

# The RISE of Islam in America

*How Will This  
Change Jewish  
Self-Identification?*

by: Jonathan D. Sarna

MOMENT 16:3 (June 1991)



**B**y the first decade of the 21st century, Islam will be the second largest religion in the United States, according to a recent study published by Oxford University Press.<sup>1</sup> *Time* magazine took up this message: "U.S. Muslims are expected to surpass Jews in number and, in less than 30 years, become the country's second largest religious community, after Christians."<sup>2</sup> Not all analysts agree on the size of the Muslim population in the U.S. (see box, p. 38), but that the Muslim population is on the rise—proportionally—no one disputes.

The possibility that the number of Muslims in the U.S. may equal that of Jews in the first decades of the next century should be of surpassing importance to American Jews, for it will undoubtedly affect American Jewish identity and life in the decades ahead. Strangely, however, it has not been the subject of any scholarly attention.

The rise of Islam in America is actually part of a larger transformation now taking place in American religious life characterized by increasing religious diversity and a heightened recognition of the inadequacy of the old Protestant-Catholic-Jew paradigm. This new world of American religion has begun to be recognized in academic circles. Jews need to come to terms with it.

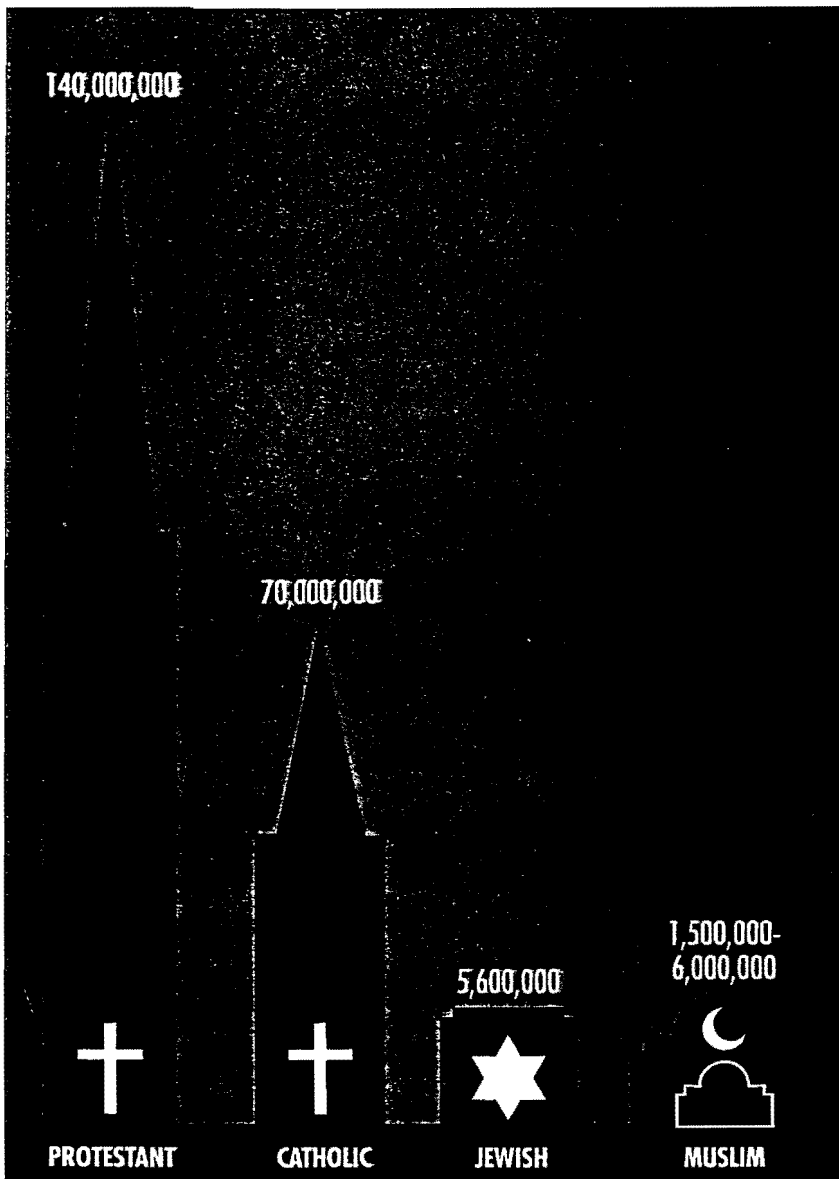
When, earlier in the 20th century, the Protestant-Catholic-Jew model of American religion was proclaimed—most effectively in Will Herberg's highly influential book by that name published in 1955<sup>3</sup>—it reflected a major advance in the standing of the American Jewish community. America, we were told, was not a single but a triple melting pot. And Jews were one of the three co-equal pots. According to Herberg, "Not to be...either a Protestant, a Catholic or a Jew is somehow not to be an American."

We sometimes forget that for well over a century after the Constitution was promulgated in 1787, a great many Americans believed that they lived in a Christian, often more narrowly defined as a Protestant, country.

The First Amendment's guarantee of religious freedom did not bother those who held this view, for they believed, following U.S. Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story, that:

Fridays at noon, 4,000 to 5,000 worshipers gather for prayer at the Islamic Center in the heart of Embassy Row in Washington, D.C. The 160-foot-high mosque, serving the diplomatic and local community, was completed in 1957 at a cost of \$1,140,335, funded largely by donations from governments of Muslim countries. Five times daily from the minaret, the muezzin calls the faithful to prayer. Verses from the Koran adorn the building. Inside the mosque are Turkish tiles, an Egyptian chandelier and pulpit, Iranian carpets and Vermont marble. The *mihrab*, a small arched niche, is centered on the front wall and marks the direction of prayer toward Mecca.

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The real object of the amendment was, not to countenance, much less to advance Mahometanism, or Judaism, or infidelity, by prostrating Christianity; but to exclude all rivalry among Christian sects, and to prevent any national ecclesiastical establishment, which should give to an hierarchy the exclusive patronage of the national government.<sup>1</sup>

Since, into the late 19th century, Protestant churches outnumbered all others by more than 10 to one, dissenters could be safely dismissed, if not altogether ignored.<sup>5</sup>

Even the Supreme Court agreed, as late as 1892, that "this is a Christian nation." The justice who wrote that decision, David Brewer, a missionary's son, subsequently defended his views in a widely distributed lecture unabashedly titled "The United

States—A Christian Nation," published in 1905.<sup>6</sup> Jews certainly objected to this formulation but made little headway.<sup>7</sup>

Not until the 20th century did the more inclusive concept of America as a "Judeo-Christian" nation develop,<sup>8</sup> attaining prominence in the 1930s. When Fascist fellow travelers and antisemites appropriated "Christian" as a trademark, "Judeo-Christian" became a catchword for the other side.<sup>9</sup> Gradually, "Judeo-Christian" became the standard liberal term for the idea that Western values rested on a shared religious consensus. By 1952, the term was so pervasive that President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower told us that the "Judeo-Christian concept" formed the basis of "our form of government."

Three years later, Herberg published *Catholic-Protestant-Jew*, making the case, as one commentator has put it, for "the pervasiveness of religious self-identification along the tripartite scheme of Protestant, Catholic, Jew."<sup>10</sup>

This tripartite model of American religion replaced the once familiar "Protestant synthesis" that told the story of American religion in terms of Protestantism alone. With the 20th-century decline of mainline Protestantism, the remarkable growth of Catholicism, the interreligious assault on wartime and postwar religious hatred (particularly antisemitism), the rise of the interfaith movement and the coming of age of non-Protestant intellectuals, the new synthesis was overdue.

As early as 1927, even before the new synthesis had fully crystallized, the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ) was established. The NCCJ's education program featured hundreds of local "round tables," each one "a body of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leaders" who joined together. Everett R. Clinchy, the NCCJ's longtime executive director, developed this idea into a full-scale ideology, arguing that America consisted of three co-equal "culture groups," each of which made valuable contributions to American life and should be encouraged to flourish. This tripartite approach was soon enshrined in countless symbols, from "equal time" radio allotments on NBC to the famous Chapel of Four Chaplains, "an interfaith shrine"

commemorating the 1943 sinking death—“standing on deck, arms linked, praying”—of Catholic, Jewish and two Protestant chaplains on the SS *Dorchester*.<sup>11</sup>

By the mid-1950s, both the Judeo-Christian tradition and the triple melting pot had become firmly entrenched components of American identity. Both models—and they were clearly linked—pointed to a pluralistic understanding of America, an America that embraced Jews as equals. For Jews, all-too-used to being cast in the role of persecuted minority, this was a pleasant change.

Many Jews at the time no doubt understood that Jews did not quite deserve the co-equal status that these concepts accorded them. They probably hoped that Jews might compensate for their manifest numerical inequality by making a more substantial contribution to American life.

But there was also a great danger here, a danger that we may only now begin to appreciate: namely, that there was a large and, indeed, growing disjunction between myth and reality. Neither the Judeo-Christian tradition nor the “triple melting pot” adequately or accurately conveyed the full extent of American religious pluralism in



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(Top) This Lebanese Muslim family lives in Dearborn, Michigan, where Arabs constitute 20 to 25 percent of Dearborn's total population, the highest density of Arabs in the U.S. (Center) Old ways persist in Dearborn for a Lebanese woman carrying home her groceries. The majority of Arabs—including 8 percent Christians—living in the greater Detroit area are Lebanese, Yemeni and Palestinians. However, in the U.S. as a whole, the largest group of Muslims is from the Indian subcontinent, followed by those from Arab nations. (Bottom) Two men meet at an Arab grocery store in Dearborn while a child watches, his head shaved for summer coolness. Arab immigration to the U.S. began in the 1890s, with newcomers heading for employment at the Ford plant in Detroit. An estimated 250,000 Arabs live in the Dearborn/Detroit area, 230,000 of whom are Muslims. The second mosque in the U.S. was built in Detroit in 1916. Now seven mosques serve the greater Detroit area, but smaller buildings also operate as religious centers for people who cannot reach the mosques. The Muslim population in the Detroit area has been rising gradually, mostly by family members immigrating to join those already settled. Recently, Lebanese, Palestinians from Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza, and, this year, Kuwaiti families have moved to the area in larger numbers than before.

all of its complex manifestations.

For a time, Americans lived happily with this disjunction, cognitive dissonance notwithstanding. Jews found their exaggerated status particularly convenient—an overwhelming number of Americans believed that Jews formed a far larger proportion of the nation's population than they actually did and treated Jews accordingly.<sup>12</sup>

But these myths are now dying. It behooves us to examine what this portends

for Jewish identity in the coming decades.

Today, assumptions about America's "Judeo-Christian" character and its "Protestant-Catholic-Jew" makeup must confront the rapid growth of American religions that are not Protestant, Catholic or Jewish and stand totally outside the Judeo-Christian spectrum. Islam is the most important of these faiths, but there are also the so-called "hidden religions,"<sup>13</sup> including metaphysical faiths, Eastern religions, psychic or new

## How To Count Muslims

Estimates of the Muslim population in the United States vary widely from 1.3 to 6 million. The *World Almanac 1991* reports 5,525,000; the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1991 annual) uses the number 5.6 million; John Zogby of John Zogby Associates estimates about 4.5 million Muslims in the U.S.; Ari Goldman in the *New York Times* (February 21, 1989) wrote of 6 million Muslims. An accurate count is difficult to come by because, although race and ethnicity are recorded by the United States Census, religious identification is not.

The most recent study, by Barry A. Kosmin and Jeffrey Scheckner of the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center, not available to Jonathan Sarna when he wrote this article, asserts that the Muslim population is only, at most, 1.5 million.

Kosmin and Scheckner's result closely matches that of Richard Weekes reported by John R. Weeks in "The Demography of Islamic Nations," in the *Population Bulletin*, December 1988. Weekes estimated that there were 1.5 million Muslims in the U.S. in 1983. The article's author, John R. Weeks, concludes: "It is probably reasonable to assume that as of 1988, the Muslim population of the United States was somewhere between 1.5

and 6 million. It is certain, however, that the Muslim population is growing numerically at a more rapid rate than the population as a whole, and that there are concerted efforts currently underway by Muslim groups to increase public awareness of Islam in America.

In the same article, Weeks refers to a comment by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, coauthor of the 1987 study whose Muslim population estimates (2 to 3 million) were used by Jonathan Sarna in the accompanying article. Ms. Haddad observed that "because of continued migration of Muslims to the U.S., along with higher than average fertility among Muslim immigrants and converts, it is possible that the Muslim population of the United States could reach 6 million by the year 2000."

So, wide-ranging though it is, the elusive answer to the question of how many Muslims live in the U.S. today seems to be at least 1.5 million with a plausible possibility of at least twice that many and some likelihood of 6 million at the turn of the millennium. To achieve precise numbers, more must be learned about the number of Muslims already residing in the U.S., the percentage of Muslims who are immigrating to the U.S., the number of children Muslims are bearing and how successful Muslims are at attracting converts.

Barry A. Kosmin, and Jeffrey Scheckner, "Estimating the Muslim Population of the United States in 1990," City University of New York, (April 1991). This study uses data from three sources: 1) The National Survey of Religious Identification (1989-1990) directed by Kosmin in cooperation with CUNY professor Seymour P. Lachman; 2) The 1980 U.S. Census figures on country of origin and 3) U.S. immigration statistics from 1980-1989 which are available by country of origin.

The 1990 survey (implemented by the ICR Survey Research Group of Media, Pennsylvania) asked a sample of 113,000 adults, "What is your religion?" The surveyors, using standard U.S. demographic data, weighted the data obtained by interviews to reflect the known composition of U.S. households and the composition of the total adult civilian household population in the continental U.S. The weighted results were as follows: 86.9 percent (151,660,000) Christian; 1.8 percent (3,137,000) Jewish; 0.3 percent (527,000) Muslim; 7.5 percent (13,116,000) stated no religious preference; 2.2 percent (3,839,500)

refused to answer; and 1.3 percent (2,269,000) included Hindus, Buddhists and others.

Recognizing that the population of American Muslims derived from their survey was far lower than even the lowest previous estimates, Kosmin and Scheckner decided to estimate the number of Muslims in the U.S. indirectly, utilizing statistics available from the 1980 U.S. Census and from U.S. immigration records between 1980 and 1989.

According to the 1980 U.S. Census, 737,000 people reported Middle Eastern or North African descent. Kosmin and Scheckner assumed that one-half of this number were Muslims (369,000). They also assumed, on the basis of other surveys and literature, that there were half as many Muslims in the U.S. with no Middle Eastern or North African roots (184,000). Adding these two groups together, the 1980 Census information gave them an estimate of 553,000 Muslims in the U.S. in 1980.

To determine how the Muslim population in the U.S. changed during the decade of the

1980s, Kosmin and Scheckner looked at immigration data during those years. They found that 495,000 immigrants came to the U.S. from countries with large or mostly Muslim populations in the Middle East, North Africa, Asia and elsewhere in Africa. Estimating that three-quarters of them remained in the U.S., they arrived at 371,000. Kosmin and Scheckner estimate that 50 percent of this number (186,000) may be Muslims. They add to it another 50,000 Muslim immigrants from India, Israel and Yugoslavia, countries with Muslim minorities.

Adding the 1980 census estimate for the Muslim population in that year (553,000) to the immigration-based estimate for the number of Muslims who came between 1980 and 1989 (236,000) gives a total of 789,000 Muslims of foreign extraction in the U.S. in 1990. Adding to that number the approximately 300,000 American-born black Muslims, the 100,000 or so other Americans who converted to Islam and about 80,000 students produces a total Muslim population in the U.S. in 1990 of not much above 1.3 million. "Certainly," Kosmin and Scheckner conclude, "it cannot exceed 1.5 million."

age religions and the like. Moreover, nearly one American in 10 reports no religious affiliation whatsoever.<sup>14</sup>

From the viewpoint of American Jews, the growth of American Islam merits special attention, especially given the organized Muslim community's hostility to Israel. The Persian Gulf war has focused some attention on this community in the form of FBI investigations and fears of a fifth column. The real significance of American Islam, however, lies deeper.

Historically, Muslims came to America as early as the colonial period, but always as individuals. The most visible early centers of Islam in America were in Michigan, especially in the Detroit/Dearborn area, for many Arab immigrants took jobs at the Ford plant. Other Muslim communities were established in East Coast and Midwest industrial centers. But given immigration restrictions and assimilation, the number of Muslims in America remained small—a little more than 100,000—into the early 1960s.

Since then, the nation's Islamic population has mushroomed, owing both to large-scale immigration (14 percent of all immigrants into the United States are now Muslims, according to *Time* magazine) and to thousands of converts, especially blacks. Significant Islamic communities may now be found in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit and Toledo, Ohio. One recent study lists 598 mosques and Islamic centers operating in the United States and estimates the number of American Muslims as "somewhere in the range of two to three million."<sup>15</sup> On February 21, 1989, the *New York Times* spoke of "six million Muslims in the United States." Given the high birth rate of American Muslims, the growing number of converts and the continuing flow of immigration, it is possible that the number of American Muslims will exceed the number of Jews even before the end of the decade.

Muslim leaders feel, quite understandably, that the Judeo-Christian and Protestant-Catholic-Jew models of America are exclusivistic, implying as they do that Muslims cannot participate as equals in American society. "We'd like people to start thinking of the U.S. as a Judeo-Christian-Muslim society," Salam Al-Marayati, spokesman for the Muslim Political Action

## What Do Muslims Believe?

► **Basic belief:** Profession of faith: "There is no God but Allah; Muhammad is the prophet of God." • Hereafter: After Day of Reckoning, faithful will be rewarded and wicked will be punished • Muhammad is last prophet in line from Abraham through Moses and Jesus • Koran was revealed by God in Arabic to Muhammad • Community of believers includes all who revere Allah, Muhammad, Koran and Day of Judgment.

► **Sources of Islamic law:** Koran • Hadith (traditions about life of Muhammad) • Sharia (holy law, equivalent to *halachah*).

► **Islam's five pillars:** Profession of faith • Congregational prayer five times daily, preceded by ablutions of hands, face and feet • Annual payment of obligatory tax, to be used for poor • Fasting from daybreak until sunset during month of Ramadan • Pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in lifetime.

► **Great Festival:** Pilgrims gather in Mecca, birthplace of Muhammad in 570 C.E., on 10th day of 12th month of Islamic calendar to commemorate Abraham taking Ishmael up to the mountain to sacrifice him to God. Muslims celebrate festivals during changing seasons of year because Muslim calendar consists of 12 months, each beginning with new moon. Since lunar year has 354 or 355 days, each new year falls 10 or 11 days behind parallel solar year.

► **Branches of Islam:** **Sunni** Practiced by 90 percent of all Muslims. Believe Muhammad appointed Abu Bakr, member of Meccan aristocracy, as his successor and that certain members of this aristocracy inherited leadership of Islam from Muhammad • **Shia** Partisans of Muhammad's son-in-law and cousin, Ali. Believe caliphate must be passed on through descendants of Muhammad through his daughter Fatima, wife of Ali. Ninety percent of Iranian and 60 percent of Iraqi Muslims are Shia.

► **Approximate numbers and locations:** One billion Muslims in world—30 percent live on Indian subcontinent • 20 percent in sub-Saharan Africa • 18 percent in Arab world • 17 percent in Southeast Asia • 10 percent in Soviet Union and China • 10 percent in non-Arab Middle East • less than 1 percent in the U.S.

Committee, told *Time* magazine recently. Another Muslim told researchers that he looked forward to the day "when all will say 'Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims.'"<sup>16</sup>

Given this move away from the triple melting pot view of American religion and the almost inevitable reevaluation downward of Judaism's place in the panoply of American religion, Jews in the next few decades will probably have to endure what mainline Protestants went through earlier in this century: the experience of status-loss, of feeling almost dispossessed. The rise in status that Jews experienced when the triple melting pot image gained ascendancy will, I believe, be partially if not wholly reversed. Thus, the Jewish community will have to learn to live with a radically different image of itself—a much less flattering one.

As a result, American Jews will, I believe,

*continued on page 53*

## The Rise of Islam

continued from page 39

receive far less textbook and media attention than they do now. Where for some years, Jews benefited from a disproportionate share of religious attention, almost on a par with Protestants and Catholics, now they will have to shrink their expectations to a more realistic level in keeping with the Jewish community's actual size and significance.

Jewish political power in the years ahead may also fall into decline. As politicians become aware of America's changing religious situation, many may feel less inclined to listen when Jewish lobbyists come calling. Political power in America is, of course, more than just a function of numbers; organization, intelligence, experience, participation and money also count for a great deal. But given countervailing pressure from constituents actively hostile to Jewish interests, the knowledge that America's Jews are a less significant group than they used to be cannot but have some impact. In the coming years, Jews will have to work much harder to achieve their goals and will not be able to take their power nearly so much for granted.

Israel may well suffer the most from these changes. The declining status of American Jews coupled with the rise of American Islam and the growing political maturity of the American Muslim community will make it much more difficult in the years ahead for massive aid to Israel to win congressional approval. Already, the Muslim Political Action Committee is promoting pro-Palestinian policies. Having learned much from watching how Jewish political lobbyists work, American Muslims intend to increase their political activities and hope to elect a Muslim to Congress by 1992.<sup>17</sup>

For a few decades, at least, we are likely to see a return in this country to the rhetoric of religious triumphalism. Faiths new on the American scene and flush with fresh converts often delude themselves into thinking that theirs is the faith of the future, the religion that will bring the truth to all Americans and unite them into a single all-embracing church (or mosque). Almost inevitably, this pious hope stirs up religious fervor, spurs the faithful to participate in religious crusades and successfully thwarts liberal efforts aimed

at promoting interreligious harmony. Catholics, Jews and mainline Protestants know from experience that sooner or later all such hopes are doomed to disappointment: religious monism is not the American way. But this may well be the kind of lesson that every faith community must learn anew for itself.

Until this and other lessons are learned, interfaith conversations will become much more difficult. In the past, leading Jews, Protestants and

Catholics have, if nothing else, established certain proprieties that permitted them to interact; they all learned to practice what John Murray Cuddihy calls "the religion of civility."<sup>18</sup> Faiths previously excluded from the mainstream do not necessarily share these proprieties and may in some cases openly scorn them—witness the intemperate rhetoric of some fundamentalist preachers or of Black Muslim leaders like Louis Farrakhan. Unless (or until)

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MM51



## The Rise of Islam

continued from previous page

a new generation of religious leaders from a much broader spectrum of faiths can be initiated into the niceties of religious conversation, progress can scarcely be expected. Discussions will either prove too limited to be meaningful or too acrimonious to be helpful.

On the brighter side, the rise of Islam and the widening parameters of American religion may in the long run promote closer Muslim-Jewish relations. Confronted with surprisingly similar kinds of religious problems in a society that is still overwhelmingly Christian, Jews and Muslims have every reason to learn to work together in support of common interests. Moreover, the neutral American environment should make possible a level of religious interaction between Jews and Muslims that would be unthinkable either in Arab countries or in Israel. For reasons stated above, I do not expect serious inter-religious conversations to take place in the near future. But the history of Catholic-Jewish relations over the past century in America demonstrates that change is possible. Improvements may come sooner than we think.

The changing world of American religion that I have portrayed here may prompt American Jews to reevaluate their fundamental agenda and goals for the years ahead. If Jews are to be known once more as a religious minority, a so-called dissenting faith, they may want to act the part, just as they did decades ago. This means that Jews would focus first and foremost on their own interests, next on those issues of special concern to religious minorities and only third on the great social and political agenda that majority faiths worry about. Historically, the Jewish community played a tremendously important role as leader and voice for America's religious minorities: It did more than any other faith community to promote inclusive theories of American life (the melting pot and cultural pluralism) and religious liberty for all.

In my opinion, Jews have had far less impact as yea-saying members of the religious majority and have squandered precious resources on issues about which they have little new to say. By refocusing priorities back toward minority group issues—particularly the age-old American question of minority

rights versus majority rule—Jews may actually make more of a mark than they did as members of the religious establishment. Such a refocusing, strengthening as it would Jewish minority group identity, would have the additional advantage of promoting group survival as a weapon against interfaith marriage and assimilation.

Admittedly, predictions about the future of the American Jewish community are notoriously untrustworthy. As early as 1819, former President John Adams predicted that Jews in America might "possibly in time become liberal Unitarian Christians." In 1964, *Look* magazine devoted a whole issue to the "Vanishing American Jew," at the time a much-discussed subject.

So far, thank God, these and other predictions have proven wrong. The Jewish people lives on. Some might consider this a timely reminder that (as someone once said) "prediction is very difficult, especially about the future." Others may view our continuing survival as nothing less than providential: evidence that God in a display of divine mercy is watching over us. A third view, my own, is that precisely because Jews are so worried about survival, we listen attentively to prophets of doom and respond to them. Gloom and doom prophets function historically as a kind of Jewish early warning system: Their jeremiads hit home and produce necessary changes. For this reason, contemporary prophets, much like the biblical Jonah, are often fated to spend their lives as "self-negating prophets." Their widely publicized prophecies, instead of being fulfilled, usually result in the kinds of changes needed to "avert the evil decree."

Jews have done exceedingly well in this country both in the old days when they were viewed as members of a religious minority, roughly akin to Turks and infidels, and more recently, when they became part of the religious majority, grouped together with Protestants and Catholics. That yet another change may now be taking place should thus occasion concerned vigilance but not necessarily alarm. Indeed, we have seen that some of the implications of this change may actually turn out to be positive. Moreover, it is a mistake to assume that Jews are merely the objects of history, tossed about by forces totally beyond their control. While Jews may not be able to do anything about the

realignment of American religion and the growth of American Islam, the way they respond to these challenges may make a great deal of difference. American Jews survived earlier challenges because Jewish leaders responded to them creatively—with wisdom, discernment and flexibility. One hopes that our present leaders can do as well. ▀

<sup>1</sup> Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Adair T. Lummis, *Islamic Values in the United States: A Comparative Study* (New York: Oxford Univ., 1987), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Richard N. Ostling, "Americans Facing Toward Mecca," *Time*, May 23, 1988, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Will Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (Rev. ed., New York: Anchor, 1960), esp. pp. 256-57.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Story, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (Boston: 1833), as reprinted in John F. Wilson and Donald L. Drakeman, *Church and State in American History* (Boston: Beacon, 1987), pp. 92-93.

<sup>5</sup> Robert T. Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities* (New York: Oxford Univ., 1971), p. 118.

<sup>6</sup> Morton Borden, *Jews, Turks and Infidels* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina, 1984), pp. 62-74; Naomi W. Cohen, *Encounter With Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States, 1830-1914* (Philadelphia: JPS, 1984), pp. 98-100, 254-256.

<sup>7</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Jews and Church State Relations: The Search for "Equal Footing"* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1989).

<sup>8</sup> Adumbrations of it may, however, be found a century or more earlier.

<sup>9</sup> Mark Silk, *Spiritual Politics: Religion and America Since World War I* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), pp. 40-53.

<sup>10</sup> David G. Dalin, "Will Herberg in Retrospect," *Commentary* 86 (July 1988), pp. 38-43.

<sup>11</sup> Everett R. Clinchy, "Better Understanding," *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* 2 (1942), p. 257; Louis Minsky, "National Conference of Christians and Jews," *ibid.*, 8, p. 114; Benny Kraut, "Towards the Establishment of the National Conference of Christians and Jews: The Tenuous Road to Religious Goodwill in the 1920s," *American Jewish History* 77:3 (March 1988), pp. 388-412; *idem.*, "A Wary Collaboration: Jews, Catholics and the Protestant Goodwill Movement" in William R. Hutchison, ed., *Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America 1900-1960* (New York: Cambridge Univ., 1989), pp. 193-230; Alex J. Goldman, "Alexander D. Goode," *Giants of the Faith: Great American Rabbis* (New York: Citadel, 1964), pp. 311-329; see also Lance J. Sussman "Toward Better Understanding": The Rise of the Interfaith Movement in America and the Role of Rabbi Isaac Landman," *American Jewish Archives* 34 (April 1982), pp. 35-51.

<sup>12</sup> Charles H. Stember et al., *Jews in the Mind of America* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p. 77.

<sup>13</sup> See G. Gordon Melton, *The Encyclopedia of American Religions* (Wilmington, NC: McGrath, 1978, 1985).



<sup>14</sup> Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney, *America Mainline Religion: Its Changing Shape of the Religious Establishment* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ., 1987), esp. p. 17; Silk, p. 181.

<sup>15</sup> Haddad and Lummis, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Ostling, p. 50; Haddad and Lummis, p. 161.

<sup>17</sup> Ostling, p. 50. Abdo A. Elkholy dreamed of a far more radical agenda for Arab Americans. "Many of the great national movements which have changed the course of our modern history started abroad," he pointed out. "Could it be that future historians will focus on the Arab elites in America and their role in a sweeping Arab revolution which would unify the Middle East and liberate it from both international Zionism and military domination and corruption?" See Elkholy, "The Arab-Americans: Nationalism and Traditional Preservations," *The Arab Americans Studies in Assimilation*, ed. by Elaine C. Hagopian and Ann Paden (Wilmette, IL: Medina Univ., 1969), p. 17.

<sup>18</sup> John Murray Cuddihy, *No Offense: Civil Religion and Protestant Taste* (New York: Seabury, 1978).

## Arab PR

*continued from page 45*

that Muslims can be black Americans or they can come from Indonesia, Iraq or occupied Palestine.

Lawrence cites other pro-Arab groups that have an impact on schools. The Arab Women's Council Research and Education Fund, in Washington, D.C., sponsors essay contests for high school students. Winners and their teachers are taken on a tour of Jordan and Israel. Arab World Consultants in Berkeley, California, conducts teacher training programs and publishes "The Arab World: Multi-Media Units."

According to Jackie Berman, education director of San Francisco's Jewish Community Relations Council, the pro-Arab viewpoint often filters into schools via materials and programs on the Middle East produced by organizations with a known Arabist tilt. The North American Coordinating Council (NACC) of NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations), affiliated with the United Nations, presents workshops with a Palestinian viewpoint.

The UN also sponsors Model UN sessions in high schools where students role-play and debate. "How do you suppose," Berman knowingly asks, "Israel comes out?"

These materials get into the classroom precisely because they appeal to legitimate concerns of teachers. Con-