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# ISRAEL

IT'S DILEMMA AND OURS

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NEWSPAPER

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# ANOTHER LOOK AT ISRAEL

*To visit Israel today is to experience a moral and emotional vertigo*

**ALBERT B. SOUTHWICK**

"Visiting Israel is a disturbing experience to any Jew, however peripheral or marginal a Jew he may be," writes Georges Friedmann in *The End of the Jewish People?* It is also a disturbing experience to non-Jews of a certain age and experience—those middle-aged liberals whose outlook toward Jews and Judaism was forged vicariously in Hitler's dreadful ovens a generation ago. To visit Israel today—particularly if one also visits Jordan and Lebanon—is to experience a moral and emotional vertigo that leaves a taste of ashes in the mouth.

It is not that the Israeli accomplishment is less impressive than imagined. If anything it is more so. The desert truly blooms. The exiles have been gathered in from the far corners of the earth. The Israelis themselves—tanned, vigorous, valiant—seem to be living proof that the Judaic experience over the millennia apparently distilled a superior human material from its variegated streams, just as David Ben Gurion has so often said.

Add to that the miraculous achievement of the Six-Day War and you get an almost providential saga. David vs. Goliath. The children of exile home at last to worship once more at the Wailing Wall. Safe for all time from Auschwitz, the ghetto, and the immemorial curse of prejudice and rootlessness.

It is a story that appeals to the Biblical consciousness and the sentimental liberalism of Americans. It also helps to stifle any guilt feelings that may linger from those hideous days when the Jews of Europe tried to flee Hitler's tightening net and found almost all doors closed. Pope Pius XII is by no means the only person in authority who looked away.

The answer, of course, was Israel, the Jewish home in Palestine that Lord Balfour had promised. To support Israel was an expiation, and many of us gave our hearts to the cause. To question the wisdom of displacing the native Arabs with foreign Jews was to play the game of the wicked Grand Mufti. To feel sympathy with the

million or so Arab refugees was to turn one's back on the Six Million who had died in Hitler's fearful extermination pits. As war followed war, and Israel waxed ever stronger, it was always the Arabs' fault and their sufferings were of their own making.

Yet, despite their fatal genius for putting themselves in the wrong, the Arabs have a far more powerful case than most American liberals care to admit. They have suffered wrongs that, under ordinary circumstances would be considered cruel beyond belief. In order for a Jewish state to be established in Palestine, a thousand year old Arab Palestine community was wiped out and most of its residents scattered into squalid shanty towns of hate and hopelessness. Because of the crimes of a Christian nation in Europe, the people of the Near East had a catastrophe visited upon them, and they have been repeatedly punished in wars that they cannot seem to avoid precipitating.

Nothing fails like failure, and the Arabs have stumbled from one non-success to another. One result is the comic Arab stereotype—the shiftless, boastful, cowardly camel jockey. More than 15,000 Egyptians, Jordanians, and Syrians died horribly in the Six-Day War, thus inspiring at least 15,000 jokes for night club comics in Miami, Las Vegas, and elsewhere. There seems to be something morally reassuring in this sort of ridicule. *Untermensch* do not prick the conscience the way real human beings do. And who can deny that the teeming refugee camps seem filled with *unters*—particularly on those days when prosperous Israelis and Americans, loaded down with cameras, take the bus tour through the Gaza Strip?

It was in a refugee camp—actually the camp at Shuneh in Jordan—where I felt a sharp twinge of moral vertigo. Had we liberals given our hearts to Israel over the years for this? Located on a dusty plain in the Jordan Valley, 1,000 feet below sea level, it was packed with more than 10,000 refugees who fled their homes on the West Bank during the fighting in June. These were former merchants, farmers, craftsmen and manufacturers

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who had lost everything they had owned—homes, businesses, machinery, property—all. The women in our party wept at the sight of newborn twin girls lying on a filthy blanket on the dirt floor of a tent, flies buzzing around their faces. The single word that best describes those 10,000—and 200,000 more like them—and another 700,000 who lost their homes and their land 20 years ago—is “victims.” No euphemism will do.

History is cold-hearted and perhaps—perhaps—all this could be justified if Israel had proved to be a force of liberation, universality, and enlightenment in the Middle East. If it could be shown that the Arab masses, as well as the Jewish elite, eventually stood to benefit from Jewish hegemony in Palestine; if the rulers in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem showed the vision of Moses and the imagination of Isaiah in bringing some modern revelation to Jew and non-Jew alike; if the most precious strain of Judaism—its combination of compassion and justice—were to flower in this new Zion, all might yet be well.

But Israel has not become, or done any of those things. Georges Friedmann thinks Israel is the end, not the flowering of the Jewish spirit and tradition. The native Hebrew sabras show little interest in Jewish traditions of the past 2,000 years, and the orthodox religion is far more active politically than spiritually. Not more than 10 or 15 percent of Israeli citizens attend synagogue regularly, even though the orthodox rabbinate has managed to maneuver the state into a sort of pseudo-theocracy where Jew may not marry non-Jew and where all non-Jews are clearly made to understand that they are second-class citizens.

As for the Arabs, how can they look on Israel as anything other than an alien, aggressive thing, introduced into the Arab world by force and sustained by a dangerous expansionist drive? A hundred years ago Palestine was solidly Arabic, and had been for more than a thousand years. At the time of the Balfour Declaration in 1917, there were probably fewer than 50,000 Jews in Palestine, and there were only 170,000 as late as 1930. But in the past 38 years, that small minority has been swelled by successive waves of immigration (*aliya*) to more than 2.5 million Jews, who have established in Palestine a radically different nation and philosophy from anything that has been seen there in all its long history.

“Israel is an anomaly,” writes one Arab, Dr. Mounir Sa’adah of the Choate School, “a materialist-collectivist society, a theocracy resting upon racism and triggered by arrogant nationalism.” Those harsh words are an overstatement, but they contain an uncomfortable residue of truth. Israel, to an American, is one of the friendliest and most pleasant places to visit. But few non-Jewish Americans (or Jewish Americans, for that matter) would care to live there. It is an exclusive society, as David Ben Gurion once made clear to an Israeli Arab: “You must

know that Israel is the country of the Jews and only of the Jews. Every Arab who lives here has the same rights as any minority citizen in any country in the world, but he must admit that he lives in a Jewish country.” The paradoxes in that statement are both naive and remarkable.

Here an instructive contrast can be drawn between Israel and Lebanon, its next-door neighbor. Lebanon may have a less efficient government than Israel, and it certainly does have an odd parliamentary system (by long tradition, the various top government positions from prime minister on down are earmarked for representatives of the various religious groups). But Lebanon’s large number of minority groups feel relatively comfortable. They are not automatically considered second-class citizens as is the case in Israel.

Yet the eternal Jewishness of Israel is an article of faith with the Israeli establishment. In his interview with our group, at the College of the Negev located on the rim of the spectacular Zin Canyon, Ben Gurion repeated what he has so often said—that “at least” three million more Jews must settle in Israel in the next 25 years if the state is to be secure. But no such emigration will take place. The 2.5 million Jews in the Soviet Union would not be allowed to leave for Israel even if they wanted to. The 6 million in the United States show little interest in the idea. Neither do the 500,000 in France or the 450,000 in Britain. It was regarded as a terrible scandal in Israel when the great majority of Algerian Jews chose to go to France rather than Israel when Algeria became independent. Last year, we were told, the number of Jews who left Israel exceeded those arriving. With the mass exodus of Jews from North Africa, Iraq, and Yemen just about finished, Israel has exhausted the last large reservoirs of immigrants. From here on in, the Jewish population of Palestine is going to progressively diminish in relation to the Arab population with its much higher birth rate.

The demographic facts put a very clear handwriting on the wall. The Israeli Arab population (those Arabs who have lived in Israel for the past 20 years and are considered Israeli citizens) number about 250,000, or about 12 percent of the Israeli total. The annexation of old Jerusalem adds another 60,000 Arabs. If Israel were to annex the West Bank, with its 700,000 people, the Arab population would be almost 40 percent of the total. Even the Israelis admit that 40 percent would become a majority within 15 years.

Whether the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are annexed or not, the Arab population in what used to be Palestine will outnumber the Jewish population before 20 years have elapsed. In 40 years, the Arabs will be perhaps twice as numerous as the Jews. Will Israel then still try to maintain itself as “the country of the



Jews and only of the Jews?" Can it do so without progressively becoming an elitist tyranny, after the order of Rhodesia and South Africa?

Such questions do not sit well with American liberals. Most of us have been so thoroughly conditioned by the Jewish agony and holocaust that we prefer to keep silent rather than say anything that conceivably might feed the sparks of anti-Semitism. But does the compassion we feel for the Jews and the admiration we feel for Israel mean we must harden our hearts against the victimized Arabs? Are the refugee camps of Gaza justified somehow by the Nazi concentration camps 25 years ago?

At some point, distinctions must be made. World Jewry is one thing. Our "Judaic-Christian heritage" is something else. Israel is something different from either.

Unfortunately, these are distinctions we are not permitted to make, judging from an exchange of views in the March issue of the *Andover Newton Quarterly*. There it is spelled out by both Christian and Jewish spokesmen that "the Christian failure to see the Jewish state as a theological fact" has broken off the "dialogue" between Christian and Jew in this country.

Politics and theology always make a dangerous mix, and Israel is no exception. In his celebrated essay of disenchantment with Israel, published in *The New York Review of Books*, I. F. Stone put the point pithily: "Israel is creating a kind of moral schizophrenia in world Jewry. In the outside world, the welfare of Jewry depends on the maintenance of secular, non-racial, pluralistic societies. In Israel, Jewry finds itself defending a society in which mixed marriages cannot be legalized, in which non-Jews have a lesser status than Jews, and in which the ideal is racial and exclusionist. Jews must fight elsewhere for their very security and existence—against principles and practices they find themselves defending in Israel. Those from the outside world, even in their mo-

ments of greatest enthusiasm amid Israel's accomplishments, feel twinges of claustrophobia, not just geographical but spiritual. Those caught up in Prophetic fervor soon begin to feel that the light they hoped to see out of Zion is only that of another narrow nationalism."

For this heresy, Stone was drawn, quartered, flayed, flogged, and racked in print. James Michener, a 110 percent gentile Zionist, exclaimed that "this colossal miscarriage of an idea" sounded as if Hannah Arendt had written it, which is akin to pronouncing the medieval anathema on Stone. The mutual feeling between Miss Arendt and certain Zionist circles is unmitigated loathing.

"But—" the reader will say, "we cannot abandon Israel. We cannot stand by and watch another genocide."

Of course not. But neither do we have to stand by and endorse the building of an exclusionist semi-theocracy based on dubious millennial notions, especially when this is being done in such a way as to polarize the whole Middle East into attitudes of hatred that guarantee another war. We need not remain silent about the suffering and injustice that have been inflicted on the million native Palestinians who, after 20 years, still fester in miserable shanty towns.

The May 3 issue of *The New York Times* carried a page advertisement heart-rending to those of us who once pledged ourselves to the creation and the defense of Israel:

WANTED: A BALFOUR  
TO FOUND A NATIONAL HOME  
IN PALESTINE  
FOR ONE AND A HALF MILLION  
ARAB REFUGEES

Can the living compassion that once leaped into action when Jews were the victims be silent now in the face of this new appeal?

## Four Responses

### ARTHUR A. COHEN

Yehzekel Kaufmann, the great modern Jewish Biblical exegete, wrote in 1930 a book, *Exile and Alienage*, in which he described the predicament of the Jews amid the nations. A Zionist ideologue of philosophic and historical sophistication, he concluded his study with a chapter of secular ecstasy, "The Pangs of Redemption," in which he called for a rejuvenation of the Jewish will to national self-liberation. Even then, one year after the massacre of Jewish settlements in Palestine by Palestinian Arabs, he recognized that the consequence of a large Jewish settlement would be the displacement of a mil-

lennial society of Arabs, the polarization of Arab nationalism, and the miserable prospect of a sullen, angry, and vengeful Arab world. The only fact that Kaufmann had not anticipated was that the mass immigration of Jews to Palestine would occur, not as a result of a quest for self-redemption, but as a refuge center for the survivors of the Holocaust. Otherwise all that he foresaw has come to pass.

The pain of Albert B. Southwick's essay, "Another Look at Israel," is that it is right (despite my strong feeling of its polemical disingenuousness) and useless. The victim now victimizes, the terrorized terrorizes, the once-homeless now create homelessness. Tragic. Part of the



ecology of human history. But what's to be done? How does one interrupt the chain of aggression and reaction, both Israeli and Arab? How does one move Christian humanitarians, like Southwick, to stop getting things off their good chests and come up with some hard proposals for rapprochement? How does one get support for Israeli organizations like *Ihud*, founded by Buber, Simon, Bergmann, and others, to establish colloquy with the Arab world, but now floundering for lack of energetic endorsement? Unfortunately, Southwick has nothing but tears. For Israelis there are, however, prior issues—the experience of isolation, self-reliance, primary dependence upon Jewish solidarity throughout the world does not make for a particularly moral politics, if politics are ever moral. The only way, apparently, for Jews to insure to Christians that they're in the moral right is to lose, to retain their own millennial privilege as victims. The Israelis as "victors" must always be in the wrong in the eye of humanitarian radicals and Christian conservatives.

There is no question but that fault can be found with Israel. There is no question but that moral arrogance and ethnocentric pride are contemptible. It is not, however, that Israeli Jews should know better. Having been a victim is no pedagogy and no persuasion. Should Jews know six million times better than non-Jews? If only the issues were as clear as Southwick wants them. If the issues were only that of right and wrong: if only the Israelis hadn't been threatened by Arab genocide; if only *fedayeen* attacks on Jewish settlements had not been continuous for 20 years; if only the Arab population had not fled Israel; if only Nasser had not decided to cover the failure of Egyptian socialism by convoking holy war, and, also, if only the Jews had not remembered that all their allies of the last 20 years, including the United States, had weakened, or even repudiated what are called "commitments."

It is miserable that people suffer and starve. Unfortunately Southwick is content with his cry. What are his proposals? Apparently none but the cry. Until he comes up with something that transcends the necessity of apportioning blame nothing will be accomplished. Certainly

nothing will be accomplished with Jews if Southwick can honestly conclude his essay with a line like "compassion that once leaped into action when Jews were the victims. . . ." Come now, Southwick. Where was all this compassion? I'd love to have you over to tell me about it one day. We can have tea and compassion.

## PAUL JACOBS

A fundamental problem of the Middle East is that two groups of equally determined people are convinced, equally, of their moral right to occupy the same land space and each is prepared to exercise military power to achieve their objective.

This tragedy has many dimensions, but surely one of the most painful is raised by Mr. Southwick—that of the Palestinian refugees. I believe their plight may have no solution for they will never be accepted into an Israeli state in which they are able to exercise effective political power: speaking of the Israeli Arabs, the Israeli Prime Minister's Advisor on Arab affairs, just after the Six Day War, told me: "... we don't ask an Arab to be a Zionist. We don't want him to sing *Hatikvah* or to join the Israeli Army. . . . He belongs to the Arab nation on one side and he belongs to the Israeli state on the other side. And these two are in a state of war. . . . That's why we tell the Arabs: 'You mustn't be a Zionist. But you must obey the laws of this country. You can't be against this country. But we don't want you to be a real Zionist. It's up to you, you can speak Arabic, you can have the Arab way of life, you should pray to Allah, but we don't want you to be a Zionist. . . .'"

Even if there were peace between Israel and the Arab nations, most Israelis assume their country should never have substantial numbers of Arab citizens. A prominent member of the Israeli cabinet who, after the war, favored establishing a loose federation with a Palestinian Arab state, stated to me: "I take it for granted that Israel is a Jewish state."

Obviously, he, like the other ideological Zionists who built the country, would oppose any policy that might lead to an Arab majority in Israel. The younger generations of Israelis would oppose such policies, too, because Israel as it is now, a Jewish state, is their country whose right to exist they will defend at all costs.

During the Six Day War, the agony of the Arab refugee problem was overshadowed in the Israeli consciousness by the spectre of an Arab-inspired Auschwitz. Even those Israelis who in the past were the most vociferous opponents of their own government's policy towards the Arabs, were convinced in the days before the Six Day War that the Arabs were intent on wiping them from the face of the earth, while the rest of the world stood by, passively. (The

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Arab leaders, with their endless and mindless shouts for the destruction of Israel and the physical annihilation of the Israelis, must bear the primary responsibility for having convinced all Israelis they had to fight for their very lives.)

So, today, the increased number of refugees have become a reservoir of terrorists, carrying out savage guerrilla attacks in Israel; the Israelis respond with increasing numbers of more severe forays into Arab territories and the tension grows ever more frightening.

Unless. Unless what? Unless the Arabs begin a dialogue which has as its premise accepting Israel's existence and giving up the hope of restoring Arab Palestine. But a simultaneous dialogue must begin among Jews, too, based on accepting their basic responsibility for the plight of the refugees. Jews must understand the awful truth of what Martin Buber said: "There is no re-establishing of Israel, there is no security for it save one: it must assume the burden of its own uniqueness, it must assume the yoke of the kingdom of God."

But, I believe, sadly, that neither of these dialogues are likely to be opened. Instead, I think another war will erupt soon.

### BRUNO MUSSAR

As a Catholic priest living in Israel for over fifteen years, in friendly relationship with Jews and Arabs, I have discovered how complex and difficult it is to understand the situation here. I wonder how some people, after a short visit in the Mideast, can feel qualified to express with assurance a clearcut judgment.

Mr. Southwick's article seems to me very seriously biased. My purpose is not to point out its inaccuracies, its one-sided and distorted presentation of the refugee problem for which Arab leaders bear a heavy responsibility, its lack of understanding of what is really happening in Israel, and its total lack of sensitivity to the true drama of the Israel-Arab conflict. The article unquestioningly accepts that propaganda which endeavors to draw world attention away from the human problems which confront two neighboring countries and direct it towards the artificial and delusive field of pan-Arabic politics, for which the 1967 Khartoum Conference's directive: *no negotiation, no recognition, no peace . . .* remains the program. Such an article cannot further the cause of peace. My purpose is to point out some of the difficulties in judging correctly this very complex situation, for the benefit of further discussion; and to bring into the discussion some experience and reflections I share with other Christians in Israel.

Mr. Southwick has some excuse for not understanding the situation in the Mideast. It is difficult for a Westerner

to understand the Orient; and a visitor can hardly discover the hidden causes of what is happening in this part of the world; propaganda, also, has become such a perfect technique, that the unaware visitor absorbs lies with the very air he breathes.

Mr. Southwick has a still better excuse for his complete misunderstanding of Israel, a people and a country full of paradoxes: citizens can be as different as a Yemenite and a Pole, yet blended together by the Land of their common origin and destiny; narrow, exclusive nationalists living side by side with generous followers of the universalistic visions of the Prophets (which are strongly expressed in the *Charter of Independence* as the character and aim of the State of Israel); fighters for democratic freedom opposing the efforts of the modern zealots for a pseudo-theocracy; a socialist country seemingly striving towards a materialist paradise, where hundreds of thousands of people go up to the Western Wall to pray on feast days, where nearly every Jew fasts on the Day of Atonement, and where every Friday at sunset a deep silence falls on Jerusalem, and the songs of the Psalms and Hymns coming from the innumerable synagogues reach the ears of the passer-by strolling in empty streets.

All that exists in Israel, but the hasty foreigner runs the risk of seeing only what, consciously or unconsciously, he expects to see. He will then go back home confirmed in his prejudices, but he will have failed to discover some of the deepest, truest and most attractive aspects of the Jewish soul and of the reality of Israel.

Many Christians come to live in Israel through a deep love for the Jewish people. A true relationship between Christians and Jews requires that each one accept the other as he defines himself. For the Jew, the Land—with Jerusalem its capitol and center—has always been essentially one with the people. After 20 centuries of dismemberment, the Jewish people is again whole and strives to be fully itself.

Today something very great is happening, which the short-sightedness of men and peoples cannot undo. After the Holocaust, the passion and horrible death of six million Jews, the ingathering of the exiles—even if relatively few—and the blossoming of the desert may be the signs of a renewal of life not only for the whole of the Jewish people, but also for the world. Many examples of that renewal could be given: the efforts towards a spiritual revival inside Jewish religious tradition and a renewed understanding of the relations between Bible and life; private and collective initiatives for establishing cultural, artistic and better human relations between Jews and Arabs, and for projecting possible political and social solutions for a future peaceful neighborhood; intensive educational, technical and medical aid to African and Asian countries; the objective teaching of Christian-



ity, of other religions, of Eastern and especially Arab civilizations and history in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where nearly 300 Arab students and many Christian clergymen, priests and nuns study; the success of many groups, in Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Tiberias, where Jews and non-Jews meet to discuss, in a frank and friendly fashion, the human and spiritual problems they are confronted with.

The people of Israel has a message, akin to the message of the Prophet Isaiah, to give to the world today, a message that Christians today will do well to listen to, for it will attune them to the very roots of their faith, *a message of peace*.

But in order to utter that message, and to show, as Mr. Southwick expects, "the vision of Moses and the imagination of Isaiah in bringing some modern revelation to Jew and non-Jew alike," Israel needs to be at peace with her neighbors. Only then the best of her creative energies, the "combination of compassion and justice" which characterizes Judaism, will be able to express itself freely and to liberate in Judaism the immense potentialities of self-renewal and of renewal of the world which the return to the Land has made possible. If only the Western powers whose influence is so great in shaping history could understand this, and let this vision, instead of carefully balanced diplomacy, guide their policies, the discouraging Mideast deadlock where hope is decaying would be broken, and a way towards peace opened.

I was born of Jewish parents in Egypt, where I lived for 18 years. I am now an Israeli citizen. Still, some of my dearest friends are Palestinians, Egyptians, Lebanese or Iraqis. I feel very deeply their humiliation and their suffering and I feel torn: as if the drama of the terrible conflict between the justice of the Arabs and the justice of the Israeli Jews were aching within myself. I try to understand. I eliminate, mentally, all the factors of the conflict which are not essentially related to the true issue: selfish reckonings, political ambitions, nationalistic exclusiveness, considerations of prestige and emotional passions. I then reach the essential question: *What prevents the Jews in Israel and the Arab Palestinians living under a government of their choice, from sharing this land, which is large and rich enough for both?* Such a wide and wonderful field is open to their friendly cooperation, with the friendly help of their Arab neighbors, that it is difficult to understand why the peoples today at war have not already sat down together to share the bread and the salt of reconciliation and to discuss Peace. Surely, there will be no peace without sacrifice, and each party will have to pay a high price for a peace acceptable to both. But do they not understand that every day that passes widens the gap of hatred, and that hatred can solve no problem? May all those who believe in God—the one and almighty God of us all—pray to Him

that He turn the heart of his foolish but beloved children to one another, that they may start building together that difficult peace.

### MARC H. TANENBAUM

My comment on Mr. Southwick's article must be sketchy. Not because a great deal cannot be said; rather because he raises a cluster of complicated issues involving history, theology, sociology, political science and international law, all of which are too intricate for adequate response in this "brief" statement. I shall therefore isolate only several of the key issues, and seek to demonstrate how misinformed or uninformed I believe him to be on basic historic facts, and how fundamentally wrong and unhelpful I regard his overall attitude toward advancing any resolution of the present Middle East conflict.

In a typically perceptive essay, Reinhold Niebuhr has observed that "the ethic of the New Testament is eschatological and ultimate. . . . We are dealing with the pinnacles of the moral and spiritual life in the pages of the New Testament and not with the stresses and strains of a community of self-seeking men," nor "with the substantive problems of justice by which conflicting and competing claims are adjudicated."

Dr. Niebuhr adds, "If an ethic were drawn merely from these eschatological heights without any recognition" of the depth of Christian realism, "Christianity would be no more than a system of rigorous moral idealism, prescribing responsibilities which are on the very edge of historical possibilities. It was the error of nineteenth-century liberalism to reduce Christianity to this dimension." (*Faith and Politics*, edited by Ronald Stone, pp. 166-7).

Mr. Southwick's article, I fear, is a classic example of this eschatological perfectionism. From this derives his liberal moralism which is the ground of political irresponsibility. Moralism is stern and judgmental and tends to identify the opponent as the epitome of evil. Moralism sets men apart from the opposition. Moralism makes no compromises because good cannot compromise with evil, nor virtue with vice. Moralism also tends to distort truth and deny reality.

This approach, which regrettably has been characteristic of some Christian institutions and leaders in relation to Middle East problems, almost paralyzes anyone from dealing pragmatically with the complicated and morally ambiguous problems of how to maximize justice, how to use power morally in a situation in which rights exist on both sides.

Mr. Southwick creates the image of warlike "aggressive" Israelis as contrasted with righteous "victimized" Arabs wanting only justice for Palestinians.

He suggests that the refugee problem derives entirely



from the immigration of "foreign Jews" who displaced the "native Arabs". He thereby ignores the fact that six Arab states launched a treacherous attack against Israel in 1948, defying the United Nations Partition Plan. The cause of this displacement was not Jewish aggression but Arab aggression.

He also completely ignores the role of Arab governments during the last 20 years whose politics have demanded and kept alive a Palestinian refugee problem. At the same time, he passes over in silence the initiatives taken by the Israelis to bring about a resolution of the hapless plight of Arab refugees.

His one-sidedness also leads to ignoring entirely that more than one half million Jews have been driven from Arab countries during the past 20 years. Their properties have been appropriated and no one mentions anything about compensating them. They have been absorbed

and rehabilitated by Israel and have not become a charge on the conscience and charity of the world community.

His one-sidedness also leads to his ignoring the truth when he says that "Palestine was an Arab country" for a thousand years. Apart from the period of the Crusades (1099-1187), Palestine was not a state, an independent political entity, at any time during these eighteen centuries. Almost the only time Palestine has been a self-governing territory in all of its history was when it was a Jewish state. And Jews never gave up living in Palestine, as numerous objective historians document.

Perhaps at another time, when space allows in *Commonweal*, it will be possible to present another version of all the problems touched upon by Mr. Southwick, in order that the reader can judge better than is now possible what the realities and prospects are for a genuine understanding of the Middle East situation.

It is the end of the grape  
Harvest. How amiable  
Thy dwellings, the little huts  
Of branches in the vineyards  
Where the grape pickers rested.  
*Adieu panniens, vendanges sont  
faites.*

Five months have passed. Here am  
I—

Another monastery  
Garden, another waterfall,  
And another religion,  
Perched on the mountain's  
shoulder,  
Looking out over fog bound  
Santa Barbara. Cactus  
And stone make up the garden.  
At its heart a heavy cross.  
Off behind the monastery,  
Deep in the canyon, a cascade  
Of living water, green and white  
Breaks the arid cliffs, twisting  
Through yellow sandstone  
boulders.

Sycamores, canyon oaks, laurels,  
Toyonberries, maples, pines.  
Buzzards dream on the wing, high  
On the rising morning air.  
A canyon wren sings on a dead  
Yucca stem. Over a high rock  
Across the stream, a bobcat  
Peeks at me for a moment.  
A panting doe comes down to  
drink.

And then the same water ousel  
I just saw above Kyoto.  
Passing through the dry valley  
Of gum trees, they make it a place  
Of springs, and the pools are filled  
With water. Deep calls to deep  
In the voice of the cataracts.  
Loving kindness watches over  
Me in the daytime and a song  
Guards me all through the starlit  
night.

Altair and Vega are at  
The zenith in the evening.  
The Cowboy has gone back  
Across the Cloudy River.  
The Weaving Girl is pregnant  
With another year. The Maggie  
Wing bridge of dreams has  
dissolved.  
The new wine dreams in the vat.  
Low over the drowsy sea.  
The Sea Goat moves towards the  
sun.

Richard of St. Victor says,  
"Contemplation is a power  
That coordinates the vast  
Variety of perception  
Into one all embracing  
Insight, fixed in wonder on  
Divine things—admiration,

Awe, joy, gratitude—singular,  
Insuperable, inseparable,  
Insatiable, but at rest."  
The sparrow has found her a home,  
The swallow a nest for herself,  
Where she may raise her brood.  
When we have tea in the loggia,  
Rusty brown California towhees  
Pick up crumbs around our feet.  
The towhees were pets of the  
Indians.

They are still to be found on  
The sites of old rancherias,  
Waiting for the children to  
Come and feed them acorn cakes.  
Just so the swallows still nest  
In the eaves of all the buildings  
On the site of the vanished  
Temple in Jerusalem.  
Above us from the rafters  
Of the loggia hang two wooden  
Mexican angels, on their backs  
Are birds' nests. The autumn sun  
Is a shield of gold in heaven.  
The hills wait for the early rain  
To clothe them in blessings of  
flowers.

It is the feast of Raphael  
The archangel, and Tobit.  
And the faithful dog.

KENNETH REXROTH

#### A SONG AT THE WINEPRESSES