🏛️ The First Major Contributor: Haym Salomon

The most prominent early financier was **Haym Salomon**, a Polish-born Jewish immigrant who arrived in New York around 1772 and became a highly successful broker. During the Revolutionary War, Salomon became a key financial ally to Robert Morris, the Superintendent of Finance for the Continental Congress. [1, 2]

- **Funding the War:** Between 1781 and 1784, Salomon was instrumental in raising approximately **$650,000** (worth tens of millions today) to keep the Continental Army supplied. This included brokering crucial French and Dutch loans and using his personal funds to advance direct loans to the government. [1, 2, 3]
- **Bankrolling Early Presidents:** Salomon personally funded the living expenses and paid the salaries of key founding fathers and future U.S. Presidents—including **James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and James Monroe**—when they were impoverished delegates attending the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. Madison famously wrote in a letter that Salomon "obstinately rejects all recompense" for his financial help. [1, 2]

📦 The Shift to Modern Campaign Donations

If you are looking at the first time Jewish Americans donated to **electoral political campaigns** or political parties in the modern sense, the timeline shifts to the late 19th and early 20th centuries:

- **Late 19th Century (Individual Donors):** As German-Jewish immigrants achieved significant wealth in retail and investment banking (such as the Lehman, Goldman, and Sachs families), wealthy individuals began donating to political parties. During this era, most established, wealthy Jewish business owners were conservative and donated to the Republican Party. [1]
- **The 1930s (Mass Political Mobilization):** The first time the Jewish community mobilized as a major, coordinated financial and voting bloc was during **Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal era**. Enticed by FDR's social programs and stance against fascism, Jewish labor unions, mutual aid societies, and individual donors shifted overwhelmingly to the Democratic Party, cementing a political relationship that reshaped American campaign finance. [1, 2, 3]