a meeting with Kennedy in exchange pleased Ben-Gurion. The Prime Minister wanted to meet the new president quickly and early in his presidency. While he



had made a public statement about Dimona while Eisenhower was a lame-duck, he viewed Kennedy as inexperienced and overwhelmed by the new office. At the time, Kennedy was juggling many other competing issues such as the Bay of Pigs invasion, domestic civil rights, and the spread of communism in Africa.<sup>203</sup> Ben-Gurion hoped that he would be able to convince the young, distracted, and inexperienced president that Dimona was a non-issue. Thus, as a mediator, Feinberg pleased both Kennedy and Ben-Gurion.<sup>204</sup>

But why did Kennedy agree to the meeting? It broke diplomatic protocol to meet Ben-Gurion so early in his presidency. Perhaps a US visit to Dimona was in and of itself enough. However, dating back to Feinberg's first meeting with Kennedy in August 1960, Feinberg was already on the record that his donations were made "on the clear understanding that they would be repaid."<sup>205</sup> Perhaps this was the sort of repayment Feinberg desired: a meeting with the prime minister of Israel to quell the administration's fears regarding Israel's nuclear program. Thus, having Ben-Gurion "cut the line" and meet with the president before he met with other foreign leaders could be understood as a second favor to Feinberg.

Ben-Gurion agreed to set an American visit to Dimona for May 15th in exchange for a meeting with President Kennedy, secured by Feinberg.<sup>206</sup> Because of Israel's small stature, and the fact that the "special relationship" had not yet been established, it would have been unacceptable for the first state visit of Kennedy's to be with Ben-Gurion, preceding French President Charles De Gaulle or other allied nations (and even the Soviet Union). Therefore, the meeting was cast as an informal coincidence with no agenda.<sup>207</sup> The cover for the meeting was set that Kennedy was scheduled to speak at a dinner for a cancer fund.<sup>208</sup> Ben-Gurion, meanwhile, had a state visit to Canada, so he was in the region.<sup>209</sup> They met at the Waldorf Astoria in New York for ninety minutes on May 30, 1961.

At the meeting, Ben-Gurion reiterated that “for the time being the only purposes [of the nuclear reactor at Dimona] are for peace.” However, tellingly, he did leave the door open for developing a nuclear weapon, saying: “After three or four years we shall have a pilot plant for separation, which is needed anyway for a power reactor. There is no such intention now, not for 4 or 5 years. But we will see what happens in the Middle East.”<sup>210</sup> The separation that Ben-Gurion referenced is separation of uranium and plutonium. Such separation is the key component for making a nuclear weapon. What the Americans understood from this statement, however, was that “Israel’s main—and for the time being only—purpose is this [cheap energy, etc.] ... Commenting on... the political and strategic implications of atomic power and weaponry, the Prime Minister said he does believe that ‘in ten or fifteen years the Egyptians presumably could achieve it themselves.’”<sup>211</sup> Essentially, they missed that there was the possibility that Israel could achieve nuclear weapons capability within the next five years. Nevertheless, Kennedy, while pleased by the reports he received from the US visit to Dimona two weeks earlier, said that “a woman should not only be virtuous, but also have the appearance of virtue,” in reference to Dimona.<sup>212</sup> The metaphor is anything but subtle. It isn’t enough that Israel says that it isn’t developing nuclear weapons but it needs to be able to show it as well, hence the importance of visits. He also said that the US would “use its weight against such a proliferation.”<sup>213</sup> To this, Ben-Gurion reiterated again that it was only for peaceful purposes and suggested a willingness for future American scientists to come to Dimona for informal visits.<sup>214</sup>

With this issue taken care of, the two leaders spent the rest of their 90-minute meeting discussing other issues in the US-Israel relationship, including resettlement of Arab refugees, to which Ben-Gurion appeared to be receptive, as well as future arms sales and water problems.<sup>215</sup> Ultimately, neither party wanted to ask nor answer the tough questions about Dimona. In this

manner, Kennedy let Ben-Gurion off the hook by not questioning why Israel needed a second reactor or why it needed a plutonium separation plant (the key component in making a nuclear weapon), or why Israel was spending so much on an oversized research. The meeting ultimately put the nuclear issue on the backburner for the next 21 months in US-Israel relations.<sup>216</sup>

What was Feinberg's importance here? Feinberg organized the critical meeting between Ben-Gurion and Kennedy that would set the tone for US-Israel relations for the next two years on Israel's nuclear program, an issue that had the potential to be and indeed became the biggest fissure in the US-Israel relationship during the Kennedy Administration. Yet, as a result of this meeting and Ben-Gurion's lie to Kennedy, the nuclear issue became a non-issue until 1963, much to Feinberg and the Israelis' delight. Feinberg himself was likely pleased to help the Kennedy Administration get off on the right foot with the Israelis. He had proven his worth with a new set of leaders, delivering key "wins" for both Kennedy and Ben-Gurion.

### **Feinberg Looks Out for His Younger Brother**

For the rest of 1961, Feinberg had little contact with the president or the administration on issues pertaining to Israel. The relations between the US and Israel on most issues were handled through formal diplomatic channels. However, by October 1961, Feinberg began to try to call in his third favor to the president: getting his brother Wilfred a federal judicial appointment.

From the 1940s onward, as the eldest son, Feinberg took on the position of being the provider for his family. Daniel Feinberg, Abe Feinberg's nephew, recalled his uncle financing Daniel's parents' home in Mt. Vernon. He remembered being married in his uncle Abe's backyard, and his uncle facilitating a six-week apprenticeship for him with Dr. Louis Miller, the head of the Israeli Ministry of Health. Feinberg also extended Daniel a bridge loan to buy him his first

house.<sup>217</sup> For Daniel’s brother David, Feinberg got him a job. David recalled Feinberg as “this powerful businessman, strongly connected to political interests, taking care of his family.”<sup>218</sup>

It is with this self-conception that Feinberg approached Kennedy to try and get his younger brother a judicial appointment. Abe Ribicoff, former governor of Connecticut and Kennedy’s current Secretary of Health, Wealth and Education, recalled: “Feinberg only wanted one thing—to put his brother on the federal bench. ... I sat in on the meeting with Kennedy and recommended that he do it. The president said, ‘Look, Abe, when all is said and done, the only Jew who was for me [early in the campaign] was Abe Feinberg.’”<sup>219</sup> On October 5th, Feinberg’s brother Wilfred was appointed to United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, paying off another debt to a campaign financier.

Wilfred Feinberg was not unqualified. He had graduated from Columbia Law School having been the editor in chief for the law review in 1946 after taking three years off for wartime army service. He clerked for three years for Judge James P. McGranery from 1947-1949 before moving into private practice.<sup>220</sup> After clerking for McGranery, Wilfred worked as an associate at what is now known as Kay Scholer for four years, then was made partner at the law firm McGoldrick, Dannett, Horowitz & Golub.<sup>221</sup> Yet, his brother Abe’s access to the president undoubtedly helped launch Wilfred’s judicial career.

### **The Limits of Feinberg’s Influence**

After Kennedy’s May 1961 meeting with Ben-Gurion, the United States displayed little interest in Israel’s nuclear program. Despite a warning from internal intelligence estimates in late 1961 about Israel’s capacity to produce a nuclear weapon, the Kennedy Administration seemed to take Israel at its word and kept the nuclear issue off the table.<sup>222</sup> The Cuban Missile Crisis (October 1962) changed the calculus. Faced with the serious prospect of nuclear annihilation,

Kennedy was reminded of the dangers of nuclear proliferation and the difficulties it posed in dealing with other states. The more nuclear states, the greater the danger and complexity. Indeed, the Cuban Missile Crisis also spurred Kennedy to engage in arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union throughout 1963, culminating with the Atmospheric Test Ban Treaty in order to curb nuclear proliferation.<sup>223</sup>

With the dangers of nuclear proliferation at the front of his mind, the midterm elections past, and believing he had already given Israel a major diplomatic gift by selling it advanced HAWK missiles in 1962, the first American advanced weapons sale to Israel, Kennedy thought the time was right to press Ben-Gurion on further inspections. Feinberg would fight “the strongest battle of my career to keep them from a full inspection.”<sup>224</sup>

On March 6th, 1963, CIA Director John McCone received an intelligence estimate of the dangers of Israel gaining a nuclear weapons capability. The CIA believed Israel would become more bellicose to its neighbors, leading Israel’s neighbors to turn to the Soviet Union for arms and essentially dividing the Middle East along Cold War lines. In doing so, Israel would become a client of the US and the Arabs clients of the Soviet Union.<sup>225</sup> Dividing the Middle East along Cold War lines ran counter to US strategic thinking about the Middle East. At this point the US tried to maintain a balance of power in the region and not pick a side in the Arab-Israeli conflict in an effort to keep the Soviets out completely.

On March 15th, the State Department concluded that Israel had decided to proceed with nuclear enrichment at a level sufficient to make weapons.<sup>226</sup> Eleven days later, Kennedy instructed his national security advisor to “undertake every feasible measure to improve our intelligence on the Israeli nuclear program.” He also wanted “an informal inspection of the Israeli reactor complex to be undertaken promptly and to be as thorough as possible.”<sup>227</sup> Here,

the operative word is “inspection.” Past visits by US scientists to Dimona were considered “visits,” implying that Israel had the power to show the US what Israel wanted shown. An “inspection” would give the US the power to see what it needed to see.<sup>228</sup>

At this point, it appears Feinberg leaves the story entirely, and the limits of his influence can be most clearly seen. By May 1963, negotiations between the US and Israel were happening bilaterally through letters directly between Ben-Gurion and Kennedy and instructions from Kennedy to US Ambassador to Israel, Wally Barbour, on what to tell Ben-Gurion. Kennedy stressed the importance of obtaining truthful information about Israel’s nuclear activities, arguing that Israel’s possession would kick off global proliferation. He also explicitly stated that American support and commitment to Israel “would be seriously jeopardize[d]” without a clear understanding of Israel’s nuclear intentions.<sup>229</sup>

In the past, Dimona had only been discussed informally and with much lower stakes. There was never an explicit linkage of US arms in exchange for a comprehensive visit. It was an informal arrangement between allies. By suggesting that American support and commitment to Israel “would be seriously jeopardize[d]” without a clear understanding of Israel’s nuclear intentions, Kennedy raised the importance of an inspection with Ben-Gurion to unprecedented levels and threatened the “special relationship” that was just emerging.

Ben-Gurion responded by reiterating that the nuclear program was strictly for peaceful purposes. He said that “annual visits” could be permitted, but that there was no reason to do so until January when the facility was completed.<sup>230</sup> Here, Ben-Gurion tried to buy time so that the Americans could only see what he wanted them to see.<sup>231</sup> This was unacceptable for the United States. US nuclear weapons experts in the CIA and Atomic Energy Commission determined that inspections every six months were required in order to verify that Dimona was not being used for

a nuclear weapons capability.<sup>232</sup> On June 15, Kennedy planned to respond to Ben-Gurion, insisting on inspections every six months and an inspection early that summer.<sup>233</sup>

The telegram was never delivered to Ben-Gurion. Ben-Gurion resigned unexpectedly the day before it was scheduled to arrive. Some argued that it was due to a lack of domestic political support while others speculated that it was due to pressure over US inspections over Dimona.<sup>234</sup> Ben-Gurion said he simply “no longer had the mental fortitude to bear responsibility” of the premiership.<sup>235</sup> Whatever the reason, Ben-Gurion’s resignation bought the Israelis at least two more months of delays on inspections. It wouldn’t be until July that Ben-Gurion’s successor, Levi Eshkol, received the letter intended for Ben-Gurion, then until August 19th when Eshkol would give his final response allowing for a visit in late 1963. He also said that future visits would be possible but should be discussed at a later date.<sup>236</sup> The actual American visit wouldn’t take place until January 1964, the original date Ben-Gurion proposed months earlier.

Why did the US ultimately acquiesce to Israeli evasions? It did not secure semi-annual visits and it didn’t get a visit during the summer as it deemed necessary. Perhaps it was to strengthen Levi Eshkol. The new prime minister was under attack in the Israeli press for not standing up to American pressure on the “large science project designed to enhance the deterrent capability of the Israel Defense Forces.”<sup>237</sup> The Americans perceived him as more pragmatic and open to negotiation than Ben-Gurion and did not want to undermine him. Perhaps the US’s calculus on Israel’s security had changed. Egypt was unwilling to allow inspections into its advanced weapons program. Given that the US was publicly committed to protecting Israel, perhaps it did not wish to repeat the mistake of Korea (or the impending mistake of Vietnam) and would tacitly allow Israel to handle its own defenses by developing its own security deterrents.<sup>238</sup> Indeed, at the same time as Kennedy was receiving Eshkol’s response, he was

getting word from Vietnam that “the prospect of a South Vietnamese collapse seemed more likely than a victory.”<sup>239</sup> Kennedy’s biographer Robert Dallek suggests that Vietnam in the late summer and fall of 1963 was Kennedy’s primary occupation. He simply may not have had the capacity to be pushing two major initiatives on seemingly unwilling foreign nations.

Perhaps Feinberg played a role in the background. As historian Seymour Hersh reported, Feinberg had said, “I fought the strongest battle of my career to keep them from a full inspection. I violently intervened not once but half a dozen times.”<sup>240</sup> Feinberg claimed to Hersh that he was notified of US demands for inspections by Myer Feldman.<sup>241</sup> Through Feldman, Feinberg relayed his political complaints about inspections to the President. “The message was anything but subtle,” Hersh reports. “Insisting on an inspection of Dimona would result in less support in the 1964 presidential campaign.”<sup>242</sup> By August, 1963, Dallek explains, Kennedy already had his eyes on the 1964 election.<sup>243</sup> Thus, Feinberg insisting that pushing the Israelis too hard on the nuclear issue would lead to negative electoral consequences for Kennedy could have been effective. Unfortunately, Feinberg’s covert nature prevents this theory from being verified.

Whether or not Feinberg was involved in this manner, Kennedy was slated to receive a real reward for what was an unprecedentedly pro-Israel presidency, a presidency marked by increased financial aid and the first US sale of advanced weaponry to Israel, the HAWK missile. On December 5th, 1963 Feinberg scheduled a fundraiser for the Weizmann Institute at New York’s newest hotel, the Americana. Kennedy himself was to be the keynote speaker and honoree. Tickets to the event cost \$250 a seat (or more than \$2,000 in 2021 dollars). While not a fundraiser for him per se, Kennedy would have had the opportunity to speak directly to some of New York’s wealthiest Jewish and pro-Israel constituents. Indeed, the invitation itself had a



message from Feinberg saying that Kennedy's presence "demonstrates President Kennedy's interest in the welfare of Israel and the American Jewish Community."<sup>244</sup>

Kennedy never attended the gala for the Weizmann Institute in his honor. On November 22, 1963, he was assassinated in Dallas Texas. Shaken by the murder of the president, Feinberg received a condolence letter from Teddy Kollek, his Israeli friend from the pre-State period who now worked in the office of the Prime Minister. "What a blow," it read, "what a calamitous blow to so many people, but more particularly for those like you who were so close to the great young man."<sup>245</sup> Feinberg's brother, Wilfred, would eulogize the President at Feinberg's synagogue, the Free Synagogue of Westchester.

When Johnson first took over as president, he is remembered telling either Israel's foreign minister Golda Meir or a group of Jewish leaders: "You have lost a good friend, but you have found a better one in me."<sup>246</sup> Yet, the relationship that Feinberg would personally develop with Lyndon Johnson over the next five years was also unlike those with previous presidents. Their friendship transcended Feinberg's transactional relationship with Kennedy. It was one of marked trust, of shared worldview, of mutual support and one that Feinberg would exploit to benefit his family and Israel.

## Chapter 4: Intermediary and Friend: The Johnson Years

### Intro

With Lyndon Johnson as President, Feinberg's role in the US-Israel relationship entered a new phase. If under Truman it was marked primarily as a fundraiser and arms smuggler and under Kennedy it was as a one-way pressure vehicle from the Israelis to the Administration in exchange for campaign contributions, the dynamic with the Johnson Administration was categorically different. Whereas Feinberg revered Truman and had a transactional relationship with Kennedy, he had a genuine friendship with Johnson.<sup>247</sup>

The Johnson-Feinberg friendship enabled both men to benefit in important ways. Johnson accurately perceived Feinberg to be a pressure vehicle of the Israelis, but he was the first president to flip the dynamic and use Feinberg to put pressure back on the Israelis. This was part of the broader diplomatic strategy implemented by the United States towards Israel that was more explicitly tit-for-tat (especially in arms sales) in that the US linked its deliverables to Israel to certain concessions from the Israelis. In this new bargaining arrangement, Feinberg was much more active in the foreign relations between the two countries than before, serving as an important intermediary between the two parties. Meanwhile, Feinberg understood that his friendship with Johnson would allow him to be a trusted advisor on US-Israel relations. Through this role, he intended to push the administration into a more pro-Israel posture.

The Feinberg-Johnson friendship enabled Feinberg to play a key intermediary role on three critical issues to US in the Middle East: arms sales to Israel and moderate Arab states in 1963-1966 and 1968; as a back-channel in the lead up to and in the wake of the June 1967 War; and on issues of Israel's nuclear program. It also played a role in Johnson's appointment of Feinberg's brother, Wilfred, to a judgeship on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit of US Court of Appeals.

### **Feinberg and Johnson: Two Men Alike**

Feinberg first met Johnson in 1948 when he donated to Johnson's successful senatorial campaign.<sup>248</sup> In many ways, they were quite similar. They were the same age, both born in 1908. They were both large men, standing six foot, three inches. And they were both the masters of their own world who got what they wanted. Johnson was famous for his levels of persuasion coming from the famed "Johnson Treatment." His biographer, Robert Dallek, described it as "supplication, accusation, cajolery, exuberance, scorn, tears, complaint, the hint of threat. It was all of these together. It ran the gamut of human emotions. Its velocity was breathtaking and it was all in one direction. ... [Johnson] moved close, his face a scant millimeter from his target, his eyes widening and narrowing, his eyebrows rising and falling. ... The Treatment [was] an almost hypnotic experience and rendered the target stunned and helpless." Yet, he would also have a personal touch, knowing the exact idiosyncrasies of each senator, their strengths and weaknesses, and how best to approach them.<sup>249</sup>

Feinberg too was one to use his stature and intellect as forms of persuasion. Former Brandeis President and friend of Feinberg's Jehudah Reinharz recalls sitting in Feinberg's office when Feinberg would get a call from the governor or the chairman of the senate. "You could see it," he said, "he was very straightforward, very rough, sometimes raising his voice. He was [an] imposing physique, over six feet. ... He clearly put the fear of god in people."<sup>250</sup> Such a temperament, combined with his high-powered contacts, his wealth, and his ability to take care of his family led Feinberg's nephew Daniel to refer to him as a "benign godfather."<sup>251</sup> Yet, as we have seen with Truman, Feinberg believed Presidents be respected and persuaded and spoken to with candor. He valued an informal relationship just as much as the formal one.<sup>252</sup>

Both men were also incredibly ambitious. At every step, Johnson attempted to remake his position and increase its prestige. As Congressman Richard Kleberg's secretary in the 1930s, Johnson ran the office and shaped Kleberg's politics.<sup>253</sup> As Senate Minority Leader, he attempted to unify a factionalized Democratic Party.<sup>254</sup> As Senate Majority Leader, he reinvented the position and became "the most effective Majority Leader in Senate history."<sup>255</sup> He even tried to remake the Vice Presidency and give it more policy roles rather than accept it as merely a ceremonial position.<sup>256</sup>

Feinberg was similarly ambitious and strived for greatness in his chosen fields. He had turned his small family hosiery business into one of the largest apparel companies in the United States. He was the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Brandeis University, and developed one of the primary funding vehicles for Israel's development, Israel Bonds. He provided the seed money to help Israel develop nuclear technology and had strong relations with leaders in the United States and Israel.

Johnson and Feinberg were also both masters of accumulating political debts as a means to enhance their power. To remake the role of Senate Majority leader in the mid 1950s, Johnson reduced the number of seats on minor committees and raised the numbers on major ones, thereby allowing him to give senators more prestigious and interesting committee assignments. This created a set of IOU's that he would utilize in future legislative battles. He would also dole out political "goodies" such as setting the legislative calendar to prioritize certain bills over others, shepherding certain bills through committee, and even assigning favored senators good offices and parking spots.<sup>257</sup> Meanwhile, as was shown in chapter 3, Feinberg's accumulated political debt from Kennedy was a critical component to his influence. Thus, these two men shared an outlook on how politics was carried out: transactional whereby you gained the more you gave.

Most importantly, Johnson trusted Feinberg. Johnson was perpetually worried about leaks coming out of his Administration. He wanted to control the narrative while getting advice from people he trusted. Feinberg was just that type of person. Jehuda Reinharz recalled of Feinberg: “He was also the kind of guy who I could tell things and ask his advice and he would never reveal them. You could put him on a rack and torture him and he would never reveal it. He was the kind of guy you wanted as a friend. He was totally trustworthy.”<sup>258</sup> Unfortunately, this same trait meant he kept no records of what he did and little leaked out to the media, presenting immense challenges to historians.

Finally, Johnson had long understood the power of money in politics. As part of his 1948 Senate campaign, he flew around north-central Texas in a helicopter to get from city to city faster while passing out campaign literature. He also employed an “advance team” of staffers to arrive in each city ahead of time to make sure that everything was ready for a successful visit from Johnson. All of this took a lot of money and Johnson was willing to spend above the legal limit to accommodate it. To ensure the donations from two prominent donors in particular, Sid Richardson and George and Hermon Brown, Johnson gave them political payoffs during his time in Congress. To Richardson, he helped assign government contracts and to the Browns, he gave shipbuilding contracts during World War II and the contract to build an army base in Guam.<sup>259</sup> That Feinberg operated in a similar way, giving hefty campaign contributions in exchange for a say in policy was likely a comfortable paradigm for Johnson.

### **Feinberg and Johnson 1964 Presidential Campaign**

Feinberg enthusiastically set out to ingratiate himself to the new president along these quid-pro-quo terms throughout 1964, Johnson’s election year. Feinberg pushed the Weizmann Institute dinner back to February 6th, 1964 after Kennedy’s assassination. While devastated by

Kennedy's assassination, he would not miss out on an opportunity to secure a political debt of his own. Feinberg chose to honor the new president, Lyndon Johnson, giving him the same benefits of access to wealthy Jewish donors that would have been bestowed on Kennedy.<sup>260</sup> On September 3, 1964, Democratic National Committee Finance Chairman, Dick McGuire—whom the *New York Times* called “easily the most powerful man in the national party structure”—reiterated Feinberg's commitment to Johnson in a telephone call.<sup>261</sup> McGuire told Johnson that Feinberg was “working 100% for you and that this is the way it's going to be.”<sup>262</sup> He went on to say, “they [one of which was Abe Feinberg] were doing it for President Kennedy as it were as they are now doing it for you, sir.”<sup>263</sup>

Feinberg was a part of the group to have raised at least \$500,000 for Kennedy on the condition that it would be repaid in pro-Israel action. Based on the above conversation, it can safely be assumed that Feinberg was engaged in similar activity for Johnson. Furthermore, Feinberg's contributions were unique. As referenced opaquely by McGuire, Feinberg didn't give to the DNC. He gave to the president himself through the president's personal aide, Walter Jenkins. At least \$250,000 in cash that Feinberg raised sat in Jenkins' safe for Johnson.<sup>264</sup>

Feinberg held mixed views about his fundraising. On the one hand, Feinberg told historian Seymour Hersh that “Raising money is a very humiliating process. ... People you don't respect piss all over you.”<sup>265</sup> For someone who held himself in such high regard, who was the chairman of one of the largest companies in his industry, fundraising was clearly demeaning.

Yet, it also granted him access to the most powerful people in the world, something he desperately sought. Therefore, on balance, the humiliation appears to have been worth it for Feinberg. With Johnson going on to win the 1964 election, Feinberg had ready access to the President himself. McGeorge Bundy, Johnson's first National Security Advisor whom he

inherited from Kennedy, thought it mostly had to do with money. Bundy recalled: “the President takes the call from Abe Feinberg, because it might mean another million dollars. Anyway, he likes Abe Feinberg.”<sup>266</sup> Through access, Feinberg and Johnson became “extremely close.”<sup>267</sup> Their similarities shined through and an informal friendship ensued.

### **An intermediary on US Tank Sales to Israel**

Yet, Feinberg’s relationship with the President was much more than a simple financial transaction or merely a friendship. In fact, Bundy himself introduced Feinberg to the US-Israel relationship not as explicitly a donor but as an intermediary to help with US-Israel relations.<sup>268</sup>

By spring of 1964, Johnson had three priorities in US-Israel relations. He viewed the Middle East through a Cold War lens and saw Nasser’s goal of uniting the Arab world as a communist threat in the Middle East that should be opposed.<sup>269</sup> This led him to be more instinctively close with Israel and sympathetic to its security needs. He saw it as a western power fighting communism in its region. Yet, the Cold War context also meant that the US needed to support Arab countries which had not yet sided with Nasser or the USSR, creating a divide between Israeli and American security interests.

Aside from the Cold War rationale, Johnson also had domestic political reasons to support Israel. Key donors like Feinberg expected it of him. Johnson understood how political debts worked. If he wanted to push through his ambitious domestic reforms such as the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act and other Great Society reforms, he needed to maintain the broadest base of support. Furthermore, support for Israel was popular in Congress and he assumed it would win him Jewish votes.

Finally, there was Israel’s unresolved nuclear program. Much of the Johnson administration, whether it was the State Department, the Pentagon, or the NSC, was very wary of

Israel developing a nuclear weapon. They feared Israel going nuclear would set off an arms race in the Middle East, would make Israel more bellicose, and would undermine America's global non-proliferation policy. Throughout the Kennedy years, the US had received assurances that it was only for peaceful purposes and had been given periodic invitations to "visit" the nuclear facility at Dimona. Yet, the Israelis would never authorize the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to visit it, and maintained a policy of nuclear ambiguity, whereby no one would know what Israel's nuclear status was.<sup>270</sup>

Decision makers in the NSC, State Department, and Defense Department had learned from the HAWK missile sale in 1962 that it needed to negotiate with Israel in a more direct, quid-pro-quo fashion.<sup>271</sup> They had discovered that unless they specified explicit Israeli commitments to take certain actions in the Americans' interest in exchange for American supplies of weapons, the Israelis would not take those actions. Therefore, when the Israelis came to the US asking to buy tanks (1963-1965), the US stalled. The Johnson Administration was inclined to sell the tanks to Israel because it deemed Israel's request as sufficiently necessary for Israel to maintain its security; it wanted to strengthen a regional ally; and wanted to demonstrate its support of Israel to the US Jewish community. However, because of its other foreign policy preferences, the Johnson administration preferred to do so secretly through West Germany to shield the US from the diplomatic blowback from the Arab world. Finally, the US hoped to use the tanks as leverage on the Israelis to gain stronger oversight over and firmer commitments regarding Israel's nuclear program at Dimona.<sup>272</sup>

It is within this framework that National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy brought Feinberg into picture in May 1964. During the tank negotiations, the Israelis put pressure on the Johnson Administration by leaking to their friends in Congress (most notably Republican New



York Senator Jacob Javits) their desire to get the tank deal concluded. Congressmen would then, in turn, press the administration to conclude the tank deal. To protect the West Germans from Arab pressure while also relieving Jewish, Israeli, and Congressional pressure on the Administration, Bundy and Johnson agreed to brief Feinberg and Senator Abe Ribicoff on their thinking regarding the tank sale. Feinberg and Ribicoff would then tell the Israeli Ambassador and US Senators respectively that “this is no time to rock the boat.”<sup>273</sup> The Israelis and senators should be confident that the Israelis would get the tanks but that the negotiations needed to remain out of the public eye.

Here, the Johnson Administration, for the first time on record, turned the tables on the Israelis. It decided to use Feinberg’s influence with the Israelis to diffuse Israeli, Jewish, and Congressional pressure on the Administration to buy it time to proceed with the bargaining arrangement. Because Feinberg was successful in alleviating the pressure, the Johnson Administration was able to secure two concessions from the Israelis. First, it made sure they did not buy French missiles capable of delivering a nuclear warhead, a practical limitation on Israel’s nuclear weapons pursuit. Second, the Israelis allowed the Americans to update the Egyptians on Israel’s nuclear program to prevent misunderstandings. This second concession represented a change in Israeli strategy from wanting to keep the Egyptians “in the dark” to the more cautious American approach of permitting American reassurances and diffusing the situation. Johnson achieved all that while buying more time to delay the arms sale. Forty of the 150 US-made tanks were delivered to Israel via West Germany by February 1965.<sup>274</sup>

We do not know how Feinberg viewed his role as an intermediary on behalf of the Johnson administration in this instance. It is the first time where Feinberg was put in the position of needing to restrain the Israelis, and he never spoke publicly of such interactions. However,

Feinberg was delivering good news. Israel would get the tanks! Furthermore, Feinberg was a calculating man. Whatever doubts he may have had in pushing the Israelis to accommodate US preferences, he likely understood the value of his relationship to Johnson in Israel's eyes.

Johnson was expressing real confidence in him to serve as a backchannel. If he violated that trust, his access could have been limited and so he could no longer push the administration in a pro-Israel direction. Thus, he likely served as a loyal and honest messenger on Johnson's behalf to the Israelis. His loyalty and honesty are only reinforced by his success.

However, in February 1965, there were press leaks about the West German tank sale to the Israelis. In response to intense Arab criticism and Egyptian threats to no longer recognize West Germany but East Germany, the West Germans backed out of delivering the rest of the tanks. Meanwhile, Israel's eastern neighbor, Jordan, was under pressure from Egypt and the USSR to accept Soviet arms. The US perceived the Jordanian King, King Hussein, to be in a strategically weak position. In 1964, King Hussein had told the US that the Soviets were offering to sell him MiG-21 [interceptor] planes. The US considered Jordan a moderate Arab state and a state that had traditionally been an ally of the US in the region against the USSR. The prospect of it turning to the USSR deeply concerned US policy makers in terms of the Cold War balance of power in the Middle East.<sup>275</sup>

Therefore, in February 1965, the US tried to link Israel's remaining tank delivery as well as an additional 100 tanks to Israeli acquiescence to US plane sales to Jordan. To convey the message, Johnson personally turned to Feinberg. In their February 20th phone call, Johnson told Feinberg that the Israelis had two options: they could accept the tanks and controlled arms sales to Jordan and not make a big fuss about it, or they would get no tanks and the US wouldn't sell any arms to Jordan. After all, Johnson said, he had no interest in being an arms dealer but "if

anyone is pro [Israel] I am and I want to work with them and want to help them... [but] this little King [the King of Jordan] has some value to us and we ought to keep him as far away from the Soviet [Union] and Nasser as we can.”<sup>276</sup> Yet, ultimately, Johnson said, he was going to tell Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, “you’re going to decide this. ... Now you just make a decision and get ahold of Abe Feinberg, who’s a man I trust most and tell him.”<sup>277</sup> If they weren’t going to sell tanks to Jordan, then Johnson wanted “some editorials asking me to do it. I don’t want to be out there on a limb I’ve got to walk back on.”<sup>278</sup>

Here, Feinberg’s source of power was reversed again. No longer was it simply that the Israelis trusted him for all he had done in the past. The President of the United States was the one imbuing him with his trust to act on his behalf. Feinberg was a signaling message that the President was serious. Being placed in such a position was likely confusing for Feinberg. Much of Feinberg’s self-understanding up until this point had been that he was working to benefit Israel through his contacts in the administration. He viewed himself as the actor not as a tool. Now, his role was much more ambiguous because while he may have shared the President’s view that a Soviet-aligned Jordan presented a greater threat to Israel, the Israelis themselves had not yet perceived that. Otherwise, they would not have opposed the sales. Thus, for the first time, he was placed in the position of telling the Israelis what they should do in their security policy, of being a tool of the president rather than an advocate for Israel.

Johnson ultimately sent Robert Komer, the man who handled the Middle East for the National Security Council and Averell Harriman, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, to negotiate the final details with Israeli Prime Minister Eshkol. Komer handled the real policy parts of the negotiation while Harriman was there to symbolize that it was a friendly interaction.<sup>279</sup> The deal concluded in mid-March, 1965 with the Israelis agreeing to US sales of

planes and tanks to Jordan and accepting the US tank sales while also committing vaguely “not to be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the region.”<sup>280</sup>

The Israeli commitment on nuclear weapons was a far cry from what Komer hoped when he began the bargaining interaction over tanks in 1963. His big picture goal was to place the nuclear program under the oversight of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in order to better monitor it. Feinberg’s back channel diplomacy could be instructive. It is difficult to imagine that Feinberg serving as the President’s personal messenger on this issue had no impact on the Israelis. Indeed, for years, he was seen by the Israelis as “one of us.”<sup>281</sup> He likely told the Israelis exactly what the President told him, that it was in Israel’s security interests for the US to arm the Jordanians at a low level instead of having the Soviets arm him.

Furthermore, Feinberg did not pressure the Israelis on the nuclear issue because the President did not tell him to do so. That Feinberg was speaking directly for the President rather than any other agency suggests that the Israelis took the Feinberg channel much more seriously than the Komer-Harriman channel that *did* choose to push the nuclear issue. Knowing that Feinberg knew about Dimona and had alerted them in the past when it was a presidential priority, the Israelis likely perceived that its absence from Feinberg’s communications that the real concession they would need to make for the tanks was Jordanian arms sales, not Dimona.

Israeli historian Zaki Shalom went further in his assessment of the situation. He argued, “In light of the diplomats’ observations *and following talks with Abraham (Abe) Feinberg* [emphasis added], an American Jewish leader and close friend of Johnson’s who was in direct contact with Eshkol,<sup>282</sup> the president concluded that Eshkol would reject any fixed formula on the Dimona Project that would seem to compromise Israeli sovereignty.”<sup>283</sup> Johnson recognized that the US didn’t have the leverage to lock Israel into a hard agreement on the Dimona reactor.

Shalom implied that Feinberg himself played a key role in convincing the president of his own lack of leverage. Perhaps he told him that the Israelis simply wouldn't accept it while also laying out political consequences for not following through on the deal. Thus, in a variety of ways, Feinberg played a critical role in mediating the 1965 tank sale to the Israelis and plane and tank sales to Jordan, while also allowing the Israelis to maintain maximum flexibility with regard to their nuclear program.

At this point, Feinberg was likely pleased with his accomplishment. He had helped secure tanks for the Israelis while protecting its nuclear program, a program he felt was essential to Israel's long-term national security. Conceding the weapons sale to Jordan, while not ideal, was something he could live with.

### **Feinberg Puts His Brother on the Court... Again**

Not all of Feinberg's work with the White House was political. On August 23rd, 1965, Thurgood Marshall was appointed the Solicitor General of the United States, the first African American to ever hold the position and the highest ranking African American in the government. However, Marshall's appointment opened up a judgeship on the 2nd Circuit of the US Court of Appeals. Just as he had tried to get his brother a Federal District Court appointment under Kennedy, so Feinberg now pushed for his brother Wilfred to take Marshall's open seat.

As early as July 15, Johnson would run Wilfred Feinberg's name by Marshall himself.<sup>284</sup> Two months later, on September 28, Feinberg had a 25-minute conversation with the President.<sup>285</sup> Later that day, President Johnson told Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach "I'm committed to Feinberg and I want to get it up there as soon as I can."<sup>286</sup> Wilfred Feinberg would be Johnson's judicial nominee.

Johnson personally had little regard for the role of judges in shaping policy. He likely saw them as political favors to be given out to his supporters and friends. In that same conversation with Katzenbach, Johnson said, in regard to another judicial appointment, “I don’t give a damn who’s judge in Boston.”<sup>287</sup> In a separate judicial appointment, Johnson selected his long-time friend, Abe Fortas, to serve on the US Supreme Court.

After briefly considering giving Wilfred Feinberg a recess appointment in October 1965, Johnson continued to push New York Senator Robert Kennedy to sign off on the appointment. The deciding factor was that Kennedy’s preferred candidate, Edward Weinfeld, was 64, making him too old to make a long-term impact on the court.<sup>288</sup> Wilfred Feinberg, on the other hand was only 45 at the time of his appointment, and would go on to serve for another 23 years. He was also appointed to the district court by Bobby’s brother, John F. Kennedy which “sort of took out of any objections Bobby Kennedy could have.”<sup>289</sup> Furthermore, Wilfred Feinberg had never been reversed in his time on the district court, indicating he was a worthy candidate on the merits, quite apart from the influence deployed on his behalf.<sup>290</sup> On January 19th, 1966, Wilfred was nominated to the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals and confirmed on March 4th.

### **The Friendship Matures**

Feinberg also continued to maintain his friendship with the President in 1966. He traveled to Houston with Johnson aboard Air Force One for one of Johnson’s speeches. Upon their return to Washington, he flew with the President on Marine One back to the White House.<sup>291</sup> He also attended the Presidential Ball, a dinner honoring the President at the New York Waldorf Astoria as part of the President’s Club.<sup>292</sup> Such banquets were routine for Feinberg. He threw them regularly throughout the 1950s and 1960s as fundraisers for politicians and as informal ways to gain access and express friendship. It was a style of life with which he was quite comfortable.

Unfortunately, he struggled much more in his family life. The same traits that made him a powerful businessman and allowed him to thrive among other high-powered individuals—his confidence, intensity, and “take-no-prisoners” attitude—turned off family members. He would come home and read the newspaper where he could not be bothered.<sup>293</sup> He took an overbearing and paternal attitude towards his sister, Belle, and her passion for music. While he offered loans for his family, he always made sure they knew its source. He fought with his son Richard’s wife, which complicated his relationship with him and his grandchildren.<sup>294</sup>

### **Feinberg Under Fire**

In the political realm, for much of 1966, Feinberg served as an informal liaison between the Jewish community writ large and the administration rather than playing a role in back-channel diplomacy. Perhaps this was due to American frustration at Israel’s willingness to use a backchannel.<sup>295</sup> In any event, he was expected to convey US positions on Israel to the Jewish community. He was brought in on May 19, 1966 for a 45 minute off the record meeting with Johnson<sup>296</sup> where he was likely told in advance of the agreement by the United States to sell 48 Skyhawk planes, which was to be announced to the public the next day.<sup>297</sup> In July, 1966, Feinberg met with the President to go over the guest-list for an “Israeli dinner” that he was putting together for the President.<sup>298</sup> The following month, when Israel’s president, Zalman Shazar made his first trip to the United States, Feinberg attended the 150-person dinner in his honor in the East Room.<sup>299</sup> In October, 1966, Feinberg was told ahead of time of the US decision to approve of an Export-Import Bank loan to help Israel buy a 7<sup>th</sup> Boeing Jet for El Al, Israel’s commercial airline. The end of the notice read, “[the] President wished you to be notified.”<sup>300</sup>

Many members of the Jewish community did not appreciate this informal dynamic whereby Feinberg spoke for the entire Jewish community. They resented the fact that Johnson

thought he could gain Jewish support just by stating his support to Israel to a man like Feinberg while ignoring concerns like his Administration's policies in Vietnam. As 1966 progressed, the Vietnam War was growing increasingly unpopular across the United States. The Jewish community was no different. Furthermore, because Jews tended to be more liberal, they were less likely to support the Johnson Administration because of its Vietnam policy, regardless of its policies on Israel. Despite this fissure within the Jewish community, Johnson understood South Vietnam and Israel to be comparable: small "free world" countries fighting aggression. He thought it was hypocritical for American Jews to support Israel but not the South Vietnamese.<sup>301</sup> Yet, the primary way he communicated his feelings towards Jews was through Feinberg. A relationship that had started out usefully on both sides was becoming dysfunctional.

The Johnson Administration was openly criticized by some members of the Jewish community. The antizionist American Council for Judaism (ACJ) was understandably frustrated by this dynamic. According to historian Walter Hixson, they criticized "the maintenance of 'Jewish presidential advisers' as well as the expectation that 'Jewish leaders' could deliver 'Jewish votes,'" fundamental assumptions that underlay Feinberg's relationship to the administration.<sup>302</sup> Feinberg didn't speak for them.

Even wealthy Jewish Zionist donors were turned off by the close Johnson-Feinberg relationship. Chicago real estate developer and leader in the Jewish community Philip Klutznick wrote to Feinberg that current dynamic of having the President communicate to a very select group of Jews (of whom Feinberg was one) and expecting them to be his messengers, giving a couple of speeches and accepting medals at the request of a handful of Jewish organizations was a poor strategy. Without saying it explicitly and in a much more polite tone, he implied the same critique that ACJ had made: you alone do not and cannot represent the entire "Jewish vote."



Rather, the administration needed to have a broader understanding of what constituted the Jewish vote and needed to do a better job of being more inclusive in its messaging. This, he believed, would save the administration a lot of trouble with the Jewish vote on other issues that Jews cared about such as the Vietnam War and race issues.

These disagreements within the American Jewish community led to criticism of Johnson, both publicly and privately, which frustrated Johnson greatly. Feinberg tried to console the President. In October 1966, Feinberg wrote to Johnson, “No President has had a more empathetic bond to the Jewish community than you.” Nevertheless, Feinberg also tried to explain where the Jewish community was coming from. He told him, “the Jewish community is not monolithic, but that, to quote a remark attributed to Mark Twain, ‘Jews are like all other people only more so.’”<sup>303</sup> This advice was consistent with the advice he gave President Truman: the Jewish vote was not monolithic and should not be understood as such.

Johnson replied four days later on October 7, 1966 thanking Feinberg for his “warm and understanding letter.” “Surely no one could have written his President and friend a more encouraging letter,” he wrote. Not explicitly referencing Vietnam or Israel, Johnson attempted to give a vague justification for US efforts in Vietnam, opening the door to the possibility that it was an “error of commission,” an error from trying to do too much. Nevertheless, he expressed hope that Americans would understand that “we are committing everything we have to helping those who need us at home and abroad,” and that mistakes made were in that vein.<sup>304</sup>

Feinberg disregarded criticism of his relationship with Johnson. He cherished his access to and friendship with the President and believed that he was serving the Jewish community’s interests.

Unfortunately, it appears that Johnson did not heed Feinberg's advice. In November 1966, Johnson attempted to use Feinberg as his surrogate explicitly. Feinberg was given a letter, drafted by the new National Security Advisor, Walt W. Rostow, in the President's name that was clearly intended to be his reiteration of all he had done for Israel and therefore, for the Jews. That the letter came only days before the midterm elections confirms its purpose. In the letter's preface, Rostow wrote on behalf of the President that "The depth and breadth of these programs is impressive. So is the fact that our total aid to Israel last year was higher than any previous single year because of significant military credits."<sup>305</sup> The implication is obvious. This is all I have done for Israel, I expect the Jews to vote for Democrats.

### **Samu, Aid, and the March to the June 1967 War**

Soon thereafter, Feinberg re-engaged in the business of the US-Israel relationship in December 1966. On November 13th, Israel launched a retaliatory raid on Samu, a city just south of Hebron in the Jordanian controlled West Bank. The Israeli explanation was that it was in retaliation for a mine that had killed three Israeli soldiers on the Israeli-Jordanian border. 125 houses were destroyed, despite the fact that later evidence suggested that the mine incident was staged by the Palestinian Liberation Front, a Palestinian (Arab) militia, not the Jordanians.<sup>306</sup>

The Johnson Administration was furious. Rostow told the president that it "gravely damaged their unspoken truce with [King] Hussein."<sup>307</sup> A core tenet of Middle East stability was keeping the Israeli-Jordanian border quiet and arming both the Israelis and the Jordanians to keep the Jordanians out of the Soviet and Nasser sphere of influence (which Johnson saw as one in the same). Johnson dispatched the US Ambassador to Israel, Wally Barbour, to tell Eshkol personally that if such retaliatory raids continued, it could bring about a "reassessment of the premises on which our decisions regarding military supply to Israel were based."<sup>308</sup>

The Johnson Administration also felt that in order to keep Jordan out of the Soviet and Nasser spheres of influence, it would need to re-supply the Jordanian military in accordance with Jordan's requests. However, domestic political considerations threatened to get in the way. Rostow recognized that "we may have to look like we're making some anti-Israel gestures before we're done."<sup>309</sup> Therefore, he recommended that they loop in Feinberg for a "pre-emptive briefing."<sup>310</sup>

Such a pre-emptive briefing took place on December 9th, 1966. Robert Komer, the President's special advisor and a member of the National Security Council met with Feinberg and laid out the administration's thinking. He told them of the impending arms sales to Jordan and to tell the Israelis and her friends in America to "keep their shirts on, and not start telling us how to handle Jordan again. Their credentials were hardly very good on this subject."<sup>311</sup> Feinberg said he would pass the message along to Israeli Foreign Minister, Abba Eban.

In this situation, Feinberg was most uneasy about his role as an intermediary. He was being asked explicitly to reprimand the Israelis for a military action that they had taken. Who was he to question the actions that the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) took on behalf of the security of the state of Israel? For this reason, he pushed back on the administration, arguing that if the Jordanians would be armed, so too should the Israelis. He also argued that US pressure on the Israelis would have political consequences.<sup>312</sup>

While Feinberg's message was received by the Administration, Feinberg was instructed to "pass on the full flavor of" Robert Komer's, the special assistant to the President and former National Security Advisor, to the Israelis.<sup>313</sup> It was critical that the Israelis understood the importance of arming Jordan "unless they want an enemy,"<sup>314</sup> a Soviet and/or Nasser backed Jordan on Israel's border. Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, Feinberg complied.

By December 13th, the issue that generated the “most bitter backlash from the United States ... in Johnson’s tenure,” was handled.<sup>315</sup> The Americans would supply the requested arms to the Jordanians. The Israelis were briefed through official channels via their Ambassador, Abe Harmon, and likely through unofficial channels by Feinberg.<sup>316</sup> Feinberg agreed to shut down criticism of the deal inside the US Jewish community, while the administration promised that neither it, nor Jordan would leak the arms sale.

Nevertheless, because of the Samu incident and regular nagging from the Israelis to receive compensatory aid for the aid the US gave to Jordan, Feinberg remained a key contact in US-Israel relations from December 1966 through the end of the June 1967 War, a war that fundamentally changed the Middle East. From February 1967-May 1967, Feinberg remained an informal go-between for the Johnson Administration and the Israelis, specifically on questions of aid level.

After returning from Israel in March 1967, Feinberg met with the president on March 16th 1967, before yet another one of his private trips to Israel.<sup>317</sup> The Israelis liked to know that Feinberg had met with the president before he came to them.<sup>318</sup> Johnson raised the importance of setting a date for another visit to Dimona as a condition for giving Israel any aid. He also expressed his displeasure at Eshkol’s failure to respond to the President’s March 1965 letter recommending IAEA safeguards at Dimona. Finally, Johnson gave the “headings” of the type of aid that the Israelis could expect,<sup>319</sup> though he remained non-committal as the agencies were still discussing the details.<sup>320</sup>

It seems Feinberg was a key person to get the negotiations moving. On March 21, Saunders wrote Rostow, “As I understand the President’s instructions after meeting with Feinberg, our next step is to get State, Defense, and AID together for an agreed upon proposal”

[underlining his].<sup>321</sup> Furthermore, it seems only after Feinberg's meeting with the President and his likely meeting with high level Israeli officials did the Israelis agree to a US visit to Dimona.<sup>322</sup> The State and Defense Departments were still nervous about continuing to become arms suppliers, but ultimately compromised and permitted to give Israel 100 armored personnel carriers (APCs).<sup>323</sup> While they saw the APCs as some leverage, they did not see them as enough leverage to cause Israel to abandon the Dimona project completely.<sup>324</sup>

In mid-May, 1967, Feinberg again met with the President upon his return from Israel.<sup>325</sup> Evidently, the US was satisfied with what it saw at Dimona, so Feinberg was told that the aid package will "substantially meet their requests."<sup>326</sup> In that same May 16th meeting, Feinberg was also asked about Israel's view towards Syria. The evolving situation in the Middle East necessitated the Feinberg backchannel.

### **The June 1967 War**

Tensions had heated up since April with border clashes along the Israeli-Syrian border.<sup>327</sup> By May 14th, the Egyptians had received what they deemed to be credible intelligence from the Soviets that Israel was preparing to launch an attack on Syria.<sup>328</sup> They likely transferred this to the US, who then asked Feinberg about Israel's intentions. While sympathizing with the Israeli position of defending its borders from Syrian sponsored Palestinian aggression, Rostow and Secretary of State Dean Rusk believed that Israel needed to be careful not to instigate a hot war.<sup>329</sup> What Feinberg told the President is unknown as the meeting was off the record.<sup>330</sup> Nevertheless, it brought Feinberg into the loop on what Johnson believed to be the most serious diplomatic crisis of his presidency.<sup>331</sup>

Because the Egyptians believed the Soviet claim of an imminent Israeli attack on Syria, with whom Egypt had a mutual defense pact, Nasser called up his reserves and stationed them in

the Sinai while dismissing UN Peacekeepers. Because his army would not tolerate Israeli shipping through the Straits of Tiran, on May 22, Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran, a key outlet for Israeli shipping in the Red Sea.<sup>332</sup> Johnson called for de-escalation and demobilization of the armed forces as well as condemning the closure of the Straits and the departure of UN Peacekeepers.<sup>333</sup> Feinberg phoned the president and gave his approval.<sup>334</sup>

Nasser, in closing the Straits of Tiran and requesting the departure of UN Peacekeepers, hoped to restore the status quo from before the 1956 War.<sup>335</sup> His bellicose speech on May 26, 1967 only threatened Israel more and made it feel as though there was a “noose around its neck.”<sup>336</sup> Historian Gideon Remez, author of *Foxbats Over Dimona* (2008), argues that these actions, in the lead up to the June 1967 War were centered on a failed Arab-Soviet plot to destroy Dimona.<sup>337</sup> Another historian, Michael Oren (2002), argues that the cause of war mirrored the causes of World War I: a game of brinkmanship gone too far that accidentally spilled into war.<sup>338</sup>

Feinberg served as a backchannel throughout the lead-up to the war. Eshkol’s primary objective in late May was to try and have the American’s either break the blockade of the Straits or support an Israeli attempt to open the Straits. While Johnson called for a diplomatic solution to the conflict, after Egypt signed a mutual defense pact with Jordan on May 30th,<sup>339</sup> Feinberg relayed back to Eshkol that Johnson believed “that an Israeli preemptive strike was the only possible course.”<sup>340</sup> He, like the Israelis, likely believed that Israel was on the brink of annihilation. With this expectation, the Israelis prepped their preemptive strike. At a reception in New York on the night of June 3-4, Feinberg whispered to President Johnson, “Mr. President, it can’t be held any longer. It’s going to happen within the next twenty-four hours.”<sup>341</sup>

On the morning of June 5th, Israel launched a preemptive attack against the Egyptian air force, destroying 68% of Egypt's fighter planes and making thirteen air bases inoperable.<sup>342</sup> In response, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq declared war on Israel. The Johnson Administration was silent until June 7 when it issued a statement of "neutrality in word, thought, and deed," and suspended aid to both sides. Feinberg was furious with this statement. He knew it didn't reflect the president's true beliefs and he expected better of his friend. He was not alone. Many other Jews, including Arthur Krim, chairman of United Artists (a large entertainment company) and close friend of President Johnson's, decried the statement. So Feinberg went to Rostow and requested "Presidential action to stem the anti-Johnson feelings on the part of the Jewish people on behalf of the neutrality statement."<sup>343</sup>

Here, Feinberg's dueling loyalties to the President and to Israel can be seen most clearly. He was loyal to the president so he asked for something to give to the Jewish community to restore their faith in Johnson. Thus, National Security Advisor Walt Rostow told the President that Feinberg "couldn't be more loyal, but the average U.S. Zionist doesn't understand."<sup>344</sup> Yet, such phrasing also implied Feinberg's advocacy on behalf of Israel as an equally strong force. Only a pro-Israel statement or gesture could re-ingratiate Johnson with Feinberg and with the Zionist community. For this reason, Feinberg alerted Johnson through Rostow that "[Eban] was going to take the position of no withdrawal without a definitive peace, and he would be seeing [U.S. Ambassador to the UN Arthur] Goldberg to ask for U.S. support. Feinberg thought this was the way for the President to retrieve his position after the McCloskey statement."<sup>345</sup>

The Johnson Administration wouldn't go that far, but it would get pretty close to that formulation. On June 19, Johnson came out with his five principles for ending the war: mutual recognition of the rights of each state in the region to exist; assured territorial integrity and

political independence of all states; guaranteed freedom of navigation through international waterways; a Middle East arms control agreement; and a resolution to the refugee crisis.<sup>346</sup>

These terms wouldn't be accepted by the Arab States who wanted to simply return to the status quo of June 4th, 1967. Ultimately, the proximate resolution would come in the form of UN Security Council Resolution 242 unanimously passed on November 22, 1967. The resolution closely mirrored Johnson's principles from June 19th. It called for

Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from [territories](#) occupied in the recent conflict; (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force; [and] *Affirms further* the necessity (a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area; (b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem; (c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones.<sup>347</sup>

Egypt, whose representative then sat on the Security Council as a rotating member, agreed to the terms because it did declare the “inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war,” it never explicitly called for recognition of Israel, and called for “Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from [the] [territories](#) occupied in the recent conflict” in the Arabic and French versions, though not the English. The use of the definite article “the” is critical because it implies that Israel would withdraw from all territory it acquired in 1967 while the English version without “the” implies Israel only has to give up some of the territories.<sup>348</sup> This ambiguity lies at the heart of disagreement of UNSC Resolution 242 to this day.

### **Feinberg Returns as the Mediator, and Friend**

By the end of 1967 and into early 1968, Feinberg returned to his more familiar role of intermediary for the Israelis and a friend of Johnson's. He encouraged the administration to lift



its arms embargo on Israel and resume arms sales and consider resupplying the Israeli air force.<sup>349</sup> Johnson in turn used Feinberg to quell Congressional opposition to renewed arms sales to moderate Arab countries.<sup>350</sup> In the meantime, their friendship grew closer. Feinberg spent a night at the White House in October 1967,<sup>351</sup> reviewed a thirty-minute press interview Johnson did for “the three networks” with his wife, Lady Bird, in December,<sup>352</sup> and even provided commentary on his final State of the Union in January 1968. In response, Johnson thanked his friend, concluding, “As always, I am proud and grateful to share the leadership of this proud nation with you.”<sup>353</sup>

### **Phantoms and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**

From January through June 1968, Feinberg would have monthly meetings with the president, all of which were off the record. It is safe to assume that he applied pressure on the administration to release supersonic F-4 Phantom planes, capable of delivering a nuclear weapon.<sup>354</sup> Feinberg had been engaged in weapons negotiations before and had raised the issue of Phantoms previously with the President. Furthermore, this was the primary issue in US-Israel relations at the time. While the Congress supported the sale, the Johnson Administration wanted to use the Phantom planes as leverage to get the Israelis to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), whose language had just been finalized. Israel even voted in the UN General Assembly to support the treaty.<sup>355</sup>

As the year wore on and upon further Israeli inspection, however, the Israelis realized the bind they had been placed in. If they signed the treaty as a non-nuclear state, their obligations under the treaty would force them to allow full International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections at all their sites rather than maintaining their agreement for informal US visits. The Israelis had fought for years to prevent IAEA control of their nuclear facilities and were not

willing to change now. Yet, signing it as a nuclear state would have undermined their strategy of nuclear ambiguity, where they tried to keep their Arab neighbors in the dark as to their nuclear capabilities in order to serve as an effective deterrent without causing an arms race. In addition, signing as a nuclear state would have shown the world that all of Israel's and the US's previous assurances of its peaceful nuclear program were lies. Therefore, the Israelis simply hoped to buy time and wait out the Johnson Administration.<sup>356</sup>

By June, Johnson had decided to sell the Phantoms to the Israelis.<sup>357</sup> However, until October 1968, he wanted to make it seem as though he was forced into it, with no alternative.<sup>358</sup> Why Johnson came to this conclusion is anyone's guess. Investigative journalist Seymour Hersh argued, "It was, perhaps, nothing more than his farewell gift to the Israeli people and his way of repaying the loyalty of Abe Feinberg."<sup>359</sup> Such repayment was for the long list of deeds Feinberg did for the president, from private donations to serving as an intermediary, to becoming his friend. After all, both Feinberg and Johnson understood political debts. For these reasons, in the same conversation that Johnson first admitted his intent to sell the Phantoms, he went on to say that Feinberg "is the finest I ever saw."<sup>360</sup>

Perhaps Feinberg sealed the deal with Johnson during their trip to the Johnson Ranch together from May 31-June 2, 1968. That weekend, Feinberg and his wife Lillian spent the weekend with the Johnsons. Johnson himself personally picked up Feinberg at the airport.<sup>361</sup> Feinberg also recalled swimming in the President's pool with Johnson.<sup>362</sup> David Feinberg, Feinberg's nephew said that his uncle Abe forgot his pajamas on that trip to the Johnson Ranch. Yet, because Feinberg and Johnson were of similar stature, Feinberg slept in the President's pajamas.

Perhaps the decision to sell the Phantoms and decouple the NPT from the Phantom sale was for more macro political and military reasons. Johnson had already stated that he no longer sought reelection. Furthermore, Johnson could have reasoned based on the “sense of Congress” that either of his successors would give Israel the Phantoms anyway.<sup>363</sup> Therefore, he hoped to get the credit.

He also may have known that efforts to couple Phantom sales for a signature on the NPT were impractical. Johnson received “eyes-only” or highly classified estimates from the NSA in mid-summer 1968 that Israel had a full nuclear weapons capability.<sup>364</sup> Thus, linking the Phantoms to the NPT would do little to stop Israel from going nuclear. Furthermore, it would only embarrass the US and Israel on the world stage. No matter how Israel signed, it would come out that Israel and the US had been lying about its nuclear program for almost a decade, claiming it was only for peaceful purposes. If Israel signed as a non-nuclear state, Israel would be subject to IAEA oversight over its whole nuclear infrastructure, which would expose its military nature. If it signed the treaty as a nuclear weapons state, then the US and Israel would be openly admitting to having lied to the world throughout the 1960s.

With these two alternatives, it would be far better to leave it ambiguous and force every country to figure out Israel’s nuclear position for themselves.<sup>365</sup> While much of this logic represents much of Israel’s strategic thinking on the issue, it is possible that Feinberg was aware of it and that he presented it to Johnson off the record.

Nevertheless, despite the President’s private feelings, the State Department and Pentagon attempted to maintain the link of Israel’s signature of the NPT in exchange for the Phantoms. Negotiations between Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Warnke and Israeli Ambassador to the United States Yitzhak Rabin in October 1968 began on this premise.

Once they were linked in negotiations, Feinberg called up Rostow to tell him that the Israelis were “up in arms” over the linkage. Rostow told Feinberg that neither the President, nor the Secretary of Defense authorized this linkage.<sup>366</sup> With this confirmation of policy from the President via Feinberg, Rabin was in a clear position to hold his ground. For the next two weeks, however, Warnke continued to press the Israelis to sign the NPT.<sup>367</sup> To end the stalemate, Feinberg again was contacted by Rabin to get presidential interference. Feinberg contacted Warnke and confirmed that there would be no preconditions on the Phantom sales.<sup>368</sup> The Israelis would receive the Phantoms without signing the NPT. All they gave was a reiteration that they “would not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the region.”<sup>369</sup>

The implication here cannot be understated. Feinberg’s call led to the US ceding all of its remaining leverage on Israel’s nuclear program. By not forcing Israel to sign NPT, the United States accepted the reality that Israel would become a nuclear weapons state. Thus, from the moment of providing the seed money for the nuclear program to acting as an advocate for decoupling the issue in an arms sale, Feinberg played a key role in creating and solidifying Israel’s nuclear status.

### **Conclusion: Feinberg After Johnson**

Unfortunately for Feinberg, during these negotiations, Republican and former Vice President Richard Nixon defeated Johnson’s Vice President Hubert Humphry in the 1968 elections. In line with Feinberg’s pattern of contributions to Democratic candidates, he had given Humphry \$250,000 in his campaign<sup>370</sup> and served as one of his delegates at the famously contentious Democratic Convention in Chicago.<sup>371</sup> With the loss, Feinberg lost much of his access to the Presidency. He never again achieved the level of access he had enjoyed during the Johnson Administration.

Nevertheless, his role in shaping US-Israel relations should not be understated despite his lack of influence post-1968. Feinberg had helped push US foreign policy during the Kennedy and Johnson years from one of Middle East balance to a clearly pro-Israel position. With Henry Kissinger serving as Nixon's National Security Advisor and later Secretary of State, the US officially solidified this fundamental shift in its approach to the Middle East. In light of Israel's victory in the June 1967 War and its possession of nuclear weapons, Kissinger believed Israel to be a strong Western power in the Middle East and scrapped any semblance of a balanced approach to dealing with the troubles in the region. Such a position had been inconceivable when Nixon was Vice President from 1953-1961 and is a testament to the shifts in US foreign policy that occurred from 1961-1969.

Outside of politics, Feinberg, who turned sixty-one in 1969, remained active in business and philanthropy. He served as the chairman of American Bank and Trust until 1976.<sup>372</sup> He dabbled in real estate both in New York and Israel, building The Excelsior apartment building in New York in 1967 and the Jerusalem Hilton in 1974.<sup>373</sup> Having been granted the license to bottle and sell Coca-Cola in Israel in 1967, he continued to make business and philanthropic trips to Israel for the rest of his life.<sup>374</sup> After years of serving on the American Committee of the Weizmann Institute, in 1971, he was sworn in as the chair of the board of the Weizmann Institute.<sup>375</sup> When his son Richard passed away in 1996, because Richard was a distinguished member of the faculty of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine at Yeshiva University in New York, Feinberg endowed an academic chair for schizophrenia research in Richard's memory.<sup>376</sup> In his will, he donated money to Brandeis University, whose board he had once chaired, to create the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life.

For all that Feinberg accomplished, he was content to have worked largely behind the scenes. For that, “Abe Feinberg must surely rank as one of the authentic giants in Jewish public and philanthropic affairs,” Abe Sachar, Brandeis’ University’s first president wrote in his memoir.<sup>377</sup> “He did not seek any accolades or trophies, he wasn’t after any recognition,” another former Brandeis President, Jehuda Reinharz told me. “If he wanted to, he could get as much as he wanted.”<sup>378</sup> Indeed, when Feinberg was named the B’nai B’rith Man of the year in 1960, President Truman observed that in addition to the good works by Feinberg that had been made public, “I could name two or three times as many that he has done anonymously, without personal credit and always at sacrifice to himself.”<sup>379</sup>

Indeed, in one of Feinberg’s most introspective moments late in life, he laid out what he hoped his legacy would be. “In periods of depression,” he wrote “I look back upon [what I did for the state of Israel] to re-bolster my satisfaction in having contributed in some small degree to the creation of a state for our people.” By methods that were usually out of the spotlight, and at times may well have been illegal, Feinberg achieved his ultimate objective of helping to build the modern state of Israel.

## Appendix: A Note on Sources

In many places in this thesis, I relied upon testimony from Abe Feinberg himself to describe his actions. I tried whenever possible to supplement Feinberg's own accounts with material from other sources, combing the digitally available versions of the *Foreign Relations of the United States*, whatever has been digitized at the Truman and Johnson Libraries, and 23 of the relevant files scanned for me by the Kennedy Library. I have also relied upon declassified FBI files that are currently available through the Israel Lobby Archive online.

I would like to have had access to a more expansive source base. My limited access was the result of two compounding factors: Feinberg's own decision to not keep records of his actions and the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic of 2020-2021.

As the reader can see, Feinberg was a secretive man who worked to control the narrative about himself (See pgs 3-5 of intro). Therefore, much of what is available about his activities is available because he wanted it in the public domain.

Second, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I was unable to gain access to the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential library or the National Archives. I was also unable to visit Israel to cross-reference stories Feinberg told with Israeli sources such as Ben-Gurion's diaries, the archives of the Weizmann Institute, and the Israeli National Archives. I was also unable to meet with Sy Hersh and inspect his notes of his interview with Feinberg, which is the most extensive primary record of Feinberg's involvement on the nuclear issue. I also could not undertake a complete FOIA request on Abe Feinberg because the FOIA process takes longer than I had to research.

Thus, I am fully aware of the shortcomings of the sources provided. Future historians would be wise to build on my work and cross-reference my thesis with sources from areas unavailable to me.

## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/oral-histories/feinberg>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/oral-histories/feinberg#33>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/oh-bundym-19690130-1-07-17>
- <sup>4</sup> Interview with Reinharz.
- <sup>5</sup> Weissberg Interview
- <sup>6</sup> Annie Pollard and Daniel Soyer, *Emerging Metropolis: New York Jews in the Age of Immigration, 1840-1920* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 254.
- <sup>7</sup> Feinberg, Steven (Abe Feinberg's grandson). Interview with Max Rotenberg in person 10/14/2020
- <sup>8</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Feinberg, David (Abe Feinberg's nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone 1/8/2021
- <sup>11</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>12</sup> Abraham Feinberg, "The Anatomy of Commitment," *Rehovot*, 1974, pp. 18-23, [https://weizmann.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/delivery/972WIS\\_INST:972WIS\\_V1/1252222440003596?lang=en](https://weizmann.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/delivery/972WIS_INST:972WIS_V1/1252222440003596?lang=en), 18.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> Pollard and Soyer, *Emerging Metropolis*, 245-248
- <sup>15</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>16</sup> "Nuremberg Race Laws," Holocaust Encyclopedia (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, September 11, 2019), <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/nuremberg-laws>.
- <sup>17</sup> "Anti-Jewish Legislation in Prewar Germany." Holocaust Encyclopedia (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum), <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/anti-jewish-legislation-in-prewar-germany>.
- <sup>18</sup> Feinberg, "The Anatomy of Commitment," 18
- <sup>19</sup> While to the contemporary reader the term Palestine implies support for Arabs of the region, prior to 1948 it was simply the name of the area under the British Mandate, occupying the area from the Jordan River in the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west and from the Red Sea in the South to a diplomatically agreed upon border with the French in Lebanon in the north, just beyond the Sea of Galilee.
- <sup>20</sup> Feinberg, "The Anatomy of Commitment," 18
- <sup>21</sup> Melvin I. Urofsky, *American Zionism from Herzl to the Holocaust* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1975), 395.
- <sup>22</sup> Feinberg, "The Anatomy of Commitment," 18
- <sup>23</sup> "Anti-Jewish Legislation in Prewar Germany," Holocaust Encyclopedia (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum), accessed March 31, 2021, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/anti-jewish-legislation-in-prewar-germany>.
- <sup>24</sup> Feinberg, Steven (Abe Feinberg's Grandson). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 8/3/2020
- <sup>25</sup> Norbert Weissberg, email to the author, January 31, 2021.
- <sup>26</sup> Susannah Handley, *Nylon: The Story of a Fashion Revolution: A Celebration of Design from Art Silk to Nylon and Thinking Fibres* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 36.
- <sup>27</sup> L. B. Glickman, "'Make Lisle the Style': The Politics of Fashion in the Japanese Silk Boycott, 1937-1940," *Journal of Social History* 38, no. 3 (January 2005): pp. 573-608, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jsh.2005.0032>.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid. p. 597.
- <sup>29</sup> Feinberg, Steven (Abe Feinberg's Grandson). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 8/3/2020
- <sup>30</sup> United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, *ABRAHAM FEINBERG, aka, Abraham Fineberg*, (1952), pp. 1-4, <https://www.israellobby.org/Feinberg/04171952background.pdf>.
- <sup>31</sup> Pap Ndiaye, *Nylon and Bombs: DuPont and the March of Modern America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 91.
- <sup>32</sup> Handley, "'Make Lisle the Style,'" 46
- <sup>33</sup> Ndiaye, *Nylon and Bombs*, 101
- <sup>34</sup> FBI, *ABRAHAM FEINBERG, aka, Abraham Fineberg* (1952), pp. 1-4, <https://www.israellobby.org/Feinberg/04171952background.pdf>.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> Feinberg, Daniel (Abe Feinberg's Nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/6/2021



- <sup>37</sup> “Daily Life in the Ghettos,” yadvashem.org (Yad Vashem: The World Holocaust Remembrance Center), accessed March 31, 2021, <https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/about/ghettos/daily-life.html> and “Ghettos,” Holocaust Encyclopedia (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, December 4, 2019), <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/ghettos>.
- <sup>38</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>39</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 18, and James Bradley, Robert Cowley, and Jamce Chace, “The Presidency of Henry Wallace,” in *More What If?: Eminent Historians Imagine What Might Have Been* (London: Macmillan, 2002), 394.
- <sup>40</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 19
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>43</sup> Marie D. Natoli, “Harry S. Truman and the Contemporary Vice Presidency,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (1988): pp. 81-84, 81.
- <sup>44</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>48</sup> Jeffrey S. Gurock and Leonard Dinnerstein, “America, American Jews, and the Holocaust,” in *American Jewish History* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1998), pp. 427-440.
- <sup>49</sup> Walter L. Hixson, *Israel's Armor: The Israel Lobby and the First Generation of the Palestine Conflict* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 35.
- <sup>50</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 19
- <sup>51</sup> Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 38-39
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>53</sup> Michael Joseph Cohen, *Truman and Israel* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), 110.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 48
- <sup>55</sup> Yishuv is a broad term that means literally “settlement” in Hebrew. It refers to the organized Jewish community in Mandate Palestine. This included schools, hospitals, universities, as well as quasi-governmental operations such as delivering basic social services, labor unions, political parties, agricultural collectives, and militias.
- <sup>56</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 19
- <sup>57</sup> Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 39
- <sup>58</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 19
- <sup>59</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>60</sup> Ricky-Dale Calhoun, “Arming David: The Haganah's Illegal Arms Procurement Network in the United States, 1945–49,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 36, no. 4 (January 2007): pp. 22-32, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2007.36.4.22>.
- <sup>61</sup> United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), *Correlation Summary* (1956), 14, [https://www.israellobby.org/Feinberg/01301956\\_correlation\\_summary.pdf](https://www.israellobby.org/Feinberg/01301956_correlation_summary.pdf) and Calhoun, “Arming David,” 25.
- <sup>62</sup> Feinberg, Steven (Abe Feinberg’s Grandson). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 8/3/2020
- <sup>63</sup> *Logistics in World War II: Final Report of the Army Service Forces* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1993), [https://history.army.mil/html/books/070/70-29/CMH\\_Pub\\_70-29.pdf](https://history.army.mil/html/books/070/70-29/CMH_Pub_70-29.pdf), 230, and Calhoun, “Arming David,” 23-24.
- <sup>64</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 20
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid. p. 19
- <sup>66</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>67</sup> Dinnerstein, “America, American Jews, and the Holocaust,” 427-440
- <sup>68</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>70</sup> The telegram never got through because the British intercepted it.
- <sup>71</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>72</sup> Michael Karpin, *The Bomb in the Basement: How Israel Went Nuclear and What That Means for the World* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 133.
- <sup>73</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 19

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- <sup>77</sup> Abe Feinberg (Waltham, Massachusetts, n.d.).
- <sup>78</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 20
- <sup>79</sup> Shimon Peres, *No Room for Small Dreams: Courage, Imagination, and the Making of Modern Israel* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2017), 55.
- <sup>80</sup> FBI, *Correlation Summary* (1956), 103
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>83</sup> Natan Aridan, *Advocating For Israel: Diplomats and Lobbyists from Truman to Nixon* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 24.
- <sup>84</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 20
- <sup>85</sup> Michael Cohen, *Truman and Israel*, 143
- <sup>86</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>87</sup> Michael Cohen, *Truman and Israel*, 144
- <sup>88</sup> Ibid. p. 143-146
- <sup>89</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 20
- <sup>90</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>91</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>92</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 23
- <sup>93</sup> Norman A. Rose, *Chaim Weizmann: A Biography* (London: George Weidenfeld & Nicolson Limited, 1986), 420.
- <sup>94</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 20
- <sup>95</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>96</sup> FBI, *Correlation Summary* (1956), 7
- <sup>97</sup> Michael Cohen, *Truman and Israel* 149-172
- <sup>98</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>99</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>100</sup> Rose, *Chaim Weizmann*, 429-430
- <sup>101</sup> Michael Cohen, *Truman and Israel*, 173-219
- <sup>102</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>103</sup> Morris W Barzilai, “A Time of Jubilation, A Time to Dream,” n.d.
- <sup>104</sup> Philip White, *Whistle Stop: How 31,000 Miles of Train Travel, 352 Speeches, and A Little Midwest Gumption Saved the Presidency of Harry Truman* (Lebanon, NH: ForeEdge, 2015), 138.
- <sup>105</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>106</sup> White, *Whistle Stop*, 8.
- <sup>107</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>108</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>109</sup> Weissberg, Norbert (Abe Feinberg’s Son-in-Law). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/18/2021
- <sup>110</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>111</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>112</sup> Weissberg, Norbert (Abe Feinberg’s Son-in-Law). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/18/2021
- <sup>113</sup> FBI, *Correlation Summary* (1956), 4, 19, and 102
- <sup>114</sup> Sue Fishkoff, “He Ushered Israel To The White House,” *The Jerusalem Post*, December 30, 1994, sec. Features, pp. 10
- <sup>115</sup> Weissberg, Norbert (Abe Feinberg’s Son-in-Law). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 8/23/2020
- <sup>116</sup> Fishkoff, “He Ushered Israel to the White House,” 10
- <sup>117</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 70
- <sup>118</sup> Ibid. p. 37
- <sup>119</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>120</sup> Fishkoff, “He Ushered Israel to the White House,” 10
- <sup>121</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>122</sup> Aryeh Manor and Shimon Peres (Boston, Massachusetts, n.d.).
- <sup>123</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 38
- <sup>124</sup> Shimon Peres *No Room For Small Dreams* (50-51)
- <sup>125</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 3
- <sup>126</sup> Memorandum of Conversation with Mr. Abraham Feinberg and John A. Waldo, July 17, 1951. Dean G. Acheson Papers, “July, 1951.” Harry S. Truman Presidential Library.
- <sup>127</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>128</sup> Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 78
- <sup>129</sup> FBI, *Correlation Summary* (1956), 33
- <sup>130</sup> Ibid. p. 48
- <sup>131</sup> Subin v. Goldsmith, CaseText (United States Court of Appeals, Second Circuit 1955).
- <sup>132</sup> Feinberg, Daniel (Abe Feinberg's nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone 1/6/2021.
- <sup>133</sup> Subin v. Goldsmith, CaseText (United States Court of Appeals, Second Circuit 1955)
- <sup>134</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>135</sup> Suzanne Spellen, "Past and Present: The Julius Kayser Company, Clinton Hill," *Brownstoner*, January 16, 2015, <https://www.brownstoner.com/history/past-and-present-the-julius-kayser-company-clinton-hill/>.
- <sup>136</sup> Drew Pearson, "Mississippi Race Violence Backfires, Forces Reform," *Independent*, November 13, 1964, sec. Editorial, p. B-2, <https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/24118974/?terms=%22Abe%20Feinberg%22%20%2B%20%22Kayser-Roth%22&match=1>.
- <sup>137</sup> Steven Rattner, "Financial Intrigue, Mystery Shroud American Bank and Trust Collapse," *New York Times*, September 25, 1976, <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/09/25/archives/financial-intrigue-mystery-shroud-american-bank-and-trust-collapse.html>.
- <sup>138</sup> Gabriel Sheffer, *Moshe Sharett: Biography of a Political Moderate* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 645.
- <sup>139</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 54
- <sup>140</sup> Photo of BG giving his speech at the King David Hotel (document 38)
- <sup>141</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 54
- <sup>142</sup> Charles Weiss, "Bond Leader Sees Investment at Work," *Jerusalem Post*, June 19, 1956, p. 2.
- <sup>143</sup> Weissberg, Norbert (Abe Feinberg's Son-in-Law). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/18/2021
- <sup>144</sup> Reinhartz, Jehudah (Friend of Abe Feinberg, former president of Brandeis University, and biographer of Haim Weizmann). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/19/2021
- <sup>145</sup> Weiss, "Bond Leader Sees Investment at Work," 2
- <sup>146</sup> "Israel Bonds Leadership Parley Hears Seven Year Totals Noted," *The Jewish Advocate*, January 16, 1958, p. 7.
- <sup>147</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>148</sup> Feinberg, Daniel (Abe Feinberg's nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone 1/6/2021.
- <sup>149</sup> Feinberg, Steven (Abe Feinberg's grandson). Interview with Max Rotenberg in person 10/14/2020
- <sup>150</sup> "Paid Notice: Deaths Feinberg, Abraham," *New York Times*, December 8, 1998, sec. B, p. 10, <https://www.nytimes.com/1998/12/08/classified/paid-notice-deaths-feinberg-abraham.html>.
- <sup>151</sup> Feinberg, "The Anatomy of Commitment," 23
- <sup>152</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>153</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998), 28.
- <sup>154</sup> Ibid. p. 30-40
- <sup>155</sup> Seymour M. Hersh, *The Samson Option: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy* (New York: RandomHouse, 1991), 27.
- <sup>156</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 12.
- <sup>157</sup> Feinberg, "The Anatomy of Commitment," 23
- <sup>158</sup> Since the 19th century, France had held Algeria as a colony. Beginning in 1954, native Algerians, led by the National Liberation Front (FLN) fought a war against French colonial rule. The war lasted eight years. The agreement referenced above bound Israelis to collect and share intelligence that would link Egypt to arming the FLN.
- <sup>159</sup> Karpin, *The Bomb in the Basement*, 81-91.
- <sup>160</sup> Ibid. p. 136. (Karpin cites Ben-Gurion's own diaries for this claim. Those diaries are currently in Israel and have not been digitized. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was unable to see this in its primary source.)
- <sup>161</sup> Karpin, *The Bomb in the Basement*, 136-7, Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 66-67.
- <sup>162</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 66-67.
- <sup>163</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 141
- <sup>164</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 94.
- <sup>165</sup> "Abraham Feinberg's FBI File," Israel Lobby Archive (The Institute for Research: Middle Eastern Policy), accessed March 31, 2021, <https://www.israellobby.org/Feinberg/>. However, he was asked to register as a foreign agent for his work with "Israel Speaks" in 1952. Instead of registering, he shut down the paper.
- <sup>166</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 208-213

- <sup>167</sup> For more info, see <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/22/612> for the statute and <https://www.justice.gov/nsd-fara/fara-index-and-act#611d> for the clarification of the term “Foreign Agent”
- <sup>168</sup> After World War II and throughout the Cold War, the US had a uniquely close relationship with the UK share its nuclear weapons technology with them. It was inconceivable that the US would have to balance its interests against Britain’s in the nuclear field.
- <sup>169</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 84-85
- <sup>170</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 53-55
- <sup>171</sup> The Jews of the United States, *The Jews of the United States* (The National Library of Israel), accessed March 31, 2021, [https://rosetta.nli.org.il/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps\\_pid=IE63522888&\\_ga=2.107202434.1883834747.1582145250-660694830.1582145250](https://rosetta.nli.org.il/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE63522888&_ga=2.107202434.1883834747.1582145250-660694830.1582145250).
- <sup>172</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 21, and The Jews of the United States (The National Library of Israel), and Mike Feldman Files “Jewish Problems (2 of 4)” pg 39
- <sup>173</sup> AP, “Kennedy Not Expecting Action This Fall on Demo Platform,” *The Hays Daily News*, August 5, 1960, p. 2, <https://newscomwc.newspapers.com/image/9132449/?terms=%22Abe%20Feinberg%22%20%2B%20%22Kayser-Roth%22&match=1>.
- and Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 21
- <sup>174</sup> Letter from I.L. Kenen to Myer Feldman, August 10, 1960. Myer Feldman Personal Papers, Box 008, “Jewish Problems (2 of 4),” JFK Presidential Library.
- Attendees at this meeting included some of the most influential Jews in Democratic Politics and give a flavor for Feinberg’s milieu at the time; Myer “Mike” Feldman, Kennedy’s liason to the Jewish community; Max Bressler, the president of the Zionist Organization of America; Leibel Katz, the president of B’nai B’rith; I.L. Kenen, the head of the newly created American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC); wealthy Jewish real estate developers Philip Kluztnick and Louis Boyar; investment banker Ira Guilden; Chicago Democratic boss Jacob Arvey, and teamster lawyer Morris Shenker.
- <sup>175</sup> Myer Feldman, recorded interview by John Stewart, August 26, 1967, (558), John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program, <https://www.jfklibrary.org/sites/default/files/archives/JFKOH/Feldman%2C%20Myer/JFKOH-MF-12/JFKOH-MF-12-TR.pdf>
- <sup>176</sup> Memorandum of Conference Between Senator Kennedy and Leaders of Various Jewish Organizations, Myer Feldman Personal Papers, Box 008, “Jewish Problems (4 of 4),” JFK Presidential Library.
- <sup>177</sup> Feldman interview by Stewart (1967), 558
- <sup>178</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>179</sup> Letters from Myer Feldman to Morris Shenker, Label A Katz, Ira Guilden, Max Bressler, Jacob Arvey, Irving Engel, Mark Boyar, Louis Boyar, Julian B. Venesky, Dewey D. Stone, and Abraham Feinberg, August 19-20, 1960; and “Position of Senator Kennedy on Various Issues Involving Israel and the Middle East.” August 19-20, 1960. Myer Feldman Personal Papers, Box 008, “Jewish Problems (2 of 4),” JFK Presidential Library.
- <sup>180</sup> Feinberg, “The Anatomy of Commitment,” 21
- <sup>181</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 97
- <sup>182</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>183</sup> John F Kennedy, “Speech by Senator John F. Kennedy, Zionists of America Convention, Statler Hilton Hotel, New York, NY,” The American Presidency Project (UC Santa Barbra, August 26, 1960), <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/speech-senator-john-f-kennedy-zionists-america-convention-statler-hilton-hotel-new-york-ny>.
- <sup>185</sup> The Jews of the United States, *The Jews of the United States* (The National Library of Israel), accessed March 31, 2021
- <sup>186</sup> Feldman interview by Stewart (1967), 558
- <sup>186</sup> Letter from Arthur L. Jacobs to Meyer Feldman, September 29, 1960; Letter from Arthur L. Jacobs to Stephen Smith, September 26, 1960; Letter from Arthur L. Jacobs to Senator John F. Kennedy, August 26, 1960; Myer Feldman Personal Papers, Box 008, “Jewish Problems (2 of 4),” JFK Presidential Library.
- <sup>187</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 97
- <sup>188</sup> Bar-Zohar, 274;
- <sup>189</sup> Weissberg, Norbert (Abe Feinberg’s Son-in-Law). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/18/2021
- <sup>190</sup> Feinberg, Daniel (Abe Feinberg’s nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone 3/9/2021
- <sup>191</sup> Weissberg, Norbert (Abe Feinberg’s Son-in-Law). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/18/2021
- <sup>192</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>193</sup> Wolfgang Saxson, "E. R. Feinberg, 64, Psychiatrist Who Treated Violent Children," *New York Times*, May 22, 1996, sec. D, p. 21, <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/05/22/nyregion/e-r-feinberg-64-psychiatrist-who-treated-violent-children.html>
- <sup>194</sup> Weissberg, Norbert (Abe Feinberg's Son-in-Law). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/18/2021
- <sup>195</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 85-88
- <sup>196</sup> Ibid. p. 89-92
- <sup>197</sup> Ibid. p. 95-97
- <sup>198</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 98
- <sup>199</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 100-103
- <sup>200</sup> Ibid. p. 104
- <sup>201</sup> Karpin, *The Bomb in the Basement*, 186
- <sup>202</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>203</sup> Tom Segev, *A State at Any Cost*. pg 629
- <sup>204</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963, Volume XVII, Near East, 1961-1962*, eds. Nina J. Noring (Washington: Government Printing, Office, 1994), Document 35 <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v17/d35>
- <sup>205</sup> Weizmann Institute pg. 4
- <sup>206</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 195
- <sup>207</sup> Memorandum for McGeorge Bundy, The White House, Subject: Press Interest in Ben-Gurion Visit, May 22, 1961; and Memorandum of Conversation: Discussion with Arab Ambassadors: President Kennedy's May 30 Meeting with Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion of Israel, June 2, 1961. National Security Files, Box 119a, "Israel: Subjects, Ben-Gurion Visit, 5/20/61-6/2/61." JFK Presidential Library.
- <sup>208</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>209</sup> Bar-Zohar, 272.
- <sup>210</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 108-109.
- <sup>211</sup> Ibid. p. 109.
- <sup>212</sup> Ibid. p. 108
- <sup>213</sup> Memorandum of Conversation: Discussion with Arab Ambassadors: President Kennedy's May 30 Meeting with Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion of Israel, June 2, 1961. National Security Files, Box 119a, "Israel: Subjects, Ben-Gurion Visit, 5/20/61-6/2/61." JFK Presidential Library.
- <sup>214</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 109
- <sup>215</sup> Ibid. p. 111
- <sup>216</sup> At the time of the Ben-Gurion-Kennedy meeting, much of the Knesset and Ben-Gurion's cabinet did not know the true purpose of the Dimona facility (Cohen 141). It would be discussed in a roundabout but muted fashion in 1962-1963 in Israel, with much of it hidden behind military censors and self-censorship. For these reasons, the path of least resistance was to continue funding the project rather than have it spill out into an open debate, which could have harmed Israel's national security.
- <sup>217</sup> Feinberg, Daniel (Abe Feinberg's nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone 1/6/2021
- <sup>218</sup> Feinberg, David (Abe Feinberg's nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone 1/8/2021
- <sup>219</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 98.
- <sup>220</sup> McGranery would go on to be Truman's last Attorney General.
- <sup>221</sup> "Wilfred Feinberg, Venerable Federal Jurist and Distinguished Law School Alumnus, Dies at Age 94," Columbia Law School, accessed March 31, 2021, <https://www.law.columbia.edu/news/archive/wilfred-feinberg-venerable-federal-jurist-and-distinguished-law-school-alumnus-dies-age-94>.
- <sup>222</sup> National Intelligence Estimate Number 35-61 (Supersedes 35-58): Outlook for Israel, October 5, 1961. National Security Files, Box 427, "Israel: 1961-1963 (Folder 2 of 2)." JFK Presidential Library, 6-7
- <sup>223</sup> Robert Dallek, *An Unfinished Life: John F. Kennedy, 1917-1963* (New York, NY: Back Bay Books/Little Brown and Company, 2003), 607-627.
- <sup>224</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 108
- <sup>225</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, Office of National Estimates, Memorandum for the Director, Subject: Consequences of Israeli Acquisition of Nuclear Capability\*, March 6, 1963. National Security Files, Box 427, "Israel: Nuclear Energy Program, 1963." JFK Presidential Library
- <sup>226</sup> Department of State Memorandum, Israel's Atomic Energy Program, March 15, 1963. National Security Files, Box 427, "Israel: Nuclear Energy Program, 1963." JFK Presidential Library

- <sup>227</sup> National Security Action Memorandum No. 231, TO: Secretary of State; Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission; Director of Central Intelligence, SUBJECT: Middle Eastern Nuclear Capabilities, March 26, 1963. National Security Files, Box 427, "Israel: Nuclear Energy Program, 1963." JFK Presidential Library
- <sup>228</sup> Zaki Shalom, *Israel's Nuclear Option: Behind the Scenes Diplomacy between Dimona and Washington* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2012), 46
- <sup>229</sup> Outgoing Telegram, Department of State, Action: Amembassy TEL AVIV 835, OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE, EYES ONLY, EMBTEL 894, March 18, 1963. National Security Files, Box 427, "Israel: Nuclear Energy Program, 1963." JFK Presidential Library
- <sup>230</sup> Letter from David Ben-Gurion to President Kennedy, March 27, 1963. National Security Files, Box 427, "Israel: Nuclear Energy Program, 1963." JFK Presidential Library
- <sup>231</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 131
- <sup>232</sup> MEMORANDUM FOR MR. McGEORGE BUNDY, THE WHITE HOUSE, SUBJECT: Reply to Israel Prime Minister Ben-Gurion on Dimona Visits, June 12, 1963. National Security Files, Box 427, "Israel: Nuclear Energy Program, 1963." JFK Presidential Library
- <sup>233</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 134
- <sup>234</sup> Ibid. p. 135
- <sup>235</sup> Segev, 649
- <sup>236</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 163
- <sup>237</sup> Shalom, *Israel's Nuclear Option*, 62.
- <sup>238</sup> Ibid. p. 66-68.
- <sup>239</sup> Dallek, *An Unfinished Life*, 672
- <sup>240</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 108
- <sup>241</sup> The relationship between Feinberg and Feldman is quite interesting. Feldman was Kennedy's official liaison to the Jewish community and worked in the White House. Feinberg was an outside financier who hoped to influence Kennedy with his money. At times throughout Feinberg's life, he was asked whether he wanted to come into the administration. Each time, he declined. Feinberg believed he could have the most impact by providing outside pressure on key issues. Thus, there was no rivalry between Feinberg and Feldman. While working together, they performed different functions.
- <sup>242</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 108
- <sup>243</sup> Dallek, *An Unfinished Life*, 689
- <sup>244</sup> Adlai E Stevenson (Boston, Massachusetts (MA), n.d.).
- <sup>245</sup> Abe Feinberg (Boston, Massachusetts (MA), n.d.).
- <sup>246</sup> Karpin, *The Bomb in the Basement*, 242, Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 222
- <sup>247</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>248</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 126; Weizmann Institute Article, pg 5.
- <sup>249</sup> Robert Dallek, *Lyndon B. Johnson: Portrait of a President* (London: Penguin Group, 2005), 87.
- <sup>250</sup> Reinhartz, Jehudah (Friend of Abe Feinberg, former president of Brandeis University, and biographer of Haim Weizmann). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/19/2021
- <sup>251</sup> Feinberg, Daniel (Abe Feinberg's nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone 1/6/2021.
- <sup>252</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>253</sup> Dallek, *Portrait of a President*, 22
- <sup>254</sup> Ibid. p. 79
- <sup>255</sup> Ibid. p. 82
- <sup>256</sup> Ibid. p. 122
- <sup>257</sup> Ibid. p. 83-86
- <sup>258</sup> Reinhartz, Jehudah (Friend of Abe Feinberg, former president of Brandeis University, and biographer of Haim Weizmann). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/19/2021
- <sup>259</sup> Dallek, *Portrait of a President*, 61-64.
- <sup>260</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 2/6/1964, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19640206>, pg 1.
- <sup>261</sup> AP, "Richard Maquire, Close Aide To President Kennedy, Dies," *New York Times*, February 21, 1983, sec. B, p. 8, <https://www.nytimes.com/1983/02/21/obituaries/richard-maquire-close-aide-to-president-kennedy-dies.html>.
- <sup>262</sup> Telephone conversation # 5461, sound recording, LBJ and DICK MAGUIRE, 9/3/1964, 1:05PM, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations and Meetings, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-05461>
- <sup>263</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>264</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 192-3.
- <sup>265</sup> Ibid. p. 193
- <sup>266</sup> Oral history transcript, McGeorge Bundy, interview 1 (I), 1/30/1969, by Paige E. Mulhollan, LBJ Library Oral Histories, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed March 31, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/oh-bundym-19690130-1-07-17>, 33
- <sup>267</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>268</sup> Telephone conversation # 3427, sound recording, LBJ and MCGEORGE BUNDY, 5/13/1964, 3:35PM, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations and Meetings, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-03427>
- <sup>269</sup> George C. Herring, *The American Century and Beyond U.S. Foreign Relations, 1893-2014*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 447.
- <sup>270</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 294-302
- <sup>271</sup> The HAWK sale was the first sale of advanced US arms to Israel. It was predicated on the benevolent assumption that if the US sold Israel the HAWK missiles, then Israel would accommodate US interests (i.e. admitting more Palestinian refugees into Israel and on the nuclear issue) more readily without need for an explicit link. When Israel then refused to cooperate, the NSC reassessed and implemented the strategy as shown above.
- <sup>272</sup> Abraham Ben-Zvi, *Lyndon B. Johnson and the Politics of Arms Sales to Israel: In the Shadow of the Hawk* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), 1-70.
- <sup>273</sup> Telephone conversation # 3427, sound recording, LBJ and MCGEORGE BUNDY, 5/13/1964 <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-03427>
- <sup>274</sup> Ben-Zvi, *In The Shadow of the Hawk*, 40, 44-45.
- <sup>275</sup> Ibid. p. 49-52
- <sup>276</sup> Telephone conversation # 6861, sound recording, LBJ and ABE FEINBERG, 2/20/1965, 11:00AM, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations and Meetings, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed January 23, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-06861> and Telephone conversation # 6862, sound recording, LBJ and ABE FEINBERG, 2/20/1965, 11:00AM, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations and Meetings, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-06862>
- <sup>277</sup> Telephone conversation # 6862, sound recording, LBJ and ABE FEINBERG, 2/20/1965, 11:00AM, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations and Meetings, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-06862>
- <sup>278</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>279</sup> Ben-Zvi, *In the Shadow of the Hawk*, 58
- <sup>280</sup> Ibid. p. 64-70
- <sup>281</sup> Karpin, *The Bomb in the Basement*, 186
- <sup>282</sup> Eshkol's biography mentions little about his relationship with Feinberg. However, one can surmise that just as Feinberg was passed down from Kennedy to Johnson on the American side, he was passed down from Ben Gurion to Eshkol. Furthermore, despite the personal rivalry between Ben-Gurion and Eshkol, he had contacts with key figures remaining in important decision making posts inside the Israeli government: Abba Eban (Eshkol's deputy Prime Minister), Abe Harmon (Israel's Ambassador to the US), Golda Meir (Israel's Foreign Minister),
- <sup>283</sup> Shalom, *Israel's Nuclear Option*, 116
- <sup>284</sup> This source is an audio recording of a conversation between President Johnson and Thurgood Marshall. While Johnson's statements are clear, Marshall's are garbled. However, based on the ensuing events, it is highly unlikely that he objected to the Feinberg nomination.
- <sup>285</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 9/28/1965, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19650928> pg. 3
- <sup>286</sup> Telephone conversation # 8906, sound recording, LBJ and NICHOLAS KATZENBACH, 9/28/1965, 8:12PM, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations and Meetings, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-08906>
- <sup>287</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>288</sup> Oral history transcript, Joseph A. Califano, interview 22 (XXII), 2/23/1988, by Michael L. Gillette, LBJ Library Oral Histories, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/oh-califanoj-19880223-22-11-76>
- <sup>289</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>290</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>291</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 4/28/1966, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19660428> pg. 12

- <sup>292</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 6/11/1966, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19660611> pg 8
- <sup>293</sup> Feinberg, Steven (Abe Feinberg's grandson). Interview with Max Rotenberg in person 10/14/2020
- <sup>294</sup> Feinberg, Daniel (Abe Feinberg's nephew). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone 1/6/2021
- <sup>295</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 229
- <sup>296</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 5/19/1966, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19660519> pg. 3
- <sup>297</sup> Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 157
- <sup>298</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 7/14/1966, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19660714> pg 10
- <sup>299</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 8/2/1966, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19660802> pg 7
- <sup>300</sup> Message from White House to Amembassy in Tel Aviv, October 10, 1966. Country Files, National Security Files, Box 140. Folder, "Israel - Volume 6, 12/66 - 7/67 [2 of 4]." LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b140-f2> pg. 42
- <sup>301</sup> Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 157
- <sup>302</sup> Ibid. p. 155
- <sup>303</sup> Abe Feinberg (Boston, Massachusetts (MA), n.d.).
- <sup>304</sup> Lyndon B Johnson (Boston, Massachusetts (MA), n.d.).
- <sup>305</sup> Letter from President Lyndon B. Johnson to Abe Feinberg, November 3, 1966. Country Files, National Security Files, Box 140. Folder, "Israel - Volume 6, 12/66 - 7/67 [2 of 4]." LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b140-f2>
- <sup>306</sup> Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 163-164
- <sup>307</sup> WH60811, December 27, 1966. Country Files, National Security Files, Box 140. Folder, "Israel - Volume 6, 12/66 - 7/67 [2 of 4]." LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b140-f2>
- <sup>308</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>309</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>310</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>311</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXVIII, The Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964-1967*, eds. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 360. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d360>
- <sup>312</sup> Ibid. and Note from Walt Rostow to Lyndon Johnson, December 10, 1966. Country Files, National Security Files, Box 140. Folder, "Israel - Volume 6, 12/66 - 7/67 [4 of 4].", LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b140-f4>
- <sup>313</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXVIII, The Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964-1967*, eds. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 360. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d360>
- <sup>314</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXVIII, The Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964-1967*, eds. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 359. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d359>
- <sup>315</sup> Michael B. Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 34.
- <sup>316</sup> Memorandum from Walt Rostow to President Johnson, December 22, 1966. Country Files, National Security Files, Box 146. Folder, "Jordan - Volume 3, 12/66 - 5/67 [1 of 2].", LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b146-f7>
- <sup>317</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 3/16/1967, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19670316> pg. 8. (Feinberg would make three trips to Israel in this six-month timespan.)
- <sup>318</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 9/30/1966, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19660930> pg 2.
- <sup>319</sup> Memorandum for the Record, March 17, 1967. Country Files, National Security Files, Box 140, Folder, "Israel - Volume 6, 12/66 - 7/67 [3 of 4].", LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 2, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b140-f3> (81)



<sup>320</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXVIII, The Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1964-1967*, eds. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 397.

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v18/d397>

<sup>321</sup> Memorandum For WWR, Subject: Next Step on Israeli Aid Package, March 21, 1967. Country Files, National Security Files, Box 140, Folder, "Israel – Volume 6, 12/66 – 7/67 [3 of 4]," LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 2, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b140-f3>.

<sup>322</sup> Shalom, *Israel's Nuclear Option*, 145.

<sup>323</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 232.

<sup>324</sup> Memorandum for the President, Subject: Your Meeting with Mr. Feinberg at 11:30 a.m., April 20, 1967. Country Files, National Security Files, Box 140, Folder, "Israel – Volume 6, 12/66 – 7/67 [3 of 4]," LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 2, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b140-f3>.

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<sup>325</sup> Memorandum for the President, Subject: Your meeting with Messrs. Feinberg and Ginsburgh, May 15, 1967. Country Files, National security Files, Box 140, Folder "Israel – Volume 6, 12/66 – 7/67 [2 of 4]," LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 2, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/nsf-cf-b140-f2>

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327</sup> The issue of rights to water from the Jordan river went back to 1948. Much of the water for the Jordan River comes from tributaries in Syria and Lebanon. In addition, the water of the Jordan River and its tributaries was seen as vital for the economic development of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel. In the early 1960s, Israel began diverting some of the water to be used for national development. In 1964, in response, the Arab League agreed to divert some of the tributaries themselves. Syria especially was involved in actually diverting the water itself using bulldozers. Israel fired on those bulldozers to prevent the diversion. The US hoped to find a peaceful solution to the water issue. Over the next three years, there would be a number of flare-ups between Syria and Israel over the issue, culminating with a Syrian sponsored Palestinian bombing of an Israeli water tanker along the Lebanese border, leading to open conflict and cross-boarder shooting. For more info, see Fred J. Khouri, "The Jordan River Controversy." *The Review of Politics* 27, no. 1 (1965): 32-57. Accessed April 2, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1405426>.

and Oren, *Six Days of War*, 46-47

<sup>328</sup> Oren, *Six Days of War*, 57-58

<sup>329</sup> Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 171.

<sup>330</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 5/16/1967, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19670516> pg. 4

<sup>331</sup> Oral history transcript, McGeorge Bundy, interview 3 (III), 3/19/1969, by Paige E. Mulhollan, LBJ Library Oral Histories, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/oh-bundym-19690319-3-07-19> p. 22

<sup>332</sup> Oren, *Six Days of War*, 57-58

<sup>333</sup> Lyndon B Johnson, "6. Statement by President Johnson, 23 May 1967" Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Government of Israel, May 23, 1967),

<https://mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook1/pages/6%20statement%20by%20president%20johnson-%2023%20may%201967.aspx>.

<sup>334</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 5/23/1967, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19670523> pg 8

<sup>335</sup> Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 172

<sup>336</sup> Stein, Kenneth W. "The Six-Day War." *Hist. 383: The Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Lecture, March 2018.

<sup>337</sup> Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez, *Foxbats Over Dimona: The Soviets' Nuclear Gamble in the Six-Day War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

<sup>338</sup> Oren, *Six Days of War*, Whole Book.

<sup>339</sup> Dallek, *Portrait of a President*, 283

<sup>340</sup> Oren, *Six Days of War*, 150

<sup>341</sup> Ibid. p. 166

<sup>342</sup> Ibid. p. 176

<sup>343</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 6/7/1967, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19670607> pg 14

<sup>344</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXIX, The Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967*, eds. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 195.

<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v19/d195>

- <sup>345</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXIX, The Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967*, eds. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 194. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v19/d194>. The McCloskey statement was the statement of US neutrality in the war.
- <sup>346</sup> Oren, *Six Days of War*, 324
- <sup>347</sup> S/RES/242 §. Accessed March 31, 2021. <https://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/7D35E1F729DF491C85256EE700686136>.
- <sup>348</sup> Oren, *Six Days of War*, 326
- <sup>349</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XXIX, The Arab-Israeli Crisis and War, 1967*, eds. Harriet Dashiell Schwar (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2000), Document 463. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v19/d463>
- <sup>350</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>351</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 10/10/1967, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19671010> pg 1 and President's Daily Diary entry, 10/9/1967, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19671009> pg 7
- <sup>352</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 12/18/1967, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19671218> pg 9
- <sup>353</sup> Lyndon B Johnson (Boston, Massachusetts (MA), n.d.).
- <sup>354</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 238; Hixson, *Israel's Armor*, 230
- <sup>355</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 300
- <sup>356</sup> Ibid. p. 301-310
- <sup>357</sup> Telephone conversation # 13129, sound recording, LBJ and ABE FORTAS, 6/21/1968, 3:48PM, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations and Meetings, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-13129>
- <sup>358</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>359</sup> Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 192.
- <sup>360</sup> Telephone conversation # 13129, sound recording, LBJ and ABE FORTAS, 6/21/1968, 3:48PM, Recordings and Transcripts of Telephone Conversations and Meetings, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/tel-13129>
- <sup>361</sup> President's Daily Diary entry, 5/31/1968, President's Daily Diary Collection, LBJ Presidential Library, accessed April 01, 2021, <https://www.discoverlbj.org/item/pdd-19680531>, pg 4, 7
- <sup>362</sup> Abraham Feinberg Oral History Interview, 1973
- <sup>363</sup> Ben-Zvi, *In the Shadow of the Hawk*, 117-120
- <sup>364</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 308
- <sup>365</sup> Ibid. p. 302-303.
- <sup>366</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XX, The Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1967-1968*, eds. Louis J. Smith (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2001), Document 290. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v20/d290>
- <sup>367</sup> Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 415
- <sup>368</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968, Volume XX, The Arab-Israeli Dispute, 1967-1968*, eds. Louis J. Smith (Washington, Government Printing Office, 2001), Document 313. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v20/d313>
- <sup>369</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>370</sup> Aridan, *Advocating for Israel*, 239
- <sup>371</sup> Democratic National Convention Delegate Medal, 1968, (Boston, Massachusetts (MA), n.d.).
- <sup>372</sup> Rattner, "Financial Intrigue, Mystery Shroud American Bank and Trust Collapse."
- <sup>373</sup> ProQuest Historical Newspapers The Jerusalem Post pg. 3 and Daniel Feinberg Interview March 9, 2021
- <sup>374</sup> Feinberg, Steven (Abe Feinberg's grandson). Interview with Max Rotenberg in person 10/14/2020
- <sup>375</sup> Rehovot Volume 6 Number 3 Winter 1971. Pg 43
- <sup>376</sup> "Paid Notice: Deaths Feinberg, Abraham," *New York Times*, December 8, 1998
- <sup>377</sup> Abram Leon Sachar, *Brandeis University: A Host at Last* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis Univ. Press, 1995), 195.
- <sup>378</sup> Reinharz, Jehudah (Friend of Abe Feinberg, former president of Brandeis University, and biographer of Haim Weizmann). Interview with Max Rotenberg by phone. 1/19/2021.
- <sup>379</sup> Eric Pace, "Abraham Feinberg, 90, Philanthropist for Israel," *New York Times*, December 7, 1998, sec. B, p. 10, <https://www.nytimes.com/1998/12/07/nyregion/abraham-feinberg-90-philanthropist-for-israel.html>.

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