

WASHINGTON, DC

Obama nominates Orthodox Jew for treasury secretary

US President Barack Obama nominated Jack Lew, his chief of staff, as the next US treasury secretary last Thursday.

Lew is an Orthodox Jew and one of Obama's closest advisers. His appointment comes on the heels of Obama's selection of John Kerry as secretary of state and the controversial Chuck Hagel for secretary of defense.

"As the son of a Polish immigrant, a man of deep and devout faith, Jack knows that every number on a page, every

dollar we budget, every decision we make has to be an expression of who we wish to be as a nation, our values," Obama said last Thursday.

As treasury secretary, Lew will jump straight into the fire of a tough battle against Republicans in Congress over the deficit ceiling and extensive cuts to government spending – and he is already known for intense clashes with Republicans over such matters. According to Bob Woodward's book, *The Price of Politics*, that,

House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner went as far as to specifically ask Obama to ban Lew from attending talks with House Republicans at the Capitol.

"Jack Lew said 'No' 999,000 times out of a million," Boehner told Bob Woodward regarding Lew's attitude during 2001 debt ceiling talks. "At one point I told the president, keep him out of here. I don't need somebody who just knows how to say 'No.'"

Obama's choice of Lew is seen



Jack Lew: new US treasury secretary

as a signal of the president's determination to control record-breaking budget deficits.

The 57-year-old Lew would bring private sector and international experience to the treasury department. He has held top jobs at Citigroup's wealth management branch and at the state department, where he oversaw international economic issues in his first job for Obama.

Assuming that Lew is confirmed by the Senate, he will

replace Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, the last of Obama's original economic team of 2008.

Compared with Geithner, Lew "is more closely aligned with the class-warrior image that Obama adopted during the election campaign," according to *The Atlantic* magazine.

"A staunch liberal, he started

his political career canvassing for anti-war hero Eugene McCarthy in 1968 (he was 12); his adviser at Carleton College was Paul Wellstone, later an iconic liberal senator; and one of his first jobs in Washington was working for Democratic lion and former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill," *The Atlantic* wrote of Lew online.

– JNS.org

Why this Quebec Jew was never lured to Toronto

When the separatist Parti Québécois won the last election with a minority government, most federalists I know breathed a huge sigh of relief. Last summer's campaign was worrisome, as the PQ made all kinds of threats regarding language legislation. It reminded some of 1976, when the party first took office under the charismatic René Lévesque. Thousands of anglophones, many of them from the Jewish community, headed down Highway 401 to Toronto and never came back.



Mike Cohen
QUEBEC
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The PQ will likely retain their minority status until at least the spring of 2014. That is when their next budget is due. While they huff and puff about a lot of things these days, they cannot pass any of their extreme measures as the opposition Liberals and Coalition avenir du Québec would vote them down.

If the PQ does win a majority next time though, will we see another rush down the 401? I thought about that a lot last week as I spent my longest time in Toronto ever – eight straight days for family and business reasons. We had set up residence in a comfortable two-bedroom junior suite at the Grand Hotel and Suites on Jarvis Street. After a few days these comforts of home really did give me the feel of living in Canada's largest city.

While I was in town, I also spent time visiting with and talking to many of my friends who have moved to Toronto. They have been here for decades, part of an extensive community of former Montrealers who have no intention of moving back. For one thing, they do not have to worry about the introduction of new laws aimed at the enforcement of a stronger French presence everywhere in society. Despite the minority status, the PQ is still trying to turn 'English' into a bad word.

I love Toronto. For 11 years I worked for the

now defunct Canadian Jewish Congress and came here on an almost monthly basis. The thought of moving here did cross my mind on more than one occasion. As a fan of Broadway music, the stellar lineup of musicals presented by Jewish impresario David Mirvish's team, such as the current hit *The Wizard of Oz*, did indeed serve as an incentive. But I got married to a Montreal girl, started a family and Toronto became "a great place to visit."

There are many ex-Montrealers these days who miss the city terribly. With no plans to move back, they have found a way to deal with their homesickness via a Facebook page called Montreal Memories. Of the 5,000 plus members, a good chunk are former Montrealers now residing in Toronto. Folks like Jewish businessman Barry Zbar, who moved here almost 30 years ago and manages the page.

"I stayed in Toronto because I was in accounting and had established clients, but I came here initially because of business and the Quebec political scene was making things difficult," he said, echoing the sentiments of many. "The Facebook page has nearly tripled in size in the last year, with members in more than 30 countries! We've had gatherings of members in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and Los Angeles, with a big one planned in Florida in either February or March coming up. We have many members in Israel and would eventually like a reunion there."

I am a member of the Montreal Memories Facebook page. In my opinion, it represents a good opportunity to try to lure some ex-Montrealers back home. In 1976 I saw all of the moving trucks pack up and corporate offices head to Toronto. Nearly 40 years later, political instability or not, Quebec remains part of Canada. I do not expect that to change in my lifetime. So I will keep my regular reservation at the Grand Hotel, where for some reason their CTV feed is from...Montreal.

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VAUGHAN
Parks Development

NOTICE OF COMMUNITY MEETING

The City of Vaughan – Parks Development Division invites you to attend a community information meeting for:

NORTH MAPLE REGIONAL PARK
(East side of Keele Street, central between Teston Road and Kirby Road)

The meeting is scheduled for:

Date: Thursday, January 31, 2013

Place: Vaughan City Hall
Multi-Purpose Room – (main floor level)
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario
L6A 1T1

Time: 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Purpose of meeting:

The community meeting is being held to review the facilities being considered for this site. The review will focus on the current needs of Vaughan's residents and future vision for the North Maple Regional Park. The discussion points and any revisions to the facilities will be incorporated into the terms of reference for a Request for Proposal to fully develop the Park through a Private Public Partnership.

For further information please call:

Melanie Morris Construction Coordinator (905) 303-2069 Ext. 8058	or	Martin Tavares Construction Coordinator (905) 303-2069 Ext. 8882
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MARLON KALLIDEEN, Commissioner of Community Services