

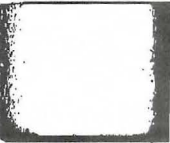
A Perspective on
**LOBBYING THE EXECUTIVE
 BRANCH**

A Report to the
 Strategic Planning Committee *
 Steve Rosen
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* of the AIPAC Board of
 Directors

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A PERSPECTIVE ON RELATIONS WITH THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

AIPAC was, for good reasons, founded and organized to relate to and influence the United States Senate and House of Representatives. Most of the parts of the AIPAC system are therefore designed and tailored to match the parts of the Congress, from the political education workshops through the electoral process monitoring, to the key contact system and the legislative liaisons. Our very claim to fame is that we are the only organization registered to lobby the Congress in behalf of U.S.-Israel relations.

Yet, most foreign policy is determined primarily by the agencies of the executive branch, with little or no congressional involvement. For example, the Reagan Plan, which was the centerpiece of U.S. policy toward Israel and the Middle East during one of the most turbulent years in AIPAC's history, was invented by, negotiated within, and implemented by the Administration. No Congressional hearings were held, no legislation was required, and no major acts of Congressional approval were sought.

Similarly, the decision of the Carter Administration to exclude Israel from the roster of nations with whom the U.S. sought to build a defense system for the Middle East, and the subsequent decision of the Reagan Administration to reverse this and institute a program for U.S.-Israel strategic cooperation, were both Administration decisions with little or no Congressional involvement.

Other examples abound: U.S. policy toward Israel's incursion into Lebanon; the recent Murphy mission and the decisions to meet/not meet with a joint delegation; the decisions to accept/not accept the Soviet Union as a party to Middle East negotiations--all these and other key events happen within the counsels of successive administrations, with sporadic congressional involvement at best.

Even on those issues that do come substantially within the purview of Congress—aid, trade, arms sales—the role of the Administration is critical. Rarely does the Congress increase aid to Israel by more than a margin of \$300 million over the President's request. But, this year, the President's request increased aid by almost two billion dollars, an amount that even our best friends would have found unattainable without Administration support.

On terms of aid, it was an Administration initiative, following the recommendation of the Carlucci Commission, to go from the loan/grant mix to all-grant.

Similarly, the Free Trade Area was an Administration initiative. Improvement of the MOA establishing the terms under which Israeli firms bid for U.S. Department of Defense contracts was an Administration initiative. Inclusion of Israel in the SDI research and development was done unilaterally by the Administration. Sending the U.S. Air Force to rescue Jews in Sudan was done by the Administration.

The point of all this is certainly not to depreciate the importance of our work with the Congress. What it does directly—billions in aid, arms sales, the many friendly amendments—is critical. And much of what it does not decide, ~~the existence of~~ an ardently pro-Israel congress influences. We must do everything in our power to maintain and strengthen our relations and influence with the widest possible coalition of friends in both houses of the Congress.

But after we have said that, it is also true that we face an enormous challenge in the Administration. And here, in contrast to our efforts in the legislative branch, the record so far is very spotty at best.

Consider: We lack entirely any key contacts to the President, his Chief of Staff, his Deputy Chief of Staff, the Deputy Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Deputy National Security Adviser to the President, and many other top officials. If these people were the heads of Congressional committees, this situation would not be tolerated for a day.

And, at the bureaucratic levels, the situation in some agencies is not much better. We have almost no contact with the vast bureaucracy of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. It is as if they were a foreign government. Similarly, the Central Intelligence Agency, and other key bodies.

What can we do about all this? The first thing we must do, is decide the degree of importance we intend to attach to the goal and its many parts. Because a serious program to transform our relations with the Executive branch would be an enormous undertaking, requiring a tremendous investment of resources of money, time, and attention. It might also require changes in some of the principles of policy that have guided us until now.

At the other end of the scale, we may decide that the costs and risks exceed the benefits, or that we simply do not have the resources. If this is the case, we should at least make a set of conscious choices with some discussion of the implications.

Staff Development. Below the political echelon of the Administration, the lay leader key contact system is of limited utility. Here, we are not dealing with elected officials, so there is resistance rather than receptivity to citizen involvement. Officials represent the nation as a whole, rather than a state or district. Unlike Congressmen, they do not have individual opinions, but must follow the policy of the President. They work for secretive rather than open institutions and agencies. And, perhaps most important of all for effective communications, they are in many cases experts in our subject themselves, as opposed to the "generalist" in Congress who might be convinced

by a few general "talking points" explained by a layman.

Lobbying executive branch agencies will generally depend on experienced staff professionals who belong to the same "community of discourse" as the officials they are approaching. These staff experts should have levels of experience commensurate with that of the officials they are expected to approach. For example, if we intend to deal seriously with the Pentagon, we need a contact person at mid-career, from a defense community background.

One need that is particularly critical, in my judgment, is to bring onto the staff an individual who understands and has relations with people in the political echelon of the White House in the Reagan Administration. At present, we are limited in our effectiveness by the fact that we have very little knowledge of the political players in the office of the President. I am proposing not so much a house "conservative", as a staff specialist in politics of the Administration. This should also be distinguished from expertise in the foreign policy apparatus of the Administration, which, to a degree, we already have. Candidates for an "Admin specialist" position do potentially exist (e.g., Ben Waldman).

We also need "critical mass" among professionals dealing with the executive branch and the Administration, so their efforts are mutually reinforcing like that of the legislative professionals. It is not sufficient to have one or two people "doing the executive branch" part time as an avocation. Critical mass does not come all at once, but I would hope that, say, three years from today, we would have four or five people working within a schematic plan comparable to the legislative liaison system.

Differences Between
Lobbying Congress and
Lobbying the Executive Branch*

<u>CONGRESS</u>	<u>EXECUTIVE BRANCH</u>
1. Responds	1. Initiates
2. Deals selectively with particular issues	2. Deals comprehensively with all issues, often guided by strategy or game plan
3. Contains little organized anti-Israel opposition	3. Contains strong, permanent opposition: the Arabists
4. Job security influenced by constituents	4. Job security not very influenced by constituents; appointive, many tenured
5. Representative, responsive, seeks constituency contacts	5. Systematically insulated from outside influence; many shun constituency contacts
6. Open	6. Secretive, veiled in security
7. Policy preferences defined largely by constituency concerns	7. Policy preferences defined by perceived "national interest," disdains "special interest groups"
8. Motivated by electoral politics which lobbyist must understand	8. Motivated by bureaucratic politics which lobbyist must understand
9. Generalists with little expertise, constituents often know more	9. Experts and dedicated functional specialists, constituents usually know less
10. Enunciate own views	10. Enunciate one policy
11. Able to negotiate change of position	11. Not usually able to negotiate change of position
12. Represent state or district	12. Represent nation as a whole
13. <u>LOBBYING BEST DONE</u> <u>CONSTITUENT-TO-MEMBER</u>	13. <u>LOBBYING BEST DONE</u> <u>EXPERT-TO-EXPERT</u>

* Meaning Executive Branch at Sub-Cabinet level