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**Beyond the City****Jewish Vote Still Hil's
Most don't believe slur accusation**

By JOEL SIEGEL

Daily News Senior Political Correspondent

An allegation that Hillary Rodham Clinton once used an anti-Semitic slur isn't costing her much, if any, Jewish support — but that could change if the accusation is ever proved.

That's the finding of a sampling of Jewish voters by the Daily News. Reporters fanned out across metropolitan New York to assess whether the allegation is having any impact on the Senate race.

Of the 119 people questioned, 21 (18%) said they believe the charge that the First Lady called a campaign aide a "Jew bastard" the night Bill Clinton lost a congressional race 26 years ago. Another 34 (29%) said they don't believe the charge. The rest said they aren't sure or do not care.

But the sampling indicated that the alleged remark, although 26 years old, still carries some potency — and thus presents a potential hazard for the First Lady.



Otero AP

Hillary Clinton

About one in five voters — or 21% — said they would be less likely to vote for Hillary Clinton if the allegation proved true. At least half of those voters are Clinton supporters or undecided.

With the battle between Republican Rep. Rick Lazio and Clinton so close, even a slight shift in attitudes could have major ramifications.

Randy Navo, a 48-year-old teacher from Great Neck, L.I., said she backs Clinton, but, "If it's proven to be true, I would have a hard time voting for her." Citing Clinton's controversial embrace of Yasser Arafat's wife last year, Navo added, "You know, it's three strikes and you're out."

Clinton supporter Misa Wanderman, 49, of Manhattan also said she would drop Clinton if the allegation proved true. "I wouldn't vote for anybody I thought was bigoted," she said.

"It's all hearsay," said Richard Kabakow, 40, a contractor and a Clinton supporter from Westbury, L.I. But, he added, "If you produced a tape recording [of the alleged slur], I wouldn't vote for her."

The Daily News survey found 50% backing Clinton, 27% supporting Lazio (R-Suffolk) and 23% undecided — numbers roughly paralleling polls taken before the allegation surfaced last Friday in a book by a former National Enquirer reporter.

The results were not scientific, but they offer a broad window into the thinking of Jewish voters — who make up about 13% of the electorate. Nearly all those questioned by The News — 93% — said they were familiar with the allegation, which Clinton has called "absolutely false."

Many said they found it hard to believe the charge, however, because it doesn't fit their image of Clinton or because it surfaced during the campaign.

Sara Fine, 28, a software writer from Scarsdale, Westchester County, said, "If it were true, it would be very upsetting. But, I can't believe any of the information I hear about her now. It's silly. What [next]? 'She is from Mars, she had 12 kids and abandoned them in a project in the Bronx?'"

"It's all politics," said Marcia Stein, pushing a baby carriage along Avenue U in Brooklyn. "Leave her alone with this stuff. What does it have to do with being senator?"

Others said a statute of limitations applies. "I'm angry about kicking up a political fuss about something 26 years ago, which makes it meaningless. It's cheap-shot politics," said Murray Schechter, a retired ad man, in Mill Basin, Brooklyn.

Even a majority of the Lazio backers sampled said it would have nothing to do with their vote against Clinton.

"I am not pro- or anti-Hillary Clinton because she is pro-Jewish or anti-Jewish," said Jerry Flum, a 59-year-old Internet company president from Scarsdale. "She's not an ethical leader."

Voice of the People



McAlpin for NEWS
Misa Wanderman

Misa Wanderman, 49, Manhattan, Clinton supporter:

"I wouldn't vote for anybody I thought was bigoted."

Roy Kramon, 82, Scarsdale, Clinton supporter:

"Even if she gave vent to her feelings at that time, I still back her up. Going back 26 years, I wouldn't hold anything against any person — even the Bible doesn't give you 26 years."

Leigh Fields, 22, student at SUNY Buffalo, Great Neck, L.I., undecided:
"She seems to be too bright of a woman to have made such a ridiculous statement."

Amy Kalmanofsky, 34, rabbi, outside Jewish Theological Seminary in Manhattan:
"I don't think it would affect my vote. Overall, I still like what Hillary says and support what she stands for."

Steven Keller, 46, physician, New Rochelle, Lazio supporter:
"I think it's out of character."



Andrade for NEWS
Leigh Fields



Andrade for NEWS
Richard Kabakow

Batya Miller, lawyer, upper West Side:
"I don't think she's an anti-Semite."

Richard Kabakow, 40, contractor, Westbury, L.I., Clinton supporter:
"It's all hearsay. But if you produced a tape recording [of the alleged slur], I wouldn't vote for her."

Original Publication Date: 7/21/00

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From: News and Views | Beyond the City |
Wednesday, July 19, 2000

Wiesel Says Hillary Rap Doesn't Wash

By EDWARD LEWINE
Daily News Staff Writer

Nobel Prize winner and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel told the Daily News yesterday that Hillary Rodham Clinton is no anti-Semite.

And Wiesel spoke for the first time publicly about Clinton's generosity to his foundation, which promotes tolerance.

"I know one thing is clear," Wiesel said in a telephone interview from his Manhattan office. "All these stories about her anti-Semitism are wrong."

"She wouldn't use that kind of slur," he added.

Wiesel revealed that Clinton donated a portion of the earnings from her best-selling 1996 book, "It Takes a Village," to the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Sanity, which fights anti-Semitism and racism.

And, he said, the First Lady asked that her gesture be kept private.

"Why should she give money for that if she is what they claim she is?" he asked.

Wiesel would not say how much money had been donated. The book's publisher, Simon & Schuster, did not return calls.

Wiesel, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986 and has chronicled his experiences during the Holocaust in books of his own, said he was not endorsing Clinton's Senate bid. "I am not in the political field," he explained.

And he gently rapped the First Lady's knuckles for kissing Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's wife, Suha, after she made inflammatory comments about Israel.

"I was disturbed when I saw on television when she sat there and listened to the stupidities and insults by Suha Arafat,"

Wiesel said. "But I'm sure she regrets it."

Whatever mistakes Clinton may have made, Wiesel said, he's judging her on her lifetime — not on one comment or action.

"It is not surely an incident or an accident that should make me decide whether a person is or is not an anti-Semite," he said.

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No sure thing

Hillary Clinton struggles for women's votes

By TOM PRECIOUS
News Albany Bureau
7/24/00

YORKTOWN - When Hillary Rodham Clinton began her U.S. Senate campaign, Democratic and even Republican women formed her natural constituency, a crucial group she could count on for support.

It was no accident that after confirming in late winter 1999 that she was considering a Senate bid, the first New York audience Clinton spoke to was an all-female one.

"Isn't it about time New York State sent a woman to the United States Senate?" the Democratic Party's chairwoman, Judith Hope, told a cheering crowd of 1,000 women that early March day at a Manhattan hotel ballroom.

Yet after working the state for more than a year, Clinton is finding it an increasingly uphill challenge to lure to her side what is likely to be a swing group of voters: white women.

Recent polls show that her standing among white women, which first began showing up as a real problem late last year, is only getting worse.

The situation has some of her New York advisers growing increasingly worried, they acknowledge privately, as Election Day approaches.

Clinton is overwhelmingly supported by black women. But more white women prefer her opponent, Republican U.S. Rep. Rick A. Lazio, even though polls show her promoting issues - from education to health care - that white women say they care about most.

Publicly, her advisers said they are not worried, that in the end, white women will come back to her by



BILL WIPPERT/Buffalo News
Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton, here addressing a luncheon in Buffalo last month, is no shoo-in with white women voters, a swing group in statewide politics.



"I'm not a President Clinton fan. I don't like him and I don't trust her." Megan Molloy, 25, of West Seneca



"I feel we'd be better served by someone with a strong affiliation with the area." Maureen Marshall, 47, of West Seneca



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women will come back to her by November. Privately, though, several advisers said the campaign is facing a serious task. It needs to attract not only the soccer moms, but also older women and "pink-collar" white women who are not college educated and work in lower-paying jobs.

"If the white women's vote doesn't break her way, it's obviously a big, big problem," said one Democratic strategist working on the campaign.

The reasons vary, according to interviews with political consultants, pollsters, independent experts and women voters.

But for many white women, the reluctance to cozy up to Clinton seems to be as much about her personality as it is her philosophical beliefs. And the criticisms of her by white women appear to be years in the making, not the kind of feelings that can be easily turned around by television ads or campaign fliers.

For some white women, the central issue is her ties to eight years of the Clinton White House, even though President Clinton still ranks high in polls among women in New York.

"I don't like her politics," said Martha Taj, a Williamsville Democrat interviewed last week in downtown Buffalo. "President Clinton misled the nation. She's just as involved in it as he is. We don't need someone like that."

Despite the passage of time, many women interviewed and responding to polls say they have not been able to get beyond her marital strife with her husband, highlighted by the Monica Lewinsky scandal that eventually led to his impeachment.

From young professionals to senior citizens, several women questioned the handling of her marriage.

"I would have had more respect for her if she would not have stuck by him," said Megan Molloy, a 25-year-old married West Seneca Republican. "I don't like him and I don't trust her."

Others, however, find reason to listen and see what Clinton offers.

Sharon Mortin of Derby said Clinton's association with her husband and Johnny-come-lately residency were pluses.

"I have some reservations because of her association with a presidency that had such adverse publicity," she said. "But the way they both held up and faced their accusers changed my mind."

"She's going to be more of an advocate than Lazio," Sharon Mortin, 59, of Derby



"I don't like her politics. President Clinton misled the nation. She's just as involved in it as he is. We don't need someone like that." Martha Taj, Williamsville Democrat



"I'm troubled by her past. . . . If she had an agenda by sticking with (President Clinton), it was to promote her career. But I'm willing to listen." Susan Przybylak, Sloan independent

Martin, 59, a married college graduate who works as a disability examiner for the state, said she is a Democrat with conservative views.

"She's really found out what Western New York's problems are. She's done her homework," Martin said. "All of our representatives are from New York City. They don't know our problems. She's going to be more of an advocate than Lazio."

"Carpetbagger" sticking?

Many women also question her sudden interest in New York affairs and a New York address.

"I feel we'd be better served by someone with a strong affiliation with the area," said Maureen Marshall, a 47-year-old West Seneca independent who also said she disagrees with Clinton on abortion and "family values."

Others complained about her trying to ride her husband's coattails, while some talked of her in ways some men complain about women - such as being too aggressive.

A number of women interviewed at a shopping center in Yorktown in Westchester County, where Democrats outnumber Republicans as they do statewide, expressed strong feelings toward Clinton. That is something few voters have had any real time to do with Lazio in his young campaign since New York Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani dropped out.

"I just don't like her. I think she's kind of crooked with all that Whitewater stuff and other things. And she's married to Bill Clinton," said Frances Scheuerman, a senior citizen and independent from nearby Putnam County.

"I just think she's a phony," said Donna Gregorio, a married Republican from Mohegan Lake in Westchester County who often votes Democratic. Gregorio said it's not Clinton's politics that keep her from supporting the first lady - "I just can't relate to her."

But supporters can be found as well, such as Faith Kasanofsky, a housewife and independent voter from Croton in Westchester County. "She's extremely intelligent and handles herself beautifully," she said. "I would actually like to see a woman with her gusto working for us in the Senate."

Diverse views

If anything, the New York Senate race this year is serving to shatter a common political misconception that women will blindly support women candidates.

"Women are as homogeneous as men are, which is to say they aren't homogeneous at all," said Elizabeth Sherman, director of the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. "Women have much more divergent interests than ever before because they are working in so many different kinds of professions."

As a result, she said, women no longer vote along gender lines, but by party identification or for whatever candidates appeal to their broader personal and professional interests - just like men.

Indeed, Hillary Rodham Clinton has her supporters among white women, in part because she has been a strong supporter of women's rights.

"But then others feel she's manipulative, that maybe she's too self-interested, that she is maybe trying to use the Senate race just to advance her own career and maybe not the interests of New Yorkers," Sherman said.

Numbers look bad

The major polling organizations find Clinton's problems among white women getting worse.

In early 1999, as she was ruminating about running, 81 percent of Democratic women supported her. A year later, when she had become candidate Clinton, the Marist College poll found that support had slipped to 67 percent.

A poll out two weeks ago by Quinnipiac College, meanwhile, shows her favorability ratings among New York women at their lowest level: dropping from 61 percent favorable among all women in February 1999 to 28 percent this month.

Douglas Schwartz, Quinnipiac's polling director, said Clinton is faring worst among white women who are older, or have no college education or who live in the New York City suburbs, where she is losing to Lazio 62 to 31 percent among white women.

When African-American and Latino women are factored in, Clinton beats Lazio statewide 50 to 39 percent. But when only white women are polled, Lazio is ahead 47 to 41 percent.

Adding to her problem is the fact that Lazio's strength among white Republican women is stronger, 78 to 11 percent, than Clinton's backing among white Democratic women, 66 to 23 percent.

White women pick winners

What makes white women so crucial in the Senate race is that, according to Schwartz, they have shifted back and forth across party lines during the past few statewide elections.

"The key thing over the last decade is that white women have been on the winning side in New York State elections," he said.

Clinton's supporters say what they like most about her is her intelligence, followed by her stand on education and her strength or courage, Schwartz said. Eight percent said they support her because she's a woman.

Among those who dislike her, concerns over the carpetbagger issue, questions about her honesty and handling of marital problems lead the list.

Besides gender problems with some male voters, Clinton also must face some white women voters who just don't think politics is a place for some women.

Anna Greenberg, a Harvard University professor who specializes in public opinion and gender politics, said a poll she did for an Internet site found most women don't believe a first lady should be taking on nontraditional jobs, such as running for Senate.

"The assumption that women candidates should have an easier time with women voters is a mistake," she said.

That is not news to Gayle Syposs, who ran for her first political job on the City of Tonawanda Common Council back in 1973. Consistently over the years in seven subsequent races, she said, she always had to work harder to convince women voters - particularly middle-aged ones - to back her.

"I don't know whether they felt threatened, or if it was a feeling that they're not in this racket so how could I be in it, or whether I should be home with the kids," said Syposs, now a deputy commissioner with the Erie County Board of Elections.

"Women are nobody's natural supporter. . . . They don't have blind loyalty," Syposs said.

Stressing women's issues

It's not that Clinton hasn't been trying with women.

Downstate, she pushes abortion rights. Upstate, she talks economy. All around the state, she pushes education, health care and gun control. She has spoken out about gender equity at the United Nations, promoted breast cancer research on Long Island and called for an end to the international prostitution trade.

Her spokesman, Howard Wolfson, said that, in the end, women "will realize that Hillary is the right choice."

Other supporters say many voters aren't focused on the race, despite its high media interest, and won't be until after Labor Day. After that, the differences between the two campaigns on issues important to women will be made clearer, Clinton advisers say.

"I think you will see Hillary Clinton's numbers rise," said Suzy Ballantyne, the top political strategist at the state AFL-CIO.

But Clinton critics say the damage is too far along for her to recapture the lost white female support. White conservative women already oppose her for a host of policy reasons, such as abortion. Many white liberal women question whether Clinton is just "an opportunistic feminist," said Barbara Ledeen, executive director for policy at the right-leaning Independent Women's Forum in suburban Washington, D.C. The group is heavily financed by billionaire Richard Scaife, a well-known Clinton detractor.

"She's not an authentic woman with authentic family values who has an authentic point of view," Ledeen said.

But Susan Przybylak, a married, 28-year-old independent voter from Sloan, while troubled by some aspects of the first lady, may offer the kind of hope Clinton needs to appeal to white women as the campaign heats up.

"I'm troubled by her past, with her husband and the allegations about Whitewater," she said. "If she had an agenda by sticking with (President Clinton), it was to promote her career. But I'm willing to listen."

News Staff Reporter Mischa Gaus contributed to this report.

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NEWS

Hillary Vows to Keep Aid for Israel

by **Jenn Abelson**
Staff Writer

In her second appearance at a Long Island synagogue since allegations arose last week that she used an anti-Semitic slur 26 years ago, Hillary Rodham Clinton recognized supporters who defended her character and vowed to continue foreign aid to help Israel fight terrorism.

"I was grateful for everybody, from Elie Wiesel, Mayor Giuliani, Chuck Schumer and Joe Lieberman [Democratic Senator from Connecticut]...that so many people here in our country, in Israel and other places have responded so strongly," Clinton said yesterday to nearly 200 audience members at The Jewish Center of the Hamptons in East Hampton.

Former National Enquirer reporter Jerry Oppenheimer contends in his book, "State of the Union," which was published last week that the New York Senate candidate uttered the word "Jew" in an obscenity-laced harangue at her husband's campaign manager in Arkansas in 1974.

Clinton immediately denied the allegation, and said yesterday that false, venomous attacks "don't belong in our public life and are wrong." Yesterday, the chief campaign strategist for opponent Rep. Rick Lazio, Mike Murphy, said on CNN that he believes Clinton's assertion that she did not use an anti-Semitic slur, but he added that "there's an unease about trustworthiness of Mrs. Clinton, because there's such a history of spin taken to the ultimate with the Clintons, that she has a credibility problem." Last week Lazio expressed doubts about her denial.

Delivering an hour-long speech peppered with knowledge of the Torah, Clinton underscored the importance of hate crimes legislation, abortion rights, affordable health care and securing peace in the Middle East.

She described the ongoing talks at Camp David between leaders of Israel and the Palestinians as "the most comprehensive and intense negotiations ever," and said "peace is seen as the best hope, the smartest strategic choice for the security of the children of Israel." The Jewish Center audience received Clinton warmly, giving her three standing ovations during her appearance and booing the announcement of rival Rick Lazio's upcoming speech at the synagogue Saturday. Both had accepted invitations before the book was released.

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By **BETH J. HARPAZ**, Associated Press
First published: Sunday, July 23, 2000

First Lady speaks at synagogue

Talk centers on Israeli peace a week after slur allegation surfaces

WESTHAMPTON BEACH -- Seeking to calm jittery Jewish voters, Hillary Rodham Clinton appeared Saturday at an Orthodox synagogue to denounce terrorism against Israel and support its right to be free from violence.

The First Lady spoke before an overflow crowd of about 350 people just one week after her campaign was rocked by an allegation that she made an anti-Semitic remark in 1974. She has angrily denied the charge.

"I know this has been a very difficult and trying week for you," said Rabbi Marc Schneier, who invited and introduced Clinton. "It's time for us to move on. Hillary has always been a friend of our people."

Clinton spoke about the ongoing Camp David peace talks, telling her audience that "the challenges the President and prime minister are facing are rooted in whether or not others will give up their hatred and their sense of violence ... in return for peace."

President Clinton, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat have been meeting at Camp David in efforts to reach a new Middle East peace agreement. The President, who was in Japan for an economic summit, is due back at the talks Sunday night.

The First Lady spoke at the Hampton Synagogue in Westhampton Beach, an exclusive Long Island summer resort. Though nominally Orthodox, the synagogue attracts a cross-section of Jewish worshippers.

The GOP Senate candidate, U.S. Rep. Rick Lazio, was scheduled to speak at the synagogue next Saturday. Both candidates are courting the Jewish voters who make up 12 percent of the New York electorate.

During the service, as dictated by religious custom,



Clinton sat on the side of the synagogue reserved for women. She was accompanied by a female Secret Service agent and Schneier's wife, Toby.

The Clinton visit came one week after the first published reports regarding her alleged use of an anti-Semitic remark toward an Arkansas campaign worker in 1974. The charge appeared in "State of a Union," a new book by former National Enquirer reporter Jerry Oppenheimer.

The First Lady, in an emotional news conference, emphatically denied the allegation. Traditional wisdom says Clinton needs to win 60 percent of the Jewish vote for a November victory; she is currently polling between 50 and 60 percent.

During her appearance at the synagogue, Clinton never mentioned Arafat or the PLO. Instead, she focused on Barak and Israel.

The Israelis, she said, have a right "to keep their children safe from violence and terrorism. We know in our hearts that God has deemed their cause just. ... I believe we have to support their efforts, and particularly support what the prime minister is going to do."

Some in the audience remained unconvinced about Clinton's commitment to Israel.

"Everyone likes her very much," said temple treasurer Seymour Siegel. "They're just disturbed about her passion with the PLO and her history with those causes."



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NEWS

STATE GOP BOSS RIPS HILL FOR HER 'BLIND AMBITION'

By GREGG BIRNBAUM and ROBERT HARDT Jr.



Republicans yesterday launched a stinging new attack on Hillary Rodham Clinton - charging she's driven by "blind political ambition" - while Clinton met privately with a leader of the city's livery drivers.

Fernando Mateo, head of the state Federation of Taxi Drivers, called on the Democratic Senate candidate to help secure federal funding to make it safer to drive a cab in the city.

HILLARY CLINTON:
Huddles with cabdrivers.

"I asked her to ask the president to please help this industry," Mateo told The Post after the closed-door session at union headquarters in Manhattan.

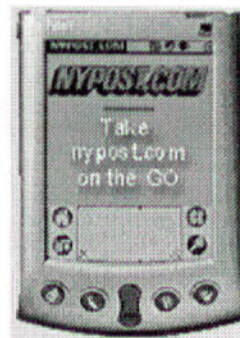
"She said she would try to help us in any way she can."

In the wake of violent attacks that have left nine livery cabdrivers dead this year, the federal bucks could be used to buy high-tech global positioning systems, to track taxis' movements, and other safety devices.

Mateo, who is looking to increase the livery union's political power, also hopes to meet with Rep. Rick Lazio before making any endorsement in the Senate race.

Meanwhile, state GOP head William Powers sent a new fund-raising letter to potential donors, accusing Clinton of being "an angry woman" and urging them to help him "stop this ambitious, ruthless, scheming, calculating, manipulating woman."

Powers charged that the first lady has "been at the



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Powers charged that the first lady has "been at the front and center of every Clinton-Gore scandal, and this has been the most seedy, shameless and corrupt administration in American history."

At a press conference in Albany, Powers - who had a bumper sticker on his desk reading, "Kiss my N.Y. ass, Hillary" - defended the harshly worded solicitation, saying it was highly effective.

"I've never seen a response to direct mail like we're getting from [this letter]," Powers said.

Clinton campaign spokesman Howard Wolfson said, "These negative letters signal that Rick Lazio and the GOP have no intention of running a campaign on the issues. We are confident that New Yorkers will reject Rick Lazio's campaign of insults and personal attacks."

Lazio did not campaign yesterday. He was in Washington, D.C., for votes in Congress, including one to eliminate the "marriage tax."

Lazio backed the tax-reducing measure, which President Clinton has threatened to veto.

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By **LARA JAKES**, Political writer
First published: Friday, July 21, 2000

GOP attacks First Lady to help raise cash

Albany-- Letters calling Clinton names said to rally thousands of dollars

State Republicans have fired off a second round of fund-raising attacks against Hillary Rodham Clinton's U.S. Senate campaign and have at least three more bullets ready to go, the party's chairman said Thursday.

A three-page direct-mail letter sent to in-state donors describes Clinton as an "ambitious, ruthless, scheming, calculating, manipulating woman." It was signed by New York GOP Chairman Bill Powers, who released copies of the letter Thursday.

An earlier memo targeting national Republican donors and using a similarly personal, negative attack, has garnered "tens of thousands" of dollars -- sometimes on a daily basis -- to help GOP U.S. Rep. Rick Lazio defeat Clinton in the Nov. 7 election, Powers said.

Lazio, who pledged to stay away from negative campaigning, has so far held back from attacking Clinton personally.

"While Rick Lazio smiles for the cameras in public, his Republican allies quietly send out insult-filled letters behind closed doors," said Clinton spokesman Howard Wolfson. "It's time for the hypocrisy to stop. These negative letters signal that Rick Lazio and the GOP have no intention of running a campaign on the issues."

For her part, Clinton has been hammering Lazio through TV ads and in her campaign speeches, but she generally sticks to hitting the congressman on his voting record in the U.S. House and on his stands on certain issues.

Asked if there was a difference between ads that point out a candidate's voting record or political platform and fund-raising letters that call a candidate names, Powers responded: "No."

Clinton has also followed the direct-mail money trail. Financial reports filed with the Federal Election

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Commission show Clinton spent about \$1.5 million on direct mail and received \$4.5 million in the three-month reporting period that ended June 30.

Overall, Clinton has so far raised more than \$18 million since she began campaigning last year and has about \$7 million on hand. Lazio, who entered the race only two months ago when GOP front-runner New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani dropped out, has \$6.2 million.



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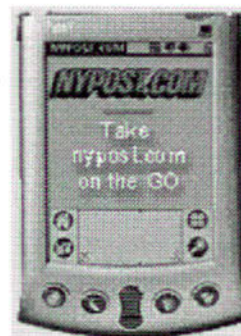
NEWS

HILL TALKS PEACE TO JEWS

By GREGG BIRNBAUM

DAY AT THE BEACH: Senate candidate Hillary Clinton shakes hands after attending services at the Hampton Synagogue in Westhampton. - AP

Hillary Rodham Clinton jumped into the sensitive Camp David peace talks yesterday, saying the Americans and Israelis want a deal - and strongly suggesting Palestinian leaders are the stumbling block.



"So much of the challenge that the president and the [Israeli] prime minister are facing is rooted in whether or not others will give up their hatred, will give up their sense of violence and their commitment to destruction in return for peace," Clinton said at an Orthodox synagogue on Long Island.



PAST ISSUES

Since Yasser Arafat is the only other person President Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak are facing at the negotiating table, the first lady's stinging broadside about "commitment to destruction" seemed aimed at the PLO leader.

INTERACTIVE FEATURES

Hasan Abdul Rahman, the PLO's representative to Washington, said Clinton's remarks did not "deserve a comment."

Israeli radio gave the first lady's words top billing on the nightly news, headlining with "Hillary comes to help Barak - blames the Palestinians and Arafat for the slag in the summit" and broadcasting Clinton's comments.

A source close to Barak hailed the first lady for backing the Israeli delegation's privately held view that Arafat is the obstacle to reaching an agreement.

But Clinton's spokesman, Howard Wolfson, said later in the day after speaking with the first lady that she meant "terrorists, fundamentalists and extremists," not Arafat.

Addressing more than 300 worshipers in the packed Westhampton Beach synagogue during Shabbat services, Clinton said her husband and Barak are laboring for a breakthrough - but she didn't include Arafat.



Arafat.

"Over the last 10 days now, [a peace deal] is exactly what the president and the [Israeli] prime minister have worked so hard to achieve," she said.

Aides said later Clinton didn't follow her prepared text and inserted her own off-the-cuff comments throughout the 24-minute speech.

It was Clinton's first appearance before a Jewish audience since she was accused a week ago of uttering an anti-Semitic slur in 1974 - a controversy she didn't bring up, although the synagogue's rabbi, Marc Schneir, told his flock it was "time to move on" and called the first lady a "friend of our people."

Clinton's comments about the Mideast peace process were striking because they occurred while the strained and delicate Camp David talks are continuing and she has previously been cautious not to say anything that could be disruptive or appear to take sides.

But the first lady got solidly behind Israel yesterday, saying, "I believe we have to support these efforts and particularly support what the [Israeli] prime minister is trying to do."

As the first lady spoke, peace negotiators were marking time yesterday, awaiting the return of President Clinton from the G-8 conference in Japan - and the beginning of the most decisive phase of the historic Middle East talks.

Aides said the first lady's visit to the synagogue had been scheduled before her husband's former campaign manager, Paul Fray, charged that Clinton called him a "f-ing Jew bastard" in 1974. She has denied it.

The first lady used the politely received speech to deliver her most extensive pro-Israel remarks since her campaign began.

Clinton referred to Israel as "the homeland," recalled that she has known three prime ministers of the Jewish state, commented about a not-generally well-known Jewish holiday, and reminisced fondly about her first trip to Israel in 1981.

"In all of the trips that I have made since then, I have come back even more committed to the security and well-being of Israel," she said.

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Sunday, July 23, 2000**Synagogue Offers Hil Relief
Slur tale takes a rest
at Hamptons temple**By WILLIAM GOLDSCHLAG in Westhampton Beach, L.I.
and DAVE SALTONSTALL in New York
Daily News Staff Writers

On the seventh day, Hillary Rodham Clinton's alleged anti-Semitic slur seemed put to rest — at least in the eyes of Jewish congregants who warmly welcomed the First Lady and Democratic Senate candidate yesterday to their Orthodox synagogue in the Hamptons.

"I know this has been a very difficult and very trying week for you, and it's time to move on," Rabbi Marc Schneier said to Clinton, who was seated, in accordance with custom, in the women's section. "Hillary has always been a friend of our people," he told an overflow crowd of 500 in Westhampton Beach.

From the pulpit, Clinton drew from the Torah and the values of her own Methodist upbringing to call for "standing against bigotry, prejudice, racism and anti-Semitism" and for hope that the Camp David talks between Israelis and the Palestinians will end with a peace deal.

"I am worried today about the increasing and continuous level of hatred, hate crimes, prejudice and bigotry in our communities," she said. "I think all of us know how important it is to stand against it whenever it raises its ugly head."

Standing in front of an imposing ark of Jerusalem stone, she paid tribute to her husband's and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's efforts to negotiate a peace. She omitted mention of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, with whose wife last fall she shared a politically sloppy kiss.

The Clinton campaign knew the Hampton synagogue probably



Roca NEWS
Hillary Clinton (l.)
and Rabbi Marc
Schneier (r.)

would be a friendly venue. Schneier was part of a clerical group in 1998 urging forgiveness of Bill Clinton in the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

Most of the congregation put aside the synagogue's usual rules of decorum to stand and applaud when she concluded.

Although some still harbored doubts about her views on Israel, all those interviewed believed either that she never uttered the anti-Semitic slur, or that it mattered little even if she had said it.

"To pull something up from 27, 26 years ago, it's ludicrous," said Amy Robinson of Westhampton. "She's not anti-Semitic." Terri Seidman, a Westhampton interior designer, observed, "Her value system is so global and so broad that even if she did say it, it isn't who she is."

The Clinton campaign hoped the friendly reception yesterday would bring closure after more than a week of combating allegations that she called former Bill Clinton campaign manager Paul Fray a "Jew bastard" in 1974 during a heated argument.

The allegation was contained in a new book, "State of the Union: Inside the Complex Marriage of Bill and Hillary Clinton," by a former National Enquirer reporter.

"It did not happen," a trembling Hillary Clinton told reporters at the dramatic press conference last Sunday, her eyes welling with tears. "I have never said anything like that. Ever. Ever."

She then released a copy of a letter that Fray had sent her in 1997, in which he apologized for negative things he had said about her to other authors and journalists over the years.

Later in the day, President Clinton picked up the phone and defended his wife in an exclusive, on-the-record interview with the Daily News.

"In 29 years, my wife has never, ever uttered an ethnic or racial slur against anybody, ever," Clinton told Michael Kramer, The News' managing editor for politics. "She's so straight on this, she squeaks."

Though Rep. Rick Lazio's campaign criticized Clinton's handling of the slur controversy, Lazio himself would only comment that he didn't know whom to believe.

Remarkably, other prominent Republicans came to Clinton's defense, most notably Mayor Giuliani and GOP presidential candidate George W. Bush, who said that as far as anti-Semitism is concerned, Hillary is clean.

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Sunday, July 23, 2000

Hillary Tries to Be Too Good to Be True

By CHRIS MATTHEWS

WASHINGTON

She thinks she's better than us.

That's the decisive issue in this year's New York Senate race. It's not policy or politics or personality. It's how voters react to how Hillary Rodham Clinton views herself.

The First Lady does not offer herself — both ally and critic agree — as one of the people, another kid made good from the neighborhoods.

"One of the top hundred lawyers in the country!" declared her earliest notices.

A graduate of Wellesley and Yale Law, she entered the White House as the most educated First Lady in history. We were getting, the new First Lady herself let us know, two leaders of presidential stature for the price of one.

We're talking about more than diplomas and IQ here.

As a Senate candidate, Clinton has brandished an image of unquestioned moral superiority. Who can forget her first sighting as a New York politician — that smart, gutsy barnstorming for '98 Senate candidate Chuck Schumer? Far from being a player in the Clinton coverup, here was its prime casualty, a woman carrying on the fight amid the mortification wrought by her husband's outlandish misconduct.

Many people, including some close to me, see the First Lady entirely in this light. They look up to her as their champion, smart enough to be future President, strong and downright good enough to put up with a current President's weaknesses.

What other woman have they known with such spunk, such panache, such nerve, such pristine, state-of-the-art political goodness?

This is the stellar premise that will decide the contest for those not bound by unblinking party loyalty. It explains as much as anything the uproar this week over what Clinton said or didn't say on election night in Little Rock, Ark., a full 26 years ago.

I'm sorry, but most Americans, and that includes most politicians, do, on occasion, get angry. Whether it's on the highway after having someone cut you off or in the heat of a hard-fought political campaign, real people do let loose with every verbal arrow in their quiver.

Only a politician claiming an extraordinary moral and cultural stature would claim to be above such explosions of expletives, not excluding the ethnic variety.

Yet this is the message that President Clinton delivered the other day by phone to the editors at the Daily News. He told them that Hillary is innocent, not just in this pathetic claim of 26 years ago, but that she is totally innocent: She has never, at any time, ever voiced a negative thought about any ethnic, religious or racial group.

If we believe her claim, no such thought has even entered her head. Ever!

This is the enduring, dominating question of this campaign. If Hillary Rodham Clinton is truly a superior American figure, she may well deserve to be the United States senator from New York. If she isn't, but thinks she is, that may be a presumption even this liberal, welcoming state may be unwilling to ratify.

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First published: Saturday, July 22, 2000

Moynihan calls accusations 'ugly'

Outgoing senator voices his support for First Lady's Senate bid

WASHINGTON -- Daniel Patrick Moynihan defended the woman who hopes to replace him in the U.S. Senate, saying charges accusing Hillary Rodham Clinton of uttering an anti-Semitic slur 26 years ago "are ugly and patently false."

"The campaign for Senate hit several unacceptable low points this week," Moynihan said in a statement released Friday.

"I commend Mrs. Clinton for staying focused on the important issues that face our state and running a campaign of substance."

The First Lady has vehemently denied that she yelled a slur at campaign worker Paul Fray after Bill Clinton lost a congressional bid in Arkansas in 1974.

The accusation is made in a new book, "State of a Union: Inside the Complex Marriage of Bill and Hillary Clinton," by former National Enquirer reporter Jerry Oppenheimer.

New York's retiring senior senator called for an end to "this unprecedented level of personal attack and character assassination."

"In doing so we might salvage a civilized discourse in our political process," the Democrat said.

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