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THE POLITICS OF ZIONIST FUNDAMENTALISM
IN ISRAEL: AN OVERVIEW*

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FIRST DRAFT
NOT TO BE QUOTED

INTRODUCTION

On Friday April 27, Kol Yisrael, the Israeli broadcasting service, announced a shocking news report. An act of sabotage of great magnitude, aimed at the blowing up of six Arab buses, packed with passengers, had just been exposed and prevented. During the following week, more than twenty men suspected of forming a terrorist network were arrested. In the following weeks, it was further disclosed that the suspects accepted responsibility for the two most spectacular anti-Arab terrorist actions that had taken place in Judea and Samaria (the west Bank of the Jordan, occupied by Israel in 1967) - the assassination attempts on the mayors of three Arab cities in 1980 and the murderous attack on the Islamic College in Hebron in 1983. A score of smaller acts of the same nature was also attributed to the suspects and it was further disclosed that a detailed and carefully planned, incredible project of blowing up the sacred Moslem mosques on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem was on their planning boards.

However, what shocked many political observers and students of Israeli extremism, was not so much the news about the existence of such a terrorist group, as its identity. The members of the network were identified as hard core members of Gush Emunim (the block of the faithful) a pioneering and religious settlement movement whose members since 1968 have taken upon themselves the task of settling Judea and Samaria. The great shock and surprise about the disclosure of the group's identity was due to the rather non-violent posture, assumed for years by the spokesman and spiritual leaders of Gush Emunim. Though

not a peace organization, but rather an aggressive settlement movement and some times illegal at that, Gush Emunim never developed openly a brutal ideology of violence. Its Orthodox leaders never argued for the deportation of the local Arab population in the name of the Jewish right to the land - a right in which they strongly believe. Instead, they always argued that a peaceful and productive co-existence with the Arabs was both possible and desirable. To think that any of these highly educated and responsible men, some of whom were ranking officers and all of whom were heads of large religious families, were ready and able to resort to systematic terrorist activities was beyond imagination.

In view of additional information obtained since the beginning of the trial and as result of a rereading of some earlier chapters in the history of Gush Emunim, it seems that our previous understanding of this movement was greatly lacking. Upon reexamination, it now appears that Gush Emunim has not only introduced to Israel's public life a highly successful settlement movement, but also a special mode of thinking, capable of producing immense-sometimes incredible aspirations. The amount of apprehension and support bestowed upon the terror suspects by most of Emunim's spiritual authorities and members points to the fact that the radical cast of mind is not restricted or limited to the very few. It indicates that we are in fact in a position to speak about a totalistic belief system associated with Gush Emunim and its supporters which is of general Israeli significance and importance. Since this new mode of thinking and belief combines at once a very concrete attachment to the truths of the Bible as well as a total commitment to the precepts of modern secular Zionism, I suggest calling it **Zionist Fundamentalism.**

It should perhaps be stressed that Jewish fundamentalism in Israel is not new and that it was not introduced to the land by Gush Emunim. It existed prior to the emergence of this movement and in fact was there long before the establishment of the State of Israel. This traditional Jewish fundamentalism was however always the exclusive property of the very orthodox anti-Zionist sects.¹ In the context of the growing Zionist enterprise in Palestine which later on gave birth to the State, the traditional fundamentalist school has become socially isolated politically detached and culturally marginal. Seeing Zionism as a religious affront it secluded itself willingly in a cultural, sometimes real, ghetto and had nothing to say about matters of State or national territory issues. It stood, in principle, in direct opposition to pragmatic Zionism, including religious Zionism, which for many years was oriented towards "the art of the possible".

A reexamination of the cultural milieu of Gush Emunim as well as of its politics suggests today that it had forcefully introduced fundamentalist politics in present Israel. It shows further that this fundamentalist cast of mind is bound, because of its great present influence to have a far reaching effects on high national matters including State decisions on peace and war. In order to support this proposition, a full portrait of Gush Emunim, its ideo-cultural milieu and its politics will be presented.

HISTORY

Gush Emunim was formed at a founding meeting held early in March 1974 at Kfar Etzion, with about two hundred people participating.² It was at that time declared to be an organized faction within the National Religious Party (NRP). The founding meeting was preceded by

informal discussions in which a decisive role was played by former students of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, the spiritual leader of Yeshivat Merkaz ha-Rav, among them Rabbi Moshe Levinger (the leader of the Kiryat Arba settlers), Hanan Porat (one of the revivers of Jewish settlement in Gush Etrzion), Rabbi Chayim Drukman (educator and one of the leaders of the Bnei Akiva Religious youth movement, now a member of Knesset), Rabbi Waldman, Rabbi Yohanan Fried and other young people of similar background. After a short period of intra-NRP existence, the Gush Emanim people left this party in the Spring of 1974 and declared their movement to be an independent body. Ever since, they have refused as a group to identify automatically with any Israeli political party and have gained a unique political status on their own account.

The members of Gush Emanim were active even before the actual founding of the Gush, but not until the Yom Kippur War was there a sufficient motivation to organize politically. Against the background of the gloomy public mood and the first territorial concessions in the Sinai Peninsula (in the framework of the first disengagement agreement with Egypt), Gush Emanim's founders felt it their duty to set up a barrier capable of stopping unnecessary territorial concessions. They were particularly wary of the official lukewarm position of the NRP, which was then a partner in the Labor coalition, concerning the future of Judea and Samaria.³ They also felt that it was necessary to promote Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria in an organized and vigorous way, and to bring about the extension of Israeli sovereignty to those territories. They regarded extra-parliamentary demonstrations and mobilization of their sympathetic public as effective means to counter the American pressure for concessions.

From the beginning the Gush Emunim people most of them yeshiva graduates, rabbis and teachers launched a vigorous information campaign to explain their position. They carried their campaign to all parts of the country, including kaffee klatsches, schools, meetings in yeshivot, and so on. At the same time they began forming core groups of people who would populate the settlements the Gush planned to set up in the future. The spearhead of Gush Emunim's settlement movement, the Elon Moreh group, was already in existence in 1973.⁴ A step of major importance was the decision in which all the founders accorded that there would be no formal membership in Gush Emunim, no membership cards would be issued and that its people and potential supporters would not be called upon to carry out any particular concrete task which would set them apart from the rest of the nation. This was a very wise decision, for it meant that Gush Emunim could always claim that it had a very large number of members, and there was no official means by which that claim could be refuted. Similarly, many sympathizers could participate in specific activities of the Gush with which they identified without feeling any obligation to support other activities or to identify with any broad platform. Nor would the opponents of Gush Emunim suffer from this decision. They could always contend that the Gush is nothing but a small marginal group of fanatics who are making a lot of noise.

During the Rabin government (1974-1977) Gush Emunim operated on three planes: it organized protests and demonstrations against the interim agreements with Egypt and Syria and against the political and diplomatic activity related to these agreements; it promoted attention-focusing activities in Judea and Samaria to underscore the Jewish attachment to those parts of Eretz Yisrael; it carried out settlement operations in the occupied territories.

The protest activity of Gush Emunim began with the active support it gave to the hunger strike of the leaders of the Greater Israel Movement, which started on Independence Day in May 1974, outside the Prime Minister's residence in Jerusalem.⁵ This line of activity was continued in repeated protests against Henry Kissinger during his visits to the country as part of his shuttle diplomacy. The participation in these demonstrations, which continued sporadically until the fall of 1975, ranged from the scores of people who blocked traffic on Ruppin Road, a main thoroughfare of Jerusalem, thereby obstructing the advance of the official motorcades, to the thousands who filled Jerusalem's Zion Square and clashed there with the police.

This activity reached a peak in October 1974, when a mass rally was held in Tel-Aviv's Malkei Yisrael Square for the recognition of Judea and Samaria as an inseparable part of the country. The rally was also an occasion to note that 460,000 people had signed a petition to the effect. After the signing of the interim agreement with Egypt and the end of Dr. Kissinger's visits to the country, the large protest activities by Gush Emunim ceased. Only small flareups, demonstrations opposite the Knesset building or the Prime Minister's office, remained in evidence that the Gush had not forsaken this avenue of activity in principle.

Attention-focusing activities by Gush Emunim, to stress the Jewish attachment to Judea and Samaria, began with Operation Go-Around, which took place in October 1974. As part of this operation, in which an estimated two thousand people participated, the participants managed to get past army roadblocks and spread out across Judea and Samaria to those points where the Gush maintained the settlements should be

established.⁶ Since the operation was meant for publicity purposes, the participants did not get into a serious collision with the army and when requested to leave those points did so without much ado. A similar action was conducted on Hanukkah (December 1975), when many supporters of Gush Emunim spread out across mountain tops in Judea and Samaria in a candle-lighting operation. During the Passover holiday in 1976 a tradition began which has since become an annual custom, the Eretz Yisrael Ramble. Between twenty to thirty thousand people took part in a mass hike across Samaria.⁷ The participants in this march, as in the others that followed, did not come only from peripheral circles, but included also major establishment figures such as Menachem Begin, Yigal Hurwitz and Guela Cohen. Gush Emunim has always invested a tremendous effort in organizing these marches, for the extent of participation in them became the number one barometer for assessing public support of the movement and its ideas. On the basis of the participation in these marches the leaders of Gush Emunim claimed that a mass movement was arrayed behind them.⁸

The power, importance and public influence of the protest actions and the publicity-seeking activities never for a moment obscured for Gush Emunim its deep commitment to the idea of settlement beyond the Green Line. The government of Israel, being pragmatic and subject to pressures from all sides, was not enthusiastic about initiating settlement. Its hesitancy was mostly marked during the period of the negotiation on the interim agreements with Syria and Egypt, talks which were conducted under heavy American time pressure applied by Dr. Kissinger. Gush Emunim did not let up on this matter and its inside pressures, which are unknown to the public, were no less than its external ones. In response to this pressure the government first authorized

the settlement at Keshet on the Golan Heights, a military foothold at Tekoa and another at Kochav ha-Shahar.⁹ Afterwards Minister of Defence Shimon Peres authorized a workers' camp at Ba'al Hazor, which later became Ofra, a civilian settlement in all respects, including families and children. These activities notwithstanding, the spearhead of Gush Emmim was and still remains the core-group of Elon Moreh. This group, which, as was mentioned earlier, preceded the formal establishment of the Gush, has become the symbol of its fundamental challenge to the guiding conception of the Labor government, viz., secure borders combined with minimal involvement with the densely populated Arab areas.¹⁰

The founders of this core group, Benny Katzover and Menachem Felix, have expressed more adamantly than anyone else the determination of Gush Emmim to settle in all parts of Eretz Israel, including the very heart of the Palestinian population. This group tried on seven different occasions to settle in the Nablus-Sebastia region, and each time their attempts were thwarted and the settlements forcibly dismantled by the army. With the eighth attempt, after a very dramatic confrontation, Gush Emmim broke down the government's opposition and achieved the well-known 'Kadoun compromise. This event took place during Hanukkah. On a rainy, wintry Hanukkah night in December 1975, about two thousand people, members of the core group and yeshiva students on holiday, settled in Sebastia. In a brilliant ploy, some of the leaders of the American Jewry, who at the time were convening at the Jerusalem Conference to express special solidarity with the State of Israel, were mobilized by Gush Emmim to express privately their support of the settlement attempt. Following two days of tense confrontation it was finally agreed that the members of the core group would leave the site

'on their own accord', pass to a military camp at Kadoum and stay there until a decision was reached about their future location.¹¹

The 'Kadoum compromise' brought the series of confrontations between Gush Emunim and the Rabin government to a head. Afterwards the group receded from the public vision, but its inside activity continued, increasingly geared to exerting pressure within the government to establish new settlements, to provide support for existing ones and to launch an all-out public relations campaign. Important in this regard was the Ein Vered Conference, at which the Gush's major breakthrough into the hard core of the labor movement was crowned with success. Participating in this large conference of identification with Gush Emunim were prominent figures in the Labor settlement movement who proclaimed their open support for the Gush. They even expressed their readiness to work for it on a regular basis.¹² Gush Emunim ostensibly proved that it had succeeded in overcoming the psychological barrier of cooperation between the religious and secular camps, and in particular that it had received support for its extra-parliamentary mode of action from an elite group within the Labor movement. After Kadoum and the formation of the Ein Vered Circle, it was clear to the government in general and to Prime Minister Rabin in particular, that here was an opponent of substantial weight.

The Likud victory in the elections of May 1977 and the declaration of the Prime Minister designate, Menachem Begin, that 'we will have many more Elon Morehs', induced many of Gush Emunim leaders to believe in all sincerity that their extraparliamentary period was over.¹³ And indeed, the new regime accorded them full legitimacy. Gush Emunim was in fact never regarded by Menachem Begin as a deviant

group. Its young members had always been the Prime Minister's darlings. Many had long been envious of the ease with which the leaders of Gush Emunim could get to speak to Begin and obtain satisfaction from him. Since they had formed their movement in order to achieve the concrete goal of settlement in Judea and Samaria and not in order to add another color to the spectrum of extra-parliamentarism in Israel, many of the Gush Emunim people were happy about the opportunity offered them now to shed the somehow extremist unsympathetic image. Another reason for their satisfaction was the senior position of Rabbi Chayim Drukman, their man who was placed as the number-two man in the NRP list to the Ninth Knesset.¹⁴

Gush Emunim's rejoicing did not last long. Despite their great expectations, the government did not come up with a large-scale settlement program. The constraints of daily policy-making, Mr. Begin's failing health, and especially American pressures, began to leave their mark on the cabinet, and the impatient Gush found itself in the position of being given the runaround by the government and the Prime Minister. It was still a sympathetic government, and the Minister of Agriculture, Ariel Sharon, did not conceal his affection for Gush Emunim, but it gradually became clear to them that even under a Likud administration, they might have to use the extra-parliamentary tactics they had devised during Rabin's regime.

The Camp David accords, the Autonomy Plan and the government's commitment to give up the Rafiah Salient struck Gush Emunim like a bolt out of the blue. This was without doubt the lowest point in its short history. Its leaders had had time enough since Sadat's visit to Jerusalem to discern what the future held in store, but the firm belief

that history was on its side - which characterized Gush Emunim all along - prevented an early forecast of the dramatic event, and when it happened they were altogether at a loss.¹⁶ The total concession by the 'Greater Israel Faithful', Menachem Begin, the paving of the way for a Palestinian state by the Autonomy Plan and the dismantling of the settlements in the Rafiah Salient left them dumbfounded. The activity of the Gush people was paralyzed and its return to normal did not come about easily. The Gush members were simply too weak to manage the organization of an anti-government front by themselves and at that time were greatly assisted by other peripheral elements such as the Herut 'Loyalists Circle', Professor Yuval Ne'eman, members of the Great Israel Movement, Knesset Members Guela Cohen and Moshe Shamir, several former Rafi members and others who together formed the 'Covenant of the Eretz Yisrael Faithful'.¹⁷ This new association committed itself to the original platform of the Greater Israel Movement, and by its very founding in effect declared a total war on the Camp David Accords. Later on, this entire group founded the Ha Tehiya movement, which took up a decisive position against Begin's determination to carry out the Camp David accords.

An event of major significance to the history and the consciousness of Gush Emunim took place in the months preceding April 28 1982. This was the date set by the Israeli Egyptian Peace Treaty for the final Israeli evacuation of Sinai. The settlers of the Rafiah Salient and the members of Gush Emunim refused to believe that a retreat was at all possible. Together they established a mass movement aimed at frustrating the government's commitment.¹⁸ Although the movement was launched in the name of the Sinai Settlers, it was soon taken over by a group of zealots of Gush Emunim. Hundreds of them, perhaps even a thousand, settlers in Judea and Samaria, left their newly built

homes and moved to Yamit, the new capital of the salient and to its surrounding settlements, in order to stop the retreat with their bodies and by their strong belief. They flocked over with their rabbis, their Yeshivot and even their families, fully convinced that they were Heavenly ordained for the mission.¹⁹ Several of them, the most extreme, seriously considered armed resistance and only a very cautious operation by the army managed miraculously to prevent the eruption of large scale violence.²⁰

The activities of the terror network described in the introduction to this essay were greatly influenced by the 'treacherous' evacuation of Sinai. Already in 1980 the leaders of the group concluded that the Begin government was not to be trusted and obeyed. The Prime Minister was ready in their opinion to surrender Israeli holy lands in the south and his defense minister, Ezer Weizman, was willing to let loose on PLO terrorists in Judea and Samaria. The result was a very sophisticated and daring assassination attempt on three Arab mayors considered to be the unofficial PLO leaders in Judea and Samaria.²¹ As the time of the retreat was approaching several members of the network developed an incredible plan. The Moslem mosques on the Temple Mount, the second holiest place for hundreds of millions of Moslems were to be blown up. Two considerations prevailed in the minds of the perpetrators, a millenarian dream and a political tactical one. The dream related to the desire of creating conditions for final redemption - a dream that existed in the mind of every member of Gush Emunim.²² The Tactical ploy had to do with the disastrous retreat. The members of the network were convinced that the spectacular operation would not only destroy the Muslim mosques but also the Israeli Egyptian Peace Treaty.²³ The Sinai

peninsula was, according to this incredible plan, to remain forever in Israel's hands and the Israeli people were - perhaps through an "armagadon war" to come back to their senses and join Egunim's way. It is not yet fully clear why this grand operation was never carried out, but fortunately it was not.

In the context of discussing the growing frustration of some of Egunim's true believers it is important to stress also some of the great achievements of the movement as a settlement trust aimed at Israelizing Judea and Samaria. Following Begin's great electoral success in 1981 the cabinet which ran Israel's affairs was no longer the same cabinet that had signed the peace agreements. The dominant axis in it was composed of Begin, Sharon and Shamir. This was a hawkish axis, altogether different from the previous one - Begin, Dayan and Weizman - that was responsible for the spirit of Camp David. The new axis was limited by the Camp David framework and the Autonomy Plan, but nevertheless has been operating at full steam and with considerable aggressiveness to perpetuate Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria. Despite the Gush's disappointment with Sharon's stance during the period of the Camp David accords, it has become apparent during the past years that they could not wish for a better representative in the government. Ariel Sharon has proven to be a very able minister and has proceeded rapidly towards the realization of his settlement plan.²⁴ Sharon always objected to the Alon Plan, which in one form or another had guided all the Labor governments. He formulated an all embracing strategic settlement plan based on Jewish control of all the dominant

roads in the West bank. By virtue of his stubbornness and aggressiveness he succeeded in carrying out more of the plan than either his friends and opponents thought possible. In spite of the difficult personal crises he encountered in the Likud government, he endured better than Dayan and Weizman, who were the only ones able to neutralize him. With Sharon as a dominant figure in the Likud government, Gush Emmim had no need for noisy extra-parliamentarism.

FUNDAMENTALIST IDEOLOGY

Gush Emmim has always been characterized by its spiritual nature and by the commitment of its leaders to a unique religious world view. What escaped most observers of this movement, however, was the totalistic and fundamentalist nature of this world-view. The reason for this is due to the fact that the Gush has been primarily conceived of as a pragmatic settlement movement identified with secular aspirations and mundane achievements. Relatively little attention has been given to the comprehensive cultural milieu within which the movement has emerged even before it was formally established and named. Only recently have a few scholars, prominent among them Kibbutz intellectual Zvi Kanaan²⁵ and the late Professor Uriel Tal, identified and characterized the totalistic structure and the messianic contours of the new ideology.²⁶ Both Kaanan and Tal have shown that in the orthodox and dogmatic cultural system in which the young members of Gush Emmim have grown up, nothing could be done or said without a religious legitimization of a prestigious rabbi. They have convincingly argued that these rabbis because of their spiritual authority were responsible for setting the boundaries of Emmim's sphere of expectations and operations and that these boundaries have in the "messianic age" become almost limitless.

A clue to ~~Emunim's~~ fundamentalist ideology can be found when the fact that all of its spiritual authorities and many of its leaders were educated in Yeshivat Merkaz ha-Rav, is given a proper attention and when it is further remembered that the founder of this Yeshiva, the late Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak ha-Cohen Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of the Jews of Eretz Yisrael, was an original messianic thinker.²⁷ It now appears that the unique kabbalistic interpretation of the late Rabbi Kook has assumed since 1967 a manifest and popular character and has become not only the esoteric property of a selected few, but the forensic ideology of many and a guide-line for political action. Several of the cardinal points of this all embracing belief system warrant closer scrutiny:

Redemption

Rabbi Kook believed that the Jewish people of his day existed in an era in which the birth pangs of redemption had already begun. This was attested, according to his interpretation, by the rise of modern Zionism, the political gains of the movement, the Balfour Declaration and the entire Zionist enterprise in Palestine.²⁸ For many years the students in his small yeshiva were educated in this spirit and when he died the tradition was passed on especially to his only son, Ra'bi Zvi Yehuda Kook. Until 1967, the Kooks' special interpretation was kept, on a rather esoteric level. Like a classical kabbalistic thinker, the elder Rabbi Kook was equivocal on many issues, vague on others and was said to have different scholarly interpretations. His teaching did not become a fountain for earthly activities and mundane operations. The Six Day War and the great Israeli victory however, transformed the status of Rabbi Kook's theology. Suddenly it

was clear to his students, and eventually to others that they were living in a truly messianic age and that it was their calling to deliver the message to the rest of the nation. Empirical reality has assumed a sacred aspect and every event was shown to incorporate a theological meaning and to be part of a metahistorical process of redemption.²⁹ Though shared by many rabbis and religious authorities, the new interpretation was most vocally preached by Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook. He, the present head of Yeshivat Merkaz haRav, has defined the State of Israel as the halachic Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Israel as the Kingdom of heaven on earth. Total holiness was now extended to each and every Jew living in Israel and all phenomena including secular ones were said to eventually be taken over by this holiness. From this study's point of view, the significance of the new mystical status bestowed upon present reality has been its operational meaning. No more was the new interpretation preserved in esoteric Kabbalistic writings. It has become the order of the day. Even before the gathering of Gush Emunim, individual yeshiva students and activists have begun talking in the new language but after the official establishment, the new theology has become the practical property of a whole movement. No ordinary discourse with the members of this movement was now possible without repeated references to grand national resurrection, historical meanings of ordinary events, the building of the third temple and redemption.³⁰ Gush Emunim thus assumed its fundamentalist nature. Almost all the Biblical rules regarding the Kingdom of Israel, the nation and the land were now literally applicable and strict Halachic instructions concerning national behavior in the messianic age were now said to be valid.

The Sanctity of the Land of Israel

According to the fundamentalist conception of reality which is espoused by the new school, not only the time dimension of the Jewish nation but also the space dimension has been metaphysically transformed. The essence of this transformation amounts to the total holiness of the land of Israel and every concrete grain of its soil. "This holiness", writes Professor Tal, "does not replace the physical substance but inversely, the physical substance is itself becoming sacred until total holiness is achieved. Thus no individual can escape holiness and every place upon which a Jewish foot is set is holy. The historical symbols are transformed from mere symbols to a concrete substance. Not the single individual but the place is holy and not the place as a symbol for holiness, but the physical place: trees, stones, graves, walls and other places as well. They all are sacred in themselves."³¹ It should perhaps be stressed that the belief that the Jewish people and the land of Israel in its entirety are one and the same, goes back to Rabbi Kook's mystical interpretation of distinguished religious authorities, but in this case too, an immense epistemological leap has taken place since 1967. From that time on and as a result of the concretization of messianism in Israel, the whole issue of the borders of the Land has assumed an unprecedented seriousness. In countless religious symposia and learned essays the question of the genuine borders of the Land has been discussed and debated.³² While the secular proponents of the greater Israel^l idea have started to survey the borders according to security considerations or legal historical ones, the religious messianic proponents have only had in mind one consideration: the Biblical covenant and the promise made by God to

Abraham. In that context it was soon discovered that the territory under consideration was not restricted to the vast area taken by the Israeli army in the Six Day War, but extended to the Euphratus on the northeast and to part of the Nile on the southwest. While no unanimity on the operational meaning of the new Biblical map has been reached, not a single one of the fundamentalist authorities was ready to consider giving back even a single square inch for either peace or security considerations. Some of the extremists do even believe that further territorial annexations are timely. Rabbi Israel Ariel the former head of Yamit's (the evacuated city in the Rafia Salient) yeshiva is a typical example of a stiff fundamentalist mind. In a private interview with this writer, he did not disclose his opinion that our time is a high time for Israel to wage a War of conquest. When asked about current political constraints and diplomatic limitations, the Rabbi responded by saying that Joshua who waged an immense war of conquest in Canaan had far worse political constraints and limitation.³³ When pressed further about potential casualties and national losses the fundamentalist rabbi responded by referring to a Biblical ruling that in case of a holy war no question about casualties is legitimate until one fifth of the nation is extinct.

Not all the rabbis of the new school or the members of Gush Emunim would go all the way with Rabbi Ariel and so far his is clearly a minority opinion.³⁴ The fact that such an argumentation is heard today and is legitimate is however indicative. Thus, Israel's chief Rabbinate - which has formally nothing to do with Gush Emunim - had in 1976 issued an official halachic ruling about the holiness of the Jewish territories and the consequent holiness of the political sovereignty

over them. And in 1979 this distinguished national institution which is sanctioned by a state law had ruled that no part of the holyland could be returned even in the context of a peace treaty. "According to our holy Torah and the unequivocal and decisive halachic rulings there exists a severe prohibition to pass to foreigners the ownership of any piece of the land of Israel since it was made sacred by the Brit Bein ha-Betarim (Abraham's Covenant)".³⁵

The totalistic and uncompromising position of the messianic school and its operational translation in the daily life of the members and supporters of Gush Emunim is highly helpful in the explanation of several events in the last decade. It explains for example The stubborn opposition to Israel's retreat from Sinai and the belief held until the last moments of April 28, that God was about to intervene directly in order to prevent Begin's national crime.³⁶ It also explains the high welcome accorded by Gush Emunim to the Israeli conquest of Southern Lebanon. This territory belonged in Biblical times to the tribes of Asher and Naftali and no reason in the world existed not to free it from the hostile Arabs and reclaim it forever.³⁷

The Revival of Zionism and Settlement

In an early comprehensive ideological document produced by Gush Emunim it calls itself a "movement for the renewal of Zionist fulfillment" "Our aim is to bring about a large movement of reawakening among the Jewish people for the fulfillment of the Zionist vision in its full scope, with the recognition that the source of the vision in Jewish tradition and roots and that its ultimate objective is the full redemption of the Jewish people and the entire world."³⁸

Thus, although it appeared to many that Gush Eimanim was established as a single issue movement to promote the extension of Israeli sovereignty to Judea and Samaria (and if possible, to all the occupied territories) it never actually confined itself to that issue alone. Taking into consideration the new totalistic definition of reality as well as the concrete operations of the movement it is obvious that Gush Eimanim sees itself as a movement of revival whose task is to revitalize historic Zionism that died out in the Israel of the 1950's and 60's. According to Eimanim's analysis, the Israelis now live in a crisis born out of the fatigue that followed the partial implementation of Zionism after the establishment of the State of Israel. This crisis has led to a weakening of the pioneering spirit, to the unwillingness to continue to struggle against the pressures of the outside world especially against the Arabs, to the establishment of a materialistic society and a setting of the private ego over and against the national goal and mission. A survey of the writings of many of Eimanim's rabbis and spiritual authorities reveals a strong denial of modern Western culture.³⁹ It appears from these sources that there exists a gap between Jewish authentic culture and modern alienated Western culture. The revival and rejuvenation of Zionism should go in the Jewish path and not vice versa. Gush Eimanim has taken upon itself to fight the decadent tendencies. Since in the past, Zionism was different and was based on self-sacrifice and pioneering, this according to Eimanim interpretation is not an original approach but a revival of what had already been developed by others. The tendency among Gush Eimanim people is consequently to present themselves as heirs of authentic Israeli Zionism, which actually built the yishuv, guided by the ideas of settlement of the land, manual labor, and personal example.

The settlements of the movement are consequently more than simply the means of taking over the land of Judea and Samraria by colonizing it. To them, these settlements represent the utmost achievement, the purest Zionist activity in every sense of the term. The Gush are not socialists, of course, but they are deeply attached to the kibbutz movement which in its prime shared many of the same ideas. It is therefore not surprising that two of the most prominent leaders of Gush Emunim, Rabbi Moshe Levinger and Hanan Borat are originally religious kibbutz members. Borat comes from Kfar Etzion (which was ~~destroyed~~ destroyed in the 1948 war) and Levinger was formerly the rabbi of Kibbutz Lavie.

The Arabs

A key operational question that stems from the monopolistic approach of Emunim fundamentalists to the issue of the Land of Israel concerns the Arabs. What is the role accorded to the Palestinian Arabs in the age of Jewish redemption? What right, if at all should they maintain in the holy land of Israel? For many years the spokesmen of the movement had stuck to the formal "three alternatives" answer, according to which every Arab living in the land would be presented with three alternatives: to acknowledge publicly the legitimacy of the Zionist doctrine (the Gush Emunim's version) and to receive full civil rights, including the right to elect and be elected to the Knesset (and serve in the army); to obey the laws of the state without formal recognition of Zionism and be in return granted full rights of resident alien (but not political rights); to be offered economic incentives to immigrate to Arab countries.⁴⁰

While not excessively liberal the "three alternative" proposition makes at least some political sense. In a context of a peace settlement and an agreed upon borders it may even be appealing to some non Gush Emunim Israelis. The problem with this position is that it never really exhausted the full range of attitudes on the status of non-Jewish foreigner's expressed in the theoretical deliberations of the fundamentalist school. It is only when examined in view of the conceptions of redemption and the sanctity of the land that these attitudes are becoming clear. Basically as the late Professor Tal has shown the entire issue is a question of human and civil rights. Tal has accurately phrased the issue by saying that "if the time and the space are two total existential categories, then no room can be left to foreigners. As we have seen the question is not limited to a bunch of crazy prophets that lost control or to an unimportant marginal minority but pertains to a dogmatic and highly elaborated philosophy. This system leads to a policy which cannot coexist with civil and human rights and in the final analysis it does not leave room for toleration."⁴¹ Following Tal it is possible to identify in the fundamentalist school three positions on the civil and human rights of the non-Jewish person: limitation of rights, denial of rights and in the most extreme and isolated end - a Torah based preachings for genocide. Each of the positions it should be stressed is anchored in an authoritative interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. The first position is relatively moderate. It stems from the conviction that the notion of universal equal human rights is a foreign ideal which like other

European, non-Jewish values has no meaning in the context of the Holy Land.⁴² The status accorded to non-Jewish residents in the Bible is the status of resident aliens who may enjoy partial privileges but never obtain full equal rights to the Jews. Eban's "three alternative" propositions reflect this rather moderate position and may be seen as its political translation.

The second approach to the question of human rights amounts to a denial of those rights since the very existence of the Jews in Israel depends on Arab emigration. The ruling regarding conquest of the land according to Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, in his essay "The Messianic Realism", stands above "moral-human" considerations of the national rights of the Gentiles in our Land.⁴³ The people of Israel according to this interpretation were ordered to be sacred but not to be moral. Alien moral considerations do not obtain in the case of the Chosen People. The practical meaning of this interpretation is that in times of war no distinction should be made between enemy soldiers and civilians since both are of the category of people who do not belong in the land. The most extreme position, that of genocide was expressed in an essay by Rabbi Israel Hess under the title "The Genocide Ruling of Torah". In his essay, published in the official magazine of Bar Ilan University students, Rabbi Hess likens the Arabs to the Amalekites about whom it was decisively ruled in the Bible that they deserve annihilation.⁴⁴ The historical Amalekites were according to Hess both socially and militarily treacherous and cruel. Their relation to the Jew is like the relation of darkness to light i.e. one of total contradiction. The Arabs who live today in the land of Israel and who are constantly waging a terroristic and treacherous war against the Jews are direct descendants of the Amalekites and the correct solution to the problem is genocide.

Discussing the delicate issue of the Arabs it is important to maintain that Hess' position is an isolated minority position and that even the second "denial" approach is not very often discussed. Nevertheless, the issue at stake is that in the context of the present fundamentalist discourse, these positions are taken without being considered illegitimate or disgusting. And what is of greater importance is the fact that none of them has so far been ruled out as totally erroneous by high religious authorities. Since the cultural atmosphere of the fundamentalist milieu is not open and pluralistic, but rather socially monolithic and hierarchial there is a serious reason for concern. It is not at all clear whether the silence on the extreme positions is a sign of disapproval or an indication for a tactical underplay born out of political prudence.

Some indication for the awareness of Gush Emunim to the great political sensitivity of the extreme talk on the Arabs is provided by the present refusal of its leaders to comment meaningfully on the future of the Arabs in Judea and Samaria following the "expected" annexation to Israel. Emunim's standard answer on this issue is that their mission is not to solve the Arab question (the Palestinian problem does not exist!) but the Jewish question.⁴⁵ When hardly pressed, Emunim's spokesman always maintain that in due time All-Mighty God would provide the right answer. The evolution of Emunim's frontier vigilance and anti-Arab terrorism does not leave much room for the imagination.

The Relation to Democracy and the Rule of Law

A key issue in the understanding of the politics of Gush Emunim is the attitude of the movement and its fundamentalist cultural infrastructure towards democracy and the rule of Law. A historical examination of the movement's record is rather incriminating. During its

formative years, the days of the Rabin administration, Gush Emunim had clearly satisfied an image of an anti-democratic organization. It initiated illicit settlements, affronted the democratically elected government and was on balance intensively illegal. In the case of the retreat from Sinai in 1982 the movement had again demonstrated its great disorderly potential. In its refusal to respect the peace treaties with Egypt Gush Emunim did not just oppose the government but came out directly against Israel's legislature, the Knesset, which overwhelmingly approved the treaty. Many of Emunim's settlers have over the years been involved in anti-Arab vigilante activity which eventually culminated in the sophisticated terror network exposed in 1982.

Not only the past operations of Emunim's members are of dubious "democratic" nature, but also the cultural milieu of its spiritual authorities. There can be little doubt that the fundamentalist beliefs of the rabbis mentioned above are undemocratic. Their totalistic conception of redemption, their understanding of the existential dimension of time and space and their interpretation of the laws of Torah are totally alien to modern democracy and to the principles of legal positivism. None else but on the issue of human and civil rights of the non-Israeli residents, is this position so clearly expressed.

But is it the entire story? Do the past illegal operations of Emunim's settlers and the totalistic conceptions of their rabbis exhaust the subject? An empirical examination indicates that there is more to it. Thus, despite their rather impressive illegal record, the leaders and theoreticians of Gush Emunim are surprisingly not defensive about the issue of democracy.⁴⁵ Their rather interesting argument

is that they and their school should not be judged in the context of the abstract notion of democracy, but in the context of the Israeli political system which is a democracy. They point out to the fact that they have always had great respect for the secular insitutional expressions of Israel's soveriegtny - the government the kneset and the army. They maintain that many of them together with young members of the NRP, were active in lauching the yeshivot hesder (religious academies combining religious study and military service). They palyed a major role in changing the NRP's orientation towards the institutions of government in Israel. Whereas over the years, the instutions of sovereignty had been basically considered instrumental - only live and let live - Gush Emanim has begun to view it as an end in itself. The Gush insists that these institutions which are of great national importance be infused with truly Zionist content - pioneering and self-sacrifice.⁴⁷

Upon a close exmaination, much of Emanim's argument is sustained by the facts. The movement has never developed a blunt anti-democratic ideology and in a general historical Israeli context has not displayed an exceptionally undemocratic behavior.⁴⁸ Its main problem with democracy is that with respect to the one issue that truly concerns Gush Emanim, namely Eretz Yisrael the movement has adopted a very restrictive and doctrinaire attitude. According to its interpretation the only legitimizing principle in whose name the State of Israel, its democratic regime and its legal system were established is Zionist settlement in all parts of Eretz Israel. In this view, democracy is a reasonable system provided it exists within a truly Zionsit community.

Should the two collide, Zionism takes precedence. If the majority, as represented by the Knesset of Israel, rules against it, then it must be a momentary political majority, manipulative and misleading.⁴⁹ It must be consequently fought at all costs. It is the right and the duty of every Jew in Eretz Israel to struggle against any tendency to compromise on the issue of settlement in the land even if it is proposed by the majority. When Gush Emunim people are asked how is it that they, who show so much respect for the state, are prepared to act against the government's order and guidelines, they reply that the existing government coalition and its legal framework do not represent the true spirit of the state. Government actions that prevent settlement may be legal but they are illegitimate. A government that prevents settlement undercuts its own legitimacy and places itself in the same position as the British Mandatory government, which undermined its legitimacy by enacting the policy of the infamous White Paper of 1939.⁵⁰ During the period of the White Paper, illegal acts of settlement by secular Zionists were altogether legitimate; the same pertains to today, and that does not imply a general anti-democratic orientation.

A final judgment about Gush Emunim, democracy and the rule of law should thus be held in abeyance. There exist many indications that the fundamentalist structure of their thinking and their limited commitment to the democratic procedures would, in time of high pressure, drive many members of Gush Emunim to a total confrontation with the democratic system. There are on the other hand some indications that many elements within the movement will not opt for such a confrontation. These elements will put a high premium on the interpretation

that the present state of Israel, despite all its follies, is both the halachic kingdom of Israel and the culmination of the Zionist dream.⁵¹ Its rulers should perhaps be strongly criticized but finally obeyed. I would consequently risk the proposition that in a situation of extreme pressure about critical issues such as the surrender of Judea and Samaria, Gush Emunim and the fundamentalist school will split.

CULTURE AND SOCIAL ORIGINS

One of the explanations for the relative underestimation of Gush Emunim as a viable political force in Israel has to do with the early public image it obtained in the mid 1970's. In those years of the Rabin administration the movement launched its illicit settlement drive. Its members and leaders, though highly successful in bringing the government down on the issue of settling Samaria appeared very much as a bunch of crazy idealists unbalanced and incapable of maintaining ordinary life. To many Israelis' reminiscence of their early pioneering youth movement, Gush Emunim appeared as a rejuvenated anachronistic movement of the same nature. Many of these people in and outside of Israel still preserve in their minds the same image of the Gush and its settlers. They are convinced that once the "real" politics will take place (in the form of a decisive government resolve to compromise over Judea and Samaria) the phenomenon called Gush Emunim will evaporate. An unrealistic youth movement, all its virtues notwithstanding, cannot last forever in the world of the "grown ups" or be of some significance in the context of high state politics.

A close and realistic examination of Gush Emunim today shows that nothing could be more erroneous and misleading than this image. It

shows that ever since its establishment the movement was far more serious than an isolated bunch of crazy zealots and that today, eleven years after its creation it has given birth to a highly variegated social and institutional system. This system includes a state supported settlement organization, official regional municipal councils and independent economic corporations. In addition, it has a unique feature which greatly solidifies it, a highly cohesive spiritual leadership composed of distinguished rabbis and religious scholars. It would not be erroneous to speak today of the invisible kingdom of Gush Emunim which is gradually acquiring the shape of a state within a state.

A full understanding of this system must not start with the official establishment of Gush Emunim in 1974 but with its cultural and social origins which go back to the 1950's and 1960's. We have already noted that the leadership of Gush Emunim emerged almost exclusively from the Yeshivat Merkaz ha-Rav and was influenced by the teachings of Rabbi Kook as interpreted by his son, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda. No less important is the fact that most of the leadership of Gush Emunim came to Merkaz ha Rav from the world of the so-called 'knitted skullcaps', the Bnei Akiva youth movement, ha-Poel ha-Mizrahi and adherents of the notion of Torah va-Avodah (Torah and Labor - the founders of the Religious Kibbutz movement which cooperated with its secular counterpart). It is important to note the spiritual underpinnings of these roots because the process under consideration pertains not only to Gush Emunim but also to one of the central transformations that have taken place in Israeli

society, and which has not yet been adequately studied. Although there was no outright Kulturkampf in the fifties and sixties, there was nevertheless a power play in which the victors were the religious educational system and the subculture of ha-Ebel ha-Mizrahi and the 'knitted skullcaps'. In contrast to the other sectors of the Zionist educational system, which in the course of being nationalized lost their normative character and underwent an astonishing dilution, the religious Zionists developed an educational system which created norms of life and behavior of the highest order for a quarter of the school population. Thus, the religious Zionist public was spared the general decline that beset the country's secular educational system, and indeed, may even have been consolidated by it. Around that educational system, totalistic life patterns were created for an entire public, which reinforced its religious life not only at home and in the synagogue, but also (for its children) in the neighborhood kindergarten, in the ulpanah (religious academy for girls) or yeshiva (religious academy for men).⁵²

Within this slow but massive cultural process of educational transformation emerged the unique revival of Yeshivat Merkaz ha-Rav. After the death of its founder, it fell into decline until the end of the 1950's when a new Bnei Akiva generation revitalized the old school. This new generation listened eagerly to the interpretations of the son of Rabbi Kook to the teaching of his father and infused it with nationalistic meaning. When the war of June '67 broke out, these youngsters were ripe and ready to formulate a new religious Zionist ideology, but not however, before witnessing a unique, almost miraculous event.

On the eve of independence Day, 1967, a group of graduates of the yeshiva met at Merkaz ha-Rav for an alumni get-together. As was his custom, the erstwhile Rabbi Zvi Eliezer Rabinovitch delivered a festive sermon, in the midst of which his quiet tone suddenly rose to a crescendo, bewailing the partition of historic Eretz Yisrael. His faithful students were led to believe⁵³ that this situation was intolerable and could not last for long. When three weeks later in June 1967 they discovered themselves to be citizens of an enlarged State of Israel, the graduates of Merkaz ha Rav were convinced that a genuine spirit of prophecy had come over their rabbi on that Independence Day.

They, his faithful students, became holy emissaries equipped with unshakable confidence in the rightness of their mission and in the divine backing for their activity. At one stroke a flame was lit and the conditions were ripe for imparting to the entire subculture of the 'knitted skullcaps' - the new political ideology of a greater Eretz Yisrael. Today it is clear that from being a social and spiritual subculture, most of the 'knitted skullcap' community has become a public with a political consciousness. According to the new ideology, the historic Land of Israel must now pass into the hands of the Jewish people not only by military action but also by settlement and political activity - that is, by imposing Israeli sovereignty.

Not all the religious public was swept by the new spirit. The Religious Kibbutz Movement, for example, and its most prominent leaders have retained deep reservations about this revolution in thought. So too has the Os ve-Shalom (Strength and Peace) movement of religious intellectuals, and presumably many others, including heads of yeshivot and rabbis. But it is clear today that between 1967 and 1973 most

'knitted skullcaps' went through a process of 'Eretz Yisraelization'. This ideological maximalization was not effected only by people from Yeshivat Merkaz ha-Rav. A sizable role was also played by the 'Yung Gaurd' of the NRP as well, of course, as the Greater Israel Movement.

The understanding of the full magnitude of the of the cultural transformation of the national religious bloc may help us in the explanation of Gush Emunim and its unprecedented effectiveness in Israeli public life. Thus instead of the common conception of the Gush as an isolated group of religious fanatics, who emerged from nowhere in the wake of the Yom Kippur War, an iceberg analogy may serve us better. It shows Gush Emunim as the tip of an iceberg whose base (like that part of the iceberg which is submerged) is a complete social and cultural system which is not so extreme and visible.⁵⁴

The iceberg model is very effective in explaining the great success of Gush Emunim in its formative years. It helps us understand how the movement was capable of launching its illicit settlement drives despite the small number of the actual settlers. It shows that in time of trouble the Gush people could rely upon a large pool of participants comprised of the religious higher educational system, yeshiva high schools, religious academies for girls, Bnei Akiva Yeshivot and Yeshivot hesder. For years these youths have been educated in a specific belief based world view. Quite a few of its rabbis and teachers - its spiritual authorities and identification models - passed through the Merkaz ha Rav hothouse and others were waiting their turn to get there. Most of these youths did not join the large operations of Gush Emunim by way of individual decision. They came as organized groups in

organized transportation. At times they have done so on the explicit instructions of the director of the yeshiva, and at times because their absence from studies was considered legitimate. It is no accident that the large demonstrative activities of Gush Emunim and its settlement moves always took place during school holidays, when young people were free to attend these events.

The link with the educational institutions of the 'knitted skullcap' culture and with other organizational networks affiliated with it also explains the question of the funding of Gush Emunim's large scale operations. Many of its opponents have raised the question, very suspectly, about how a small and fanatical group could manage to raise the considerable funds needed for its activities. It is now clear for example, that most of the organized transport and equipment for the early operations were contributed by official institutions such as yeshivot, youth centers and settlements. They credited all of these expenses to their official budgets, without having to provide an accounting to anyone, or having to distinguish between their expenses for legal and illegal activities.⁵⁵

In addition to their reliance upon human and financial resources of the wide knitted skullcap subculture, the activists of Gush Emunim relied heavily on its political resources. This could be accomplished because the young Bnei Akiva were also an integral part of the N.R.P., a permanent senior partner in Israel's cabinet. Gush Emunim activists despite their extreme positions on settlement issues were always welcome in high political circles. Fully backed by the N.R.P. they could be sure that no decisive military action was to be taken against

them for fear of a general governmental crisis. Having also the support of the opposition leader at the time, Mehachem Begin and the greater Israel camp, they have gradually construed a very favorable political support system within which they moved like fish in the sea.⁵⁶ Entertaining the affection reserved only for idealist pioneering youth they became in fact very effective politicians and lobbyists. Being extremely flexible in their tactics but absolutely firm in their strategy they would simultaneously act within the system if possible, and outside it if needed.⁵⁷

THE INVISIBLE KINGDOM OF GUSH EMUNIM

Though mostly illicit and extraparliamentary in the 1974-1977 period, Gush Emunim had aspired for public respectability and legal status. Its vision has always been national and grand. The major step towards respectability, legality and permanence was taken in 1978 when the Gush established Amana (covenant) as its official settlement organization, recognized by the World Zionist Organization.⁵⁸ This event happened after Begin's rise to power and was part of a series of moves aimed at a full legalization of the movement. In addition another organization was established, the Yehsha council, which was to become the official political organ of the Jewish settlements in Judea Samaria and Gaza. Having been institutionalized the movement was now trying to dissociate itself from the name Gush Emunim, which retained the association of a temporary extremist movement. While this attempt has never been successful, the institutionalization itself had and Gush Emunim was completely transformed into an established hard working community. Its members stopped preparing for and talking about

settlement pioneering. They have become settlers and pioneers in every sense of the term.

There can be little doubt that while Gush Emainim was largely responsible for the aggressive settlement ideology in all the parts of Eretz Yisrael, the framework for the actual settlement since 1967 was established and developed by the governments of Israel. Dr. Meron Benvenisti, who has been following the evolution of the West Bank under Israel's occupation has shown in his learned reports that the de facto Israeli annexation of the area, which in his opinion has actually taken place - was made possible through an incremental process of parliamentary legislation, Government ruling and administrative regulations.⁵⁹ Benvenisti stressed however, that there has been a great difference between the Maarach administration (1967-1977) and the Likud (Begin's) administration (1977-1984). While the Maarach wanted to keep open options regarding the future of Judea and Samaria and abstained from a non-selective settlement policy, the Likud was not at all interested. Even within the framework of the famous "autonomy plan" it was determined to prevent a "repartition of the land of Israel" and was consequently ready to support large nonselective settlement and a strategic take-over of the whole area.⁶⁰ No other than Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon was assigned for the job and Sharon's strategic ingenuity and ambitious aggressiveness have made the creeping annexation come true. New strategic roads were paved, new settlements including urban centers were initiated and massive economic investments were poured into the area.

Had Gush Emainim been an ordinary secular settlement movement, it would have had no reason for its displeasure with Begin, Sharon and the

Likud administration. No voluntary effort could have accomplished in Judea and Samaria what the Likud government had. But Gush Emunim because of its religious fundamentalist attachment to Eretz Yisrael was never really satisfied with Begin and Sharon, the lay politicians. Begin was always suspected of being a declarative Zionist, that is to say a man who talks highly about great national visions but is not capable of their actual realization. Sharon was mistrusted because of his immense personal ambitions and his political selfishness. Begin's refusal to officially annex Judea and Samaria after his rise to power and his part in the peace treaties with Egypt have confirmed Emunim's worst fears.⁶¹ Sharon's support of him had further added to the mistrust. Gush Emunim, could never forget that despite the great advancement in the Jewish domination of the West Bank the size of the settler's community within the general population of the area was so more than three percent. It could never ignore the fact that the holy cities of Hebron and Nablus were by and large Judenhine and that strong demands for an Israeli eventual withdrawal were made inside and outside of Israel. The result was tremendous resolve to strengthen itself to such an extent that under no circumstances whatsoever, would any Israeli government be able to surrender even a small portion of Judea and Samaria. Now that its people were the key public figures within the settler community, the most capable and motivated, this task was not very difficult.

On March 20, 1979, just six days prior to the signing of the Peace Treaty with Egypt, the military government in the West bank signed order 783 establishing three regional councils in the area. Two more councils of this nature were added later.⁶² The regulations governing

the regional councils' powers and functions, defined in Order 783 as amended, are identical with the Israeli legislation. In March 1981, five Urban councils were established by Order 982. The Order had been the copy of the Israeli Municipal Ordinance and the powers of the municipalities are consequently identical with the powers and responsibilities of the ordinary Israeli municipalities. In addition to the rights of levying taxes, supplying municipal services, nominating officers and employing workers, the West Bank councils were granted planning and building licensing powers. The Israeli settlement areas were declared "planning areas", and the councils were appointed as "special planning commissions". The purpose of these acts, initiated by Begin's government apart of their administrative dimension, was obviously to strengthen the Jewish control of the area and to bestow permanence upon the settlements. What is important from the perspective of the present essay is that the key executive positions in the new councils were given to Emmunim's members, the most able ones. Previous illicit settlers have suddenly become state officials with large budgets, great political powers and responsibilities.

Today, just a few years after the establishment of the regional and municipal councils it is already clear that theirs is a success story. The councils, especially the regional ones controlled by Gush Emmunim, are very dynamic institutions. In a few years they have managed to establish viable structures, economic corporations, transportation services health and educational organizations. These councils employ in total, hundreds of employees and own a vast equipment and assets. Though a superficial examination does not disclose a great

difference between them, and similar institutions, inside the Green Line, the difference is clearly there. The pace of development is a case in point and an outstanding example is the "Company for the development of Samaria". In only three years the company has acquired 22 buses, trucks, bulldozers and minibuses. It now operates departments for gasoline stations and soil works, and plans, in cooperation with a well established Histadrut company Even Vasid, to construct a cement factory, and with the big oil corporation Paz to produce gasoline by-products. The directors of the company are proud of their ability to finance new settlements without governmental assistance.⁶³ A recent article in *Nekuda*, the settlers' magazine, mentioned that the company is on its way to becoming an economic empire capable of acting independently in time of political troubles.⁶⁴

What today signifies the variegated organizational system of Gush Emunim and sets it apart from structurally similar institutions in Israel is its collective character and its political orientation. Thus the economic and social welfare system does not promote only the interests of the individual members. It is totally geared towards semi-autonomy. All of Emunim's dominated councils are members of the covering organization, the Yehsa Council. In its August 1984 report it was stated that the settlements and their residents are bound to promote by all possible means the application of Israel's sovereignty over Judea and Samaria. Already at the present the council operates political, financial, information and security committees. It also maintains a committee for external relations with other communities. Danny Rubinstein, the veteran West Bank correspondent of "Davar" has convincingly argued that these committees look very much like state ministerial agencies in embryo.⁶⁵

Of special significance to a full appreciation of Ezer's "invisible" kingdom is the military system that emerged slowly in the area to assure the safety and security of the settlers. Almost from the beginning of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, there were security problems in the area. Many anti-Jewish terrorist and guerilla operations took place in the early years and the settlements were consequently defined in the military jargon as "confrontation settlements". In those "border settlements" according to Military Order 432 and other orders, guards were authorized to exercise force and among other things to open fire under the necessary circumstance.⁶⁶ Many residents of the West Bank have, in fact been conscripts "on extended leave", mainly religious students combining military service with rabbinical studies. In every settlement a settler has been appointed "security officer" and received a salary from the Ministry of Defense or from the Israeli police. The result of this system is a very intensive involvement of the settler community in defense and security matters which were originally planned to be handled by the army and the military government.

In 1978 a great change in the prevailing security system of Judea and Samaria took place. Israel's chief of staff, general Raphael Eitan initiated a new defense concept under the title Territorial Defense. According to the new concept, the settler community was now assigned the entire job of protecting the area and defending itself. Hundreds of settlers were removed from their former infantry units and transferred to the West Bank. In addition to their own settlements they were to secure cultivated fields, access roads and commercial and general community facilities. Every settlement was bound to have in it an allotted

number of fit combatants including officers who are also local residents. They were to perform their active duty on a part-time basis while leading a normal civilina life. The new system also established large regional mobile forces equipped with armored personnel carriers. The task of these units was defined as "current security" activities which in the military jargon means policing the Palestinian population in their proper regions.⁶⁷

It should be stressed that no much conspiracy was involved in the very establishment of the regional defense system. It was probably seen by the chief of staff as the best and most economic way of securing the settlements from PLO terrorism and other Arab hostile acts. The concept of regional defense has been highly operative in the pre-state days in Palestine when the members of the border settlements and kibbutzim were the only ones capable of defending themselves. Nevertheless, the great potential of a sem-independent military unit composed of devoted Emmunim's officers and soldiers cannot be ignored. In view of the fact that all the councils today have special security committees that "coordinate security matters", it is almost certain that direct relationships between the political echelon and the military echelon of Gush Emmunim exists. It consequently can be argued that the "invisible kingdom" of Gush Emmunim has not only fared well in organization and finance but also in the military. As long as the range of disagreement with the government is small there exists no danger of conflict or confrontation. But no great imagination is needed in order to foreceee a situation of conflict. Very recent debates within the settler community about its future in case of a major territorial concessions by the government have concealed among others, the opinions of

those who were favoring armed resistance. These opinions may have expressed the view of a tiny minority but they should not be left unattended. The fact that the settler-soldiers keep their personal arms with them and that heavier arms are stored in the settlements' armories means that already today it is hypothetically possible to use the settlements as bases for independent military operations.

A rather moderate example for a potential Ezzunim's conflict with the prevailing law and order which has already taken place is the case of the settlers' vigilantism that has evolved in the last few years. Dr. Benvensith has accounted for it in the following way. "The quasi-independence of ideologically motivated armed settlers, serving part time under their own commanders, has led to various vigilante activities, including the smashing of cars and harassment of the Arab population. The degree of independence of the armed settlers and the lack of control over their activities were revealed by an Israeli official committee. The Committee found that incidents of vigilantism (vandalizing of arab property, opening fire and harassment) had not been investigated "because of intervention of politicians, including senior members of the government coalition who have halted investigations by intervening with authorities." a former chief of internal security who was responsible for investigating vigilante activity went even further by stating "There is a sympathetic political environment... Those settlers who took the law into their hands and established illegal settlements have now become legitimate... This proved to them that 'destroyers of fences' and law breakers, have been right, that they have become strong and respectable."68

Ahituv's warning regarding the atmosphere of the settlers' vigilan-
tism was made before the disclosure of the underground network that was
responsible for the most extreme anti-Arab terror acts since 1980.
After its disclosure, it was learned that one of the top commanders of
the regional defense unit was among the suspects⁶⁹ and some of his
underground colleagues were also involved in it.

The evolution of Emmunim's organizational structure, its municipal
councils, economic companies and regional defense units should not for
a moment overshadow the importance of its religiously and spiritual
infra-structure. An indicative case is a small and concealed recent
news that did not get much attention in the national media. According
to it a rabbinical court to rule over financial matters in view of the
Hallacha commands was established in the regional council, Mate
Binyamin. The announcement on the establishment of the court stated
among other things:

"The revival of the Israeli nation means also the return of the
Law in Israel and the management of financial issues between a man and
his peers according to the Torah and not according to the law imagined
by the Gentiles. It appears proper that settlements that are insti-
tuted by the Torah should follow this path for the law is from God"⁷⁰

What is clearly indicated in both the act and its explanation is
that the members of Gush Emmunim never forget their spiritual calling.
Many observers of the movement and its evolution are convinced that the
drives toward semi-autonomy are not restricted to the political and
economic fields but also pertain to judicial and legal aspects which
are diametrically opposed to the state's legal system. The movement,
despite its great political achievements had and remains to be a reli-
gious community which draws its great strength from its fundamentalist
convictions.

In the context of its cultural-legal facet the spiritual support system of E~~mu~~nim's community also deserves attention. This system which bestows self confidence and legitimation upon the members completes the unique and totalistic "ministate" which has evolved in the last several years. Ever since the death of Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook, three years ago, Gush E~~mu~~nim has not had a single spiritual authority to guide the leaders in their action. The syste has however functioned smoothly even without an official head since the students of Zvi Yehuda have themselves become admired authorities. Among them, Rabbi Moshe Levinger from Hebron, Rabbi Eliezer Waldman from Kiryat Arba and Rabbi Yisrael Ariel from Yamit have achieved national fame because of their exceptional activities. They are however only the representatives of dozens of young rabbis who grew up in Mercaz ha-Rav and who continued to carry its torch. Today, every E~~mu~~nim's settlement has its own authoritative and active rabbi and in many of them there exists in addition, a Yeshiva of some sort. The common denominator of all this vast system of rabbis and Yeshivot is the prevalence within it of the E~~mu~~nist Fundamentalist theology. This internal community which encompasses thousands of devoted students and spiritual guides may be seen at once as a powerful socialization organ and a spiritual support system. By educating and socializing hundreds of young students every year it helps Gush E~~mu~~nim to perpetuate itself on the one hand to to maintain its idealistic spirit on the other. The number of the new E~~mu~~nim's members may not be considered large in proportion to the rest of the Israeli people but as a reinforcement to an elite group it is quite substantial. Most of E~~mu~~nim's veteran observers, including the present writer, are convinced that the movement is by far the most dynamic social and cultural force that exists in Israel today.

GUSH EMUNIM AND ISRAELI POLITICS

While a cultural and organizational analysis of Gush Emunim may take us a long way towards understanding its sophistication and effectiveness in Judea and Samaria such analysis is not sufficient to account for the movement's great political influence. A fuller understanding of this phenomenon can be obtained only when the general context of Israeli politics, within which the Emunist fundamentalism is operative, is understood. Most observers of Israel's political map agree that today the public is evenly divided between the doves and the hawks on the territorial question. Thus while about 50% of the citizens are ready to trade part of Judea and Samaria for a real peace with a Jordanian-Palestinian entity, nearly the same number of people oppose such a settlement. This half is highly supportive of the position so well phrased by Menachem Begin many times: "Never again should Eretz Yisrael be repartitioned." What is important in the present context is that most of these 50 per cent are not fundamentalists. They are political maximalists who believe that Judea and Samaria should remain in Israel's hands for various reasons; security, demography, historical attachment and even pure emotional considerations. They are highly suspicious of the Arabs, resentful of PLO terrorism and in general see no reason for being altruistic in the cruel and bloody reality of the Middle east. For these territorial maximalists, most of whom are represented politically by the Likud and Hatahiya parties, the youthful and energetic zealots of Gush Emunim are subject for a total admiration. While they, the ordinary Israelis of nationalist convictions have personally done nothing to make the dream of the greater Israel come true, the members of Gush Emunim had. In their bodies,

with their large families they have gone to the freeing hills of Judea and Samaria and literally paved the way. They had fulfilled the mission, which is still very touching in any Zionist context that of a genuine pioneering.

The result of the immense affection and admiration bestowed upon Emanim's members by the camp of the greater Israel idea is a total uncritical and unquestioning orientation towards the fundamentalist cast of mind. The new pattern of thinking and operating is conceived to be a very blessed phenomenon with no pitfalls, flaws or potential damages. Gush Emanim and the settler community may be said to fulfill for the maximalist camp the role that was once fulfilled by the Kibbutz community for the labor movement. In the past, the leaders of the labor movement used to stress incessantly the utmost importance of the tiny Kibbutz community to the whole movement and to the realization of socialist Zionism in Israel. Many of them who as young pioneers passed through a certain Kibbutz in their way for political power and influence have feverently kept their formal membership in that Kibbutz although they had left it and became urban politicians in every respect. The Kibbutz community was thus enshrined. It had become not only a social phenomenon of some importance but a national unquestionable symbol. The same process of symbolization and magnification seems to have taken place regarding Gush Emanim. Nearly all the maximalists today cherish and enshrine this movement. Its officials and executives are warmly welcome in high governmental circles and its rabbis and spiritual leaders are accorded with great national fame and moral authority. It would not be an exaggeration to maintain that as far as the future of the land of Israel, the tiny minority of the 30000

Emanist community is standing today in a unique position of nearly directing the thinking of 50% of Israel's citizens.

To assure that its influence does not remain just moral and abstract, **Gush Eimanim** has placed its members or staunch supporters in all the maximalist political parties. Thus, **Matehiya**, despite its majority secular leadership can be seen as the political wing of the **Emanist** ideology. **Gush Eimanim** also masters political support in the **Likud** where **Ariel Sharon** an arch-maximalist is vocal and influential. The **N.R.P.** is infused with **Eimanim's** supporters, especially on the spiritual echelons of rabbis and **Yeshiva** heads and the small **Morasha**, another religious party, is headed by two prominent leaders of **Gush Eimanim**, **Rabbi Haim Drukman** and **Hanan Porat**. In addition, **Gush Eimanim** and the settler community have created a very effective lobby in the **Knesset** which is fully operative all year long. One can be sure that each and every **Knesset** or government meeting which deals with **Judea** and **Samaria** either on small questions such as construction budgets or on important ones which involve the future of the entire area is attended by members of **Eimanim** or by their political devotees. There is very little which escapes the attention of the young activists of the **Gush**. Applying their immense influence, they are usually capable of mobilizing the entire maximalist corpus to stand firm and support their positions.

The political influence of **Gush Eimanim** is not limited today to the maximalist camp only. During its pioneering years, it had also made inroads into the very heart of the **Labor** movement and to what was once called **Israel's Left**. Some of these **Labor** members, the most devoted supporters of **Gush Eimanim** had, as was mentioned earlier, crossed the political lines and became official members of the maximalist camp.

Others did not do so, and are still politically operative in the minimalist camp. Most prominent among them is Israel's present Minister of Agriculture, Arik Nachamkin, but he is not alone. While these political activists, unlike the maximalists, may be considered independent of the "mystique" of Gush Emunim they are its practical supporters on many important issues and their support counts.

Had the political influence of Gush Emunim been solely limited to the Maximalist camp and to its "minimalist" supporters, the present Labor cabinet under Shimon Peres could have perhaps stop it, or at least slowed it down. Given the present structure of Israel's politics, even this situation is a Utopia. Following the 1984 elections, the Israeli polity has been, in many respects paralyzed. The national unity cabinet which is ruling the State is equally divided between the Likud and the Maarach. No major policy decision can be made unless fully agreed upon by both parties. Prime Minister Peres is further bound to inform his deputy, Shamir, of any controversial move he is about to make and is practically, despite his impressive title - extremely limited. Even under a more favorable conditions of greater Labor majority it would have been extremely difficult for the minimalists to stop Gush Emunim's from its daily legal settlements operations. But in a political stalemate situation, as prevails today it is simply impossible. Peres and his colleagues are totally consumed by Israel's immense economic difficulties as well as by the very need to stay in power. They have very little time or energy to follow the slow but incremental annexation process which is going on. Since there are also no significant signs of compromise by Jordan or the Palestinians, their pragmatic position is one of "why worry about it at all? Why

endanger the very existence of the governmental alliance which had brought us to power?" There are very few cases of labor initiated interference in the actions of Eimanim's settlers and this interference takes place only in cases of severe law breakers.

The only public force of some significance which is fully aware of the growing political power and effectiveness of the fundamentalist school is the Israeli left, sometimes called the Israeli peace camp. This camp is however very feeble. It is composed of a few small political parties whose size in the Knesset is no more than one tenth of the legislature, of Peace Now, a vocal extraparlimentary movement and of several small civil rights organizations. The left, especially Peace Now have been successful in the past in invoking intense public emotions regarding excessive acts of the government. It miserably failed to stop the ~~being necessary~~ process of Eimanim's expansion in Judea and Samaria, which being mostly legal, ^{as a result of the Likud's} ~~during~~ the seven years ~~of~~ could have only been counter-balanced by effective and massive political force. The only success of Peace Now and the small civil rights organizations has been the identification of extreme settler transgressions that could be proved in court. These acts may have contributed to the demonization of the left in the eyes of the maximalist camp, but otherwise they made very little political difference.

ZIONIST FUNDAMENTALISM - A BALANCE SHEET

Having portrayed the general profile of Gush Eimanim, its cultural milieu, organizational ramifications and political sophistication it is important to maintain what this movement is not. In the context of Middle East fundamentalism, which is thriving today, Gush Eimanim is

sometimes mentioned in the same breath with Shia extremism and Humeinism. This image of the movement, I would maintain, is totally erroneous and misleading. The members of Gush Emainim may aspire for the immediate realization of the fundamental truths of the Jewish holy scriptures, but in their ordinary behavior they do not display craziness, sadism or primitive blood thirst. No suicidal orientations are detectable in them and street hooliganism or quasi-Fascist behavior are missing from their life. Also, in contrast to other representatives of Jewish religious fundamentalism in Israel (such as the anti-Zionist Neturei Karta which display traditional mediaval life style) Emainim people are modern, well behaved and intelligent. Many of them are professionals, engineers, talented mathematicians and successful business men. Most of their rabbis are extremely versatile and are far away from the common image of the Hyatullas. Almost every person who has ever maintained contact with them has been highly impressed by their combination of intelligence, idealism and modesty. Their disinterested dedication to collective goals and high work ethic have earned them the respect of many Israelis who do not otherwise share their convictions.

The modern and attractive life style of Gush Emainim accounts paradoxically for its main political danger since it is highly misleading. The real challenge of this movement does not lie in its ordinary way of life or even in its daily politics. It has to do with its very determined cast of mind which simply refuses to accept the constraints of historical reality. Many ordinary Israelis would have loved to live in a greater Israel free of Arab hostility. Not of few of these would have had all the reason to rejoice had the Palestinians decided

willingly to evacuate Judea and Samaria or had their government commanded the magic resources capable of restructuring the Middle East. Today however these Israelis are aware that the necessary conditions for such transformations do not obtain and that they are unlikely to obtain in any foreseeable future. These Israelis, some of whom are not less patriotic than Gush Emunim, are simply capable of reading the political map of our time. Their interpretations and political visions may vary a great deal, but when all the chips are down, they are unlikely to engage in irresponsible acts or bluntly challenge reality.

The immense danger of the fundamentalist mind is that due to its total conviction that ours is a messianic age in which reality is bound to follow ideology and not vice versa, actual facts are simply disregarded. The Palestinians do not exist, the Arab countries do not count, world public opinion is rubbish and the U.S. government is a mere nuisance. The only reality that counts has to do with Jewish redemption which is imminent. It is bound to be realized in our age by a massive aliya, by an eventual elimination of the Diaspora ~~return~~ (from) and by the building of the third temple. Throughout Jewish history there have been esoteric believers such as Gush Emunim who were equally convinced that the Messiah was just beyond the door. Fortunately these messianic believers were in most cases isolated and very few. Their messianic vision was not translated to operative political program. This is not the case with Gush Emunim and since the movement is so attractive, and effective in present day Israel, it is bound to have severe effects on the future of the country.

Footnotes

1. Cf. Menechem Friedman "Radical Religious Groups in Israel - Conservatism and Innovation" paper presented at the Colloquium on Religious Radicalism and Politics in the Middle East, 13-15 May, 1985.
2. Cf. Ehud Sprinzak "Gush Emunim and the Iceberg model of political extremism" Medina Mimshal Veyehasim BeinLeumiim MMVY (Hebrew) No. 17, Spring 1981, p. 23.
3. Ibid.
4. Cf. "Gush Emunim: The First Decade" Nekuda, No. 69, February 2, 1984.
5. Cf. Sprinzak, op. cit., 24.
6. Haaretz, October 11, 1974.
7. Haaretz, March 31, 1975.
8. Danny Rubinstein On the Lord's Side: Gush Emunim Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishing House, 1982, pp. 58-59 (Hebrew).
9. Cf. Yehuda Litani in Haaretz December 5, 1975.
10. Cf. Sprinzak op. cit., p. 25.
11. Haim Guri "A letter to Emunim's people" in Yediot Achronot May 7, 1976.
12. Sprinzak op. cit. p. 26.
13. Ibid.
14. Rubinstein op. cit. p. 167.
16. Sprinzak op. cit. p. 27.
17. Rubinstein op. cit. pp. 152-153.
18. Ibid. pp. 170-172.
19. Gideon Aran The movement to stop the retreat from Sinai - lessons and meaning (an unpublished paper).
20. N. Hofman: "Yamit and its Evacuation: How was bloodshed prevented" (unpublished seminar paper), 1984.
21. Haaretz, June 4, 1980.
22. Haaretz, June 4, 1984.

23. Haaretz, April 4, 1985
24. About Sharon Settlement plan see: Tsvi Raanan Gush Emunim Sifriyat Poalim, Tel-Aviv, 1980, pp. 146-147.
25. Ibid
26. Uriel Tal "The Foundatins of Political Messianism in Israel" Haaretz, September 26, 1984.
27. Cf. Zvi Yaron The Teaching of Rav Kook, The Jewish Agency Pulbication, 3rd ed, 1979, Jerusalem (Hebrew).
28. Ibid. pp. 270-273.
29. Raanan op. cit. pp. 64-67.
30. This judgment is based on my continuous encounters with the members of Gush Emunim.
31. Tal op. cit.
32. See for example: Yehuda Shaviv, (ed.) Eretz Nachala: Our Right to the land of Israel(Hebrew), winter, 1976, Jerusalem.
33. personal interview with Rabbi Ariel, January 31, 1985.
34. In general I did not notice a [genreal] "imperialist" tendency (support for the conquest of additional territories) at the present time and most Emunim's leaders are content with what was acheived in the Six Day War.
35. Cited by Tal op. cit.
36. Cf. G. Aran op. cit.
37. Cf Hanan Porat in Nekuda, no. 50, November 12, 1982 pp. 6-7.
38. Cited in Sprinzak op. cit. p. 31.
39. Cf. Tal op. cit.
40. Sprinzak op. cit. p. 32.
41. Tal op. cit.
42. Ibid
43. Rav Shlomo Aviner "Messianic Realism" Morasha, no. 9, Winter 1975, pp. 61-77.
44. Tal op. cit.
45. Based on a recent interview with Emunim's new secretary general, Mrs. Daniela Weiss, March 4, 1985.

46. Sprinzak op. cit., pp. 32-33
47. Ibid.
48. For a general account of the Israeli tradition of illegalism in which Gush Emunim fits perfectly well, see E. Sprinzak "Illegalism in Israeli political culture" A Study Day 1980, Magnes publication 6. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1981 (Hebrew).
49. Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim..." p. 33.
50. Ibid. p. 34.
51. Cf. Yoel Ben Nun in Nekuda no. 72, September 9, 1984.
52. Cf. Rubinstein op. cit. pp. 12-17; Raanan op. cit. pp. 39-49; Sprinzak "Gush Emunim ..." pp. 36-39.
53. Kook's sermon is quoted in Nekuda no. 86, April 26, 1985, pp. 6-7.
54. Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim ..." p. 36.
55. Rubinstein op. cit. pp. 79-80.
56. Cf. Giora Goldberg & Ephraim Ben Zadok: Regionalism and Territorial Cleavage in Formation: Jewish settlement in the Administered Territories" MMVY No. 21 Spring 1983 pp. 84-90.
57. Myron M. Aronoff "The Institutionalization and Cooptation of a Charismatic Messianic Religious Political Revitalization Movement" in David Newman ed. The Impact of Gush Emunim, Croom Helm, London, 1985 pp. 54-58.
58. Sprinzak "Gush Emunim ..." p. 41.
59. Meron Benvenisti The West Bank Data Project, American Enterprise Institute, Washington D.C., 1984.
60. Ibid. pp. 37-39.
61. Cf. Rubinstein op. cit. pp. 147-152
62. Benvenisti op. cit. pp. 39-49.
63. Dany Rubinstein "Settlers: Underground a State in creation" Davar Febreuary 2, 1985.
64. Cf. Interview with Dr. Joseph Dreizin Nekuda, no. 84, March 1, 1985 pp. 6-7.
65. Danny Rubinstein, "Settlers..." Davar, February 12, 1985.
66. Benvenisti op. cit. p. 41.
67. Ibid.

68. Ibid. p. 42.

69. The man is Captain Yeshua Ben Shoshan, former Regional Defense officer of Mate Binyamin cf. Haaretz, January 18, 1985.

70. Yehuda Litani "Double Edge Sword" Haaretz, February 21, 1985

71. Cf. Rubinstein "Settlers ..." Litani, Ibid.





The American Jewish
Committee

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- Gene DuBow
- Harold Applebaum
- David Gordis
- Marc Tanenbaum
- Jim Rudin
- Irving Levine
- Gary Rubin
- David Harris
- Judy Banki
- Alan Mittleman
- Yehuda Rosenman
- Steven Bayme
- Sam Rabinove
- Linda Greenman
- Ellen Isler
- Mort Yarmon
- Marsha Turken
-

FOR YOUR INFORMATION HARRIET S. BOGARD
West Central Area Director

...by an elected man is beside the point. The

...to be the pinnacle of Mr. Reagan's foreign policy achievements.

*St. Louis Post-Dispatch
11-12-85*

That Zionism Resolution

Among the doublespeak that sometimes exudes from the United Nations, nothing tops the Soviet-inspired, Arab-sponsored 1975 declaration by the General Assembly equating Zionism with racism. And with the absorption of black Ethiopian Jews into white Israeli society now under way, nothing could be further from the truth. Zionism is the nationalist movement to establish a homeland for Jews, culminating in the founding of Israel in 1948. It clearly isn't racist, though some who profess Zionism may well hold racist views, as do millions of non-Zionists.

In the last decade, the General Assembly resolution, passed over 35 opposing votes and 32 abstentions, has performed as intended: It stamped U.N. legitimacy on a malicious falsehood, a lie of the most fundamental kind. The resolution, which has no force of law but is a great propaganda tool, means political leaders who won't or can't

declare their anti-Semitism outright are permitted to hide behind their rhetoric condemning Zionism because the U.N. officially said, "Zionism is racism." As New York Sen. Patrick Moynihan has noted, the anti-Semitism of today is couched in the more popularly acceptable term of anti-Zionism. History is twisted beyond recognition — and so what?

In what we hope wasn't a throwaway line from the White House press office, President Reagan vowed to work for repeal of the resolution in the General Assembly. Should that happen, Mr. Reagan will have spent a great deal of capital in various international arenas. Repeal would be a signal that much has changed about the U.N.: Israel is no longer a pariah state, American power is on the rise again, the Soviets are being nice and the Arab bloc is seen for the relatively weak force it is in world affairs. The job won't be easy.

The Forgotten Vietnam Dead

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meets with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva November 19 and 20. The march and rally, sponsored by the Student Zionist Council of the U.S., included students from a number of states, including New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts, according to Steven Feuerstein. The march and demonstration in front of the Soviet Mission, initiated all national and international student demonstrations that are to occur between now and the summit conference, he said.

Avital Shcharansky began a three-day vigil outside the Mission at the conclusion of the demonstration. Upon the conclusion of the vigil Wednesday, she will fly to Washington to join students and other members of the community to protest outside the Soviet Embassy.

TWO JEWISH LEADERS EXPRESS CONFIDENCE REAGAN WILL DEAL WITH SOVIET JEWRY ISSUE WHEN HE MEETS WITH GORBACHEV

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 11 (JTA) -- Two leaders of the National Conference of Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) said that they were "confident" that President Reagan will deal with the issue of Soviet Jewry when he meets with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva November 19 and 20 and stressed that it was up to Reagan to decide how he does it.

Gerald Kraft, an NCSJ vice president and president of B'nai B'rith International, and Jerry Goodman, the NCSJ's executive director, said that they have received both public and private pledges from Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz that the issue will be dealt with "seriously." Kraft noted that the President personally considers the issue important.

"We look to the President and his Administration as the ones who will carry the message in whatever means the President thinks as best," Goodman said here last Friday. "He is essentially in this regard our messenger."

Reagan, in an interview with wire service reporters last Wednesday, said that human rights will be discussed at the Geneva summit. "But I don't think that it is profitable to put things of this kind out in public where any change in policy would be viewed as succumbing to another power," the President said.

"This is a tactic which we understand and which we approve of and we know it has worked in the past in negotiations with the Soviets," Kraft said.

Little Pre-Summit Media Attention to Human Rights

However, Kraft noted that there has been little pre-summit attention to human rights in the media partially because the President wants to make "headway instead of headlines" and because he said some in the media do not want to ask tough questions of the Soviets for fear of losing access to Gorbachev and other Soviet officials at the summit.

For this reason, Kraft said the Jewish community in the United States and abroad, supported by many non-Jews, is seeking to bring the issue of Soviet Jewry to public attention both to support Reagan's efforts and to let Gorbachev know of the concern of world public opinion.

There are a series of educational programs in the U.S. and abroad and numerous demonstrations are planned throughout the United States. A major event will be a rally in Lafayette Park on November 17 which will include a march past the White House to the Soviet Embassy.

In addition, Kraft said synagogues and churches are being asked to hold prayer services for Soviet Jews on November 18 and he and other Soviet Jewish leaders of the World Conference on Soviet Jewry will be in Geneva during the summit. There will be a day of solidarity with Soviet Jews throughout the world on November 19.

Discount Rumors Of Large Emigration

Both Kraft and Goodman discounted as rumors reports that the Soviet Union might allow large numbers of Jews to emigrate before the summit. Goodman noted one figure mentioned was 15,000 which he said is the estimated numbers of refuseniks.

Kraft said he was in Europe when the rumors began to appear in the European press and he tried to confirm them and found they were false. "When people arrive, however they arrive ... that's the only means test we have," Goodman said. He said only 124 Jews left the USSR in October and he did not expect the figures to be any better this month or in December.

Both leaders stressed that Jews want the summit to succeed. Goodman said the organized Jewish community was "not anti-Soviet, but pro-Soviet Jewry."

Kraft said there was no request that there be "linkage" between human rights and an arms agreement. "If the Soviet Union is to be trusted on an issue as vital to the peace of the world as arms control, then they are going to have to prove that they can be trusted as a signatory to human rights agreements," he said.

JEWISH LEADER URGES THAT TERRORISM BE DECLARED AN INTERNATIONAL CRIME

MIAMI, Nov. 11 (JTA) -- The executive head of the American Jewish Committee urged that terrorism be declared "an international crime" no matter what the political agenda behind it.

Speaking to the agency's National Executive Council, which concluded its annual meeting yesterday at the Hyatt Regency Miami Hotel here, David Gordis asserted that "we guarantee success to the terrorists" when the world gives "center stage" to their political agenda rather than to the murderous deeds.

In underlining his warning, Gordis, AJC's executive vice president, pointed to two recent events: the Achille Lauro hijacking and Israel's strike against a terrorist attack by hitting PLO headquarters in Tunis.

On the Achille Lauro affair: "The world proclaims its opposition to terrorism. How then to explain the eagerness of the two governments most directly involved -- Italy, whose record of internal terrorism has been so good; and Egypt, a friend of the U.S. and at peace with Israel -- to return perpetrators of that piracy and murder to their terrorist masters and free the architect of the entire plot? And then the ultimate absurdity -- to demand apologies from the U.S. for finally taking strong, resolute action against terrorism!"

On Israel's attack on PLO headquarters in Tunis: "The PLO states its goal to be the destruction of the State of Israel, and declares its right to attack all Jews and Zionists anywhere in the world. But when Israel strikes back against a terrorist attack by hitting the PLO headquarters in Tunis, it is condemned for that strike, even by its friends, who argue that the attack violates Tunisian sovereignty."

"Such responses," Gordis went on, "are dangerous not only because they egg the terrorists on to greater and greater outrages, but because they shift the precarious center and drive the moderates and would-be moderates in the direction of extremism."

From the desk of

David Singer

To: Marc Tanenbaum

I am sure you will be interested in the attached.

This is the background material for
our meeting with David Gordis on Feb. 18.
We will discuss the Sprungel
proposal. The Lieberman paper
provides some additional perspective.

The American Jewish Committee
165 East 56th Street
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The Emergence Of The Radical Right In Israel

Project Proposal

Dr. Ehud Sprinzak

The Problem

Most observers of Israeli society have expressed in the last 18 months (since the 1984 elections) grave concern about the rise of Meir Kahane and the general "Kahanist" orientation named after him. They have also been trying to comprehend the new cultural and ideological transformation that made Israel look, all of a sudden, very much like prefascist Europe of the 1920's. How could Jews who suffered so much from the hands of the historical Fascists give birth to such a broad Fascist-like phenomenon?

As of now, no satisfactory answer to all the nagging questions involved is in existence. While some expert observers speak about the constant threat of Arab terrorism other mention Israel's troubled economy. Still another school emphasizes ethnic tensions and unending social alienation. The problem of all these explanations is that as convincing as they may sound, they represent partial and non professional knowledge. None of the experts, who come up with these explanations has systematically traced the long political process through which the Israeli Right was radicalized and finally gave birth to Kahanism.

Following my many years of professional acquaintance with Israel's extremism and espically the last two years-in which a close study of Israel's Right was conducted -- I believe I am in a position to provide satisfactory answers to the questions involved. I now suggest doing it in a book length essay which appears both timely and needed.

Main Thesis

My main thesis is that Kahanism -- apart of Kahane -- can not and should not be explained by its own features. Kahanism today is not an isolated phenomenon. Rather, it is the tip of the iceberg of a much broader Israeli political culture -- one I suggest naming the Radical Right. (R.R.) This culture which is sustained by such prestigious movements as Tehiya and Gush Emunim, as well as by individual rabbinical and not rabbinical authorities, supports Kahane's ideas and provides them a cushion of public legitimacy. The head of Kach may still be the most extreme person in Israel but his extremism is not isolated. It is culturally nourished by a more respectable radicalism which is grasped by many people to be sound, patriotic and very Israeli. Kahane, who spent many years as an outcast in the political desert, is today part of the national game. In it he has become the proper address for the alienated and the deserted. These people, who mostly represent the weakest stratum of the Israeli society, do not trust the Likud any longer. They are equally unattracted by the cultural elitism of Tehiya and Gush Emunim. They seek popular and vulgar right wing radicalism and they get it from the vociferous rabbi.

The Israeli Right (R.R.) was not born in 1984, the year it so dramatically surfaced up. It emerged in 1978 as a reaction to the Camp David Accords and the "historical betrayal" of Menachem Begin, the man who surrendered Sinai and conceived of the "Autonomy plan." As long as the peace treaty provided impressive results and Begin was at his best, the small scale radicalism of Tehiya, Gush Emunim and Kach did not have a chance. But following the decline of Begin, the deterioration of Israel's relations with Egypt and the growing war in Lebanon, the radicals started to flourish. The whole nationalist Right, now bitter and embattled, started to use a very extreme jargon. The notorious style of Kahane

was not exceptional any more. Sharon, Eitan, Neeman and many others spoke almost the same language and expressed very similar attitudes.

Plan of the Book

The book will be divided into Four parts; historical, psycho-ideological, structural, and evaluative. Each part will present different facet of the Radical Right.

Part A -- will present the historical evolution of the Radical Right. It will distinguish the pre 1978 period (Right wing unity under Begin) from the post 1978 era. The Camp David crisis of 1978 will be discussed in great length. Three major reactions to the Accords will be presented; (a) the process that led to the establishment of Tehiya, (b) Kahane's ideological break with Begin and (c) the first meetings which were latter to produce the Temple Mount plot and the Jewish underground.

Part B -- will portray the collective psycho-ideological identity of the R.R. This fastly growing political culture -- which according to some estimations encompass today 25% of Israel's Jewish citizens -- will be shown to include five ideational components.

- (1) A veneration of the pre state Zionist Commonwealth.
- (2) A religious fundamentalist or secular neo-fundamentalist world view.
- (3) A conspiracy paramoya.
- (4) A Legitimation of direct action and illegal practices.
- (5) Militarism and a belief in the use of force.

Part C -- will discuss the politics of the four political foundations of the Radical Right as they act, interact and influence present day Israeli society.

1. Gush Emunim -- the pioneering and most ^{idealistic} component ~~concept~~ of the Radical Right.

2. Tehiya -- The credible political party of the R.R. which successfully brings together the fundamentalism of Gush Emunim and the maximalist tradition of the Labor movement.

(3) Kach -- The protest movement of the R.R. which provides it with its -- quasi Fascist tinge.

(4) The Concealed Radicals -- The unorganized, but highly influential, individuals who think like Kahane, support the ideas of the Jewish underground but speak moderately and conceal their extreme intentions.

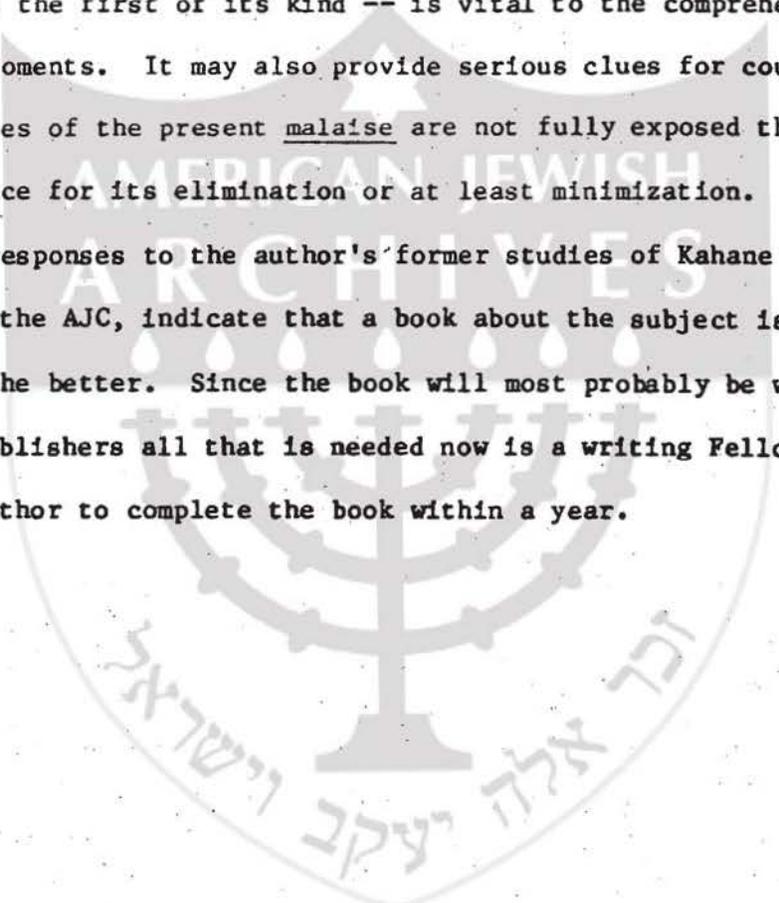
The Radical Right will be presented in this part in terms of institutions, operative movements and political forces. It will be shown as an effective, political subsystem which provides potential supporters with multiple convenient choices. The great impact of the R. R. on external -- but close -- political forces in Israel, like Likud (especially Sharon's Camp) and the religious parties, will also be illuminated.

Part D -- will examine in depth the ideological positions of the different streams of the Radical Right on the questions of democracy and the rule of law. In general it would be shown that the R. R. does not present today an immediate threat to Israel's democracy. It would however be argued that the scope and content assigned to democracy by the ideologists of this camp are extremely narrow. This interpretation, whose main conclusion today is "democracy only for Jews", would be shown dangerous in the long run. The main proposition to be developed in this section is that the Radical Right may resort, in time of national crisis, to undemocratic practices ^{which} could include ~~a~~ putch or coup d'etat.

Why Should AJC Support the Project

The AJC represents many American Jews -- and non Jews alike -- who care a great deal about the state of Israel and its democratic tradition. It especially

represents those members of the Jewish community who understand democracy in the context of universal civil liberties and who reject the proposition that a Jewish state and pluralist society are contradictory terms. Today these people are greatly disturbed. They feel that the unprecedented growth of racism and violence in Israel impairs their own Jewish identity. They consequently want to understand what happened to Israel and why. They also want to know in what ways could the humanistic forces in Israel be helped and supported. The proposed book -- which is the first of its kind -- is vital to the comprehension of all the recent developments. It may also provide serious clues for counter measures. If the real causes of the present malaise are not fully exposed there exists very little chance for its elimination or at least minimization. The positive and widespread responses to the author's former studies of Kahane and Gush Emunim commissioned by the AJC, indicate that a book about the subject is highly needed and the sooner the better. Since the book will most probably be welcomed by distinguished publishers all that is needed now is a writing Fellowship which will help the author to complete the book within a year.



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Is Israel's Soul Imperiled?

Yes, By Kahanism

By Thomas Smerling

WASHINGTON — Is Meir Kahane a serious threat to Israeli democracy? Or is he merely an ugly blemish?

Most Israeli analysts agree that the direct threat posed by Mr. Kahane's party, Kach, is limited. Mr. Kahane's politics are simply too repugnant and ultimately too un-Israeli to ever attract widespread support. Israel's new legislation against incitement to racism may succeed in barring Kach from future elections altogether.

The real danger, such Israelis say, comes not from Mr. Kahane or from his organization but from the extremist ideology he espouses.

Kahanism blends ultra-nationalism with fundamentalism, racism and legitimized violence. It casts aside democratic values in pursuit of its higher goals — first, annexation of the West Bank and Gaza ("Greater Israel"), then, institution of religious

It's the tip of an iceberg

law (a "Torah state"). Its solution to the Palestinian problem is simple: Expel the Arabs from Israel.

Kahanism is greater than Kahane, and it extends far beyond Kach. Last April, a survey by the Van Leer Foundation in Jerusalem found 11 percent of Israeli high school students ready to vote for Kach, while 42 percent agreed with Mr. Kahane's views on Arabs. Shocked, the conservative daily Yediot Aharonot replicated the survey. Its conclusion: "Kahanism is gaining ground among the youth in all strata, all over the country, from all classes. It is turning into a real threat to the State of Israel."

Kach is the tip of a right-wing iceberg. Ehud Sprinzak of Hebrew University, who has studied Israeli extremist groups for 15 years, worries more about Gush Emunim — the "Bloc of the Faithful," responsible for much of the settlement of the West Bank — than about Kach. "The forces which reject even the peace agreement with Egypt are growing daily. They are well-organized and very determined. They think as Kahane does, but they say he talks too much. When asked about Kahane's plan to expel the Arabs, they answer: 'Things that may be done in 10 to 12 years should not be talked about openly today.'"

Israel's ultranationalist party Tehiya differs from Kach more in style than in substance. Its leader, Yuval Ne'eman, advocates "negotiating" the removal of 500,000 Arabs from the territories.

Likud's right wing, combines such absolutism with power. Ariel Sharon, now Minister Without Portfolio, has proposed overthrowing King Hussein and establishing a Palestinian state in Jordan. Like Mr. Kahane, he insists that democracy must not be permitted to impede his brand of Zionism. Unlike Mr. Kahane, he conceivably could become Prime Minister.

Add to this list the religious parties and settler vigilantes, then consider Israel in 1986 — a prostrate economy with record-breaking unemployment; a relentless wave of indigenous terrorism; an army still recovering from the Lebanese trauma; continuing military occupation with its daily degradations; a political vacuum at the center. Such conditions can only fuel the search for scapegoats, strongmen and simple answers.

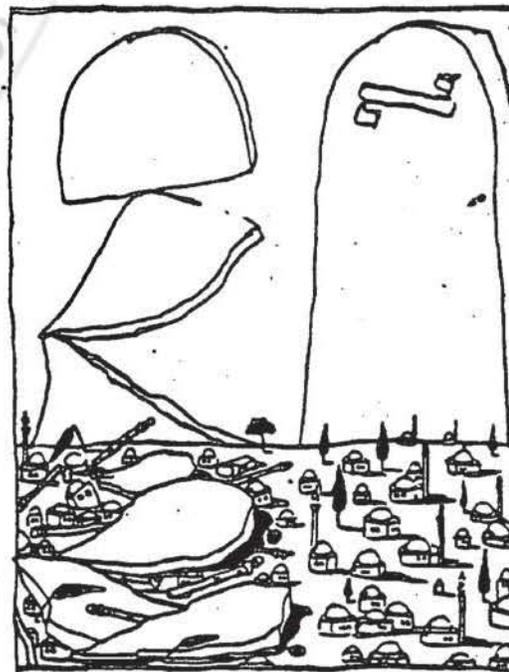
Even a modest tilt to the right could bring to power a radicalized right-wing coalition contemptuous of democracy. More insidiously, the entire political spectrum could be pulled rightward, leading to gradual erosion of democratic rights. Israeli civil libertarians are already troubled. They note that Israel's democracy is vigorous but vulnerable because it lacks a constitution or bill of rights.

Moderates recognize these dangers and are fighting back. A broad coalition is confronting Kach with legal challenges, counter-demonstrations and educational programs in the schools, army and media.

Are these measures adequate? Even those directly engaged in such efforts fear that unless conditions change, the battle against extremism may be lost — washed away by a tide of frustration.

Israel is in a state of flux. The old Labor consensus is dead; former Prime Minister Menachem Begin's counter-consensus is gone. A new order has not yet emerged. Some Israelis are struggling to solidify the center with pragmatic solutions while moving toward peace negotiations. Others are working feverishly to usher in their messianic visions of biblical redemption and Greater Israel. At stake is the soul — and perhaps the democracy — of the Jewish state.

Thomas Smerling is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.



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Jewish Ultra-Nationalism in Israel: Converging Strands

CHARLES S. LIEBMAN

Although Israelis view their Israeliness and Jewishness (i.e., their sense of being Jews) as interrelated, their understanding of Judaism, of what it means to be a Jew, carries particular nuances that distinguish it from the Judaism of Diaspora Jewry. Most Israelis, whether they are observant or non-observant of Jewish law, place far greater emphasis on the national and territorial dimensions of Judaism than do Diaspora Jews. Indeed, the development of distinctively Israeli conceptions of Judaism, a tendency that has become particularly pronounced in the religious sector in the last few years, is a fascinating topic fraught with consequences for the future of Israel-Diaspora relations. These differences allow Israelis to differentiate their loyalty to the Israeli-Jewish collectivity from their loyalty to the world Jewish collectivity. In other words, the fact that Jewishness is a central component of Israeliness does not mean that Israeli Jews cannot conceive of conflicting loyalties to Israel or to Diaspora Jewry.

Our concern is with two basic questions. First, are Israeli Jews becoming more or less nationalistic? Second, what are the different strands or components that comprise their national identity? Neither of these questions admits of any simple answers, but they afford a convenient framework within which to discuss Israeli nationalism in 1984.

Commitment to Israeli Nationalism

The answer to the first question, whether Israeli Jews are becoming more or less nationalistic, depends on the meaning of the term *nationalism*. One

meaning is the loyalty or identity of an individual with his nation rather than other collectivities. Examples of other collectivities would be ethnic, religious, regional, or social groups or, in the case of Israeli Jews, the Jewish people as a whole—i.e., the international collectivity of Jews.

Observers have pointed to the growth and increased militance of Sephardic ethnicity in the last decade. It has been suggested that this ethnic identity comes at the expense of national integration and a sense of national loyalty. The 1984 election campaign and voting results suggest that the problem is less serious than was once thought. Tami, the only distinctively ethnic party on the Israeli political map, won 2.3 percent of the vote in 1981 and many feared that its vote would increase in future elections. In 1984 Tami's proportion of the vote dropped to 1.6 percent and its future seems doubtful. It is true that a new Sephardic party, Shas, won 3.1 percent of the vote. But unlike Tami, Shas did not appeal exclusively to Sephardic voters. Some of its support came from very religious non-Zionist Ashkenazim who supported Agudat Israel in the past but were unhappy with that group's internal bickering. Shas's leadership is entirely Sephardic but unlike Tami its campaign was not anti-Ashkenazic. Rabbi Eliezer Schach, the outstanding figure of the Ashkenazic yeshiva world, quietly endorsed Shas and urged the entertainment personality Uri Zohar, now a yeshiva student himself, to appear at election rallies on its behalf.

The National Religious Party, hoping to attract Sephardic voters, placed a popular Sephardic candidate in a very prominent position on its list. According to an opinion poll, religious Sephardic voters voted or did not vote for the NRP without regard to the presence of the Sephardic candidate (*Haaretz*, 9 September 1984, p. 14).

The most striking evidence for the decline of a distinctive ethnic as opposed to a national identity among all Israelis is to be found in the 1984 voter survey conducted by Asher Arian and Michal Shamir. Forty-one percent of native Israelis whose fathers were also native-born declined to identify themselves as either Ashkenazic or Sephardic. The same is true of roughly a third of the native Israelis whose fathers were Sephardic and a third whose fathers were Ashkenazic.

A second alternative to a national identity would be identification with the sub-community of religious Jews. Tensions between religious (i.e., observant) and nonreligious Jews have always characterized Israeli society. But in this realm as well there is evidence that a national identity is replacing a narrow or exclusivistic religious identity among a growing segment of the religious population. The proportion of religious voters who supported non-religious parties first jumped in 1981. In that election the NRP lost almost half of its voters, primarily to parties of the right. These voters did not return in 1984. Indeed, excluding both Kach, the party of Rabbi Meir Kahane, and Tami, which do not conduct campaigns addressed exclusively to religious voters, the proportion of the religious party vote was 9.6 percent in 1981 and 9.9 percent in 1984. Not all of these voters were religious Jews. This low

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level of support stems in good measure from the religious voter's confidence that his basic religious interests are secure, particularly under a Likud-led government; but it also indicates a growing measure of concern and identification of the religious voter with national issues that transcend particular religious interests.

Nationalist sentiment, then, has submerged ethnic and to some extent even religiously particularist sentiment. In the latter case this is not the result of a loss of religious commitment but its reinterpretation so that it now encompasses some nonreligious Jews and excludes some ostensibly religious Jews.

In some societies regional identities are alternatives to national ones, but this has never been true in Israel. Social class identity, once a force of some significance among Israeli voters of the Left, has virtually disappeared. The Labor party has eschewed the nominal socialism to which it once paid lip service. The party system cut across the rather inchoate class structure of Israel. Appeals to class consciousness are likely to backfire against the party that utilizes them.

One might suspect that Israeli Jews feel their primary political loyalty to the Jewish people conceived as an international entity rather than to the collectivity of Israeli Jews. Many Israelis felt this way in the early years of statehood.

The Israeli media seem less attentive to world Jewry than they were in the past. *Aliya* or the absence of *aliya* no longer evokes the excitement among Israelis that it once did. It was hardly mentioned during the election campaign. There are no satisfactory measures to support this impression, although it should have been anticipated given the increase in the proportion of native-born within the Israeli Jewish population. Furthermore, the special meaning of Israeli Jewish nationalism, to be discussed below, further alienates the Israeli nationalist from the Diaspora Jew.

A second meaning of nationalism would be a willingness to sacrifice or give of oneself for the nation or its ideals. Nationalism, in this sense of the term, means the submergence of self on behalf of the nation. A growth of Israeli nationalism in this respect would be contrary to tendencies throughout the Western world. On the other hand, given Israel's delicate security situation, a decline in national loyalty bodes poorly for its future.

There seem to be no clear indications of trends in one direction or another. For example, *yerida*, emigration from Israel, has remained fairly stable over the past few years. A 1984 study commissioned by the National Council for Research and Development on emigration of technical and professional workers concluded that there was no trend toward greater emigration in general or among professional and scientific workers in particular.

Even more encouraging from a nationalist perspective are responses to a questionnaire administered in August 1984 to a random sample of Israeli Jews aged fifteen to eighteen.¹ Eighty-eight percent reported that if they

were free to live wherever they wanted they would choose to live in Israel. Twenty-three percent reported that they rarely contemplated the possibility of *yerida* and 42 percent reported they never did.

Another measure of the willingness of Israelis to sacrifice their own self-interests on behalf of the nation is the number of soldiers who prefer to serve in combat units. In the youth poll just cited, 49 percent of the males reported they would prefer combat units, 29 percent said they did not care, and 17 percent said they would prefer to serve in noncombat units.

Other measures of national commitment are the willingness of young soldiers to enter officer training school and the proportion of junior officers prepared to remain in the army after their initial military obligation is complete. Such decisions are likely to be influenced by economic considerations but given the identification of army service and national priorities, continued service is also influenced by nationalist commitment. Precise figures in this regard are secret but to judge from articles that regularly appear in the Israeli press, there seems to be some decline in the willingness of young Israelis to serve their country in this respect beyond that which is required of them. The question is whether there has been a serious decline. Observers are divided.

The most troubling sign for Israeli nationalism would be resistance on the part of young people to the draft, although such resistance to army service is not incompatible with a strong national loyalty. The reference here is to young people who seek to avoid the draft because it interferes with their material well-being. From time to time, suggestions have been made that such resistance is growing. Even if true it still does not appear to be a widespread phenomenon.

A third meaning of the term *nationalism*, to which the remainder of this essay is devoted, is the commitment to a set of public policies that affirm national pride, territorial expansion, hostility to other nations, and the elaboration of the national interest as a supreme social value. As we shall see, the evidence is quite conclusive as to the growth of nationalism in this sense of the term. Events over the course of the year, public reaction to these events, the election campaign, the election results, and public opinion polls all point in the same direction.

In 1982 the Israeli writer Amos Oz interviewed Yisrael Harel, chairman of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza and editor of its newspaper, *Nekudah*, a publication to which we attribute special significance in this essay. Harel observed that the national-religious movement used to be an imitation of the Labor movement but this changed after the Six-Day War. Labor, gnawed by "vacillation, doubt, weakness, perhaps by its own feelings of guilt at the victory" declined while the national religious youth led by Gush Emunim (formed in 1974) spearheaded the settlement in the newly captured territories. But, added Harel, "in recent months, as a result of the destruction of the Yammit region [i.e., the last phases of

Israeli withdrawal from Sinai in 1981] and the war in Lebanon, the 'dovish left' again finds itself on the offensive, while Gush Emunim and its followers have been pushed into a defensive position."²

The impression that Gush Emunim and the forces of Israeli nationalism were on the defensive continued throughout 1983. Growing numbers of Israelis seemed to question the wisdom and even the morality of the war in Lebanon. Opposition to the war in Lebanon or Israel's remaining in Lebanon is not necessarily associated with opposition to settlement on the West Bank (of YESHA, as first its proponents and since then the media increasingly refer to the territories.) Nor are both these positions necessarily linked to the adoption of repressive policies toward Arab residents of the West Bank, much less Arab citizens of Israel.³ But in fact, they frequently are. Hence the general impression as the year 1984 began was that forces favoring better treatment of Arabs in YESHA or in Israel itself, and territorial concessions in exchange for some form of a peace agreement with Jordan were on the rise. The feeling was reinforced by announcement of the results of an opinion poll conducted in January which indicated that 28 percent more voters preferred the Alignment to the Likud.

In February the Karp Commission report was made public. Judith Karp, assistant to Israel's attorney general, headed a commission appointed with the approval of then Prime Minister Begin to investigate incidents during 1981 in which Jews on the West Bank committed criminal offenses against Arabs (robbery, assault on property and on persons, including instances of death) that had gone unpunished. The Karp report was submitted in May 1982 and kept confidential for twenty-two months. It was finally released in February 1984 after the media and some of the opposition had raised a fuss. The report, both directly and by implication, pointed to neglect by the army and the police and to the unwillingness of settlers to cooperate with the police: a policy that was apparently encouraged by certain circles within the army. The report further concluded that one of the reasons Arabs refrained from submitting complaints against Jewish settlers was fear of reprisals.

The head of the investigation division of the police department confirmed that the report was written "with objectivity and described conditions in the field" (*Haaretz*, 10 February 1984, p. 11). But the minister of the interior, the minister of justice, and other political figures attacked the report. They also joined representatives of YESHA settlers in impugning the motives of its authors and demanded Judith Karp's resignation. (It must be noted that not all settlers believe that Jews are blameless in their dealings with Arabs on the West Bank). In retrospect, the reaction to the Karp report—its denunciation by a whole series of political figures before they had even had time to examine its veracity—suggested that the forces of nationalist chauvinism were not entirely on the defensive. Two further events of a similar nature confirm this impression. In both cases, like that of the Karp report, one might have anticipated that public reaction would have strengthened the

"dovish" or reconciliatory element in Israeli political life. Instead, it demonstrated the deep roots of chauvinist sentiment.

On 14 April four Arab terrorists hijacked an Israeli bus. The government announced that all four were killed when Israeli security forces overtook the bus. It subsequently developed that two of the terrorists had been taken alive but were beaten to death by security personnel after they had revealed vital information sought from them. The military censor sought to prevent publication of the evidence that two terrorists had been captured alive. Following a scandal of international proportions, the minister of defense did appoint an investigating commission. The murder was condemned by all Israeli leaders as both immoral and unprofessional. But anger in the "Israeli street" was not directed against those who killed the terrorists but rather against the newspaper that published the photographs of the two terrorists alive and in custody. A May sample found that 65 percent of Israeli Jews opposed the appointment of an investigation commission. In another poll taken among passers-by at the Central Bus Station in Tel-Aviv, a sample that overweighs poorer and Sephardic classes, 85 percent of the respondents felt that the security men who murdered the terrorists had behaved reasonably whereas only 10 percent thought the matter was one for concern. (The poll was taken by the paper *Hadashot*. It was reported some months later in a story in *Haaretz*, 1 June 1984, p. 13).

The most sensational event of the year began with the announcement on 29 April of the arrest of a group of Jews suspected of undertaking terrorist activity against Arabs. Twenty-seven men were eventually detained. Two of those arrested were army officers charged with providing information in the attempted murder of five pro-PLO leaders on the West Bank (three of whom were mayors). The army officers were tried by a military court. Five other defendants plea-bargained their way to reduced charges, and they were tried and sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from eighteen months to ten years. A variety of charges were leveled against the remaining twenty defendants including: membership in a terrorist organization, illegal acquisition and possession of weapons, conspiracy to blow up Moslem buildings on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, attempted murder of five pro-PLO leaders, placing booby-trapped grenades in a school playground in Hebron, planting bombs in five Arab-owned buses timed to detonate during an hour of peak usage, and premeditated murder in an attack on the Hebron Islamic college.

The trial opened in September 1984. Trial on the charge of premeditated murder was to be conducted separately. Hence, the guilt, relative guilt, or innocence of the accused was not the issue. As the trial progressed in September and October 1984 it appeared that the image of the terrorists and some of the acts attributed to them had been distorted by "leaks" to the press in the first month or two following the arrests. Not all the accused were charged with all the acts attributed to some of them. Questions were raised as to whether they really intended to carry out in full the most heinous of all

the acts with which they were charged, the explosion of five Arab buses that would have led to the indiscriminate killing of men, women, and children. Apparently some of the terrorists were surprised by what others did or intended to do. But the point that must be stressed here is that until the trial opened, and certainly during May and June, virtually every Israeli believed the accused were guilty of the charges that had been leveled against them based on evidence obtained by Israeli security forces. By their own admission, all of the accused were guilty of at least some of the acts with which they were charged.

The accused were all religious Jews, one of them a proselyte. Many were prominent among the leaders of YESHA settlements. A number of them had very distinguished war records.

Initial public reaction was shock and apparent condemnation of the accused and/or the acts attributed to them. This condemnation was often coupled, as in the case of a statement by then Prime Minister Shamir, with the assertion that the behavior of the accused in no way reflected on YESHA settlements. "Sometimes love of the Land of Israel can result in very exaggerated expression," Shamir was quoted as saying in early May. Only one prominent political figure, Minister Yuval Ne'eman of the right-wing Techiya party had some good words to say for some of the terrorists' acts and even he distinguished their "justifiable" acts from the attempt to blow up the Arab buses. Techiya's other Knesset members spoke in stronger tones. Geula Cohen stated "there is no 'Greater Land of Israel' without morality" and Hanan Porat, a leader of Gush Emunim, denied that the notion of Jewish sovereignty over the Land of Israel means expulsion of the Arab population. "I pray with all my heart," he said, "that the evil doers will be uncovered, that the land will be cleansed of evil doers of the left and the right. I mean Jews and Arabs . . ." (*Haaretz*, 4 May 1984, p. 15).

Both Gush Emunim and the Council of Settlements of YESHA were critical of the acts, although the latter group announced that every YESHA settlement should tax its members to support the families of the accused and afford them legal counsel.

However, even in the first month or two public opinion was not unanimous. Among the rank and file of the settlers, particularly among the youth, there was far greater sympathy for the terrorists and the acts that they had allegedly committed. According to random impressions of religious school teachers outside the territories, a majority of pupils (about 70 percent according to one source) even justified the attempt to blow up the five Arab buses. Although almost all rabbis who spoke out on the issue were critical of the terrorists in one degree or another, there were those who defended them and found religious justification for the acts attributed to them, including the attempted explosion of the buses. (The journal, *Tzfiyah*, published by LAOR, an organization created to defend the terrorists and their behavior,

was rich in such sentiment. The first issue is dated August 1984. See especially pp. 24-25 and 30-31.)

During the summer months public opinion seemed to shift even further in favor of the accused. As one regular contributor to *Nekudah* noted with dismay (19 August 1984, p. 7), attitudes gradually changed from condemnation to efforts to understand and justify the acts attributed to the terrorists and finally even to expressions of admiration. The "understanding" came quite early. The Dahaf Research Institute asked a random sample of Israeli Jews in June 1984 how they felt about the Jewish underground. Sixteen percent said they justified them and an additional 50 percent said that whereas they did not justify them, they related to what they did with understanding. LAOR, the group created to support the accused terrorists, was permitted to house itself in the offices of the NRP. In October, LAOR sponsored a giant post-holiday (Simchat Torah) demonstration in Hebron attracting thousands of Israelis including Ariel Sharon, who spoke. Yitzhak Shamir (by then foreign minister) sent a telegram of greeting. By October some twenty members of the Knesset formed a lobby to support the accused terrorists.

On 28 October 1984 a rocket was fired at an Arab bus en route from Jerusalem to Hebron. One passenger was killed and ten injured. The perpetrators also took responsibility for throwing a grenade into an Arab coffee shop on 22 September, which injured four people. They left a note signed "the Avengers" and threatened continued strikes at Israeli Arabs because the government's policy toward them was too soft. The immediate impetus for attacking the bus was the murder of two Israeli hikers by an Arab terrorist a week earlier. The condition for ceasing the attacks, according to the note, was freeing the accused Jewish terrorists. The initial reaction to the attack was condemnation by the political establishment, praise from Kahane, and "understanding" from circles close to the accused terrorists. Rabbi Moshe Levinger called the act the result of government weakness against the Arabs, leading "young men whose concern for the honor of Israel and the honor of the nation is close to their heart" to act in place of the government (*Haaretz*, 29 October 1984, p. 2.). In one national-religious school, the incident was greeted with joy; disappointment was expressed that only one Arab was killed (*Haaretz*, 2 November 1984, p. 1).

The election campaign offers further evidence of the increase in nationalistic sentiment. (Significantly, the Likud labeled itself "the national camp" and its newspaper ads pictured a cross section of Israelis identifying themselves with the slogan "I'm in the nationalist camp".) The Likud's list of Knesset candidates was more significantly nationalistic than its 1981 list. Within the Liberal party, one of the two major factions that comprise the Likud, two leading moderates, Berman and Zeigerman were dropped from the list or did not offer their candidacy. The candidates who did run on the Liberal party

list in 1984 are closer to the policy preferences of Herut, the more nationalist faction in the Likud, than was true in the 1981 election. Columnist Dan Margalit (*Haaretz*, 2 May 1984, p. 9) noted the marked influence within Herut of Ariel Sharon, the super hawk.

Within Techiya, a party to the right of Herut, Geula Cohen, who had condemned Jewish acts of violence in the territories, was dropped from second to third on the list, though not for this reason. He was replaced by former army chief-of-staff Rafael Eitan, who rivals Sharon in his hawkishness and is equaled only by Kahane in his derogatory statements about Arabs.

Eitan was an important candidate for Techiya. The party sought, through him, to appeal to a populist base and break through its image as an Ashkenazi intellectual party. Eitan, for example, charged that "the Arabs of the state of Israel are as hostile as their brothers in Judea, Samaria and Gaza and perhaps worse than them" (interview in *Haaretz*, 19 May 1984, p. 11). In an interview in *Nekudah* (23 December 1983, p. 26.) he said, "the root of the problem lies in the readiness of the coming generation to fight. The solution must begin now in kindergarten." The most chauvinistic of all, however, was the fourth candidate elected to the Knesset on Techiya's list, Rabbi Eliezer Waldman, leader of the yeshiva in Kiryat Arba, the Jewish settlement on the outskirts of Hebron. A lecture of Waldman's delivered during the war in Lebanon is printed in the book *Al Daat Hazman V'hamakom*, and the following quotation was excerpted in *Haaretz* (19 August 1984, p. 14.):

I don't know if our leaders understand the matter. Order in the world will be determined by us. After all, that is what God wants. The inner order of the world, the moral order, the order of faith will be determined by the Jews . . . But can one attain this internal order without concern for external order, opposing evil, military valor? And we shall determine this order as well. We have already begun to do so . . . There is no reason to be embarrassed by this; it's a great responsibility. We will definitely establish order in the Middle East and also in the world . . . After all, who will establish order in the world? The leaders of the west with their weak personalities? They will determine the order of the world?

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir the Likud campaign was less dramatic and flamboyant than it had been in 1981 when Begin had set the tone. Shamir's political position, however, is probably more extreme than Begin's. He called upon "all the forces who believe in the Land of Israel to unite in one bloc in order to insure that the Land of Israel in its entirety will be under Jewish sovereignty and under exclusive Jewish sovereignty" (*Haaretz*, 2 May 1984, p. 3).

The Alignment muted its differences with the Likud during the campaign. It reminded the voters that Jewish settlement in YESHA began during its administration, whereas the Likud had surrendered territory to the Arabs

and demolished settlements in Sinai as a result of the Camp David agreements. The major complaint against Likud policy in the territories was that the settlements were too costly. The argument that Likud settlement policy was an obstacle to peace with Jordan or resulted in radicalizing the local Arab population was expressed in small gatherings but was not a campaign theme. Slogans from the 1981 campaign such as "the Jordanian option" or "territorial compromise" disappeared in 1984 and the Alignment's program for an accommodation with Jordan received little publicity. The campaign noted that the Alignment had supported the war in Lebanon and only became critical of the war after Israel advanced beyond the first twenty-five miles. The Karp report and Jewish terrorism were almost totally ignored. A prominent advertisement by the Alignment appearing a number of times in the newspapers stated that "The Alignment says no return to the '67 borders, no uprooting settlements, no negotiations with the PLO, no Palestinian state," but "yes to a democratic Jewish state, yes to defensible borders, yes to responsible Zionism, yes to peace and security." The reader will observe that the "no's" are specific, as specific as the promise made by the Alignment candidate for defense minister, Yitzhak Rabin, that "the Jordan will be our eastern border." The "yes's" are vague. They are code words that promise nothing but that do hint to leftist voters who so wish to interpret them that the Alignment favors full rights for Arab citizens, is prepared for territorial compromise based on Israel's security needs, and opposes annexation of a territory with one million Arabs, preferring a more vigorous pursuit of peace negotiations with Jordan. The reluctance of the Alignment to state all this explicitly tells us a great deal about its estimate of the country's mood.

The election returns must be interpreted in light of the campaign. The Alignment's slight margin of victory cannot be interpreted as a defeat for the nationalist forces in view of the effort on its part to blur its differences with the Likud on nationalist as distinct from economic issues. There were four Jewish parties whose campaign might be interpreted as favoring territorial compromise. They won 42 percent of the vote. Five parties supported the Likud's stance or stood to the right of it; they received the same percentage. Each bloc also received the same number of seats in the Knesset—fifty-three. However, of the fifty-three mandates of the "left, almost four were contributed by Arab voters. In other words, within the Jewish sector, the nationalist parties gained a clear majority despite the economic blunders for which the country held them accountable, despite the fact that they had moved further to the right than in 1981 and despite the fact that the Alignment's campaign assured the voter that its nationalist policies would resemble those of the Likud. Soldiers casting their ballots in army precincts gave noticeably more support to nationalist than to dovish parties. As *Nekudah* phrased the results: over half the soldiers voted "for the government, 'for war', for the Land of Israel, for national as opposed to private goals" (10 August 1984, p. 24).

The Components of Israeli Nationalism

As has been pointed out, one meaning of the term *nationalism* is national chauvinism, and it has been argued that this sentiment is present and growing in strength in Israel. There are three analytically distinct streams to chauvinist Israeli nationalism. These streams are converging although, as we shall see, not every partisan of one stream approves of another. In some cases they constitute outspoken antagonists.

Territorial Nationalism

The most widely known and most popular strand of Israeli nationalism is territorial; the conception of the Greater Land of Israel (literally the whole Land of Israel). The political expression of this nationalism is the demand that Israel annex the West Bank. Its minimal demand is that the status quo be retained; i.e., that Israel retain sovereignty over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and not withdraw any further from territory captured in the Six-Day War, even in exchange for a peace agreement with Jordan. The maximalist territorial position is the annexation of Jordan and Jewish settlement in southern Lebanon both of which are part of the Biblical Promised Land. In October 1984 an organization was created to further these aims, but it has not engendered serious public support.

A variety of arguments are offered in favor of annexation or, at the minimum, retention of the status quo with respect to the West Bank. Minor arguments include Israel's need for land and population dispersal. The arguments most frequently heard focus on Israel's security needs and the religious argument. But a number of observers have pointed out that the reason so many Israelis object to returning any part of the territories is that after seventeen years of sovereignty (almost half the age of the State), many of them—younger people in particular—have become accustomed to thinking of the West Bank as their land. The election campaign and voting returns confirm the impression that large numbers of Israelis object to any kind of territorial compromise. However, Israeli willingness to compromise has never been put to a real test. Although the majority of Israelis report that they are opposed to returning any part of YESHA, they are responding to a theoretical question. Jordan, for example, has never presented Israel with a concrete proposal for a peace agreement. It has declared that any settlement with Israel must include Israeli return of all the territory captured in the Six-Day War which includes East Jerusalem. The support that the Israeli-Egyptian agreement originally evoked among the Israeli public suggests there may be a latent conciliatory sentiment that does not find expression at the present time. But the public's sense that Israel paid an enormous price for a peace agreement that is not "real" peace may have hardened attitudes.

Bearing this in mind, public opinion samples suggest that Israelis are

TABLE 1. SOLUTIONS TO ISRAEL'S TERRITORIAL PROBLEM

	PERCENTAGE FAVORING EACH PROPOSAL				
	March '83	July '83	Jan. '84	June '84	Youth Sample Aug. '84
Return	40.0	38.9	38.6	31.4	22.0
Annex	19.0	30.8	20.0	26.6	32.6
Status Quo	37.3	25.7	37.4	36.9	39.5
No Answer	3.7	4.6	4.0	5.1	5.9

becoming increasingly more resistant to territorial compromise. Mina Zemach, Director of the Dahaf Research Institute, regularly presents her respondents with three (at one time four) proposals to resolve "the long term problem of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza strip" and asks them with which proposal they most agree. The first is: "In exchange for a peace agreement return most of YESHA with concern for security arrangements acceptable to Israel." (In earlier polls, respondents were also offered the possibility of "a Palestinian State in exchange for a peace agreement." So few respondents agreed with this response that it was dropped from later questionnaires. Our analysis combines both responses.) The second proposal is "Annex YESHA" and the third is "Status quo (leaving the situation as it exists)." The table that follows compares returns between March 1983 and June 1984 and the August 1984 youth sample (fifteen- to eighteen-year-olds) to which we have already referred.

The youth are more nationalist than adults. Among adults there is a steady decline in the proportion prepared to return any territory in exchange for a peace agreement. There is a gradual increase in those who favor annexation. An exception to this trend occurs in the July 1983 sample with an unexplainable jump followed by a drop in January 1984 of those favoring annexation. The jump comes at the expense of those favoring the status quo.

Respondents who favor the status quo are asked whether, if Israel has only two options, they prefer returning most of the territories in exchange for a peace agreement or if they prefer annexation. Over the past year and a half those who chose annexation range from three-quarters to two-thirds of those whose first choice was to retain the status quo.

Territorial nationalism, however, is not simply an objection to surrendering territory to Jordan or creation of a Palestinian state. Rather, the term *Land of Israel* by which nationalists mean the Greater Land of Israel has become a symbol that evokes resonances among its adherents that could hardly be explained by economic or even security requirements. Amos Oz has noted that the issue of the boundaries of the Land of Israel is "the only issue that brings the masses into the street" (*Haaretz*, 30 January 1984, p. 9). The formulation may be overstated but correctly points to the importance of the issue to Israelis.

During the election campaign, parties of the right—both religious and nonreligious—called themselves “the faithful to the Land of Israel”. A lengthy editorial in *Nekudah* following the election (10 August 1984, p. 4) called for a unity government comprising the Alignment as well as the Likud. Like many articles in *Nekudah*, the editorial was rich in connotative language—for example: “house of Israel,” “patriotic Jews,” “people of Israel,” but mostly “Land of Israel” as expressed in such terms as “interests of the Land of Israel” or “lovers of the Land of Israel.” Clearly, Land of Israel is more than a territorial designation.

The connotations evoke religious or quasi-religious sentiments and it was not surprising that territorial nationalism found its most ardent supporters among religious Jews. In the July 1984 opinion poll, respondents were asked if they observed all or much of the tradition, a little of the tradition, or none of the tradition. Only 20 percent of the first group, compared to 31 percent of the second group and 51 percent of the third group were prepared to surrender most of YESHA in exchange for a peace agreement.

The settlement movement in YESHA was led by national-religious Jews. The ideology of Gush Emunim and the vast majority of ideological discussion within *Nekudah* had been formulated in religious or quasi-religious terminology. The significance of *Nekudah* rested on the fact that it was a publication of the Council of all the settlements in YESHA, religious as well as nonreligious. Furthermore, although *Nekudah*'s audience was found primarily in the territories, the journal had also been written for a wider audience and noted explicitly that it was concerned with reaching its antagonists as well as its sympathizers. However, an adequate understanding of what the Land of Israel symbol connotes to leaders of Gush Emunim and many YESHA settlers would require an analysis of the literature emanating from yeshiva circles. The essays of Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook (1891–1982), the spiritual father of Gush Emunim, were particularly important in this regard, though an enormous literature, much of it far more radical in orientation, could be found in some of the esoteric publications produced in national-religious circles. In summary, Land of Israel, its conquest and settlement by Jews, points to the imminent redemption of the Jews if not all mankind. “The wholeness of the Jewish people cannot be obtained without the wholeness of the land” is the way Gush Emunim's spokeswoman phrased it in a television interview. Or, as another leader of Gush Emunim observed in a newspaper interview: (*Haaretz*, 18 May 1984, p. 17):

The central point is the understanding that the object of our generation is to settle the Land of Israel not as a refuge for a people who only seeks a place to live but as the redemption of the chosen people. . . .

Not all national-religious Jews were territorial nationalists. Those who . . . and their once constituted the mainstream of religious Zionism.

viewed the return of Jews to the Land of Israel, whether to all the land or only part of it, as an instrument in the rebirth and ultimate redemption of the Jewish people. For territorial nationalists inspired by both Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935), first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Palestine, and his son Rav Zvi Yehuda, the Land of Israel is more than an instrument. In its most radical formulation the Land of Israel is both the object and the content of the Jewish rebirth. According to one settler, the object is to turn “the Land of Israel into the sole content of Judaism and Judaism into the sole content of the Land of Israel” (*Nekudah*, 23 March 1984, p. 9).

This extreme position came to be challenged within Gush Emunim circles. After all, what had been propounded was more than a political program, it was theology of Judaism. The immediate response to the arrest of the accused terrorists among some YESHA spokesmen, in addition to condemnation, was a measure of soul-searching. According to one rabbi, the problem may have been “that we became one sided in our values. Land of Israel above all” (*Nekudah*, 25 May 1984, p. 11).

Ethnic Nationalism

Ethnic nationalism, the radical hostility to non-Jews, dramatically surfaced in 1984. It was not simply enmity toward Israel's neighbors or even the demand that Israel adopt a tougher stance toward PLO sympathizers within the territories or in Israel itself. The ethnic nationalism under consideration involved hostility and prejudice toward all Arabs (less frequently toward all non-Jews), and was expressed in a number of ways. These included rising tensions in contacts between Arabs and Jews within Israel, increased instances of Jews (including the police) indiscriminately cursing and beating Arabs, and the growing numbers of Israeli Jews who favored restricting the civil rights of Arabs and/or of expelling them. Very few political figures adopted this view publicly. Its only ideological legitimacy came from religious circles, though the sentiment was by no means confined to them.

Five eighteen-year-olds, all from middle-class homes, were interviewed on a variety of topics shortly before they commenced their military service (*Haaretz*, 26 Sept. 1984, p. 7. One of them said: “Around us we hear more and more statements like: we have to finish the Arabs. We have to kill them. That's the style today. I don't know what once was true but this is discussed openly today.” A second youngster confirmed this. No one, he said, is embarrassed to say it anymore. “And when you see what's going on around you . . . people begin to understand that this may be the best answer.”

1984 was the first time the attorney general recommended charging a newspaper (a small Russian-language paper) with violating Israel's law against racial incitement because of the hostility it expressed toward Arabs. The growth of anti-Arab prejudice among Israeli Jews led a number of public

institutions including the army and the ministry of education to combat what is sometimes called "challenges to Israeli democracy" and popularly referred to as Jewish racism.

Much of the public concern arose from the election of Rabbi Meir Kahane to the Knesset. Kahane's party, *Kach*, received 1.2 percent of the popular vote entitling it to one seat. A poll conducted a month after the election revealed that if the elections were held again 2.2 percent of the voters would support Kahane. This increase, assuming the accuracy of the poll, might be accounted for by the enormous amount of publicity Kahane received after his election. It might also stem from the fact that many of his supporters did not vote for him since they did not believe he would obtain the 1 percent minimum vote necessary to secure Knesset representation. Kahane was the only candidate openly to espouse expulsion of Israel's Arab citizens. His campaign slogan "give me the power—I'll deal with them" shocked many Israelis but spoke to the hearts of at least a small minority. Most of his support came from small development towns (3.3 percent of their vote) populated by poor Sephardic Jews. He also did well in poor urban neighborhoods (2.7 percent in poor neighborhoods in Jerusalem) and in religious *moshavim* (non-cooperative agricultural settlements where Kahane received 3.2 percent of the vote). Among YESHA settlers one estimate put his proportion of the vote at 5 percent and another at 3 percent. But most surprising was that 2.5 percent of the soldiers balloting in army polls gave their vote to Kahane.

A case could be made that none of these figures justified the furor that his election provoked. His Knesset membership did provide him with a national and even international forum and access to people and places heretofore denied to him. But what troubled many even more was that support for Kahane among the youth—religious youth in particular—was far stronger than the voting returns suggested. Furthermore, many who do not support Kahane were sympathetic to his point of view.

A trial poll of summer camp leaders in the national-religious youth movement (Bnei Akiva) found that 20 percent supported Kahane (*Haaretz*, 10 August 1984, p. 15). The director of one of Israel's largest religious high schools reported in a private conversation that up to half the student body in his and similar institutions supported Kahane. Among a random sample of Israelis polled in January, 1984, 53 percent objected to Jews and Arabs living in the same building (*Haaretz*, 31 January 1984, p. 1). In the poll of Israeli youth cited earlier, 69 percent objected to living in the same building and 53 percent to studying in the same class with Arabs. In a Dahaf poll conducted in July, 1984, 15 percent of the respondents favored expulsion of the Arabs in the territories. Among those aged eighteen to twenty-two the figure was 25 percent.

Among the fifteen- to eighteen-year-olds, 42 percent thought that the rights of all non-Jewish citizens within Israel including the right to vote

should be restricted. Fifty-five percent felt that Arabs in Israel should not have the right to criticize the government and 48 percent that Muslims and Christians shouldn't be permitted to hold important public offices. Sixty-four percent felt that if YESHA were annexed to Israel, Arabs living there should be denied the right to vote in Knesset elections.

The youngsters were asked to identify themselves as "religious," "traditional" or "secular." Religious youth were consistently more hostile to non-Jews; secular youth were the least hostile. For example, 28 percent of the religious—in contrast to 54 percent of the secular—objected to denying non-Jews important public office.

As has already been suggested, the battle over the legitimacy of anti-Arab prejudice was taking place in religious circles. In September 1984 the teachers of one religious high school felt they had to confront the belief held by most of their students that Jewish law permits the murder of non-Jews. When asked by the head of the school how they differed from Nazis, their reply (he reported in private conversation) was that the Nazis killed Jews in the name of a madman whereas they will kill Arabs in the name of Jewish law. Given the influence that religious Jews have exercised over Israeli public life in the last decade and a half, the conflict within religious circles may have important consequences.

The generally unstated assumption of religious Jews, particularly in Israel, was that the characteristic of being a Jew, and therefore of being a non-Jew, was relevant to all of one's attitudes and behavior. Hence it would be reasonable to legislate for Jews and non-Jews on a group basis, and it would furthermore be reasonable to assume that non-Jews were hostile to Jews. Since the "Arab people as a whole declared war on the Jewish people who live in Zion they must be judged as a people" (*Nekudah*, 12 December 1983, p. 23). Even when the argument was phrased in secular terms it proceeded from assumptions that are deeply rooted in the religious tradition, particularly in the Israeli understanding of the tradition. This assumption is shared by many religious leaders such as Rav Yehuda Amital who sometimes expressed repugnance for the specific conclusions which the ethnic nationalists drew. The notion of permanent gentile hostility to the Jew that is also fed by the perception of the Holocaust, and the continual reminders of the Holocaust in Israeli culture provided an internal logic to the ethnic nationalist position which made it more persuasive to a neutral observer than many Israelis would care to admit. Finally, classical religious texts also provided specific support to the ethnic nationalists.

An author in *Nekudah*, defending his argument that in accordance with Jewish law Arabs need not be granted equal rights, noted that "Rav Kahana looks like a sweet playful poodle compared to Maimonides" (13 January 1984, p. 14), and a second author cited contemporary religious authorities to prove that Arabs were to be treated as the biblical nation of Amalek: in other words, wiped out (7 June 1984, pp. 32–34). Indeed, in an interview with a

leading rabbinical figure among YESHA settlers who was critical of the acts attributed to the accused Jewish terrorists, the respondent was asked: "Why did our rabbis say 'kill even the best of the goyim'?" The Rabbi answers that "this was said only in time of war . . . since even someone who doesn't fight directly may help the war effort indirectly" (*Nekudah*, 21 June 1984, p. 20). Otherwise, he explained, it is forbidden to kill a non-Jew.

The summer 1984 issue of *Kivunim*, the quarterly Hebrew language publication of the World Zionist Organization published an article by Mordecai Nisan called "A New Approach to Israeli Arab Peace." According to Nisan, only Jews can determine the order of national life in the Land of Israel. "The son of the servant [a biblical allusion to Ishmael] doesn't belong to the tribe of Abraham" (p. 34). Relying on Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* which is an authoritative document for all religious Jews, the author stated that Jews may tolerate the presence of non-Jews in the Land of Israel as long as non-Jews acknowledged their inferior status. Otherwise Jews will have to expel them. "The simple meaning of the term 'Land of Israel' points to the dominance of Jews in their land and there is no room for homiletics on this point" (p. 34).

The author, a member of the Hebrew University's School for Overseas Students, was a religious Jew. But the article's venue, the journal of the World Zionist Organization, testified how unexceptionable the expression of such views had become throughout Israeli culture.

Many YESHA leaders became disturbed by the growth of ethnic nationalism. Some *Nekudah* editorials were critical of Kahane and of acts of indiscriminate violence against Arabs although the editorials invariably ended by blaming the government for not adopting tougher measures against hostile Arabs. The Israeli vacillation and weakness, they charged, encouraged Arab violence. Most troubling of all, they claimed, were the regular instances of rock-throwing by Arab youths at vehicles driven by Jews on West Bank highways; an act that on at least one occasion resulted in the death of a passenger. But there have also been cases of Jews who were deliberately killed. This led settlers to believe that they must take the law into their own hands, according to *Nekudah*'s line of reasoning.

Territorial nationalists who are critical of ethnic nationalists have challenged them on two grounds. One is pragmatic. Jews and Arabs can and must, they say, live together in peace, even in the territories. The ethnic nationalists and their acts of reprisals disturb the good relationships between Arabs and Jews.

The second line of criticism was based on religious sources. Critics did not advocate extending the liberties or rights of Arabs beyond what they already had, but did oppose further restrictions of their rights, the indiscriminate harassment of Arabs and proposals to expel them. An interesting expression of this second line of criticism was offered by a non-observant Jew, Eliakim Haetzni, who was both an advocate of Arab rights as well as a rather ex-

treme spokesman for territorial nationalism. (He had virtually urged civil revolt if the government should attempt to surrender any of the West Bank. See *Nekudah*, 31 August 1984, p. 8-9.) According to Haetzni, the one common denominator among all the YESHA settlers is that the Land of Israel belongs to the people of Israel. He then observed that most of the condemnation which YESHA settlers voiced against the accused terrorists was their halakhic error of "false messianism." The real issue, he says, is "thou shalt not murder." Rabbis, he charges, have become indifferent to crimes that Jews commit against other Jews on a nonpolitical basis as well as to the crimes committed against Arabs. "Those who live among us and the sanctity of their lives require a great defense on the part of the teachers of halakha" (*Nekudah*, 21 June 1984, p. 23).

A realistic article on the topic of Jewish moral obligations to non-Jews observed two tendencies in the tradition, one universalistic and the other particularistic. The former taught that a Jew was obliged to help others regardless of whether they are or are not Jewish.

In days when hollow chauvinism also raises its head in our camp, it is well to remember that it is written [in the Bible] "and God created man in His image, in the image of God he created him." (*Nekudah*, 21 September 1984, p. 33)

One looks in vain for a forthright defense of the rights of Arabs rooted in religious sources and written by a religious authority acceptable to the territorial nationalists. The ethnic nationalists relied on religious authorities and brought proof-texts to prove that Arabs did not fall into the category of "strangers" whom the Torah orders the Jews to protect. They were reinforced by religious opinions challenging the rights of Arabs to live in the Land of Israel and cited chapter and verse to justify their expulsion (for example, *Tzfiyah*, 1 August 1984, pp. 32-35). But no less important, the spirit of the tradition in national religious circles emphasized Jewish chosenness, Jewish uniqueness, innate Jewish virtue, which was contrasted to gentile hostility to Jews and gentile vice.

Defense of Arab rights, by way of contrast, was often rooted in pragmatic and apologetic arguments that by their very nature were unattractive to the proud and assertive Jew in the national-religious camp. For example, Israel's first Ashkenazic chief rabbi, the widely admired Isaac Herzog (1888-1959) offered just such an argument when he declared that denying freedom of religion to Christians and Muslims would be impractical because the United Nations would not tolerate it. Liberal statements when emanating from religious sources have tended to be vague rather than specific in their citation of text. Indeed, rabbinic defenders of the terrorists even accused Gush Emunim of distorting Jewish law when they proclaimed that the settlement of the Land of Israel by Jews was not intended to deny Arabs their rights. It was not by accident, they noted, that Gush Emunim cited no

sources for this assertion whereas there was abundant religious opinion to the contrary (*Tzfiyah*, 1 August 1984, p. 36). The Chief Rabbinical Council was under some pressure to issue a statement condemning Kahane after he and his followers conducted a victory march through the Arab market in Jerusalem shouting "Arabs out of here." The Council's statement did not mention Kahane by name but did reject his program, saying that "the Torah perspective" calls for "paths of peace and brotherhood" in dealing with the Arabs. Such statements may have had some public relations value but carried little weight among religiously committed Jews.

Cultural Nationalism

The Knesset minutes record a fascinating debate that took place in December 1983 and January 1984 (reprinted in *Nekudah*, 2 March 1984, pp. 22-31). The debate was opened by Rabbi Chaim Drukman, a leading figure among the nationalists. He charged that the theater in Israel "assaults the basic values of Judaism, the nation and the state." He observed that art has a purpose but instead of fulfilling that purpose the theater, television, and press disseminate pornography and material offensive to religion and harmful to Israel's security. "Is everything permitted in the name of freedom of expression?" he asked rhetorically. His answer was that everything published or presented to the public "must be in accordance with moral and educational standards." Drukman's speech was not the first in that vein over the past year or two. Nor were all those who advocated this position necessarily religious. Indeed, the most widely known accusation that artistic expression in Israel undermined national values came from the deputy minister of education and culture who was not herself religious.

Drukman's speech did not go unanswered. In the course of the Knesset debate a variety of speakers endorsed a variety of positions. Those who challenged Drukman included some who felt that the artistic expressions offensive to religion that he cited were intrinsically meritorious. Others demurred from the content of the art but opposed any effort at state censorship or even, as Drukman had proposed, the withdrawal of public funds to support the presentation of such material. No voices challenged Drukman in the name of Jewish rather than Zionist values. The observer was left with the impression that Zionism and humanist libertarian values were equated. Indeed, as one author reminded his readers in *Nekudah*, not only did European humanism owe nothing to Judaism, it did not even derive its roots from the Judeo-Christian biblical heritage (16 April 1984, pp. 32-33). It was the exclusive affirmation of Jewish or Judaic values, the exclusion of all others, and the assumption that Jewish norms and values evolved independently of or uninfluenced by the norms and values of other cultures that we call cultural nationalism. According to the cultural nationalists only Jewish na-

tional culture and only its norms and values need concern members of the Jewish nation.

Of the three strands of nationalism that we have identified, cultural nationalism is the least rooted in Israeli society. Nevertheless, it was extremely important within religious circles since it served to insulate the religious nationalists against opposing arguments and defended both territorial and ethnic nationalism against charges that they violated standards of universal morality.

In 1977 Zevulun Hammer of the NRP was appointed minister of education in the newly formed Likud-dominated government. During his seven years in office the number of hours devoted to teaching the Jewish tradition in nonreligious schools were substantially increased and the post of rabbi was established in many schools. The hours devoted to studies of scientific subjects declined. An adviser to Hammer was quoted as saying that if "we must cut an hour from nature study or an hour from math study in order to offer Judaism, it won't bother me" (*Haaretz*, 7 October 1984, p. 9).

It is difficult to judge what impact the enrichment of the Judaic curriculum had on nonreligious students. It would be facile to attribute the rise in territorial and ethnic nationalism to this although there may be some relationship. But there is no evidence that the general public or even the nationalist youth shared the radical sentiments of the cultural nationalists. In the sample of fifteen-to eighteen-year-olds referred to earlier, only 18 percent wanted more hours devoted to Judaic studies; 23 percent wanted fewer hours. By contrast 64 percent wanted more hours devoted to technical or scientific subjects and only 7 percent fewer hours. On the other hand, 31 percent wanted more Jewish history and only 14 percent less.

In fact, cultural nationalism is an almost exclusive commitment of religious nationalists, and not all of them echoed this cry. However, their number seemed to be growing.

The growth of cultural nationalist tendencies among religious nationalists is a fairly recent development. One of the distinguishing features of religious Zionists as opposed to religious anti-Zionists in the past was that the former were receptive to Western culture, affirming both its outward forms and even some of its values. Even among the religious anti-Zionists, the German school of neo-orthodoxy affirmed the value of Western civilization and the possibility of religious Jews benefiting from its fruits.

Of course, Western culture today—and the values it projects—is not the Western culture of one hundred or even fifty years ago. Second, the mass media, television in particular, have disseminated popular rather than high culture, whereas it is the latter rather than the former which religious Jews affirmed. Third, the Holocaust experience as interpreted by Israeli society has been an important factor in encouraging cultural insulation among religious Jews. A favorite argument of cultural nationalists has been to point to

the behavior of the Nazis as the natural product of political isolation which Israeli nationalists feel, has led them to reject not only the political and moral criticism leveled against them but the cultural basis upon which such criticism rests.

The intensification of Judaic studies and the rejection of non-Judaic culture has been especially pronounced in the national-religious school system in the last few years. With the encouragement of the Ministry of Education, a new network of religious schools, Noam, has emerged. Noam is critical of the national-religious school system because it accepts pupils from nonreligious homes and refuses in some cases to separate boys and girls in the classroom but primarily because, Noam charges, the system devotes too little emphasis to Torah studies, too much to general studies. The founders of the Noam schools are close to Gush Emunim and instill in their pupils the notion that Jewish standards and Jewish ethics and morality are the only standards by which they or Israel can be judged. Although an organization has been formed within national-religious circles called Neemanei Torah V'Avoda (The Faithful to Torah and Labor) to counter this ideology and the creation of much such schools, Noam has influenced the established national-religious school system even as it created its own competing network of schools. One principal of a religious high school noted that the belief among his students that cheating on such "unimportant" subjects as math is appropriate since this is not a Jewish subject (*Haaretz*, 7 October 1984, p. 9).

According to Rav Yaacov Filber, a central personality for the leaders of Noam, Jews are enjoined to maintain themselves in isolation from other peoples. "We are commanded to raise barriers and not to destroy barriers" (*Hatzofe*, 26 September 1984, p. 17). Foreign culture is a particular anathema when its standards are used to criticize the territorial or ethnic nationalists. "Between the Torah of Israel and atheist humanism there is no connection." There is no place in Judaism, says an author, "for a humanistic attitude in determining responses to hostile behavior of the Arab population" (from an article in *Nekudah*, 9 March 1982 cited in *Haaretz*, 11 May 1984, p. 15). "Jewish national morality," says another YESHA settler, "is distinct from universal morality." Notions of universal or absolute justice "may be good for Finland or Australia but not here, not with us" (quoted in *Haaretz*, 24 May 1984, p. 7).

One standard that Jewish morality does not include is democracy, at least according to one of the heroines of the YESHA settlers. Democracy is "a ritual that is of value for Gentiles . . ." (from an interview with Miriam Levinger in *Haaretz*, 16 September 1984, p. 2).

As we already noted, the denigration of non-Jewish culture, the exclusive concern with norms and values that emerge out of the Jewish tradition is a commitment which the cultural nationalists share with non-Zionist religious elements. Where the cultural nationalists part company with them is in the assumption that the true, authentic, legitimate Jewish culture can only flourish

ish or is only properly comprehended in the Land of Israel. By implication, therefore, even the Jewish tradition in *galut* (Diaspora; literally, exile) is somehow flawed.

A letter in *Nekudah* from the wife of an accused terrorist asked why everyone, including YESHA settlers, does not recognize the merit of what the terrorists did. Her answer was that ". . . only a few have as yet succeeded in freeing themselves from the two thousand year old *galut* fear of 'what will the goyim say' . . ." (21 September 1984) p. 2). The charges reached their ultimate—though logical enough—conclusion in a biographical sketch written by one accused terrorist of another, Rav Dan Beeri. Beeri is a proselyte and the writer suggested that Beeri's non-Jewish origins "allowed him to absorb the Jewish system without the complexes of the *galut*" (*Nekudah*, 19 August 1984, p. 29).

The three strands of Jewish nationalism that have been identified seem to derive from very disparate sources. The first modern territorial nationalists were the revisionists, a militant secular Zionist party from which Herut emerged. The revisionists maintained Jewish rights to both sides of the Jordan river and affirmed the necessity for developing a martial spirit among Jews. But they also believed that despite the national conflict of interest between Jews and Arabs, Jews must respect their opponents and meticulously honor their civil liberties within a Jewish state. Culturally, under the leadership of Zeev Jabotinsky the revisionists were among the most cosmopolitan of the Zionist parties.

The archetypal ethnic nationalists were the Israeli lower classes, typically Sephardic, living in urban slums and development towns. It was the segment of the population among whom Kahane campaigned most intensely. They did not settle in the territories and there was some question as to how welcome they would be if they sought to do so. They had no particular territorial commitments nor did they harbor an antagonism to foreign culture. On the contrary, they were stereotypically the major consumers of the homogeneous mass culture purveyed by television and video-tape. Their leisure time was more likely to be devoted to sporting events than to study of sacred texts with which they had little familiarity.

Cultural nationalism defined as an exclusive concern with Jewish culture and rejection of anything of gentile origin derived from that segment of Judaism which rejected modernity and Zionism. It flourished in sections of Jerusalem and Bnei Brak, among the "Community of the Pious" to whom even Agudat Israel was suspect for the intensity of its dealings with the State of Israel. It harbored no love for non-Jews but its major antagonists, those against whom it displayed most marked hostility, were secular Jews.

These three strands of Jewish nationalism have yet to become fully merged ideologically. They do not speak to a single constituency of any significant proportion. They are most firmly anchored in three different seg-

ments of Israeli society. The most vigorous exponents of one strand include those who are indifferent and sometimes even hostile to the others. But, as we have seen, there are signs of their convergence. Their legitimation and ideological expression is rooted in a new conception of religious nationalism that owes its intellectual foundations to the teachings of the late Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, first Ashkenazic chief rabbi of Palestine, but primarily to his son Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook. This ideology has not gone unchallenged in religious Zionist circles. Organizations such as Oz V'shalom (Strength and Peace) and Netivot Shalom (Paths of Peace) are two national-religious organizations founded to combat the ultra-religious nationalists. But the latter organizations are weak. They have had an abundance of support from distinguished religious academicians but lacked the support of outstanding rabbinical figures essential for the success of any religious organization. Chauvinist nationalism seemed to be gaining influence within the country as a whole and within religious-Zionist circles in particular. Should the trends finally converge and a firm constituency develop for their spokesmen, heightened tension in Israel may be expected in the coming years.

Notes

1. The questionnaire was designed on the data collected by Mina Zemach, director of the Dahaf Research Institute for the Van Leer Institute and the youth magazine *Hamtzan*. I am indebted to Dr. Zemach, who made the data available to me, and to Shlomit Canaan, editor of *Hamtzan*, who permitted the early release of the figures to me.

2. Amos Oz, *In the Land of Israel* (Huntington, N.Y.: Fontana, 1983), pp. 114-15.

3. YESHA is an acronym for the Hebrew names of the territories Yehuda, Shomron and Azá. The word *yeshá* also means salvation. In the remainder of the essay we will use the terms YESHA, West Bank or just the word *territories* as synonymous terms to refer to that area captured by Israel in the Six-Day War, still under Israeli military occupation, but not annexed to the state, as for example East Jerusalem or Ramat Hagolan were annexed. There is no value-neutral term for this area in Hebrew. Arabs call it "the occupied territory"; Jewish settlers prefer the term YESHA and consider even "West Bank" or "territory" as indicating hostility.

4. Arabs who live in the territories are not citizens of Israel. They are subject to military rule.

Marc,

We will be discussing these papers.

at our meeting on the 12th.



*For Your
Information*

BERTRAM H. GOLD.

PRELIMINARY ROUGH DRAFT
NOT FOR PUBLICATION



February 27, 1985

The discussion which follows assumes that American Jewry and Israel will march hand-in-hand into the 21st century bound together by some version of Zionism. That ideology which is at once the founding conception of Israel and at the very heart of the identity of American Jewry is often perceived as a constant. But times change and ideologies that do not change with them are in danger of being tossed into the "dustbin of history." What kind of Zionism will American Jewry require in the future?

Ideologies generally fare poorly in the dynamic environment of America and other modern societies. For them to retain any influence at all, their proponents must be willing and able to accommodate their tenets to the winds of change, to continually reshape them to fit the needs of the societies they address. Students of Zionism often make note of the enormous societal and generational accommodations it has been heir to. The Zionism generated by Jewish thinkers in endemically anti Semitic Tsarist Russia, both in the questions it posed and the demands it made, was a far cry from the Zionism developed in a comparatively benevolent America. Similarly the kibbutz, probably the most innovative form of human organization produced by the Zionist ideology, is a far cry from the contemporary beleaguered settlements of religious zealots in Hebron. The flow of events has a way of breaking through the confines and rules cherished ideologies seek to impose. Where that does not happen societies become static and life withers. Witness China's desperate attempt to broaden Marxist-

Leninist ideology so as to circumvent the rigidities of the Soviet system. Sooner or later all students of societal development learn the basic truth that life must take precedence over ideology.

What role has Zionism played historically in the development of American Jewish life? If we understand what it has been, we may better project what it might become. Jewish life in America fashioned a kind of Zionism which contained few of the moral imperatives of the Zionism of Eastern Europe where generations of suppression and powerlessness had robbed Jews of their dignity. There Zionism sought not merely to restore their spirit but ultimately to remove Jews from the source of their degradation and resettle them in their own land where, it was imagined, "normal" development would be possible. Whether that definition of dignity and normality was seen in socialist or middle-class democratic terms, the aspiration for an improvement of the Jewish condition was a constant.

That aspiration was never part of the Zionism developed by American Jews. There was the traditional love of Zion which motivates all committed Jews. Beyond that American Zionism served as a crucial link to k'lal Yisrael, the ties to the universal community of Israel, from which American Jewry has always received cherished signals. As piety and knowledge of the tradition diminished in a relentlessly secularizing society these ties, which manifested themselves through Zionism in religious or secular form, became crucial in binding American Jewry to the Jewish enterprise. American Jewry today clings

to Israel and Zionism not only because it traditionally identifies with its beleaguered brethren abroad wherever they may be, Zionism itself is at the very heart of its identity formation. But it is a Zionism of a peculiarly American variety and it is by and for American Jews.

These ties survived against all odds in the early part of the 20th century because they were refashioned to serve the needs of an American Jewry that wanted nothing so much as to acculturate while not assimilating. The across-the-board resistance from all sectors of the community might never have been overcome if the idea of "going up" to Zion had not been muted by Louis Brandeis. He was successful in making Zionism an ideological adjunct to the primary demand of American Jewry, i.e. to become American as quickly as possible while somehow surviving as Jews. That was no easy task. Even after the vexing dual loyalties question had been solved, American Jews did not come rushing into the Zionist fold. Only after they observed the catastrophe which was overtaking their brethren in Europe did they become convinced that the millennial problem of Jewish survival required a haven governed by and for Jews, a national home. It was only then that they joined the comparatively small number of those who, motivated by pioneering zeal, devoutness, or a love of Zion inherited from their immigrant parents, had been firmly and genuinely committed to Zionism. It was the refugee crisis of the thirties and forties which finally converted most American Jews to Zionism.

But theirs was a qualified conversion. They were not the ones to be found on the training farms in eastern Europe or on the growing numbers of kibbutzim. Rather their Zionism sprang from a concern, ever present in American Jewry, for the welfare of all Jewish communities abroad. It was expressed primarily in philanthropy which is the key to understanding American Jewish organizational life. But presenting a check to UJA or Israel Bonds, or any of the myriad funds developed by the American Jewish community, ought not be seen merely as a substitution of money for self, or simply derided as "checkbook Zionism." It might as readily be seen as a symbolic giving of part of the self which is already committed elsewhere, out of a desire to link oneself, nevertheless, in a tangible way, to Israel.

The idea that in a hostile world Jews require a home, which we call "refugeism," is the additional mainstay of American Zionism. Israel is conceived of as a home for those Jews who require it. Few American Jews see themselves fitting this category, although there are some with a well honed catastrophic perspective who may think of Israel as an "insurance policy" lest it ever happen here. Most American Jews today, however, are aware that the greater danger to their survival stems from benevolent absorption rather than persecution. Whatever the case may be, the distinctive historical experience of American Jewry which draws it to Zionism, is a far cry from that of European Jewry.

Those who view American Jews as "ideological eunuchs," a term coined by an Israeli author, not only misunderstand the character and development of American Jewry but they actually find it unacceptable. This creates a bitter paradox for those who harbor such contempt. They are in some measure dependent on a community they hold in low esteem even as they are blind to the enormous potential which American Jewry possesses. The reality is that American Jewry is different, a new page in Jewish history, and so is the Zionism it has produced. It is a Zionism which meets the needs of a Jewry which thus far feels at home in America, but requires an auxiliary connection to the millennial Jewish religious civilization from which it derives its Jewish identity. Zionism furnishes such a link.

But what of the future? There are, of course, vast changes in the wind. Most who monitor the pulse of American Jewry are aware that the seductions of American culture are difficult to withstand. The assumption that a pluralistic society will furnish American Jewry with the social and cultural space to develop its particularity is increasingly open to question. We know not what to plant in the space granted. It may after all be the melting pot model which holds sway. That means that American Jewry will have to consciously will its survival as Jews willed a Jewish national state into existence. It is one of the great ironies of history that American Jewry is compelled to call upon the Jewish community of that State to help provide the spiritual sinews for its separate survival. More ironic still is that Israel, which cries out for American Jews to come, may have to realize

that Jewish survival requires a broader base than that offered by nationhood. For the foreseeable future Israel will require for her own survival all the resources, the technical knowledge, the political advocacy, which American Jewry can provide. This pattern of desperate mutual dependence will doubtless continue, though in much modified form.

The crisis of survival is characteristic of all Jewish life in the twentieth century. If American Jewry faces a danger of benevolent absorption, the Jews of Israel continue to face the implacable murderous hostility of the Arab world. If there is a lesson Jews can distill from their twentieth century experience, it is that in the end they have only each other. The good will of other brotherhoods and of Christian witnesses cannot be relied on to sustain life. Ultimately the crucial question is whether a secularized Jewry in the Diaspora and in Israel is capable of mustering such a will for survival. To even begin to search for an answer to that question we need to gain a fuller understanding of what modernization entails and above all how the much misunderstood attendant secularization process shapes the mind-set of modern man.

Secularism, which is linked to modernization, is misunderstood by many committed Jews who naturally associate it with its anti-religious thrust which occurred at the turn of the century when it was momentarily colored by Marxist socialism. They correctly perceived that secularized Jews were not only not committed to the ongoing tradition

but were often outrightly hostile to it. The confusion regarding secularism is compounded by the public dialogue today in which it often comes to mean simply a separation of church and state, when in reality, this is only one separation among many which characterize the relentless fragmentation of our society.

But secularization is not simply a condition, it is an inexorable process. The secular cast of mind creeps into every corner of contemporary life often unbeknown even to those most determined to withstand its impact. Can one really imagine that the ultra-Orthodox young man or woman who has been trained as a systems analyst can remain unaffected by his work on the cutting edge of modern technology? Does the recent report of the successful computerization of rabbinic responsa really make the computer the servant of the religious tradition? There is no need in this brief discussion to examine the entire complex process of secularization, but those elements which impinge directly on the survival of the Jewish enterprise need to be better understood.

Secular man aspires to be free and autonomous. The tribe, the extended family, the nuclear family to which he successively belonged are not considered support structures but fetters from which he must free himself. It is easy to see that the effect of such assumptions is the fragmentation of all social structures -- ethnic groups, church, family -- which conflict with man's quest to be his own tribal chief.

From a Jewish perspective the process has dire consequences. Judaism is a corporate religion and the fragmentation and atomization inherent in modern life must impinge directly on it. The remarkable organizational structure of American Jewry, the envy of other sub-cultures, must gradually lose its influence and Jewish life must inevitably become more amorphous.

A second facet of the secular mind-set leads to desacrilization. When man places himself at the center of the universe he naturally must push to the periphery what once was at the center of that world. The laity becomes more important than the deity. Secular man aspires to be rational. He assumes that the world is explainable and that its governing laws can be discovered and controlled. That is what modern science and technology is all about. The result is that things once held sacred become profane. Most important, the priority given to rationality conflicts with faith. Secular man is, by definition, a great understander but a poor believer. Again the implications for Judaism with its awesome one god are ominous. Jews have always been great believers but their avidity for the secular increasingly interferes with belief. And the impact on ideologies is no less diminishing.

One should hasten to add that desacrilization does not mean that secular man, Jewish or Christian, is irreligious or unaware of the benefits of a long enriching cultural tradition. He is merely once

removed from them. The spirit it privatized and internalized as are other controls. In theory modern secular man should require no external controls because he is self-governing. Thus, theoretically, the corporate character of Judaism and the intensity of faith among Jews may become things of the past. An autonomous free Jewry chooses what it wants to commit itself to; it becomes a voluntary association. Yet, for various reasons a startling percentage of Jews continue to choose to be Jewish and Israel is at the very center of their Jewish sensibility. Zionism, especially its peoplehood component, serves for the secular Jew as a binder. It substitutes for the other forms of corporateness which have lost their adhesiveness.

In summary, as viewed here, secularism is primarily a way of perceiving life which leads to new individual and group identity formation. Historically its impact on Jews of the West has been enormous. It not only has sparked great changes in their ancient religious civilization, their avid acceptance of secular assumptions is undoubtedly an important factor behind the remarkable Jewish achievement on the frontiers of modern culture and technology. It impinges on all facets of Jewish life in America including the peculiar type of Zionism it has developed and undoubtedly will continue to develop in the future.

But lest we assume that all American Jews are equally well along the road to "cool" secularism we must hasten to add that such is hardly the case. What we have drawn here is an absolute model which

hardly fits the complexity of life in the real world. Just as most pre-secular Jews never held a totally religious mind-set, so most contemporary American Jews are not completely secular. Most live their lives somewhere between the two polarities, balancing the demands of one against the other. At either end of the spectrum are the extremists. The tension between the two gives American Jewry measured change. By the 21st century we can assume that with the exception of some small insulated religious communities most American Jews will have ingested, to some unknown degree, secular assumptions on how life should be lived.

But it becomes clear that the wholesale acceptance of these secular values is unlikely to be insufficient to carry a meaningful life forward, much less a meaningful Jewish life. Some social scientists are already suggesting that we stand on the threshold of a post-secular world. Secularism gone awry is lethal and no one has better cause to fear it than Jews who are forewarned by their recent historical experience. Genocide was based on a modern secular medical metaphor. But even had history not given Jews a special reason to question the validity of a life lived by only secular assumptions, there is ample evidence in the malaise of modern life in America, Jewish and non-Jewish, of its insufficiency. That malaise would include a general loss in the quality of life especially as it pertains to sustained human relationships. And more important than a perceived loss in the quality of life is an inability to find meaning and, therefore, purpose in it.

For Jews that quest often entails going back to traditional institutions and forms, to the sustaining Jewish culture beneath. What may bring them to the synagogue, or the Jewish Center, or the Jewish secular organization, may be the search for fraternity which is lost in modern life.

American Zionism too is part of that hanging on to a Jewish patrimony. Secular achieving Jews may not know much about the tradition but they are uniquely aware of value and investment. Zionism offers them, among other things, a neutral way to reconnect themselves with things Jewish. They escape from the privatism of secular life into their congregations and organizations and find there that the support of Israel is at the center of a modern Jewish sensibility. It is something they can understand, it is temporal -here and now, it is a tangible reality rather than an abstraction or ideology. It is a modern secular state struggling against adversity. It sums up much of what being Jewish means for them and it holds out as well the opportunity of entering more deeply into the tradition. In short, for many secularized American Jews Zionism or Israelism becomes the path to finding transcendent purpose.

What do such Jews, caught betwixt a secular life which often lacks meaning and purpose and a tradition they only vaguely understand, require of Zionism and the Israel it has produced? What kind of Zionism will they generate?

Clearly the pronuncimientos from Jerusalem or New York which declare confidently what belongs in the center of Jewish consciousness and what on the periphery, are exercises in futility. By their very nature ideologies cannot be imposed from without, certainly not on Jews of a secular mind-set who celebrate their autonomy as Jews once celebrated the covenant. Nothing is more certain than the fact that the Zionism American Jewry will cling to in decades to come, will be shaped by their communal needs. Should it turn out to be otherwise, that ideology will become first disconnected, then dysfunctional. Modern Jewish history is cluttered with such ideologies which posed the wrong questions and yielded the wrong answers. The primary question for American Jewry has become nothing less than survival --but it is not merely survival as Jews. If it were, then aliya to Israel would indeed be sufficient. The quest is for survival as American Jews. Therefore the Zionism it will develop in the future will be, as it was in the past, an adjunct to that basic quest.

There are then certain things such a Zionism cannot be, either because it diminishes the probability for survival or it is in basic conflict with the secular American Jewish mind set. The Jerusalem platform which declares the centrality of Israel is a good example. Surely everyone can agree that there cannot be a Zionism without the centrality of Zion. That has been central in the religious tradition before the development of modern Zionism. But much depends on what that centrality is intended to mean. We have seen that for American

Jewry Israel is indeed central, so much so that in the last four decades we have expended much of our resources and energy in nurturing it. Some would even suggest that this was done at the expense of our own institutional structures.

But a centrality which means the diminution of the community with which the American Jew has cast his lot, coupled with a rhetoric which consigns American Jewry to a certain doom, cannot be imbibed as part of an ideology he calls his own. It runs counter to everything he needs to believe. He understands that in temporal political terms Israel will, for the foreseeable future, require the advocacy role of a powerful American Jew before the American seat of power.

But the American Jew cannot be a nationalist as those who live in the land. He is more inclined to accept universalist assumptions which means that he is less interested in where Jews live than in how. His interest has traditionally extended to all Jewish communities whether Israel, Ethiopia or the Soviet Union. It is an interest so intense that at times it seems that it is all that remains of a once vibrant culture. American Jewry's concern for all Jews abroad is in fact a major strand in the development of American Zionism. It is a Zionism which has always spoken more of a Jewish peoplehood than a return to Zion and is more comfortable with bipolarity than with centrality.

Can American Jewry relate to an exclusive or strident Jewish nationalism? History gives ample evidence that a sustained sense of beleagueredness as in the case of Poland or Germany, or the militant puritanism of the Irish Catholic church developed in its protracted conflict with Anglicanism, can generate such a stridency. Israel's existence has now been challenged for almost forty years and it not unreasonable to presume that the right of Jews to have a national home will be challenged until the end of the twentieth century and perhaps beyond. There are signs that an activism based on religious fundamentalism has made its debut in Israel's political culture. It was perhaps a predictable development, but for American Jews there is far more understanding of the liberal Mazzinian nationalism which served as the incubator of the original Zionist ideology, than of the chauvinistic nationalism associated with Bismarck.

Moreover, the American Jew is at once a creator and a witness to a pluralistic society which has granted him space to develop group particularity. His survival in America requires a dynamic pluralism. His priorities are given to rationalism and tolerance at home and he would be hard pressed to change his stripes abroad. More important, the American Jewish religious enterprise itself reflects the denominational pluralism of the host culture. Should Israel in its crucible prove unable to withstand the temptation to move in the direction of strident nationalism coupled with its natural partner, religious exclusivity, it could ultimately open a gap between the two communities and, in a worst case scenario, break the bond between them. The

American Jew requires a broad definition of who can be counted as a Jew because in the free atmosphere of America such a broad definition describes the reality of Jewish life.

At the same time the bi-national strategies, which held sway on the left wing of the Jewish polity before the founding of the State, would prove equally problematic. We have noted that what American Jewry most requires from Israel is a Jewish center to provide supplemental cultural energy to sustain an American Jewish culture. A state which is merely a legal container for various groups would not be able to fulfill that role. Yet, historically, there have always been strangers in Israel and the religious culture has developed a complete ethos of how they should be treated. Who knows better than Jews the travail entailed in being a stranger in the land?

The Zionism American Jews would best relate to understands fully the need for defense and security of the State, but it eschews a fanaticism that can lead to expansionism or religious exclusivity. An expansionism based on a biblical mandate cannot but seem strange to the average secular American Jew who does not accept biblical mandates in his personal life, much less as a deed for gaining additional real estate. He is convinced that offensive war is an irrational activity, that people, not territory, ultimately define community. Yet autonomy and freedom are basic precepts of the secular mind set. They are necessary for life and therefore worth defending.

It would be easier for American Jewry to relate to an Israel which was more like what they fancied themselves to be i.e. modern, urbane, tolerant and quietly excellent. These are aspirations of an achieving minority anxious to live comfortably in a pluralistic society. But that confluence is unlikely to happen. Increasingly Israelis are shaped in a society where Jews are a majority and that is a pot which produces a different dish. They are accustomed to exercising sovereign power, they are more comfortable in their skins and they need to prove nothing through extraordinary achievement.

The real differences between the two communities result more from group identity formation developed in different social, cultural and political incubators. In the long run these will prove to be more crucial than the "ideological" differences propounded by leaders and thinkers which proliferate in such unseemly numbers in both communities. The future would be more negotiable if both groups spoke the same language. However that is increasingly less likely to be. But there are enduring principles which they have always held in common: a love of Zion and a determination to survive as Jews. That has been and should continue to be a strong bridge to support their desperate interdependence. There is beneath the endless list of demands and recriminations a realization that both communities are destined to march together through history, leaning on each other because there is no one else to lean on.

How could the Israel of the future best fulfill such a role? American Jewry needs a secure modern Jewish state which modifies the secularism that has proven insufficient to carry Jewish life forward in America, but at the same time withstands the temptation to tip in the direction of theocracy. Ideal would be an Israel from which both traditional Torah, in all its varied forms, and modern technology and mastery could go forth. A society with such a vibrant combination would be far more likely to attract American Jewish settlers than the strident exhortations of ideologues. In such a society investment could become a welcome supplement to philanthropy which, even under the most noble conditions, tends to demean the recipient. American Jewry requires an Israel which offers it an alternate venture in Jewish living, in which it can seek something beyond the selfness of the modern secular life it has chosen for itself.

Above all American Jewry requires an Israel as convinced of the possibility and necessity of American Jewish survival as it is of its own. There is no paucity of threats to survival in either community.

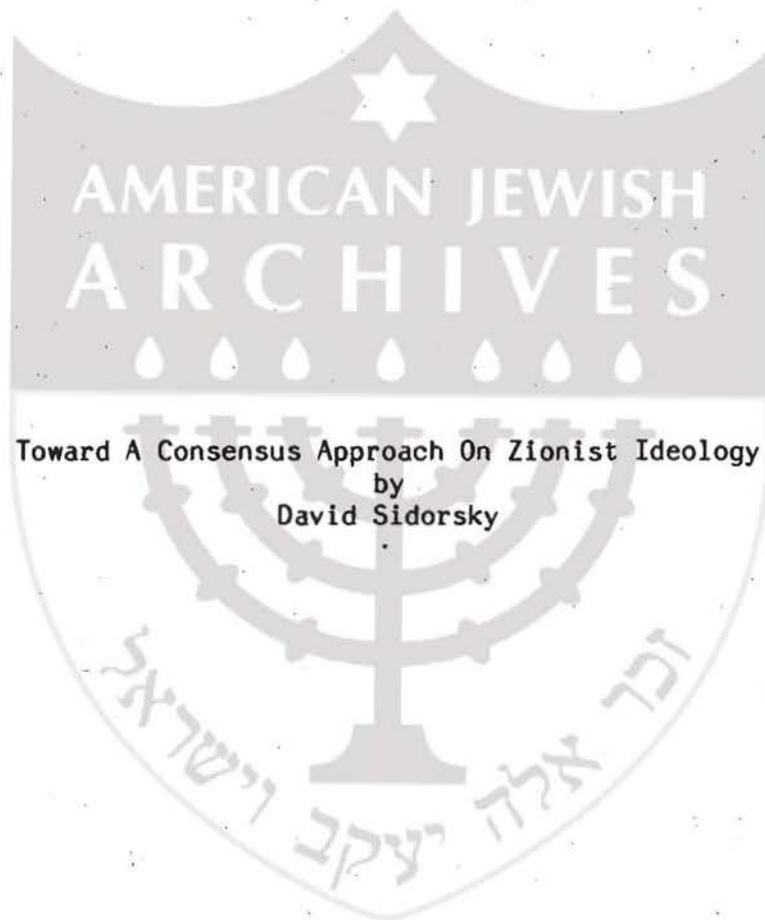
A Herzelian admonition today might remind us that it is necessary for Jews to will survival wherever they are.

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Introduction

Forty years, the symbolic span of one generation, have passed since the end of World War II and the destruction of the European Jewish community, the major milestone of modern Jewish history. In the immediate aftermath of the War, the struggle for the establishment of a Jewish state began, so that it is nearly forty years since the founding of the State of Israel. In the postwar period, the American Jewish community assumed Diaspora leadership in political support and economic assistance to Israel. This assumption of responsibility was part of its coming-of-age as a community and was an important aspect of the American Jewish community's institutional development.

The recognition of generational transition with its accompanying challenge of change in the relationship between the American Jewish community and Israel provides a point of departure for an examination of the character and direction of a constantly evolving relationship. In such a reexamination, four perspectives are relevant.

The historical perspective can bring sensitivity to the ideological conflict that preceded the emergence of the State of Israel, some elements of which persist in contemporary conditions. The pragmatic perspective involves a realization of the variety and diversity of the patterns of relationships that exist between Israel and the Diaspora. Alongside these patterns of involvement between the American Jewish community and Israel, an existential perspective would bring into focus the different conditions of existence for Israelis and American Jews which affect the significant differences of perception or attitude. Crucial to the account of the shared values and experience differences between the two communities is the ideological perspective in which the terms of the relationships have been formulated.

These perspectives set a framework for a dialogue between the Israeli Jewish community and the American Jewish community. The goals of such a dialogue are threefold. From the ideological perspective, there is the possibility of developing a consensus on the concepts that have been perennially contested. From the pragmatic perspective, there is the possibility of restating the terms of the ongoing partnership which is an enduring aspect of the relationship. From the existential perspective, there is the possibility of clarifying the ways of interaction, even symbiosis, which characterize the relationship on many levels of individual and group experience.

I. Historical Perspective

With the breakdown of the pre-modern segregated Jewish community, three competing ideological movements emerged in the nineteenth century as proposed forms of Jewish adjustment to emancipation. The once normative cultural dominance of traditionalist Orthodoxy was displaced by the three movements of religious reform Judaism, secular ethnic Jewish culture and Zionism. The separatist Orthodox community, however, asserted its continuing legitimacy against the claims of the new ideologies.

In the United States, the separatist Orthodox movement affects the major Jewish communal institutions only at the margin. In Israel, the continuing aspiration of the traditionalist Orthodox establishment to be the sole legitimate religious community is the occasion of social tension and political division. This dispute is rooted in the historic conflict between all three new ideological movements and traditionalist Orthodoxy. Historically, since the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine had no movement for religious reform and no non-Zionist secular ethnic constituency, this conflict took the form of Zionism versus the traditionalist religion. With the political compromise between the Zionist and religious parties, since the founding of the State of Israel, the focus of the dispute has shifted to the issue of the legitimacy of American style Conservative and Reform movement in Israel. The result is a continued source of tension in the relationship between the American Jewish community and Israel.

The majority of the Jews in both Western and Eastern Europe, not only welcomed emancipation but were active in the struggle for civic equality, economic and social opportunity, and the right of participation in Western culture for the Jewish minority. The differing perceptions of strategies for the achievement of Jewish rights under conditions of modernity set the framework for the three ideological movements of modern Jewish history.

(1) Emancipation of the Jews as a religious community. After the French Revolution, Western societies proceeded to transform themselves into societies which offered to every citizen, independent of prior hereditary privileges, equality in the public domain. Differences of religious belief were then to be assigned to the private domain. As part of this process, Jewish communities that had been separatist Orthodox communities prepared to restructure themselves as religious congregations. The result of that restructuring was the foundation of the neo-Orthodox, Reform and Conservative religious trends in Judaism.

Neither the Eastern European Jewish communities nor the Sephardic communities from which the Israeli society evolved had undergone this form of restructuring. Hence the difficulties of perception of the legitimacy of neo-orthodox, conservative and reform movements in Israel has been a legacy of the historical development for the current state of Israel-American Jewish relationship.

In its stronger theoretical formulations, however, the reform religious ideology rejected Jewish nationalism, particularly territorial Zionism, as a regressive particularist withdrawal from the challenges and opportunities of emancipation. The religious ideological pattern had its central locus in the texts and observances of Classic Reform.

The story of the transformation of Reform Judaism, particularly in the United States, into a Zionist movement marks a dramatic reversal. It demonstrates concretely how an ideologically anti-Zionist position changed in the postwar period into a supporter not only of the pro-Israel consensus but even of the formal Zionist movement.

At the same time, the tensions that manifested themselves in the universalist critique of particularist Zionism in the prewar period have been metamorphosed into a universalist critique of an Israel-centric Judaism and a universalist concern about the direction and quality of Israeli nationalist expression. Again, the historical legacy of the pluralist traditions of Judaism has an impact on the terms of the relationship between the American Jewish community and Israel.

(2) Emancipation of the Jews as a secularist-socialist community. The end of the ghetto and the concomitant breakdown of traditionalist separatist Orthodox authority were perceived by many as the first stage in the inevitable secularization of the Jewish community. If the Jewish community was to survive in the new framework of emancipation, it would require a reassertion of patterns of ethnic and linguistic identity that could respond to secularism.

These could not be the patterns of religious congregations in a public community of equal citizenship. Minority group rights to cultural and ethnic autonomy could, however, be recognized and, in this pattern, the autonomous ethnic Jewish community could sustain its separate schools, press or theater with its own language.

Different formulations for these patterns of minority rights were explored mostly based on Eastern European communal experience. In most of them, the language of the autonomous Jewish community was to be secularized Yiddish, not the "sacred" Hebrew. Further, a bourgeois society with individual equality was not envisaged as comprehending this set of relationships. A socialist society would emerge which would recognize equality of the Jewish group and all other ethnic minorities. Such a commitment to Diaspora nationalism or to Yiddish socialist society involved a rejection of the religious forms of Judaism and of the competing secularism of Zionist nationalism.

The strength of this ideology in American Jewish immigrant culture --its newspapers, theaters, school system and celebrations --is well known. It also flourished in Eastern Europe before the Second World War. This ideology was legislated into the Soviet legal system by Lenin and provided the framework for an autonomous Jewish community as a recognized linguistic and cultural ethnic minority of the Soviet Union.

With the end of the War, the demographic basis for this position had eroded. The destruction of the Eastern European communities, the upward mobility and integration of the Jewish urban groups in the United States, and the denial of the rights of the Soviet Jewish community characterized the post war situation. A proIsrael consensus took place in all three areas. The eastern European communities opted for emigration rather than restoration. The secularist socialist Yiddishist groups became partisans of Israel or even allied to the Zionist movement through organizational ties. The Soviet Jewish community has apparently chosen to seek emigration rather than reconstitution of its legal basis as its own road to Jewish restoration.

This record of convergence to a Zionist consensus has left significant sources of tension. The Zionist response to the socialist movement included the counter claim that it represented the most authentic socialist response in the Kibbutz, Histadrut, socialist ownership of the means of production, and socialist political party institutions. Yet, as the Diaspora communities left their socialist ideological base behind the post war period, this achievement becomes an area of potential divisiveness in the American Jewish-Israel relationship.

Further, the recognition by the Soviet Jewish community of the failure to construct an autonomous Jewish culture in the Soviet Union with the decision in favor of emigration is perceived by the Israelis as a legitimation of Zionism. This historical perception is reinforced by the contemporary political fact that Jews emigrate by virtue of repatriation or family reunification on visas to Israel. This provides the source of tension for the relationship between Israel and the American Jewish community when the Russian Jew chooses, with indifference to ideological concerns, to emigrate to another country of the Diaspora.

(3) Emancipation of the Jewish community as auto-emancipation.

The Zionist thesis was that the true emancipation for the Jewish people required a movement of national self-determination that would restore Jewish nationalism and assert national rights to a historic territory. This interpretation of emancipation involved ideological conflict with the interpretation of the Jewish polity as a religious

community within a democratic state or as an autonomous cultural and ethnic minority within a pluralist state. The ideological conflict continued until the Second World War.

After the war, the ideological debate ended. The practical agenda of Jewish life shifted the terms of the debate. The practical agenda of Jewish life included virtually universal Diaspora support for Israel. The role of Israel in strengthening Jewish life in the Diaspora was enhanced independent of ideological formulations. This shift of the agenda marked a change from ideological perspectives to pragmatic perspectives.

The Zionist attempt to formulate the pragmatic consensus in its own way was expressed in the Jerusalem Program adopted by the World Zionist Organization at its first congress in Israel after the founding of the State. This program was redrafted in 1968 and remains the Zionist formulation on the most general level of the mutual responsibilities of Israel and the Jewish communities of the Diaspora.

THE JERUSALEM PROGRAM, 5728

(Adopted by the 27th Zionist Congress in Jerusalem,
June 19, 1968.)

Zionism's aims are:

- * The unity of the Jewish people, and the centrality of the State of Israel to the life of the nation.
- * The ingathering of the Jewish people in its historic homeland, Eretz Israel, through immigration from all countries.
- * Consolidation of the State of Israel, which is based on the prophetic vision of peace and justice.
- * Preserving the unique character of the Jewish people by promoting Jewish and Hebrew education, and fostering Jewish spiritual and cultural values.
- * Defending the rights of Jews wherever they may be settled.

II. Pragmatic Perspectives

A catalogue of the patterns of relationships that have evolved between Israel and the American Jewish community during the past forty years would exhibit complex networks of association, plural affilia-

tions across conventional lines of political or social division, and multiple institutional forums of interaction on current issues of concern. An analytical framework for understanding these patterns involves six kinds of relationship.

1. Community to community relationship. Some of the activities between a Diaspora Jewish community and Israel included support for social needs and participation in Israeli communal institutions constitute a pattern of community to community interaction. To a degree, the characteristics of such a pattern are similar to any such interaction, for example, the relationship between the Jewish communities of United States and Australia or France. "Project Renewal" and the Israel community center movement are cases in point, just as the recruiting of Israeli educators or center workers for the American Jewish communal services represents a reciprocal process of community to community involvement.

2. Community to Sacred Space. Another aspect of the relationship between a Diaspora community and Israel is that which views Israel as the "sacred space" of the community. This relationship is continuous with the religious tradition in which "Zion" was the sacred locus of Judaism.

For the separatist Orthodox religious community, for example, the idea of the sacred is defined by the "halakhic mitzvot" related to Jewish residence in the Holy Land. Any violation of these regulations, whether in autopsy or archaeology, is a profanation of sacred space. Such profanation calls for dissent and protest, independent of the procedures by which a majority of Israel's residents or its State institutions decide the issues. There may be limitations on direct action against such profanation but these limits have not excluded advertisements against Israeli policy in the public media or leafletting and picketing Israeli leaders in their visits abroad.

For the more universalist members of the Jewish community, whether religious or secular, the idea of the sacred has been defined in moral imperatives. Israel's violation of its moral promise is then a profanation of its distinctive worth and reason for being. The guidelines for protesting the profanation are not clearly set, although it is also apparently "a moral imperative" that dissent be publicly recorded, not just privately communicated. In this case, too, the perceptions of the Israeli community or its majority can be overruled because of the moral imperative to preserve the integrity of Jewish sacred space, i.e., the moral dimensions of Israel.

Analogously, for some religious nationalists, the sacred space of the Jewish people is the biblical "Eretz Israel." The weakness of will of a contemporary Israeli leadership in taking steps to preserve that territory is a failure of religious mission requiring dissent, advocacy or protest.

Three relevant facts about this relationship are noteworthy. One is that there are no agreed communal guidelines to set the limits or the manner of expression of dissent against current policy of the State of Israel.

The second is that the interpretation of sacred space that motivates those in the Diaspora community has partisans within Israeli society who serve as advocates or partners in the relationship. The Israeli base legitimizes the activities of the Diaspora group when it moves outside the consensus positions of support for Israel.

Finally, the illustrations suggested are special cases of the statistical majority which relates to Israel as a sacred space in the Zionist mode. Within Zionist ideology, the secularization of the sacred was the historical task. This involved the vernacularizing of a sacred tongue, agriculturally "conquering" the sacred land and transforming Jewish religious society into a normal nation. Zionist thought has always been characterized by an ambiguity about the unique and transcendentally valuable features of this resecularized normalized land, language or people. The point of that ambiguity is recognized in the obvious paradox that it is never normal to intensely aspire to normalcy.

3. Community to Sovereign State. The various Diaspora communities relate to Israel as a sovereign state. Sovereignty provides Israel with unique opportunities for action or leadership in Jewish communal problems on the international scene whether in rescuing Ethiopian Jews, receiving refugees as immigrants, representing Jewish interests at the UN, or providing direction to efforts to assure Israeli security.

Israel's responsibilities as a sovereign state have not excluded its concern with Jewish communal interests. Thus, Israeli embassies have been involved with threatened Jewish communities in Iran or Argentina. On the other hand, Jewish and Israeli interests may be in prima facie conflict on some issues. For example, Israel has on occasion demurred from representing the interests of the Jewish community in those countries which do not recognize the State, leaving such representation to other Jewish agencies. These dilemmas and their resolutions are an ongoing feature of Israel-Diaspora relationships.

4. Community to Democratic State. A special aspect of the relationship between Jewish communities and Israel is located in the democratic aspects of Israel's statehood. Elections provide legitimacy to the Israeli position to a degree that may not be always conceded or warranted in voluntary communities.

The democratic nature of Israeli sovereignty has an impact in several specific ways. Elections set a framework for Diaspora communal participation in Israeli decision-making through allowing for

support by foreign friends of political parties in Israel. In narrower context, the electoral results are used to form the party base within the Jewish Agency/WZO structure in which both Diaspora communities and Israeli leaders participate as recognized partners in decision-making.

5. Partner in Nation-Building. Since the legal establishment of the Jewish Agency under the League of Nations mandate for Palestine, the Jewish community outside Israel has been recognized as a co-venturer in the development of Israel. The Jewish Agency included both Zionist and non-Zionist representation. Its transformation in newly written "Covenants" since the founding of the State of Israel has preserved aspects of the legal formula of the Yishuv and the Diaspora as partners in nation-building.

The World Zionist Organization in its party alignments is partners with the Israeli political groups, tabulated by electoral results for the Israeli parliament. These results are reflected in the structure of the World Zionist Organization, which in turn helps to shape the structure of the Jewish Agency.

Jewish communal representatives outside the Zionist organizations, whose authority derives from their communal leadership, complement the Zionist leadership in the structure of the Jewish Agency. The tasks assigned to the Jewish Agency include both economic and cultural functions. These functions run parallel with the Israeli government's programs in these spheres. Independently of the governmental consular or public relations functions and activities, the WZO provides leadership and an institutional framework for cultural exchange, education and youth activities, and a number of other programs in the Diaspora. Thus, the Jewish Agency is the central institutional vehicle for Israel-Diaspora relations, though public understanding of this role in the Diaspora is limited.

6. Diaspora Community to Center. The major ideological issues in the patterns of Israel-Diaspora relationships focus on the theme of the centrality of Israel.

To a degree, the Ahad HaAm vision of Israel as the center that radiates cultural inspiration for Diaspora communities has been realized. The learning of the Hebrew language is often carried out with reference not to religious tradition but to communication with Israel. Israeli culture forms in song, art and dance are widely circulated. For rabbinical students of all kinds and for many in the Jewish educational system at different levels, study in Israel is viewed as an involvement with the source or center of Jewish culture.

To an even greater degree, for large numbers of Jews, Israel is the center in that it is a moral point of honor in their assertion of their Jewish commitment. Domestic Jewish communal activities are not viewed as having the same critical character as support for Israel,

particularly in emergency situations. The relationship of centrality fits the metaphor of circling the wagons to protect the center. An alternative metaphor for Jewish behavioral commitment, particularly by less involved Jews in the Diaspora, is that of rooters or supporters for "our team." These descriptive aspects of centrality are uncontested even though the formulations in ideological terms of Israeli centrality may be in dispute.

The strength and character of these six networks of relationship with Israel are constantly augmented and reshaped. Their frameworks provide for significant changes in the relationships between the Diaspora community and Israel.

III. Existential Perspective

Most Jewish communities in the world are communities established by waves of migration. (The notable exceptions include the deprived communities of the Soviet Union, Iran or Ethiopia.) Their self-perception as achieving, mobile, post-immigrant societies may account for their indifference to Jewish self-identification or self-representation in ideological terms. Even the society of Israel, which was to a great extent the result of Zionist ideological commitment, does not define itself today in terms of Zionist ideology. Rather it represents a society of post-immigrant generations focused on practical concerns.

The American Jewish community, by virtue of its history, accomplishments and institutions, involves itself significantly as an agent within the American pluralist society. Its participation in the general society and culture helps to shape its attitudes toward Israeli or Zionist ideological dialogue. The American Jewish community unlike, for example, the Jewish community in Taiwan or Korea, does not view itself as a transient congregation but as a permanent community committed to creative survival through generations. To a marked degree, only those who are so committed are motivated to enter into relationship with Israel or to enter into a dialogue on common concerns or ideological questions.

Israeli society is a complex and multilayered mosaic of immigrant cultures. It has achieved a measure of integration and consensus across ethnic and religious lines by stressing the transgenerational task of achieving Israel security and development. There are powerful motivating factors in the society that direct the individual to focus on private and even Israeli national aspirations that are distinct from those of Jewish peoplehood or Jewish communal activity.

The relationship between the inherited patterns of Jewish identity and the environment of secular modernist culture is a condition shared by both Israel and the American Jewish community. Similarly, the adequacy or viability of Jewish religious belief,

rites, practices and institutions under current conditions, despite different historical and legal patterns, is an area of concern of both communities.

On the other hand, Israeli families are acutely aware of the sacrifice required to sustain their society under conditions of war. In that context, the American commitment to Israel is viewed as that of a committed partner who is unwilling to participate fully in the risks of the joint undertaking. For the Israeli, unlike the American Jew, the security of Israel and the stability of its economy dominates his life. This difference, accepted as given, finds expression in ideological as well as practical terms. He provides the existential foundation for the Israeli stress upon the significance of the conceptual or ideological perspective. Accordingly, this stress will recede only with changes in the Israeli security and economic situation that lessen the need for ideological reinforcement.

IV. Conceptual Perspectives

Many of the main concepts of Zionist ideology that were developed in periods remote from the Jewish condition of the 1980s continue to be the currency of contemporary debate. This conceptual framework is both anachronistic and relevant to current conditions.

It is anachronistic since these concepts were part of the conflict between Zionist and anti-Zionist ideologies that came to an end during the Second World War and with the founding of the State of Israel. Further, these concepts reflected the conditions of Jewish life in the pre-war settings.

On the other hand, three concepts - aliyah, shelilat hagola (Negation of the Exile), kibbutz galuyot (Ingathering of Exiles) - have a current function in permitting the Jewish community of Israel to assert its expectations to the world Zionist or Diaspora communities. However, this conceptual framework refers to perennial Jewish polarities: Exile and Zion; dependence and freedom; Diaspora and return; deprivation and redemption; and so on. This perennality can serve as a basis for conceptual reinterpretation or redefinition in the light of changing circumstances. These three concepts are crucial to ideological consensus.

A. Kibbutz Galuyot - Ingathering of the Exiles

In the religious tradition, this expression refers to the promise of Jewish redemption through return of all Jews to Israel. Within the history of Zionism, this implication reinforced the hope that the small number of persons who went to Israel and involved themselves in its rebuilding were to be the vanguard of a mass movement from all countries of the Diaspora, both deprived and emancipated. From that perspective, even the communities that come to Israel because it is

the sole place of refuge become part of this movement. Indeed, they provide evidence that Zionism is not just "subjective" idealism but derived from "objective" factors of modern history.

For many Israelis, the realization of the State of Israel, the Zionist revolution must be reasserted through ongoing effort, at Kibbutz Galuyot. Yet, interpretation of ideological or religious concepts like Kibbutz Galuyot is inherently ambiguous. On the one hand, it points to activism, to what has been called the mitzvah or commandment of participation in this movement. On the other hand, these concepts function as projections of an ideal future. They do not serve to determine political action in particular issues where different values conflict. Kibbutz Galuyot has never been used in Israel, for example, as a rationale for denying exit visas to any citizen. Similarly, it does not unequivocally decide whether right of personal choice or some other value should determine policy toward Soviet Jews who "drop out" en route to Israel.

The fulfillment of this concept could call for support in building Israel and in sustaining the possibilities for an ingathering of the exiles. For all Jews who support Israel, then, there are senses in which they approve and senses in which they would demur from Kibbutz Galuyot.

B. Shelilat Hagolah - "Negation of the Exile"

This concept functioned in the context of the Zionist debate with anti-Zionist ideologies between 1880 and 1940. It expressed the Zionist view that the patterns of religious emancipation would lead to assimilation. It also expressed the Zionist view that the Eastern European societies in which Jews lived did not permit their achieving permanent status as an ethnic or cultural minority.

The idea of "negation of the exile" was originally formulated as an educational or cultural ideal. Jews were to develop the values of independence or self-reliance -- particularly in agricultural, military or industrial life -- as well as cultural and linguistic forms distinct from the attitudes of the "exile" society. Accordingly, "negation of the exile" was an educational slogan for return to Jewish roots, sources or language, rather than for Jewish assimilation to the forms of the majority culture.

In a sense, the American Jewish community has adopted the competing concept of "affirmation of the Diaspora." Thus, American Zionism has consistently asserted the continued creative existence of Jews in America in symbiosis with the American society and culture. Yet, Zionists led American Jewish communal education in the direction of a curriculum that had the Hebraic revival and the nascent Jewish culture of Palestine as its major focus.

It is noteworthy that ideological concepts admit of competing interpretations. Thus, "Negation of the Exile" in the conditions of the 1980s could suggest two important themes on which there could be consensus. One of these is realism, not dogma, about the continued viability of threatened Jewish communities, whether in Iran, the Soviet Union, Ethiopia or elsewhere. Support of an emigrationist solution rather than to insist on pre-world war civil-libertarian or minority rights solution, is a significant Zionist view that has been accepted.

The other is the Zionist educational theme. This requires an appreciation of the values that can be derived from Israeli society, that can be said to reflect "authentic" patterns of Jewish self-determination and self-reliance. These could be distinguished from those situations in the Diaspora in which the Jewish community has been deprived of the opportunity to search for authentic expressions of its Jewish commitments. Without denying the cultural potentialities of integration with Western culture, a consensus can be reached.

C. Aliyah or Hagshama - Personal Emigration to Israel as Self-Realization

The idea that emigration to Israel provides an opportunity for individual self-transcendence (Aliyah) need not necessarily be interpreted as a coercive demand on others. It has characteristically represented a Zionist commitment which is personal and individual, requiring leadership by example.

The communal correlate is to make possible the conditions for this kind of self-realization. This is an activity which has received practical support in the Jewish community. One justification of this support is the contribution idealistic individuals make to Israeli society. It is reinforced by the high priority assigned by Diaspora communities to the survival of Israel and of improving the quality of life in Israeli society. It is also justified on the communal ground of the willingness of the community to assist individuals in fulfilling their felt sense of Jewish commitment.

Apart from support for programs that enhance the realization of Aliyah, most of the communal commitment to Aliya is an extension of accepted programs to use Israel as an educational resource such as tourism, study in Israel, volunteer work in Israel or investment in Israel, etc.

It is true, of course, that the concept of Aliyah can be formulated in ways which run counter to the individual community's perception of its continuity or destiny. The point here is that it need not be formulated in this way.

In examining the three most contested concepts of Zionism by the Diaspora, it is evident that their interpretation can provide a basis for agreed or shared programs of action as well as a basis for criticism and division. The significant point is that no unequivocal interpretation of these concepts need be given.

Toward a Consensus Approach to Zionist Ideology

This survey of the historical, pragmatic, and conceptual perspectives of Zionist ideology is a preamble for a decision among options that have emerged during the course of the survey. Those options are the following.

1. The decision to avoid or bypass the ideological debate. The justification for this option is as follows. In the historic dispute among the conflicting ideological positions for a post-ghettoized Jewish community, the Zionist option has succeeded in that it achieved the State of Israel and a consensus of support for Israel.

Its ongoing tasks since then can be pursued best in pragmatic development of improved relationships with the Diaspora communities. As part of those relationships, Jews of the Diaspora and of Israel will interact on their shared problems from their differing environments. In the course of those interactions, mutual understandings, responsibilities and cooperation can be built.

Thus, significant communal responses to the deeply felt needs and aspirations of Israeli society will be generated. The terms of that process need not be locked into the polemical debates of the pre-State generation. It should reflect the accomplishments and the shortcomings that have developed during the first generation (40 years) of the relationship and which have set the basis for the next generation.

2. The decision to debate, discuss, confront the inherited assumptions of Zionist advocates within Israel.

In this view, the American Jewish-Israeli cooperation is so secure that it does not require papering over or avoiding the conceptual disagreements. Consequently, American Jews should candidly assert their hopes and fears about Jewish communal existence in the United States. This will include their concerns about education, assimilation, intermarriage, the quality of Jewish life, and so on. It will also include their commitment to improve Jewish society and the positive role Jews can play in American society. It can assert willingness to participate in the needs and vision of Israeli society while also recognizing the rootedness of the Jewish community in the United States and its responsiveness to the needs and vision of American society.

Such a discussion may result in a clarification of those things on which there is agreement and those on which there is disagreement. The practical relationships can then be pursued to mutual advantage without the persistence of illusions and apologetics that now interpose upon joint understanding. Pluralism requires that each community seek to understand the other in terms of its own self perception and self definition. Such an understanding may be a good thing even if it does not lead to convergence.

3. The decision to interpret or reinterpret the conceptual framework of Zionism in ways that stress the commonality of belief.

The pragmatic structures of interaction between Israel and the Jewish community provide the basis for many conceptual interpretations under which the American Jewish community is de facto or de jure, Zionist. The Jerusalem program is the primary illustration.

Even the exclusionary concept of Zionism permits interpretations which are consistent with the American Jewish consensus. American Jews are not opposed, as noted, to helping Americans find self-realization in Israel. They also support the ingathering of diverse Jewish communities to Israel.

Further, they are not opposed to educational programs that stress the significant potential of Israel for the historic Jewish condition. Such discussions would be rooted in shared historical experience, not in stereotypical criticism of earlier phases of Jewish life in the Diaspora. As a reflection of this commonality, there has been a revival of appreciation in Israel of lost or destroyed communities. (One illustration of this is that Israel is now the predominant center for the study of Yiddish culture.) Any formal discussion between the American Jewish community and Israel could provide a range of interpretations of Zionist concepts.

4. The decision to refocus the topic of discussion. It is possible to draw up an agenda derived from the current concerns of the Jewish and Israeli communities. These could include the concerns of the Israeli community for the successes as well as the failures of Zionism. A familiar example is the Zionist belief that the State would abolish world anti-Semitism. It has served to change the image of the Jew in ways which may have lessened one form of anti-Semitism, but has increased the risk of anti-Semitism based on Third World anti-Zionism. This is a perception shared by Israeli Zionists and Jews of the Diaspora.

Analogously, there are the concerns of the American community for the successes as well as the failures of its own Jewish experience. The vulnerability of Jewish youth to extremist patterns and/or to assimilation could be one example. The inadequacy of Jewish religious life in Israel or in America may be another.

The recognition of Zionism as a philosophy of Jewish experience in a post-modern period could suggest that programs be undertaken delineating new directions for Zionism for this second generation after the founding of the State. Patterns of practical collaboration can co-exist with periodic dialogues on the changing nature of the Jewish communities in Israel and the Diaspora. These options are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, a consistent set of them could be formulated in appropriate declarative or manifesto forms.

David Sidorsky



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המשלחת הקבועה
של ישראל לאומות המאוחדות

PERMANENT MISSION OF ISRAEL
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT IN THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY

BY

AMERICAN JEWISH
AMBASSADOR JOEL BARROMI, ISRAEL

ARCHIVES
IN THE

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

ITEM 75

31 OCTOBER 1984

זכר אלה יעקב וישראל

I cannot possibly in the time allotted to me refute in detail all the allegations made today by the representative of Iraq. I will refrain from referring to his numerous quotations from press and books. The technique of collage, of artfully arranging on the canvas pieces and bits of printed matter, is a well known one.

I shall only answer to his reference to Arnold Toynbee. Toynbee was a great, though dogmatic historian. His ideas, however, were certainly not progressive. In volume 1, page 54 of A Study of History, he made the following outrageous statement:

"The black races alone have not contributed to any civilization."

On page 161, he had this to say:

"Though Christian Abyssinia was admitted with some hesitation to membership in the League of Nations she was a by-word for disorder and barbarism. In fact the spectacle presented by one African State, apart from Liberia, that had retained its complete independence was perhaps the best justification that could be found for the partition of the rest of Africa among the European powers."

Does the delegate of Iraq suscribe to those assertions? Since he takes Toynbee as a standard, does he follow him and recommend a new partition of Africa among the European Powers?

Speaking of books: The representative of Iraq mentioned that the book From Time Immemorial by Joan Peters was considered by the New York Times reviewer to be polemical. Mrs. Peters is a distinguished public figure in the United States. She was a counsel to President Carter. Her book carries words of commendation by personalities such as the historians Barbara Tuchman and Lucy Dawidowicz, the famous demographer Philip Hauser, writers such as Saul Bellow and diplomats such as Justice Arthur Goldberg. Angier Biddle Duke, former ambassador to Morocco, calls it "an arresting scrupulously researched and documented account". The main question is the validity of the data that Mrs. Peters collected and of her penetrating historical and demographical analysis. The representative of Iraq had nothing to say in this respect. Can he deny that the British census of 1931 indicated that the Moslem population of Palestine spoke 23 different languages, including Afghan?

The representative of Iraq was remiss or careless on certain points. He wished to belittle the value of the statement made by Sir Winston Churchill in the British Parliament on Arab immigration into Palestine. He did so by referring to the MacDonald White Paper.

But the MacDonal White Paper was issued in 1931. He should have better checked. There was, of course, another British White Paper in 1939, in the epoch of the notorious policy of appeasement towards Nazi Germany and the Arab countries, which were considered potential allies of the Third Reich. We could elaborate on this subject and on Iraqi connections with the Nazi regime.

Finally, a minor point. The representative of Iraq mentioned the activities of Jewish organizations in Europe after World War II and said that they acted against UNRRA and that UNRRA is what UNRWA came from.

Actually, UNRRA was established in Washington on November 9, 1943, two years before the foundation of the UN. Its purpose was to bring urgent succor to Europe devastated by war and to the victims of the concentration camps. It did a good job helping those Jews. UNRRA had nothing to do with UNRWA. The representative of Iraq, again, should have better checked.

The delegate of Iraq accused my delegation of rewriting history and mentioned UN documents. However, he was unable to deny the central fact that the Arab delegations, including the Iraqi one, rejected the Blandford Plan and all other development plans. They insisted on political recipes, like repatriation, which means bringing back the clock of history.

One of the reasons why this return to 1947 is impossible is the expulsion of Jews from Arab countries.

Iraq's role in the question of the exodus of the Palestinian refugees was aptly described by Nimr Al Hawari, who was the commander of the paramilitary Arab Youth Organization in Palestine. In his book, The Secret Behind the Disaster, he wrote:

"Iraq's Prime Minister had thundered: 'We shall smash the country with our guns, and destroy and obliterate every place the Jews will seek shelter in. The Arabs should conduct their wives and children to safer areas till the fighting has died down'".

After the end of the hostilities, Iraq was the only country who refused to sign an armistice agreement with Israel and still takes pride in being at a state of war with my country. The Iraqi government avenged itself of the defeat it suffered in the field of battle by cruelly persecuting the hapless Jewish minority. Jews had lived on the shores of the rivers of Babylonia since the Sixth Century BCE, one thousand years before the Arab conquest. Mighty empires rose and fell, but the Jewish community in Mesopotamia continued its rich cultural and religious life. Many of the great figures of Jewish thought, wisdom and piety lived there.

All this was abruptly brought to an end. In 1948, Zionism was declared a crime. Jews were imprisoned and some of them publicly hanged. In 1950, 120,000 Jews fled from Iraq and found a new haven in Israel. The Iraqi government confiscated their properties, buildings, lands, personal effects, banking accounts. Their belongings were sold by public auction. Only a handful of Jews managed to remain. They were exposed to ill treatment, threats and executions. On 27 January 1969, nine Jews were hanged, again publicly in Baghdad. On 25 August of the same year, two more Jews were similarly executed.

Iraq therefore shares with the other Arab countries the guilt of the 1948 war and of the Palestinian refugee problem and is directly responsible for the sufferings and flight of the Iraqi Jews.

Of course, not only Jews were victims of Iraq's persecutions. Many have forgotten the massacre of Christian Assyrians in 1933, whose case was debated in the League of Nations. The present Iraqi regime exceeds its predecessors in its sadistic treatment of minorities such as the Kurds and of its own citizens. A detailed documentation is to be found in Amnesty International reports. Iraq is the country where prisoners were given rat poison, and which employed mustard gas in its war against Iran. Iraq's capital, Baghdad, was the headquarters of the Rejection Front which fought against the Israeli-Egyptian peace. Baghdad was also and still is a major center of international terrorism.

Countries like Iraq, or for that matter, its enemy Iran, are the shame of our time. Its representative may speak softly here, but the country he represents stands for violence, injustice, savagery and discrimination. It was to save humanity permanently from those scourges that the United Nations were erected.



HELEN DAVIS

Israel Correspondent

Jerusalem — The business of deciding who will run the Jewish Agency-World Zionist Organization for the next four years may well dominate the four-day Zionist Congress, which opens in Jerusalem on December 6.

Indeed, the leadership issue is expected to be so overwhelming that all other substantive issues are likely to be submerged beneath the politicking and recriminations.

In the week leading up to the congress — which will be attended by 700 delegates and some 2,000 alternates and observers — the issue remained wide open, with both Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir (Likud) and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres (Labor) deeply involved in the selection of candidates.

The Israel Labor Party's initial candidate for the post of chairman, current Jewish Agency/WZO Treasurer Akiva Lewinsky, has finally bowed out of the contest after tense weeks of foot-dragging.

But he did not leave without taking a swipe at the Diaspora fundraisers in the Jewish Agency Board of Governors for vetoing his candidacy, and at his own party for failing to stand by him in his moment of greatest need.

Lewinsky, a kibbutznik

"There could be fireworks," noted a Jewish Agency source, "unless the various parties are satisfied with the deals that are being cut this week."

who has served the Labor Party and the Zionist movement for almost 50 years, told Labor's central committee last week that the intervention of the fundraisers violated the rules of partnership within the Zionist movement and represented a "grave development" in Israel's relations with the Diaspora.

For all that, the political demise of 70-year-old Lewinsky has been greeted with barely disguised relief by

Labor Party officials.

The party had feared an internal schism with Lewinsky's backers, the powerful United Kibbutz Movement, which declared itself to be outraged that a small group of Diaspora fundraisers could veto a decision of the Labor Party.

Labor's central committee is meanwhile expected to nominate another candidate for the post of chairman from among three men: Knesset Member Mordechai Gur, former chief of staff and health minister; Knesset Member Simcha Dinitz, former Ambassador to the United States; and Nissim Zvili, chairman of the Jewish Agency's Settlement Department.

None of the three, however, has generated much enthusiasm among Jewish Agency or WZO professionals.

Gur was described by one WZO source as having been a "disaster" as health minister in the national unity government — a post he resigned when Shamir took over as prime minister from Peres. "Gur," warned the source, "would leave the place in ruins."

Simcha Dinitz is regarded as able and clever, but not necessarily the man to effect the urgent changes needed in the Zionist movement. "People in the organization are afraid that he would not be totally committed to getting things done," said the source.

Tunisian-born Nissim Zvili, on the other hand, is regarded as a dedicated worker who has a comprehensive understanding of the Jewish Agency and the WZO, a man who thinks independently and speaks well and to the point. His English is fluent and he is young and attractive.

But Zvili, in his early forties, is considered to be too young and inexperienced for the job and is unlikely to find favor with the fundraisers. His chances of election might also be hampered by the fact that Israel's settlements are in parlous state — a predicament for which he must share at least some of the blame.

The Likud's unofficial candidate, Science Minister Gideon Patt, has also failed to generate excitement, despite an extended trip to the United States where he sought to endear himself to key fundraisers and American Zionist leaders.

As the week of decision approached, there was



Arye Dulzin: Calling for fusion



Akiva Lewinsky: An outgoing swipe

The Zionists Bite Back

On the eve of the World Zionist Congress showdown, bitterness between Israel and Diaspora leaders is playing itself out over who will be elected chairman.

speculation in Jerusalem that the Likud might instead put forward such bright young men as Knesset Members Dan Meridor or Ehud Olmert.

There is even talk of the Likud wheeling out a real heavyweight like Moshe Arens, former defense minister, Ambassador to Washington and a man often spoken of as a possible successor to

Shamir as party leader.

With his American background and generally high standing among Diaspora communities, Arens could prove to be a hard candidate to beat. But even if he does agree to run, he could face legal difficulties if he insists on retaining his Knesset seat while serving as chairman of the Jewish Agency and WZO.

According to WZO sources,

the Zionist Congress intends to settle the leadership issue as quickly as possible in order to concentrate on the "Zionist issues" that fill its agenda.

That, however, is considered to be little more than a pious hope. Instead, it seems likely that the business of electing a new bunch of top officials — and the role played by the fundraisers in torpedoing Akiva Lewinsky — could

devour much of the four days.

It could even, say WZO sources, boil over into open rebellion by Israeli "old-timers" who find the new, assertive mood of Diaspora leaders too much to stomach.

An indication of the depth of this feeling was contained in an indignant letter to the Jerusalem Post by veteran Israeli politician Moshe Kol, one of just three surviving signatories of Israel's Declaration of Independence.

The fundraisers, wrote Kol, "don't understand anything about the important work of the departments of the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization. They want to destroy the democracy of the world Zionist movement. Who authorized them to make such demands? Did they ask American Jewry or world Jewry?" he asked. "Thank God that such so-called leaders had nothing to say 40 years ago when the State of Israel was born and American Jewry struggled with us for our independence. If such so-called leaders would have represented American Jewry then, who would have struggled for our independence?"

Such bitterness, given voice at the congress, could drag the whole issue of the Diaspora-Israel partnership out into the open, whether most delegates want it or not. And the results of such a debate would be unpredictable.

For while outgoing WZO Jewish Agency chairman Arye Dulzin has repeatedly called for "fusion" of the Diaspora fundraisers and the Zionists, there are others who believe that the time has come to break up the 16-year partnership.

Five months ago, delegates to the Jewish Agency Assembly carefully avoided this issue. The Thirty First Zionist Congress might not, however, be so circumspect.

"There could be fireworks," noted a Jewish Agency source, "unless the various parties are satisfied with the deals that are being cut this week."

The leadership issue is not the only subject that is likely to drown out discussion of such mainline Zionist issues as immigration, settlement, Jewish education and demography.

Two non-agenda items — religious pluralism and the question of an international Middle East peace conference

are expected to be raised and hotly debated.

A powerful Reform-Conservative coalition is likely to push hard for some kind of declarative action on the Orthodox stranglehold in Israel — a move that will predictably be fiercely resisted by the Orthodox Mizrahi bloc.

The peace conference debate is expected to be promoted by the Labor Party whose leader, Shimon Peres, is its most ardent advocate and who has declared that the issue should be a matter of frank and open discussion in the Diaspora.

The Likud, which opposes such a conference and which insists that the subject is a strictly Israeli affair, will try to block any such debate, but it might not succeed.

"A lot of delegates," said a source, "will want to prove that the Zionist movement is still debating the great issues. At the same time, it might give them an opportunity to avoid the real nitty-gritty problems that threaten the whole Jewish Agency-WZO set-up."

Another controversial item is whether outgoing chairman Dulzin should be rewarded with the post of president of the Zionist movement — a role which was last filled by the late Nahum Goldmann.

According to one source, Dulzin is pushing hard for the job, but his success is by no means assured: "A lot of people, including Lewinsky, have scores to settle with him," said the source, "and they might just use the issue to make their point."

Whatever the outcome of the congress, there is no doubt that the leadership struggle — and the prospect of real heat and passion — has generated an unusual level of public interest in Israel.

The Israeli media has carried a number of articles and opinion pieces on the Jewish Agency-WZO crisis in recent weeks. Some have included demands that the entire edifice be dismantled; others have called for a "reconstruction" that would free the Jewish Agency and WZO of the thrall of party politics.

The result is that many Israelis who would not normally have been aware that a Zionist Congress was happening in their midst, will be following next week's deliberations with interest — and with the expectation of seeing blood on the floor. □



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