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Box 84, Folder 7, Jewish students on war, 1969.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date May 5, 1969
to Milton Himmelfarb
from Arnold Schwartz
subject Jewish Students on War

Some College Students'
 Religious Affiliation and Opposition to War

	Freshman Women	Senior Women	Freshman Men	Senior Men
Catholic*	1.1	1.4	-0.3	0.1
Protestant	6.3	7.6	4.8	5.6
Jew	3.3	6.6	1.3	6.2
Other**	9.1	7.5	4.4	6.0
None	7.1	8.5	7.3	6.3

* The Catholic sample is drawn from two Catholic colleges.

** The "Other" grouping is composed of Quakers, Unitarians,
 Greek Orthodox, Buddhist, and Ethical Culture respondents.

1. What this study is about

Not long ago, against the background of war in Vietnam, attitudes toward war seemed an adequate and sensitive indicator of Left and Right among students. The apparent prominence of Jewish students in anti-war protests led some to believe that the Jewish political stance was heavily skewed to the left, that none opposed war as much as Jewish youth.

A study conducted in the spring of 1967 and reported in the Winter 1968 issue of Sociological Analysis (Vol.29, No.4) presents data reflecting a Jewish college youth less "radical", comparatively, than has at times been assumed. The study, "Religion and Opposition to War among College Students," by John F. Connors III, Richard C. Leonard, and Kenneth E. Burnham, analyzes the relation between religion and opposition to war among 1,062 students on four Eastern campuses.

The extent of opposition to war was determined by responses to six questions. The questions covered the draft exemption for conscientious objectors, restriction of the right to demonstrate against foreign policy, and duty of religious leaders to support their country in times of crisis, nuclear strength as the way to peace, acceptance of total war with no distinction between combatants and non-combatants, and the nuclear bombing of large cities. Responses ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree", and the "opposition to war" score thus could run from -12 (least

opposed to war) to #12 (most opposed to war). The scores are reported in the table above.

2. Some observations on reading the table

a) The score of Jewish senior men is worth pausing on. While Jewish women (freshmen and seniors) and Jewish men freshmen are less anti-war than all but the Catholics, the Jewish senior men are strongly opposed to war by any comparison.

b) In other such surveys, students from Jewish families have made up a large proportion of those rejecting religious identification; i.e., of those falling into the "none" category. Were that to be found here, the relatively high scores of the "none" students would tend to raise the anti-war scores of the Jewish students -- the latter category now being extended to include Jewish students who shun all but the most universal self-identifications.

c) Of some interest may be the similarity of outlook between Jewish senior men and women, in contrast to the general dissimilarity in outlook between men and women in the other categories. The implications of this finding are open to speculation.

d) Finally, it is possible that the data on the Jewish sample reflect particular conditions at the unnamed school from which it was drawn.

AS:mk