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adopted countries and re-oriented their own institutions so as to support non-Jewish causes. Defense of the universal interest, they argued, was defense of their own interests. Eastern Europeans, with no hope of emancipation, had no such alternative.

The constitutional ideals of the young American Republic favored the growth of this Western-style liberalism, first transplanted here by Jewish immigrants from Bavaria and southern Germany in the 1820s and '30s. Massive immigration of Eastern European Jews began in the 1880s. At first, these immigrants were absorbed by Democratic political machines; later waves brought socialists and anarchists who, along with a lively Yiddish press and the trade union movement, stimulated independent Jewish voting and a high level of political participation. A generalized liberalism was the result.

How long this phenomenon will last is unknown. The Holocaust and the founding of Israel have rekindled Jewish traditions of self-interest. Many American Jews have also begun to question "conventional liberal assumptions" concerning the Jewish-Gentile relationship. "In the last resort," Halpern observes, "Jews are isolated and will not be effectively aided by others."

Social Security's Generation Gap

"Facing the Social Security Crisis" by Martin Feldstein, in *The Public Interest* (Spring 1977), National Affairs, 10 E. 53rd St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

Concern for the financial health of Social Security has prompted the White House, under both Ford and Carter administrations, to propose emergency legislation to shore up the sagging system. Social Security now carries an unfunded liability of \$4 trillion. Current trust funds are equivalent to only 8 months' worth of benefits, compared to 15 in 1970. The depletion rate is accelerating.

But unlike private pension programs, says Harvard economist Feldstein, Social Security's actuarial soundness has a friend in government coercion. Although bankrupt by conventional standards, there is no *economic* reason why Social Security need ever fail because "the government's power to tax is its power to meet the obligations" to future beneficiaries. The key issue, therefore, is not the administration's short-term structural tinkering but whether taxpayers are prepared to support the Social Security system.

Maintaining political support, contends Feldstein, will become increasingly difficult. The rate of return on Social Security—the excess of benefits over lifetime Social Security taxes—will fall sharply in the near future, both in real terms and relative to return on private investment. In part, this is due to the "demographic swing" from baby boom to baby slump. Where there are now 30 retirees per 100 workers, 40 years from now there will be 45. Simply to maintain the existing ratio of benefits to previous earnings, the tax will have to be increased by at least 50 percent. (There is no possibility, however,

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that the Social Security tax, which has increased 500 percent in the past 25 years, can continue to rise to provide ever greater benefits.)

In short, says Feldstein, "we are asking the next generation to pay an increased rate of tax to support us as retirees even as the whole social security program becomes less of a 'good deal' for them than it has been for us."

Feldstein proposes several measures—notably, increasing tax rates within three years—to deal with the system's more immediate problems. Since an unfair shift of the tax burden runs the risk that the next generation will simply refuse to pay, he also proposes that the current taxpayer generation, in effect, pay in advance. A 2 percent surcharge on Social Security taxes, says Feldstein, would produce about \$15 billion a year, enough to meet the needs of the demographic old-age bulge that lies ahead.

Does Sex Make a Difference?

"When Women Run Against Men" by R. Darcy and Sarah Slavin Schramm, in *Public Opinion Quarterly* (Spring 1977), Columbia University Press, 136 South Broadway, Irvington-on-Hudson, N.Y. 10533.

When a woman runs against a man in a political contest, is her sex a help or a hindrance? Conventional wisdom is divided on the subject. Some analysts say women candidates gain public recognition more easily; others argue that women "mobilize" the votes of other women; still others believe qualified women are often victims of a sexist backlash. On one point, all agree: A candidate's sex interests voters.

But in a study of 1,099 contested races for seats in the U.S. House of Representatives (in 1970, 1972, and 1974), Darcy and Schramm, political scientists at George Washington University, conclude that voters are ultimately indifferent to a candidate's sex. When variables of party and incumbency are taken into account, sex alone was found to have no effect on outcomes in the 87 races in which women participated. Regardless of sex, Democrats were likely to get more votes than Republicans, and incumbents more than challengers. Two-thirds of the women were Democrats.

In each of the elections studied, there was no evidence that a candidate's sex contributed to greater public recognition; women shared obscurity with the men. Voting turnout of women in races involving women candidates was not significantly higher, and those few voters who would favor or oppose women candidates simply on account of their sex were "balanced neatly" by voters with opposing tendencies. But if sex is not an issue, why are there only 18 women in the 435-member House?

The answer, suggest the authors, lies in the nominating process. Women were nominated in less than 10 percent of the contests studied, and women of both parties tended to be nominated from