

Correlates of the Israeli Public's Support for a Peace Accord

Alvin Richman and David B. Nolle¹

Shortly after President Obama took office in 2009, the U.S. renewed its commitment to an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. This renewed commitment raises a number of issues, not the least of which are the Israeli public's views and concerns regarding a peace accord.

A New America Foundation (NAF) survey of Israelis in November, 2009 sheds important light on the public opinion context regarding a hypothetical U.S.-proposed Israeli-Palestinian peace plan. This survey includes a number of demographic and opinion measures which permit assessments of the various correlates of support or opposition to this plan. Two sets of findings stand out: The contrasts among different attitudinal correlates of support for the peace plan and the polarization of Israeli society over this issue.

Attitudinal correlates of support for a peace accord. Seven groups of opinion variables reflecting different themes or concerns are identified as possible correlates of support for a peace plan:

- Concerns about Israel's domestic economic and social needs have the highest correlations with support for a hypothetical Israeli-Palestinian peace accord, followed by attitudes toward President Obama, concerns about an accord's ramifications for Israel's security, and the plan's potential to reduce Israel's international isolation.
- Because of the long history of U.S. support and peace promotion efforts involving Israel, attitudes toward the United States were expected to be closely related to Israelis' positions on the hypothetical U.S.-proposed peace accord. The NAF survey itself shows most Israelis have a favorable image of the United States, regard U.S. support of Israel as essential, and believe the U.S. would reduce this support if Israel were to reject a U.S. peace proposal. Nevertheless, none of these attitudes regarding the U.S. shows a meaningful correlation with Israeli support of a U.S.-proposed peace plan. At a minimum, this unexpected set of findings indicates that views of the United States and its ability to pressure Israel have little bearing on Israeli support for a peace accord compared to the other attitudes examined. Possible explanations for these unexpected findings are explored in Section III.

Polarizing factors. The survey findings also show that Israeli society is highly polarized over the issue of an Israeli-Palestinian peace accord -- in terms of ideology, political affiliation and ethno-religious identification. For example:

¹ Alvin Richman served for thirty-six years as a senior analyst in the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Information Agency reporting on American and foreign public opinion and now works as a private public opinion analyst and consultant. David B. Nolle is an independent consultant and part-time contractor for the Office of Opinion Research in the US Department of State. The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the US Department of State or the US Government.

- In eleven of Israel's twelve main political parties, majorities identify with a single ethno-religious group, and most of these groups take a definite position on the U.S.-proposed peace plan: Secular Jews and Israeli Arabs mainly *support* the peace accord, Orthodox Jews and Russians mainly *oppose* it, while Traditional Jews are divided.
- All six of the political parties whose members mainly identify themselves as right-wing *oppose* the peace accord by large margins, while all four of the parties whose members mainly identify themselves as left-wing *support* the peace accord by large margins.

This public opinion survey of 1,000 Israelis examined in detail below was commissioned by the New America Foundation and conducted November 8-15, 2009. The questionnaire was designed by Gerstein/Agne Strategic Communications which contracted the Israeli-based research company TNS Teleseker to administer the survey by telephone interviews in Hebrew, Russian and Arabic.²

After our criterion measure of *consistent support* versus *consistent opposition* to a peace plan is described in Section I below, the correlations of various demographic and attitude variables with it are examined in Sections II – III.

² The Hebrew and Arabic speaking populations were called randomly among adults 18 years of age and older; the Russian speaking population was called randomly using TNS Teleseker's database of Russian speakers 18 years of age and older which has been developed over several years through other surveys conducted by random calling. According to the data providers, the survey has a margin of error of +/-3.1 percent with a 95 percent confidence level.

I. Criterion Measure of Support for an Israeli-Palestinian Accord

The criterion measure which we employ to measure support/opposition to a peace accord is a combination of two differently-worded questions contained in the NAF survey about a U.S.-proposed peace plan (see Appendix, Tables IA and IB). Both questions are based on the same hypothetical U.S. proposal that includes a final border with land swaps, Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem becoming part of the new Palestinian state, and allowing some Palestinian refugees to live in Israel

While the two questions contain differences in wording, their primary difference is that the first question (question IA in the Appendix) prominently states that Prime Minister Netanyahu supports the U.S.-proposed peace plan, while the second question (question IB) prominently states that Netanyahu rejects this plan.³ By examining those Israelis who *consistently support* the peace plan (responded “yes” in support of the peace plan on the first question and “oppose” Netanyahu’s decision to reject the plan on the second question), we are able to control for any “Prime Minister Netanyahu effect” on the Israeli public’s support for the peace proposal. Thus, we can obtain Israelis’ view of the peace proposal relatively independent of how they think their prime minister would react to it.

In cross-tabulating these two questions we found 38 percent of Israelis consistently supported the hypothetical peace plan (“yes” to plan on question IA and “oppose” Netanyahu’s rejection of it on question IB), while 33 percent consistently opposed it (“no” to plan on question IA and support Netanyahu’s rejection of it on question IB). We will concentrate on these two groups in our analyses of the relationships of different demographic and attitude variables to support of the peace plan – those who *consistently support* the peace plan (38%) versus those who *consistently oppose* the peace plan (33%).⁴

³ A slim majority supported the first proposal (53% support vs. 44% opposed), while the Israeli public was evenly divided on the second proposal (48% support vs. 48% opposed).

⁴ A group of respondents who gave uncertain or inconsistent responses to the two questions forming our criterion measure (29% of the total sample) is scored between the two consistent groups but is not displayed explicitly in the Tables. Nevertheless, this group is a part of all calculations below regarding response distributions or statistical relationships.

II. Demographic Characteristics of Peace Plan Supporters and Opponents

Israelis are highly polarized on the subject of a peace accord. Secular Israeli Jews are far more likely to favor, and religious Israeli Jews to oppose, an accord. Politically, most of the support for an accord is on the left and center of the political spectrum, with little support on the right. Among the larger political parties, support for a peace plan comes mainly from Kadima and Labor voters, with opposition coming mainly from Likud, Yisrael Beiteinu and Shas.

Analyses of different demographic variables provided in the NAF survey reveal three measures that, while correlated among themselves, show distinct, marked associations with support for the Israeli-Palestinian peace plan. These three measures are:

- (1) Ethno-religious identification (ERI), a composite of two other variables – ethnic sector (Jewish, Russian and Arab) and Jewish religious affiliation (Orthodox, Traditional or Secular);
- (2) Political ideology – Left, Center, Right; and
- (3) Political party (party voted for in 2009 Knesset election) – including Kadima, Likud, Yisrael Beiteinu, Labor, Shas, National Union, United Torah Judaism, and Hadash.

The size of each of these groups in the NAF survey and their opinions regarding an Israeli-Palestinian peace plan are presented below for each demographic variable. The opinions of each group in Tables 1-3 below are represented by their “nets,” obtained by subtracting the percentage of *consistent opponents* of the peace plan from the percentage of *consistent supporters*.

Ethno-Religious Identification (ERI). Table 1 below shows that religious affiliation makes a substantial difference among Israel’s Jewish population. Treating Jews as a monolithic ethnic group in Israel obscures the marked differences among the three Jewish religious subgroups. The views of Israel’s secular Jews regarding the peace plan (56% support), for example, are much closer to those of Israeli Arabs (52%) than to either Jewish traditionalists (32% support) or Orthodox Jews (16%). In fact, the views of Israeli Arabs (+44 net) and Orthodox Jews (-44) are polar opposites. Although most Russians identify as Jewish secular, their views of the peace plan (22% support) are much closer to those of Orthodox Jews (16%) than to those of the non-Russian secular Jews (56%).⁵

⁵ Although the split between Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews is another important ethnic division in Israeli society, the impact of this ethnic split on support for the peace accord is considerably less than the impact of the division between secular and Orthodox Jews reported for the ERI groups in Table 1.

Table 1. Ethno-Religious Identification (ERI)

	<i>Secular</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Orthodox</i>	<i>Russian*</i>	<i>Arab</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Israeli</i>	(30% of public)	(20%)	(18%)	(16%)	(16%)	<i>Public</i>
<u>Opinion on Peace Plan</u>						
Consistent Support	56%	32%	16%	22%	52%	38%
Consistent Opposition	<u>21</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>33</u>
Net:	+35	- 2	-44	-25	+44	+ 5
(Cons. Support – Cons. Opposition)						

* Note: Within the Russian ethnic sector 77% are Jewish secular, 15% Jewish traditional, 6% Jewish orthodox and 2% Christian.

Table 1 illustrates the power of ethno-religious identification in distinguishing large differences in peace plan support among the five ERI groups. Differences in nets between groups provide a summary measure of the contrast in support levels: For example, the *net difference* between secular Jews (+35 net) and Orthodox Jews (-44 net) is a very substantial +79.

Political Ideology. In Table 2, most supportive of a peace plan are those who reported they were politically on the left (73%). Least supportive were those on the political right (20%). The net difference of +96 between the left wing and the right wing shows a major connection between political ideology and support for the peace plan.⁶

Table 2. Political Ideology*

	<i>Left Wing</i>	<i>Center</i>	<i>Right Wing</i>	<i>Total Israeli</i>
	(20% of public)	(26%)	(43%)	<i>Public</i>
<u>Opinion on Peace Plan</u>				
Consistent Support	73%	45%	20%	38%
Consistent Opposition	<u>7</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>33</u>
Net:	+66	+22	- 30	+ 5

*Note: Approximately 11% are undeclared in their ideology.

Political Party. Among the larger political parties, support for a peace plan comes mainly from Kadima and Labor voters, with opposition coming mainly from Likud, Yisrael Beiteinu and Shas. With the Labor Party now in opposition, all political parties in the current coalition government predominantly oppose the peace plan (see Table 3).

⁶ The connection between ERI and ideology is also strong. For example, about two-thirds of secular Jews (68%) and Arabs (72%) are fairly evenly divided between the ideological left and center. In contrast, four-fifths of Orthodox Jews (79%) view themselves as politically right wing.

Table 3. Political Party

<u>Political Party</u>	<u>Opinion on Peace Plan</u>			<u>Dominant ERI#</u>	<u>Dominant Pol. Ideology[^]</u>
	<u>Consistent Support</u>	<u>Consistent Opposition</u>	<u>Net</u>		
*Labor (6% of public)	81%	4%	+77	Secular (65%)	Left (58%)
Meretz (2%)	78	5	+73	Secular (85%)	Left (90%)
Hadash (3%)	71	6	+65	Arab (97%)	Left (64%)
United Arab List (1%)	57	0	+57	Arab (100%)	None
Dominant					
Kadima (19%)	54	20	+34	Secular (54%)	Center (52%)
Balad (2%)	45	10	+35	Arab (93%)	Left (41%)
*Yisrael Beiteinu (9%)	24	51	- 27	Russian (77%)	Right (67%)
*Likud (18%)	22	44	- 22	None Dominant	Right (77%)
*United Torah Judaism (3%)	18	58	- 40	Orthodox (100%)	Right (81%)
*Shas (5%)	16	65	- 49	Orthodox (88%)	Right (70%)
*Jewish Home (2%)	14	68	- 54	Orthodox (68%)	Right (86%)
National Union (3%)	13	75	- 62	Orthodox (63%)	Right (77%)
Didn't vote, don't know, other very minor parties (27%)					

Notes: * Political parties that were part of the coalition government at the time of the survey are marked with an asterisk.

Main ethno-religious identification of party members. (Percent of party members identifying with that ERI group.)

[^] Main political ideology of party members. (Percent of party members identifying with that political ideology.)

Polarization. The two columns on the right side of Table 3 reveal that there is a great deal of polarization among Israeli political parties, both in terms of ideological orientation and ethno-religious identification. Members of ten of the twelve listed parties mainly identify themselves as either left wing (Labor, Hadash, Meretz, Balad) or right wing (Likud, Yisrael Beiteinu, Shas, National Union, United Torah Judaism and Jewish Home). Only one party has a plurality of voters in the center of the ideological spectrum – Kadima (52% centrists). All six of the mainly right-wing parties oppose the peace plan by large margins. All four of the mainly left-wing parties favor the peace plan by large margins. The full implications of the recent Labor Party split from the coalition government are unclear, but appear to have heightened polarization within the Israeli political system.

Regarding ERI polarization, majorities in all but one of the twelve political parties identify with one of these ERI groups: Secular Jews (Kadima, Labor, Meretz), Orthodox Jews (Shas, National Union, United Torah Judaism, Jewish Home), Russian (Yisrael Beiteinu) and Arab (Hadash, Balad, United Arab List). The exception is Likud: About one-third of Likud voters are Jewish Traditionalists and about one-fifth belong to each of three other groups – Jewish Secular, Orthodox and Russian. The six political parties composed mainly of Jewish Seculars or Arabs all support the Israeli-Palestinian peace plan by large margins. The five parties composed mainly of Jewish Orthodox or Russians all oppose the peace plan by large margins. Likud voters

are distributed substantially across four ERI groups and show the closest margin on the peace plan, 22 percent *consistently support* vs. 44 percent *consistently opposed*.

What a broad-based coalition government might look like. These findings suggest that a partnership between Likud (18% of public) and Kadima (19%) theoretically would offer the best opportunity around which to build a broadly representative coalition government regarding a peace accord. Table 4 shows how these two political parties complement one another on the important dimensions of ideology and ethno-religious identification: Likud voters are mainly right wing (77%), but broadly represent four of the five ERI groups; Kadima voters are mainly Secular Jews (54%), but are primarily centrist in their ideological orientation.

Table 4. Characteristics of Likud and Kadima Voters

<u>Political Party</u>	<i>Political Ideology</i>			<i>Ethno-Religious Identification</i>				
	<i>Left</i>	<i>Center</i>	<i>Right</i>	<i>Secular</i>	<i>Tradit.</i>	<i>Orthodox</i>	<i>Russian</i>	<i>Arab</i>
Likud (18%)	5%	12%	77%	24%	34%	20%	21%	2%
Kadima (19%)	22	52	23	54	26	4	11	5
Total Israeli public:	20	26	43	30	20	18	16	16

III. Attitude Characteristics of Peace Plan Supporters and Opponents

Although there is an evident “Obama effect,” other views of the United States and the possibility of its pressuring Israel have almost no relationship with Israeli attitudes toward a peace accord. The strongest motivations in the Israeli public to support a peace accord are domestic: to strengthen Israel’s economy and normalize people’s lives. The prospect of better relations with other countries after an accord—both in the region and worldwide—is another relatively strong motivation. Belief that a Palestinian state could enforce its side of an accord is also significantly associated with support of the peace accord.

The NAF survey included numerous questions relating to different concerns and attitudes that might be expected to be associated with support for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. Twenty questions were selected in order to gauge their relationships to our criterion measure, *consistent support/opposition* to a peace accord (all 20 are shown in Table 5 below). These questions cover a broad spectrum of concerns relating to foreign affairs issues, Israel’s domestic priorities and security, and Israeli-Palestinian relations. These twenty questions are organized into seven thematic groups and analyzed below.⁷

Views of the United States. Because the U.S. is widely considered to be an important actor in helping secure a peace accord⁸, the most unexpected of our results is the consistently low correlations of opinions regarding the United States with Israelis’ support for a peace agreement with the Palestinians. The results in section B (1-6) in Table 5 below show no evidence of a noticeable relationship for any of the six measures representing opinions of the United States. These measures yield consistently low correlations, ranging from an r of $-.02$ to an r of $+.09$ -- each one being lower than all of the other correlations presented in Table 5. Given the findings that most Israelis have a positive attitude toward the United States and deem its international support of Israel essential (Appendix, Table IIB-1 and IIB-6), it is surprising that neither of these views has any connection to the Israeli public’s support for the proposal. Most Israelis believe the U.S. will reduce its financial and military aid to Israel if it rejects the U.S. peace proposal (Appendix Table IIB-2 and 3), but these views likewise do not correlate with support for the proposal

⁷ The 20 questions used as measures were chosen based on their question wording and examination of their inter-item correlation matrix. Each of the seven groups contains at least two questions. (Question wordings are summarized in Table 5, but are provided in full along with total public marginal results in the Appendix, Table II.) The first four groups of questions in Table 5 largely reflect foreign affairs issues; the second three groups relate to Israel’s domestic priorities, security and Israeli-Palestinian relations. The relationship between each question and *consistent support/opposition* to the peace accord are represented by two measures – *Pearson r’s* reflecting the correlation between variables containing ordinal response scales and *net differences* to permit comparison with the results of the demographic analyses in Section II.

⁸ For example, other polling reveals that both Israelis and Palestinians definitely want the U.S. to be involved in the peace process. For details, see Richman’s previous article titled “Attitude Factors in the Search for Israeli - Palestinian Peace: A Comprehensive Review of Recent Polls” on worldpublicopinion.org

Obama effect. There has been widespread discussion of the “Obama effect” as a possible factor in public opinion abroad. While President Obama’s positive ratings among Israelis exceed his negative ratings by only a narrow 5 to 4 margin, positive/negative ratings of Obama have a substantial correlation with support of the hypothetical U.S.-proposed peace plan (Table 5A1-2). The Israeli public has a more positive attitude toward the United States as a whole (56% *warm* vs. 18% *cool*) than it has toward President Obama (41% *warm* vs. 37% *cool* – Appendix Table IIA-2 and IIB-6). However, positive views of President Obama have an appreciable association with Israeli support for the peace accord ($r = .33$ in Table 5A-2), while positive views of the United States have practically no connection ($r = -.06$ in Table 5B-6). This last finding is consistent with other findings regarding the low correlations of views regarding the United States with support of a peace accord (see above).

Domestic needs. – The largest correlation in Table 5 involves the desire to secure a peace accord within the next 2-3 years in order to *strengthen Israel’s economy* (Item E2 with $r = .45$ and net difference of +74, which is comparable to the difference in nets between secular and Orthodox Jews in Table 1, +79). The Israeli public is closely divided on whether Israel’s economy requires a peace accord soon, but differences of opinion on this issue have the highest correlation with support/opposition to a peace agreement.⁹

Prospects of better relations with other countries. Also offering fairly strong arguments in favor of a peace accord are its perceived likelihood in reducing Israel’s regional and international isolation ($r = .29$ and $.28$ in Table 5C-1 and 2), as well as reducing Iran’s regional influence ($r = .25$ in Table 5D-2), while avoiding the potential risks of Jews becoming a minority within a bi-national state ($r = .23$ in Table 5G-2). The assumption that, by reaching a peace accord, “Israel will no longer be subject to *international isolation* or boycotts” is widely held among Israelis (62% view this as *likely* versus only 36% *unlikely* – Appendix Table IIC-2).

Security risks. Israeli concerns about territorial compromise and Palestinian enforcement of an agreement are fairly widespread and linked to support for a peace accord. For example, a small majority of Israelis believe “withdrawal from important territory” will *weaken* Israel (54% of total Israeli public) and that Fatah is not capable of enforcing a final status agreement (55% -- Appendix Table IIF-1 and IIG-1a,b). Moreover, both of these views correlate with support for a peace accord ($r = .30$ weighted average and $r = .25$ in Table 5G and 5F). More than two-thirds of Israelis, including Israeli Arabs, doubt Palestinian ability, specifically, “to control the extremists on their side” and views on this are related to their support for a peace agreement ($r = .24$ weighted average in Table 5F-2a,b). .

⁹ The desire to achieve a *normal life* (Item E3 in Table 5, $r = .36$) and shift to *domestic priorities* (Item E1, $r = .26$) also correlate highly with support/opposition to a peace accord. It should not be a surprise that a peace agreement with the Palestinians is viewed widely as offering an opportunity to refocus on Israeli domestic economic and social needs. These views appear to be effective in promoting a peace accord, and are popular as well: Most Israelis agree that only a peace agreement with the Palestinians will allow them “to achieve a *normal life* with security and prosperity” (58% -- in Appendix Table IIE-3) and “to invest in *domestic priorities* like jobs, education, health care and poverty” (65% -- Table IIE-1).

Interpreting the limited correlations involving views of the U.S. The absence of meaningful correlations between these views of the U.S. and support for a peace accord is open to various interpretations. At a minimum, it indicates that the Israeli public places the possibility of reduced U.S. support in case Israel rejects a peace accord far below concerns about the impact of an accord on Israel's economy, security and other matters represented in Table 5.¹⁰

Alternatively, these findings suggest that many Israelis “take U.S. aid and cooperation for granted,” discounting the possibility that the U.S. would withdraw vital support from Israel in case it rejected a U.S.-proposed peace plan.¹¹ Helping to sustain this assumption may be the long-held Israeli beliefs that their country provides a “strategic asset” to the U.S. in the Middle East, that the two societies share many important values, and that Israel possesses many sympathizers within the United States.

The absence of meaningful connections in Table 5B also suggests that the Israeli public does not accept a basic premise contained in these questions – that is, the U.S. would actually reduce the aid or international support it gives to Israel, if Israel were to reject the U.S.-proposed peace plan. When these questions were posed, many Israeli respondents predicted that it was *likely* the U.S. would “reduce its financial aid” to Israel (64%), “reduce its military aid” to Israel (58%), and “no longer support Israel in international institutions” (43%), if Palestinians accept a U.S. peace proposal and Israel rejects it. Normally, we would expect to find that Israelis who say that a reduction of valued U.S. aid and international support is *likely* if Israel rejects a peace accord would be more supportive of the accord than those Israelis who say such a reduction is *unlikely*. This was not the case on the aid and other U.S. support measures contained in the survey. In fact, even among the two-thirds of Israelis who believe U.S. support for Israel is essential (Table IIB-1), their views regarding the likelihood of reduced U.S. aid and support if Israel rejects the U.S. peace plan had very little bearing on their support for the peace plan.¹²

¹⁰ The overall minimal associations may also reflect the possibility that Israelis may be less responsive to threats of reduced aid and support than to promises to increase them. This survey focused on reductions rather than increases in U.S. aid and support.

¹¹ A variant of the phrasing in quotes was recently used by Tzipi Livni, head of the Kadima Party (Jerusalem Post, 9/21/2010) in describing the views of many young Jews abroad: “For too many young Diaspora Jews that I meet, Israel is not the source of pride or inspiration that it was for their parents’ generation. Living in vibrant Jewish communities abroad – within states that embrace multiculturalism and respect religious and minority rights – too many Jews no longer feel they need Israel as a safe haven or as an anchor for their identity. What’s more, they feel they have been taken for granted – their loyalty to Israel is expected, but their voice and their concerns are not heard.”

¹² Among those who believe U.S. support is essential, there is only a very small net difference (+8) in support of the peace plan between those who perceive that it is *likely* that the U.S. would stop support of Israel (net +16 for support of the accord) and those who think that it is *unlikely* that the U.S. would stop support of Israel (net +8).

Another way to view the apparent discrepancy between (1) the marginal results for the questions in Table 5B (see Appendix, Table IIB) showing Israelis predict reduced U.S. support if Israel rejects an accord and (2) the failure of these questions to produce an expected relationship with support/opposition to a peace accord is in terms of *potential* versus *actual* leverage. The marginals on these questions indicate that most Israelis recognize that the U.S. has various points of leverage by which to influence their government's decisions regarding an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. But, the absence of a meaningful correlation between these questions and support for a peace accord suggests that the Israeli public does not expect the U.S. to exercise its full leverage on behalf of a peace accord.

Comparing the role of different themes. As shown in Table 5 below, the results for the total Israeli public show that attitudes relating to Israeli domestic needs (average r of .36) and President Obama's favorableness rating (.34 average) are the most powerful correlates of support for a peace accord, followed by attitudes relating to reduced Israeli international isolation (.28 ave.) and the security risks of territorial compromise (.27 ave.). Assessing Palestinian enforcement capability ($r = .25$ in Table 5F-1) and the impact of an accord on reducing Iran's regional influence ($r = .25$ in Table 5D-2) also show definite links to support for a peace agreement.¹³ By far the factor least associated with support for a peace accord involves views of the United States. The six predictor items associated with the United States yield consistently low correlations, ranging between an r of .02 and an r of .09. These are the six lowest correlations with peace accord in the entire 20-item set for the Israeli public.¹⁴

¹³ We are keenly aware of the dictum that "correlation does not imply causation." In other words, a correlation between two variables does not automatically imply that one causes the other. However, correlation is a necessary condition for making the case for linear causation. Moreover, plausible arguments can be made for the causal mechanisms and causal directions for many of the variables in Table 5. But these matters as well as tests for spuriousness go beyond the scope of our analysis which is designed to provide an overview of some likely sources of support for a peace plan.

¹⁴ Moreover, within each of the five ERI groups, there are low average correlations between support/opposition to the peace accord and attitudes toward the United States, suggesting that this phenomenon is widespread throughout Israeli society. The average correlations for the six U.S. opinion measures in Table 5B ranged from .05 for Traditional Jews to .14 for Russians.

Table 5. Opinion Measures: Correlations with Support/Opposition to a Peace Accord

<i>Opinion Variables</i>	<i>Correlation with Peace Accord*</i>	
	<i>Pearson r</i>	<i>Net Difference</i>
A. <u>Obama: Favorability</u>		
1. Assess Pres. Obama's international impact: Good/Bad.	+ .36	+ 55
2. Pres. Obama's temperature rating: Warm/Cold	+ .33	+ 55
B. <u>United States: Dependence, Reliability, Favorability</u>		
1. U.S. support for Israel is essential: Agree/Disagree	+ .09	+ 16
2. U.S. would reduce financial aid, if Israel rejects peace plan: Likely/Not likely	+ .01	+ 1
3. U.S. would reduce military aid, if Israel rejects peace plan: Likely/Not likely	+ .03	+ 6
4. U.S. wouldn't work with Israel against Iran's nuclear bid, if Israel rejects plan: Likely/Not likely	- .02	- 5
5. U.S. would no longer support Israel in international institutions: Likely/Not likely	+ .02	+ 1
6. U.S. temperature rating: Warm/Cold	+ .06	+ 15
C. <u>Impact of Peace Accord on Reducing Israel's International Isolation</u>		
1. Israel will be recognized by the Arab states: Likely/Not likely	+ .29	+ 43
2. Israel will no longer be isolated internationally: Likely/Not likely	+ .28	+ 44
D. <u>The Iranian Threat</u>		
1. Nuclear-armed Iran would be dire threat to Israel: Agree/Disagree	- .11	- 16
2. Peace agreement would reduce Iran's regional influence: Likely/Not likely	+ .25	+ 35
E. <u>Israel's Domestic Needs</u>		
1. Israel could shift to domestic priorities with a peace accord: Likely/Not likely	+ .26	+ 42
2. Israel's economy requires a peace accord: Soon/Can wait	+ .45	+ 74
3. Israelis can't have normal life without peace accord: Agree/Disagree	+ .36	+ 60
F. <u>Palestinian Enforcement Capability</u>		
1. Fatah capable of enforcing an agreement with Israel: Yes/No	+ .25	+ 42
2. Palestinians will be able to control their extremists: Likely/Not likely		
a. Jewish and Russian respondents	+ .27	+ 36
b. Israeli Arab respondents	+ .10	+ 16
3. Abu Mazen temperature rating: Warm/Cold	+ .31	+ 63
G. <u>Effects of Territorial Concessions on Israel's Security, Internal Division</u>		
1. Loss of territory will weaken Israel: Likely/Not likely		
a. Jewish and Russian respondents	- .31	- 51
b. Israeli Arab respondents	- .28	- 36
2. Keeping territories risks making Israel a bi-national state: Agree/Dis.	+ .23	+ 35

*Note: The Pearson r's are computed using all ordered substantive response options in the independent variables while the net differences are computed with the substantive response options in the independent variables dichotomized.

V. Conclusions

Israel's public is polarized in terms of political-ideological orientation, ethno-religious identification, and political affiliation. Moreover, each of these factors is clearly linked to support/opposition to the hypothetical U.S.-proposed peace plan. Table 3 showed that members of ten of the twelve listed political parties mainly identify themselves as either left wing (4) or right wing (6), and that ideological orientation is an excellent predictor of support/opposition to the peace plan. Only Kadima (22% left, 52% center, 23% right) shows no ideological tilt left or right. Regarding ethno-religious polarization, majorities in eleven of the twelve political parties identify with one ERI group. Only Likud broadly represents multiple ERI groups – all but the Israeli Arab voters. The six parties composed mainly of Jewish Seculars or Arabs all support the peace plan; the five parties composed mainly of Jewish Orthodox or Russians all oppose the peace plan.

Attitudes toward Israeli domestic needs and President Obama are the most powerful correlates of support/opposition to the U.S.-proposed peace plan among the seven opinion groups examined in Table 5. The Israeli public is inclined to believe that a peace accord would allow Israel to improve its economy and focus on other domestic priorities. Wider appreciation of this message could enhance support for a peace agreement. A more favorable image of President Obama – slightly more positive than negative at the time of the survey– also could enhance support for a U.S.-proposed peace plan.

In contrast to opinions about Israeli domestic needs, views of President Obama, and other measures presented in Table 5, attitudes toward the United States and its various positions have little relation to support for the hypothetical U.S.-proposed peace plan. Even among Israelis who believe U.S. support for Israel is essential, those who say the U.S. is *likely* to reduce this support if Israel rejects the peace plan are barely more supportive of the peace plan than Israelis who says the U.S. is *unlikely* to reduce its support. One way to interpret this very unusual finding is to distinguish between *potential* and *actual* U.S. leverage: While most Israelis perceive the U.S. has multiple points of leverage on Israeli policy regarding a peace accord, they do not expect the U.S. actually to apply this leverage. Thus, one of the challenges facing U.S. policy-makers is how to demonstrate that U.S. leverage is applicable without harming President Obama's personal image, which could play an important role in fostering the acceptance of a U.S.-sponsored peace plan in the future.

Appendix

Table IA. Criterion Measure #A: Netanyahu Supports Hypothetical U.S.-Proposed Peace Plan

Question: “Now I would like you to imagine that the United States convenes a negotiations summit with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Palestinian leadership. During the summit, the U.S. presents a final status agreement that it wants the two sides to sign.

This agreement includes an official end to the conflict with no further claims to be made by the Palestinians; a demilitarized Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza; internationally recognized borders that include some land swaps allowing for most Jewish settlers in the West Bank to be inside Israel while the Palestinians get equal land areas in return; international forces to monitor the new Palestinian state and border crossings; Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem become part of the new Palestinian state while Israel retains control of Jewish neighborhoods and the Western Wall in Jerusalem; and financial compensation for Palestinian refugees while allowing some refugees to live in Israel if they meet specific family reunification criteria and the Israeli government approves.

If Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Palestinians agree to this deal, and Prime Minister Netanyahu puts it to a national referendum, would you vote yes to confirm it or vote no to reject it?”

Yes – 53%

No – 45%

Undecided – 2%

Table IB. Criterion Measure #B: Netanyahu Rejects Hypothetical U.S.-Proposed Peace Plan

Question: “Now, I would like you to imagine something different. Suppose that the Palestinians agreed to the American final status proposal that I just described, but Prime Minister Netanyahu rejects it. Netanyahu says he cannot sign the agreement because it divides Jerusalem and endangers Israel’s security. The United States says that by rejecting this reasonable agreement, Netanyahu is missing a historic opportunity for peace and Israel risks international isolation at levels it has never seen. Would you support or oppose Netanyahu’s decision to reject this peace agreement?”

Support	48%
Strongly	28%
Somewhat	20
Oppose	48%
Somewhat	20%
Strongly	28
Don’t know	4%

Table II. Question Wording and Marginal Results for Opinion Measures Correlated with Support/Opposition to Peace Agreement in Table 5 of Text

A. Obama

1. “Now let me ask you about President Barack Obama. Thinking about United States President Barack Obama and the role America plays in the world, do you think the election of Obama to the presidency is good or bad for addressing the problems facing the world?”

Good	52%	Bad	39%
Very good	13%	Somewhat bad	26%
Somewhat good	39	Very bad	13
	Don't know	9%	

2. “Now, I'd like to rate your feelings toward some people, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred, the higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward that person or organization. If you have no opinion or never heard of that person, please say so.” Barack Obama

Warm	41%	Cool	37%	Mean	48.7
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B. United States

1. “Now I’m going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right ”

Agree More With (Agree Strongly)

“The U.S. is the only powerful country that Israel will ever be able to count on to support us in international institutions.” 65% (46% strongly)

“Israel can build alliances with other powerful countries to support us in international institutions if our relations with the U.S. ever deteriorated.” 31% (13% strongly)

Agree with both or neither statement 4%

2. “I’m going to read you a list of things that might happen regarding U.S.-Israel relations if the Palestinians accept an American peace proposal and Israel rejects it. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen. ”

“The U.S. will reduce the financial aid it gives Israel.”

Likely	64%	Unlikely	33%
Very likely	21%	Very unlikely	14%
Somewhat likely	43	Somewhat unlikely	19
	Don’t know		3%

3. “I’m going to read you a list of things that might happen regarding U.S.-Israel relations if the Palestinians accept an American peace proposal and Israel rejects it. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen. ”

“The U.S. will reduce the military aid it gives Israel.”

Likely	58%	Unlikely	38%
Very likely	18%	Very unlikely	17%
Somewhat likely	40	Somewhat unlikely	21
	Don’t know		4%

4. “I’m going to read you a list of things that might happen regarding U.S.-Israel relations if the Palestinians accept an American peace proposal and Israel rejects it. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen. “

“The U.S. will not work with Israel to address Iranian nuclear development”

Likely	43%	Unlikely	53%
Very likely	14%	Very unlikely	24%
Somewhat likely	29	Somewhat unlikely	29
Don’t know		4%	

5. “I’m going to read you a list of things that might happen regarding U.S.-Israel relations if the Palestinians accept an American peace proposal and Israel rejects it. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen. “

“The U.S. will no longer support Israel in international institutions like the United Nations”

Likely	43%	Unlikely	52%
Very likely	13%	Very unlikely	21%
Somewhat likely	30	Somewhat unlikely	31
Don’t know		5%	

6. “Now, I’d like to rate your feelings toward some people, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred, the higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward that person or organization. If you have no opinion or never heard of that person, please say so.” The United States

Warm	56%	Cool	18%	Mean	60.4
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C. Reducing Israel's International Isolation

1. "Now, I'm going to read you some GOOD things that some people say will happen as a result of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen."

"Israel will be recognized by 22 Arab States who will establish full diplomatic relations with us"

Likely	48%	Unlikely	50%
Very likely	17%	Very unlikely	26%
Somewhat likely	31	Somewhat unlikely	24
	Don't know	2%	

2. "Now, I'm going to read you some GOOD things that some people say will happen as a result of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen."

"Israel will no longer be subject to international isolation or boycotts"

Likely	62%	Unlikely	36%
Very likely	23%	Very unlikely	17%
Somewhat likely	39	Somewhat unlikely	19
	Don't know	2%	

D. The Iranian Threat

1. “Now I’m going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right ”

Agree More With (Agree Strongly)

“Iran is developing nuclear weapons and will soon become
An existential threat to Israel” 56% (38% strongly)

“Iran is not capable of destroying Israel even if it develops
nuclear weapons.” 39% (22% strongly)

Agree with both or neither statement 5%

2. “Now, I’m going to read you some GOOD things that some people say will happen as a result of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen.”

“Iran’s regional influence will be reduced.”

Likely	51%	Unlikely	44%
Very likely	18%	Very unlikely	23%
Somewhat likely	33	Somewhat unlikely	21
	Don’t know		5%

E. Israel's Domestic Priorities

1. "Now, I'm going to read you some GOOD things that some people say will happen as a result of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen."

"We will be able to reduce military spending and invest in domestic priorities like jobs, education, health care, and poverty"

Likely	65%	Unlikely	33%
Very likely	32%	Very unlikely	16%
Somewhat likely	33	Somewhat unlikely	18
Don't know		2%	

2. "Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right" [Split sample, N=500]

Agree More With (Agree Strongly)

"With our weak economy and ongoing conflict along our borders, Israel cannot afford to continue the current situation with the Palestinians and we must find a way to achieve a secure peace within the next 2-3 years"

50% (33% strongly)

"With our strong military and improved measures to fight terrorism Israel can continue the current situation with the Palestinians as long as necessary and we should not rush into a peace agreement. "

46% (30%)

Agree with both or neither statement

4%

3. "Now I'm going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right" [Split sample, N=500]

Agree More With (Agree Strongly)

"Unless Israel reaches a peace agreement with the Palestinians, we will never be able to achieve a normal life with security and prosperity for our country."

58% (43% strongly)

"We have a reasonably secure and prosperous life in Israel, and it is not critical that we reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians."

34% (18%)

Agree with both or neither statement

8%

F. Palestinian Ability to Enforce an Agreement

1. “If Prime Minister Netanyahu and Fatah reach a final status agreement, do you think Fatah is capable of enforcing the agreement on the Palestinian side?”

Yes – 35% No – 55% Don’t know – 10%

2a. [Russian and Jewish respondents] “Now, I’m going to read you some BAD things that some people say will happen as a result of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen?”

“The Palestinians will not be able to control the extremists on their side who will continue to launch attacks on Israel.”

Likely	82%	Unlikely	15%
Very likely	45%	Very unlikely	6%
Somewhat likely	37	Somewhat unlikely	9
	Don’t know	3%	

2b. [Israeli Arabs] “Now, I’m going to read you some OTHER things that some people say will happen as a result of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen?”

“The Palestinians will not be able to control the extremists on their side who will continue to launch attacks on Israel?”

Likely	69%	Unlikely	27%
Very likely	31%	Very unlikely	14%
Somewhat likely	38	Somewhat unlikely	13
	Don’t know	4%	

3. “Now, I’d like to rate your feelings toward some people, with one hundred meaning a VERY WARM FAVORABLE feeling; zero meaning a VERY COLD, UNFAVORABLE feeling; and fifty meaning not particularly warm or cold. You can use any number from zero to one hundred, the higher the number the more favorable your feelings are toward that person or organization. If you have no opinion or never heard of that person, please say so.” Abu Mazen

Warm 16% Cool 64% Mean 26.7

G. Security Effects of Territorial Compromise

1a. [Russian and Jewish respondents] “Now, I’m going to read you some BAD things that some people say will happen as a result of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen?”

“Israel will be weaker because we will have to withdraw from important territory.”

Likely	55%	Unlikely	43%
Very likely	29%	Very unlikely	19%
Somewhat likely	26	Somewhat unlikely	24
Don’t know		2%	

1b. [Israeli Arabs] “Now, I’m going to read you some OTHER things that some people say will happen as a result of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. After I read each one, please tell me how likely or unlikely it is that this will happen?”

“Israel will be less safe because it will have to withdraw from important territory”

Likely	50%	Unlikely	47%
Very likely	21%	Very unlikely	28%
Somewhat likely	29	Somewhat unlikely	19
Don’t know		3%	

2. “Now I’m going to read you some pairs of statements. After I read each pair, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own view, even if neither is exactly right ” [Split sample, N=500]

Agree More With (Agree Strongly)

“I am concerned that if Israel continues to maintain control over the territories, it will become a bi-national state where Jews are a minority.” 51% (34% strongly)

“I am not concerned that if Israel continues to maintain control over the territories, it will become a bi-national state where Jews are a minority.” 42% (24%)

Agree with both or neither statement 7%