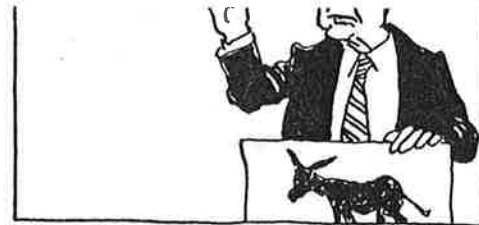
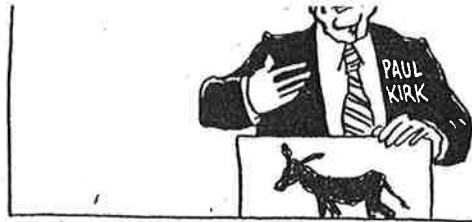


the budget deficit and controlling inflation; a year and a half ago the Republicans had the advantage on each of these issues.

One of the Democrats' most seasoned strategists, however, has just written a memorandum to the party's leading financial activists in which he argues that at the national level Democrats are in a desperate situation. "The unpleasant truth," he writes, "is this: The party has never been weaker in our lifetime, and the array of obstacles and trends never more alarming." The doomsayer is Patrick H. Caddell, who has been a key player in more presidential campaigns—1972, 1976, 1980 and 1984—than any other living Democrat.

Caddell and his associate, Thomas Riehle, examine electoral statistics from the past five presidential elections and come up with a startling conclusion: The Democratic Party has no base in national politics. Only the District of Columbia, with three electoral votes, has voted Democratic



## American Jews Have No Need to Cringe

By JOSEF JOFFE

MUNICH—"Is it good or bad for the Jews?" After centuries of bloody persecution, when any "it" might be an excuse for a pogrom, this question has virtually become part of a Jew's genes. And so it is no wonder that the Pollard affair has rattled the collective unconscious of Jews around the world.

Many American Jews have given vent to anxieties thought to be safely buried: We've had it good in America, and now there is Jonathan Pollard (like the Rosenbergs decades ago) to provide the *goym* with their best ammunition against us—the "dual-loyalty" smear. In Israel, on the other hand, widespread shame and anger directed at the government has been mixed with defiance, even *Schadenfreude*, toward the American Jewish community: You thought you had it good, but if America is the Promised Land, how come you are scurrying for cover just because of a little spying among friends?

Both sides are more wrong than right. American Jews should take heart in the fact that Jonathan Pollard is no Alfred Dreyfus, nor is the United States of the 1980s anything like the France of the 1890s.

Where is there a newspaper in the United States doing to Pollard (and the Jewish community) what the *Libre Parole* did to Dreyfus—first fingering him as traitor who spied for Germany while a captain on the French general staff, then whipping up anti-Jewish hysteria throughout the land? In the United States, by contrast, the press has bent backward to be fair to Pollard, while the finger-pointing and epithets have come from Jewish writers and spokesmen. In the xenophobic and chauvinistic atmosphere of the 1890s, Dreyfus' trials were conducted by kangaroo courts; it took 12 years of pressure by such luminaries as Emile Zola before Dreyfus was acquitted. Pollard, in contrast, enjoyed all the benefits of scrupulous due process.

These facts speak for a larger truth: America simply is not like the nation-states of Europe, period. Until the end of World War II, European Jews had never been allowed to become first-class citizens in their various national communities. No matter how brilliant, prosperous or patriotic, the Jew remained an enforced outsider. No matter how he might have tried to assimilate, he remained at best a French or German Jew, not a Jewish German or Frenchman.

In the United States everybody is from somewhere else, with memories or loyalties that tie him in one way or another to different political communities. To be 100% American and yet to take

an active interest in the well-being of different ethnic groups and political entities is—shall we say—as American as apple pie. It is certainly no automatic evidence of impending betrayal.

What's more, there is a crucial historical difference between the United States and Europe. In America there was a society before there was a powerful state that could claim the exclusive allegiance of its citizens. In Europe an omnipotent state built the nation, and if you spoke the wrong language or worshiped in the wrong church you could be in mortal trouble, as even the Protestant Huguenots found out in Catholic France.

America's pluralist and multi-ethnic constitution has not banished the demons of anti-Semitism, but it has made sure that Jew-hating is only one bigotry among many—not the one unifying banner that would mobilize a troubled society against the Jews, and the Jews only. If anything, the Pollard affair has proved that anti-Semitism does not "work" in contemporary America.

Instead of cringing, American Jews should draw comfort from this fact, but perhaps not too much of it. The problem is not that they will be held accountable for the stupidities of the Israeli government, which has added cowardice to *chutzpah* in the handling of Pollard and the aftermath. America is, and remains, the unique historical experiment that has allowed the Jews complete integration without demanding the loss of Jewish identity as a price.

The problem lies elsewhere. American Jews care about Israel, and many do so with a passion. Standing up for Israel remains a legitimate expression of pluralist politics in a country tied by interest and affection to the Jewish state. Yet, by using Pollard, the Israeli government has not just disinterred ancient Jewish anxieties, even feelings of panic; it has tainted what used to be above reproach: American Jewry's identification with the Zionist dream—which also happens to be the very lifeline of Israel.

Better that the choice between loyalties were never posed again. For, as columnist Michael Kinsley wrote recently: "If it came to 'betraying' America or Israel, the vast, vast majority of American Jews would betray Israel, and the Israelis know it." Turning Pollard against his own country was, as Talleyrand put it in a different context, "worse than a crime; it was a mistake"—even if Pollard had been Christian or Muslim.

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