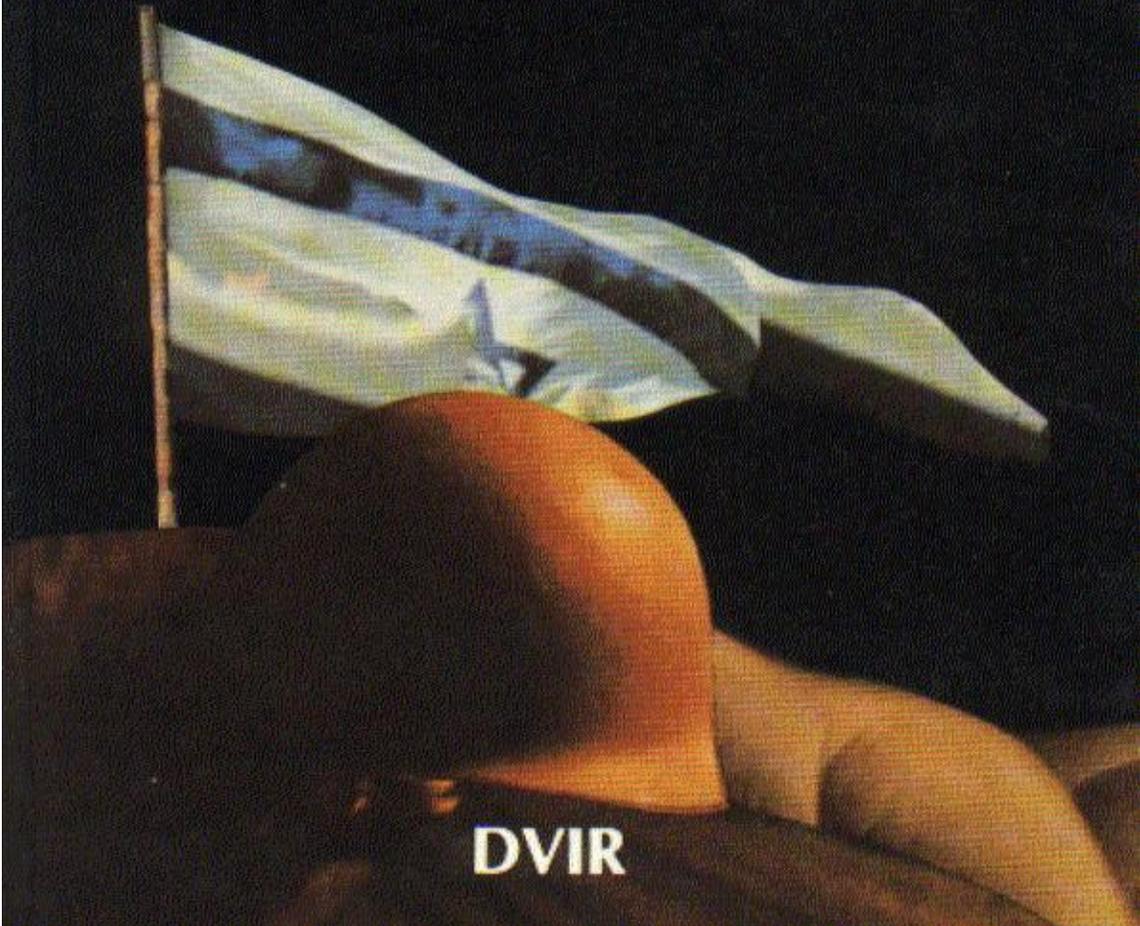


Shmuel Katz

BATTLETRUTH
The World and Israel



DVIR

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Author's Foreword

The one hundred articles and essays in the book naturally present an ongoing commentary on the turbulent stream of the history of the five years — 1978-1982 — in which they were written. Yet their scope embraces issues and events that go back years — to the Six-Day War of 1967, sometimes three decades to 1948 and the birth of Israel, further back to the aftermath of World War I and, occasionally, to earlier annals of the Jewish and Arab peoples.

These events and issues are all relevant and have remained relevant: the passage of time has not staled them. The problems faced by Israel have not fundamentally been solved; and the system for dealing with them too has, regrettably, not improved — in spite of the great change in public style of the government that took office in Israel in 1977.

Nor, broadly speaking, has there been a substantial change in the direction of events relating to the major international phenomenon of our time — the global confrontation between “east” and “west”; and this too is, I think, reflected in this book. Some of the events examined here may of course be classified as “past history” — yet their imprint is an essential aid not only to understanding what is happening today, but also to glimpsing what is likely to develop tomorrow.

This is probably why I agreed to have my contributions to the commentary of the time gathered together in a book. Thus concentrated — they do, as I find, reveal and reflect a pattern, a “plan” in the trend of events, and a “character” in the behaviour of men and their establishments which should be studied and from which salutary lessons may be learned.

I owe a special debt of appreciation to my friend Yisrael Medad of Shiloh who, given a free hand, read through some 300 pieces in order to make the selection for the book. I have not made a single change in his selection.

I have only added one choice of my own: the Afterword on Zéev Jabotinsky. It is not part of the theme of the book; but I was seized with the feeling that so comprehensive a personal statement would not be complete without a word on the man whose influence on my thinking seems to me to remain undimmed even now, in the fifth decade after his death.

Most of the contents of the book were published in the *Jerusalem Post*. The remainder appeared only in *Maariv* and have been translated especially for inclusion here. They are marked accordingly. My thanks are due to both papers.

Tel Aviv, June 1983

Relations with United States Between Begin's Peace Plan and the Camp David Agreement

The "Peace Plan" Is Defunct

What remains of the Israeli Government's "peace plan"? The only rational justification for the submission of a plan which indisputably contains far-reaching risks is that its authors, after weighing all the factors, had come to the conclusion, or had been given some clear hint, that this was a plan that would indeed bring peace. The only rational explanation for accepting the risks was that at least the Egyptians are prepared to make peace with Israel on her terms.

It transpires that this explanation is hollow. President Sadat declared in his speech in the Knesset (on 20 November) that he regards Israel's withdrawal "from all the Arab lands" captured in the 1967 war as a self-understood prelude to negotiations. On territories, he said, there is no room for negotiations. They belong to the Arabs, and "that is that".

There were those who believed, (and most people did believe) that this was merely an opening statement, dictated by the sanctified rules of negotiation. By now, however, they have seen, through the meetings in Jerusalem and at Ismailia, through the talks — official and unofficial — between the delegations, and following the publication of the details of the far-reaching concessions offered to Sadat before ever negotiations started, how Sadat continues to insist that there is absolutely no question of negotiating over territories, and that Israel must withdraw from them all. The Egyptians have asserted moreover, in ever ascending tones of anger, that Israel's refusal to comply is an act of intolerable intransigence.

Sadat added a dramatic dimension to the rejection of the Israeli plan by brusquely withdrawing his delegation from the political commission in Jerusalem; and the unconcealed purpose of his present visit to Washington is to influence the Administration to exert pressure on Israel to accept his peace plan, that is Israel's withdrawal from all the territories, etc., and recognition of the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination, etc. There are no signs, nor need it be assumed, that he has achieved this purpose. Pressure, as understood by Sadat, will not be exerted. But after

his talk with President Carter, Sadat gave renewed incisive and emphatic expression to his unchanging and unyielding demands.

* * *

There were those who believed that the government was certain from the outset that the Arabs could not accept its plan, but calculated that its readiness for such extreme concessions would evoke a friendly public opinion throughout the world, and that the US government would take a firm stand in its support. Indeed the Prime Minister claimed, and reiterated from a variety of forums, that the plan had won praise and support from the heads of the American administration.

The plan, however, was not accorded praise and support as a peace plan. Certainly, President Carter and his assistants rejoiced at its details. After all, without the unpleasantness and pitfalls of tiresome bargaining, Israel had taken a great step forward towards acceptance of the American point of view. When it became clear, however, that Sadat was not accepting the plan, President Carter did not come out against Sadat's rejection (which would be the logical corollary of US support, for the Israeli plan), nor did he defend the plan. On the contrary: he found the occasion appropriate for repeating the traditional American position that Israel *must withdraw* to the 1949 Armistice lines (with insubstantial modifications) — and even added that it was now time for Israel to be flexible (that is: to add further concessions to those in the “peace plan”).

The proposed “compromise” therefore just does not work. Both the Arabs and the Americans regard the plan only as a first “installment-on account” of a total Israeli withdrawal.

* * *

I was one of those that believed in November, when Sadat announced his intention of coming to Jerusalem, that his decision was the result of the critical state of the Egyptian economy; that the very distressing picture of urban Cairo and the grim economic forecasts submitted to him by foreign experts (and publicized abroad) had driven him, after much heart-searching, to the conclusion that Egypt could no longer sustain a policy of perpetual preparation for war, that there was simply no escape for her leaders from a reduction of her investment in the army and in security measures; and that they must concentrate all their energy and their resources on treating the ailing body of the Egyptian people. They must,

therefore (so I assumed they reasoned) reach a speedy peace agreement with Israel — and postpone the dream of her elimination to an indefinite future.

Maybe this belief was not mistaken. Had the Israeli government embarked upon negotiations with Egypt in the accepted rational way, it would have begun by ordering a survey of the degree of gravity in Egypt's economic condition, the weight of the circumstances pressing Sadat to abandon his war economy and, hence, the compulsions moving him to make substantive concessions for peace with Israel. Such a rational study develops naturally in the course of negotiations. However, the adversary's intentions can be probed in this way only if the negotiations are opened without prior conditions — meaning, in our case, without prior concessions by Israel.

The Israeli Government, however, acted according to other, completely novel rules. It started by flourishing a plan which promised Sadat, in advance, sovereignty over the whole of Sinai. This Israeli generosity ruled out any possibility of testing Sadat's desire for peace. Instead of having to apply all his energies to opening the gate, Sadat found the gate already open. If previously the thought of the price he might have to pay for peace had given him sleepless nights, they disappeared at the first contact with Israel. It can be assumed that Sadat concluded that the State of Israel and its people were most intense in their desire to achieve peace with him — and, in doing so, ignore completely the history of Egypt's belligerence towards Israel and forgive Sadat his own past.

Consequently he was not called upon to make any substantive sacrifice. On the contrary: he could continue to insist on the fulfilment of all the demands made on Israel by the coalition of Arab States. Instead of having to struggle for every inch of territory in Sinai, he was being offered Sinai for almost nothing. He was free, therefore to concentrate his main effort on the struggle for "the rights of the Palestinians" and on Israeli surrender of the Golan.

Whether this thesis is correct or whether he would in no case have allowed his economic difficulties to soften his attitude — we shall perhaps never know. His intransigent stand on the "traditional" Arab demands certainly leaves little room for doubt. We must now act on the assumption that, even if Sadat wants peace, the peace that he envisions does not also permit peace for Israel. There is no escape from the assumption that Sadat has not abandoned the Arab purpose of bringing about the liquidation of Israel in stages as an operative target.

The Prime Minister's words in the Knesset on 23 January indicate that he is alive to this implication of Sadat's pronouncements and behaviour. He said in that speech:

The President of Egypt has said that we are expected to withdraw to the lines of 5 June 1967, to come down from the Golan, to abandon Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Let him take note that as he makes these demands on us and adds a Palestinian State in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, we must construe these unacceptable demands as meaning that he does not want peace with Israel but peace without Israel. Nobody will give him that kind of peace.

* * *

In Sadat's pronouncements since then — and especially at his Press Conference in Washington, which received very wide publicity — there is not the smallest sign that he has changed one jot in his attitude. On the contrary, he continues to present "these demands" confidently and emphatically, even arrogantly. What is more his demands are treated as legitimate. They conform almost completely to the American point of view.

It is clear therefore that there is no scope for the Israeli Government's peace plan. Even its authors and its original supporters must now recognize the cruel truth that, as a plan with operational significance, it is dead.

True, the proper time for its retraction was when Sadat broke off the negotiations — when he unilaterally ordered his delegation to leave the Political Commission in Jerusalem. Certainly, however, after his clear and abrasive utterances in Washington and the inescapable conclusion that he does not intend (and he is now unable publicly) to give serious consideration to the "peace plan" as it stands — the Israeli government must surely announce its withdrawal. It is the right of the proposer — indeed, as the Prime Minister emphasized, it is his right under international law as well — to withdraw it when the other party to negotiations refuses to accept it. In the combination of circumstances in which we find ourselves this right becomes an obligation.

* * *

If the Government does not now withdraw the peace plan and President Sadat — after having told the world what his demands are — finds it convenient to renew the talks in the Political Commission in Jerusalem, the Israeli Government will find itself caught up in a set of negotiations resting on two premises:

Egypt accepts the concessions offered by Israel in the peace plan, and these will not be discussed further.

Discussion will centre on further concessions designed to bring Israel nearer still to total withdrawal “from all the territories” and to a formula on the “future of the Palestinians” which Egypt will be able to see as a step forward towards recognition of their “legitimate rights”.

These postulates will be common to Egyptians and Americans alike. It is possible to escape this trap now, immediately, as a logical and dignified response by Israel to Sadat’s intransigence. It is possible to withdraw now in logic and dignity, to cancel the present peace plan and to announce our readiness to open negotiations on a new basis. The new basis will take into account the lessons learnt in recent months. The first of them is that there will be no security for Israel except where there is Israeli sovereignty. Ma’ariv 10.2.78

How Begin’s Initiative Became “The Sadat Initiative”

Before our very eyes Anwar Sadat has succeeded for the third time in six years in pulling the wool over the whole world’s eyes. In July 1972 the sensational report was published of a drastic change in the relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union. Sadat announced the expulsion of the Soviet “advisers” and for many months thereafter noisy charges and counter-charges were exchanged, with Cairo claiming that the Soviets had refused to comply with its requests for supplies of vital armaments.

In fact that breach in relations was one of the most successful hoaxes of the century — if not the most successful. Behind the mutual recriminations the movement of Soviet arms to Egyptian ports continued unabated. The whole crisis served for 15 months as a smokescreen for Egyptian preparations, with Soviet aid, for the Yom Kippur attack on Israel.

After 1973 the Egyptians did not conceal their feelings of justified pride at the success of their deception. A detailed description of the many-sided and many-pronged operation, whose secret was so wonderfully

maintained, appeared in a book written by the military correspondent of the weekly *Raz el Youssuf*, "The Six-Hour War". The author had been given access to secret documents. Later on, Sadat himself revealed (in a radio address on the second anniversary of the Yom Kippur War) that the expulsion of the Soviet advisers had been "a strategic deception... a splendid stratagem in the preparations for war".

Sadat thus showed himself a wily tactician of the highest order, a leader capable of presiding over a complex of diversionary operations, and of maintaining a pretence of altogether imaginary international relations for a considerable period. In the light of this revelation one can only marvel at the naiveté of the Western statesmen when, after open collaboration between Egypt and the Soviets had been renewed during the Yom Kippur War and thereafter, Sadat began again to project the picture of a break with the U.S.S.R. Again a loud dispute began over the question of supply or non-supply of arms. In spite of the warnings of specialists and students of Soviet-Egyptian relations that a new hoax was being perpetrated, the decision-makers in Washington clung to the notion that their policy of appeasing Egypt (at Israel's expense) was achieving the expulsion of the Soviets from Egypt.

A week ago columnist Jack Anderson revealed in the *Washington Post* that in fact the U.S.S.R. continued to fulfill Egyptian orders for arms after 1973 and even restored the losses in arms sustained by Egypt in the war.

Now, since November 1977, Sadat has succeeded in throwing dust in the eyes of the world for the third time. Only this time the Israeli Government has been helping him.

* * *

According to reports in the media, as well as official statements and incidental revelations, it would appear that one fine morning, when Sadat was on his way from a visit to Rumania, the idea flashed into his mind that he should pay a visit to Jerusalem in order to seek a way of making peace with Israel. According to him the idea came to him as the result of President Ceaucescu's words in praise of Begin, whom he described as a serious and strong man. Thereafter, in a speech in the Egyptian Parliament, ostensibly carried away by his own words about his desire for peace, Sadat added an impromptu statement that for the sake of peace he was prepared to travel to the ends of the earth, even to the Knesset in Jerusalem.

Because of this initiative Sadat has become a world figure of historic dimensions. Throughout the world, and particularly in the U.S., he has been accorded a measure of glorification usually reserved for cinema stars and sports champions.

The reaction of the Israeli Government — again according to the reports published throughout the world — was immediate and positive. No sooner had Sadat's readiness to come to Jerusalem become known than a hearty invitation was extended to him. Even the President of the United States would not expect a more enthusiastic welcome than that accorded to Sadat on his arrival in Israel. The warmth of Israel's welcome, however, did not make much impression in the world. Even the news that in response to Sadat's initiative Israel had offered him all of Sinai (with full sovereignty, though with a provision for an Israeli presence in two percent of its area) caused no excitement in the world. Sadat remained, and has remained to this day, an international hero. The "Sadat initiative" has captured the imagination of the world. In public opinion, as well as in the diplomatic world, Israel has suffered a stunning defeat.

For some reason the leaders and spokesmen of Israel, and its Information services — as far as they exist — have concealed the fact that the story of a Sadat initiative is a hoax, that the initiative for a sensational revolution in relations between Israel and Egypt did not come from Sadat at all, but from Begin. When Sadat announced, as though proclaiming a vision, that he was prepared to come to Jerusalem, and when jubilation greeted the news that he was actually coming, he already had in his pocket Begin's promise that he could have all of Sinai.

* * *

The Ha'aretz newspaper reported on 1 March that the offer of Sinai (in all its detail) was first made to Egypt not after Sadat's "surprise" visit, but in two earlier secret meetings of Foreign Minister Dayan in Morocco with emissaries of Sadat.

In place of the legend of the "Sadat initiative", the truth emerges roughly as follows:

- a) The Prime Minister, during his visit to Rumania (at the end of August, 1977) revealed to President Ceaucescu the far-reaching concessions that Israel was prepared to make;
- b) When Sadat later came to Bucharest, Ceaucescu gave him this news and Sadat conceived (perhaps, as he has claimed, in the plane) the

- brilliant idea of coming to Jerusalem and thus converting Begin's initiative into the "Sadat initiative";
- c) Dayan met his representatives (in mid-September) and conveyed to them the details of the proposal (including the security measures for the return of Sinai to Egypt's hands, now with sovereignty);
 - d) Sadat (in November) announced his readiness to come to Jerusalem. Begin invited him to come, he came, and the world went overboard in praise of Sadat;
 - e) In "response" the Prime Minister (in December) drafted the "peace plan" for Sinai (as well as for Judea and Samaria) and brought it to President Carter for his comments ostensibly "before it was presented to Sadat".

* * *

No wonder Sadat made the most of the opportunity and applied his tremendous talents as an actor and as a tactician to extracting, to the last ounce, the political profit and the glory thus offered to him on a platter. It is incredible, but there it is: the Israeli leaders actively collaborated with Sadat in disseminating his untruth which stole the "show" from their truth — with all the grim implications for the contest to win public opinion.
Ma'ariv 8.3.78

The Prime Minister is Heading for a Trap

Defence Minister Ezer Weizman has already managed to recompense the US administration handsomely for the honour accorded him by President Carter in inviting him to a private meeting just a week before the visit of the Prime Minister to Washington. Has such an invitation, and its positive response, ever been heard of in the history of relations between democratic states in our day?

Israel's status in Washington has deteriorated considerably ever since her leaders manifested the policy of subservience (or "co-ordination") to American official "ideas", and the extent of their readiness to bend their declared political principles — beginning (in September 1977) with the grotesque idea of confining settlements in military camps (in Judea and

Samaria). This provided the first signal to Washington that it is possible to achieve retreats by this government from the policy of the straight back and common sense.

That is why the sources in the administration quoted in the media do not bother to hide the fact that the invitation to Weizman is an act of recognition of his more pliant attitude towards American demands. It is evident that the administration intends to work through him in order to achieve a “moderation” of the Prime Minister’s position on the subjects in dispute between the two governments, and to make him a party to the attempt to bring the Prime Minister closer to complete surrender to the American outlook, that is: to the Arabs’ demands.

The Defence Minister was not content with his firm stand against the entry of the Kadesh Barnea settlers to their lands, a stand transparently designed to ensure him the warmest possible reception in Washington as the most obedient child among the members of the Israeli government. No sooner had he arrived in New York than he expressed himself demonstratively (even threatening to resign) against the continuation of the preparatory work at Nebi Salah, where a nucleus of settlers, with official permission, is already in place.

To make assurance doubly sure he exploited the first opportunity — within hours, at a gathering of Israeli emissaries in New York — to lecture the Jewish people. In harsh terms reminiscent of the tone used by Israel’s adversaries in the State Department, Mr. Weizman announced that Israel “cannot do everything she would like to do” (for example to settle the land, or to take decisions according to her own judgment). His remarks unquestionably brought joy to all the friends of the Arabs in Washington. It is however a disturbing fact that his attitude on Jewish settlement is only a sharpened version of the policy that appears to be shaping in the government as a whole. When on the eve of his departure for the US he forbade the Kadesh Barnea settlers from taking possession of their land, his edict gained considerable added authority when it was given support by the Prime Minister. It appears that he was thus confirming that the Government’s decision last week “not to decide” really meant “to freeze”. It is public knowledge after all that these pioneers have for a full year been preparing to establish themselves on the land, with letters of authorization from the Alignment government and from the Zionist Organization. No extensive legal training is needed in order to understand that it would have been perfectly logical to ensure that a decision to freeze does not apply to Kadesh Barnea. Letting the settlement at Kadesh Barnea proceed would not have affected in the least the sanctity of the government’s decision “to freeze”.

Confirmation of the ban — and of the freeze itself — point to an intention, certainly to an inclination. The choice of negatives in the Government's actions and decisions — “to prevent”, to “forbid”, “not to act” — suggest the adoption of the American point of view that the establishment of settlements are an obstacle to negotiations and an obstacle to the peace process. The announcement of the Defence Minister after he reached Washington from New York (and a similar statement by Deputy Premier Yigael Yadin) that now, officially and formally, new settlements and even the thickening of old ones would be frozen until after the Prime Minister's visit to Washington — are a serious blow to the future of the settlement policy altogether.

Have the members of the “Likud” government suddenly erased from their minds the understanding that acceptance of the argument that the settlements are an obstacle to the peace process, is equivalent to adopting the argument that we are the reason for the absence of peace in Eretz Yisrael, that peace came to an end with the “occupation” of 1967, and that the restoration of peace requires only our departure from “the territories”? After all, we have asserted — and what could be more true, and how heavy is the price in blood forced upon us in learning this truth — that the absence of peace in this country is due not to these or those “territories”, or one settlement or another, or to our presence in one part of the country or another, but to the desire and the purpose of the Arabs to liquidate the Jewish State completely. We know, after all, the extent of the tactics being used against us (or has this been forgotten in the corridors of government), how clear is the attempt to lull us into sleepy acquiescence of the proposition that we should make “only” a partial concession, or only a temporary suspension of Zionist activity.

A suspension of settlement, however, even if intended as only “temporary” is burdened with implications very much deeper and more far-reaching. After all the concession is designed to satisfy the desire of the Arabs — who oppose any Israeli presence. Their opposition is a function of their claim that the country belongs to them. Our settlement is an expression of our ownership of the land. A suspension of our settlement as a result of their opposition inevitably conveys recognition of the legitimacy of their claim, and a weakening, to the same degree, of our claim that the country belongs to the Jewish people. This is an understatement. Any concession, and especially if publicly-declared, on the establishment of

settlements, adds strength to the forces working for our eviction from Judea and Samaria.

The Prime Minister will now be faced by a concentration of these forces on his visit to Washington. That, after all, is why Carter invited him to come.

* * *

The present visit to Washington is in the nature of things altogether a trap — a trap shaped by the government with its own hands. As long as it does not retract the concessions included in its “peace plan”, the talks in Washington will turn exclusively on further concessions. What does President Carter want to achieve now? His purpose is not secret, and it is constant. When he uttered praises in the December talks for the “peace plan” presented him by the Prime Minister, and asserted that it represented a fair basis, it was clear that he meant that he found in it a measure of progress towards the consummation of the American aim. The essence of this purpose is the surrender by Israel of all of Sinai, of Judea and Samaria, of Gaza and the Golan (with minor modifications here and there). Latterly the American outlook has been broadened by a new clause, one that has not been mentioned in the past, not even in the Rogers Plan: the return of refugees. Carter calls it “internal migration”. A paragraph on this subject (it is one of the most dangerous paragraphs) was included in the Prime Minister’s “peace plan”, and Carter regards it as an important step towards the “Arabization” of Judea and Samaria.

The government’s choosing to ignore the fact that neither the Arabs nor the Americans have accepted the plan only makes it easier for them to base their demands on those clauses in the plan which they do accept. The President has thus made up his mind as to how he will use the plan as a jumping-off ground towards his goal. All the threads he needs are in the plan. According to the statements he made to the delegation of Jewish leaders whom he received in the White House on 8 February, he will call on the Prime Minister to make the following changes in the peace plan:

- a) That the plan should not be revised but cancelled at the end of five years.
- b) That at the end of five years a plebiscite should be held among the residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. They will decide, and they alone, whether these areas should be included in the Kingdom of Jordan or in Israel.

- c) That during the five years Israeli army units will be concentrated in camps along the Jordan and near the “Green Line”, but will not be seen in the area as a whole.
- d) During the five years the Commissions consisting of Israeli, Palestinian Arab and Jordanian representatives, will function in regard to two central subjects: preparing the plebiscite and making arrangements for the return of refugees.

Israel will be asked to endorse this programme on the grounds that this will facilitate the continuation of “momentum”. Failure on Israel’s part to accede will reverberate through all the American and Arab channels of propaganda — as further proof that it is Israel that is obstructing the peace process.

* * *

The government knows that its peace plan remains in the field only as a scaffolding for the plans of the American administration and of the Arabs. It knows the details (more or less) of the President’s plan. The Prime Minister has accepted the President’s invitation; he is consequently travelling towards the trap with open eyes.

Ma’ariv 10.3.78

Mark Siegel Opened a Window

The resignation of Mark Siegel from his post as President Carter’s liaison officer with the Jewish community of the United States is an event whose importance extends beyond its immediate implications. It opens an additional window onto a cold and disturbing political landscape. Mr. Siegel is a young man with an impressive record in public life. Before coming to the White House he served as the Executive Secretary of the Democratic Party executive. At the White House he also acted as the liaison officer with the Party.

Speaking at a Jewish rally some days before his resignation, he explained the emotional sources of his outlook. “I am an American,” he said, “I am a Jew, and I am a confirmed Zionist”. Yet a man who joined the stable of the President of the United States in enthusiastic belief in the man and in his policies, and who had a close personal relationship with

him, would not give up his position — and thus also perhaps disrupt his political career — unless he had very weighty reasons.

Siegel resigned with dignity, out of motives that do him honour as a Jew, as an American — and as a person. He resigned in protest against the administration's policy towards Israel as reflected in the United States' part in building up the military power of the Arabs, particularly of Saudi Arabia. His step serves to draw attention to the gradual development of a new and most tangible military danger on Israel's south-eastern border. The public in Israel should open its eyes to the fact that a fourth front is being prepared for us.

Ever since the Yom Kippur War a variegated pattern of arms purchases has become evident in Saudi Arabia. These include hundreds of planes, fighting and transport, hundreds of tanks, thousands of missiles and bombs of different types, artillery and ships. The Saudis do not buy exclusively from the US. They are buying also from France, Italy and Britain. In the past it was widely assumed that Saudi Arabia is acquiring arms mainly as the financier of her sister Arab States and storing them until required. This no doubt is still true, but the accumulating facts point to a new direction and a new purpose: in case of war Saudi Arabia will open a front of her own against Israel.

* * *

This is one of the reasons for the sharp opposition aroused in both Houses of the U.S. Congress and in a section of the media by the administration's decision to supply the Saudis and the Egyptians with warplanes parallel with supplies being made to Israel. There is a continuing alertness manifested among public figures in the US to the danger of supplying offensive arms to the Arab states. Among those who vigorously denounced such supplies in the past was Mr. Jimmy Carter. When the Ford administration sold Saudi Arabia 1650 "Maverick" ground-to-air missiles Mr. Carter (on 30 September 1976 — before he was elected) said some hard things:

"There is no reason to suppose", he said, "that these missiles will add to the security and the stability of the Middle East. There is no reason to suppose that they can be used only for defensive purposes. No administration sensitive to the climate in the Middle East would allow such a deal to be transacted... When it adds arms to the Arab States in the

Middle East without limiting quantity or quality, it undermines our commitment to Israel”.

Now, when the majority on the International Relations Committee of the Senate called for a re-examination of the decision to supply F-15 planes to Saudi Arabia, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance replied:

“Saudi Arabia is of tremendous importance in the promotion of a policy of moderation in connection with the peace process and other initiatives and — in a broader context — in world affairs like monetary and oil policy”.

From other pronouncements in Washington it emerges that the administration has suddenly discovered that supplying offensive arms to Egypt and to Saudi Arabia will only increase stability to the Middle East. It is its passion for this “stability” that has given birth to its pressure on Congress. Flourishing a “package deal” before the eyes of the members of Congress, the administration threatens: “Either arms for all, or none for Israel either”.

* * *

The package deal contains two disturbing negative features. First, while Saudi Arabia is to receive the full quantity of planes she ordered — Israel is to receive only something more than half of her order. Far more serious are the implications of the fact that Israel’s order derives from a right which she had acquired earlier — and at a heavy price. In the “partial agreement” of 1975 the Israeli government gave in to American pressure and surrendered her only source of oil in Sinai as well as the strategic Mitla and Gidi passes. In return for the sacrifice made by Israel in order to help Washington improve US relations with Egypt, Washington undertook to fulfill Israel’s requirements in planes.

This adds one more American breach of undertaking to the series of such breaches, all of strategic import to Israel, spread over practically the whole life-span of the State.

In 1950 the US gave Israel an undertaking — together with Britain and France — to guarantee the 1949 Armistice lines. This undertaking turned out to be a dead letter.

In 1957, after the Sinai Campaign, Israel withdrew from Sinai and from the Gaza district under heavy American pressure. In return an

undertaking was given Israel by the US (together with other nations) that the closing of the Straits of Tiran would be regarded as an act of aggression, which would be resisted by them all. When Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran in May 1967 (and after Egyptian forces had been concentrated in Sinai, and Syrian forces on the Golan) Washington was even unable to find the document containing the 1957 undertaking.

In 1970 the US initiated an agreement between Israel and Egypt for a cease-fire and a “standstill” of arms which had been brought into action during the War of Attrition. The ink had hardly dried on the agreement when the Egyptians moved their SAM-6 missiles down to the Suez Canal. The US Government declined for weeks to admit that it knew the missiles had been moved, and subsequently refrained from taking action to have them removed.

Who can measure how much Israeli blood was shed, and what part the missiles played in the success of the Egyptian offensive at the opening, three years later, of the Yom- Kippur War?

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Now a further dimension has been revealed of the US administration’s indifference, not to say cynicism, towards Israel’s security. For example, Secretary of State Vance minimizes the importance of the acquisition of French “Mirage” planes by Egypt; and administration spokesmen, without batting an eyelid, disseminate the expert opinion that the Saudis and the Egyptians will not use against Israel the planes they are buying from the US.

Above all — the administration is actively covering up for the Saudi Arabian military build-up. This is what proved to be the last straw for Mark Siegel. He was hoodwinked. For some time now Saudi Arabia has been building a new airfield at Tabuk. When Siegel inquired whether Hawk missiles had been stationed there, the answer was No; and the airfield, he was told, was altogether of minor importance. Afterwards he learned that what was being built was a sophisticated air-base, and that it housed, *inter alia*, Hawk missiles. Administration spokesmen explained publicly that Saudi Arabia required an airfield at Tabuk in order to provide defence for her oilfields and also against attack from Iraq. Nobody explained why defence of the oil, or a prospective counter-attack on Bagdad, requires the building of an airfield 1500 kilometres from the oilfields and 1000 kilometres from Bagdad — and precisely, on the other

hand, close to the Israeli border, about 200 kilometres from Eilat.

We must therefore take note of the increasing readiness of the US administration to provide misleading information even about specific preparations for aggression against Israel

* * *

We have now been treated to another aspect of that readiness: the attempt made by the State Department spokesman, Mr. Hodding Carter to deny the responsibility of the PLO for the barbaric attack on the bus on the Israeli coast road near the Country Club. So important did he find it to defend the good name of Yasser Arafat that he did not realize how foolish and clumsy was his refusal to recognize PLO responsibility when the PLO had already boasted to the whole world of the heroism of its murderous emissaries on the coast road.

The closeness of the two acts of deception — about Tabuk and about the Country Club — is not accidental. The gravity of the prospect that compelled one courageous man in Washington to give up his high office in order to sound the alarm requires a re-assessment, profound and comprehensive, of the ways and means we must adopt in order to conduct the struggle that awaits us in the United States.

Ma'ariv 17.3.78

To Talk Turkey to Mr. Mondale

The Mayor of Jerusalem declared this week that he would not receive the Vice-President of the United States if — as has been reported from Washington — Mr. Mondale refuses to accept an official Israeli escort on his visit to the Old City (and thus demonstrates non-recognition of the unification of the city and of Israeli rule in it).

Mr. Kollek said: "If Mr. Mondale tries to draw a distinction between west and east, and emphasizes by his actions the division of the city to which we put an end, I shall not receive him. When somebody spits at you, you cannot close your eyes and call it rain".

If these words of the Mayor of Jerusalem have been quoted in the United States, they have undoubtedly raised Israel's prestige. It is desirable however that their background should be explained to the American

public, so that they might understand how deeply Israel is insulted by the idea of non-recognition and the political injustice and the historical distortion that gave birth to the idea.

On the question of Jerusalem the United States has for long manifested its contempt for international law, for fair dealing and logic in relations between nations. The previous — Jordanian — regime in Jerusalem was by any standard illegal. It was established as the result of a bloody act of aggression by the Kingdom of Transjordan and of its subsequent illegal annexation. The Jordanian government had no rights whatsoever in Jerusalem. It is these non-existent rights that the United States insists on protecting.

Israeli rule in Jerusalem was established as a consequence of the repulse of a further act of aggression by Jordan. It was based on a clearly defensive act, and it is unquestionably legal. Concomitantly the city was united; her natural life as a city, her golden gleam as a city holy to Jews and to Christians, and the freedom of approach to the holy places of all three religions were restored. Nevertheless, out of political calculation — not to annoy the Arabs (who have oil) — this great American Power behaves as she does. This is the reaction that should be occupying the media in the United States these days.

* * *

Is it not strange that in the context of a visit by Vice-President Mondale — whose declared purpose is to demonstrate the friendship of his country for Israel — an idea has been mooted in the Washington Establishment which is equivalent, according to the Mayor of Jerusalem, to spitting in Israel's face? Is this how one demonstrates friendship? The answer is: Maybe. Maybe there is also a sort of friendship that expresses itself by the one side spitting while the other side, in all friendship, wipes off the spittle. It is, however, a saddening fact that the manifestations of "spitting" are increasing to such an extent that Israel's friends in the United States have begun to see in them signs of an anti-Israeli tendency.

It now turns out that Mr. Mondale's visit is not intended merely as a ceremonial gesture towards Israel on the State's thirtieth birthday, but is assuming a clearly political complexion. It will be followed by a "parallel" visit to Egypt — whose people has no special reason at this moment for festivity, unless it be in celebration of the abolition of the last remnants of democracy in that country.

Mr. Mondale's visit to Jerusalem will be the first since the US administration managed to push through, in the Senate, the decision for the supply of planes to Saudi Arabia. It is desirable therefore that the Israeli government should not allow itself to be drawn into discussion on subjects likely to blur the significance of that decision. The government, as host, should raise all the questions that have begun troubling us as the result of American pronouncements and acts whose letter and spirit are not compatible with friendly relations.

The expressions of the administration in Washington towards Israel have become blatantly dictatorial in content and supercilious in style. Together with the "questions" that it conveyed to Israel — which in themselves were clearly conceived to press Israel to "amend" and broaden the "peace plan" — it also sent along the answers it required. The "questions" were not conveyed in decent diplomatic discretion but were blazoned forth to the whole world (and the "answers" were intended, after all to satisfy all the Arab demands). When the government of Israel failed to give the dictated answers, it was publicly reproved by an angry President of the United States. He subsequently upbraided Israel once again for having dared to publish Cairo's broadcast reply to the "peace proposals" before Sadat could launch a propaganda campaign about it.

There is no need for more examples. Advantage should be taken of Mr. Mondale's visit to convey a protest, dignified but sharp, at Washington's behavior — which does not reflect friendly gestures, nor does it accord with even the minimal norms of correct international relations. The Americans not only flaunt a display of contempt for the government of Israel, but a major distortion of the special relations, based on common interests, **of** the two States.

* * *

The clarification which should be conducted with the Vice-President however should not be concerned with form and style alone but with the major policy that they reflect. It must certainly embrace the symptoms of hostility to the basic interests of Israel that have become apparent in the application of American foreign policy in the Middle East.

It must be impressed upon Mr. Mondale that the Israeli government cannot ignore the grave implications of this policy and has no right to swallow with diplomatic courtesy the bland but absurd explanations that issue regularly from Washington. For example: that supplying planes to

Saudi Arabia and to Egypt in violation of an undertaking to Israel — and even reducing the number of planes to which she is entitled — ensures the peace and the stability of the Middle East.

This attempt to mislead, which is also an insult to the intelligence, only compounds the gravity of the offence. The strong impression has been created that the US Government has decided to reduce the status of its relations with Israel, and that in the scale of her priorities Israel's interests — and in our specific circumstances, her security — are to be subject to the maintenance and the strengthening of Washington's special relationship with Saudi Arabia and indeed with the Arabs in general.

There are many reasons and many factors inhibiting any American administration from "abandoning" Israel, and every administration would feel compelled to continue giving aid to Israel. The present administration however, more than any of its predecessors, behaves as though the interest is not mutual — and together with the aid it gives, it is conducting a campaign to weaken Israel as much as possible, and to blacken the name of its government. It thus facilitates the execution of a policy whose implications cannot be described except as most damaging to Israel. The planes' deal, in all its aspects, is an exact exemplar of this process.

It must be said in defence of this administration that it was not the initiator of this policy, which had its significant beginnings in the days of Nixon and Ford, when the architect of policy was Secretary of State Kissinger. It is, however, in the reign of Carter that we have reached the consummation of the ominous combination of violated undertakings (whose high price Israel paid in advance and in full), of tremendous strengthening — consciously — of our enemies, and the constant many-pronged pressure to weaken us. Should the various moves of the US bear the desired fruit, their result will be a shrunken Israel, given over to the mercies of neighbours who threaten her — now on four fronts — and who dispose of tremendous quantities of the most sophisticated weaponry.

The administration is moving towards consummation of this realistic outcome — by direct pressure on Israel to withdraw from territories, and by psychological pressure, such as outbursts of rage by the President or undermining Israeli rule in east Jerusalem.

This reality cries out for a change in Israeli policy. It is time to put an end to the illusion that there is a dialogue in progress with the United States on the ways to achieve peace. The struggle is over the question whether Israel will fall into the trap of collaborating in satisfying Arab desires by way of Washington. The fact that Israel is aware of this truth,

that it is seeing the picture whole, should dominate the talks that are about to take place with Mr. Mondale in Jerusalem; and the operative conclusion from its awareness should be the adaptation of Israeli policy to these circumstances.

Mr. Teddy Kollek reacted on the subject of east Jerusalem with dignity — reflecting, moreover, political wisdom. The same degree of dignity reflecting political wisdom is required in the totality of Israel's relations with the United States.

Ma'ariv 30.6.78

To London — Without Prior Concessions

President Carter's latest statement contains a harsh challenge to the government of Israel. He will be able to judge by its reactions whether its tactical moves are determined by rational criteria and relevant considerations, or whether it can be made to dance to a tune of Washington's choice. Mr. Carter's statement to a group of newspaper editors last Saturday is only an additional move in the Administration's campaign for softening Israel towards submission to the demands of the Arabs.

The significance of his statement and its thrust are clear. Mr. Carter claimed that he does not know — Heaven forbid — the contents of the "peace proposal" which the Egyptians are about to submit to Israel through his mediation. Nevertheless he knows that the Egyptian proposal will not satisfy Israel. For this "blow" he has already prepared an antidote: he will arrange a meeting in London between the Foreign Ministers of Egypt and of Israel in the presence of his own Secretary of State. If they do not find a co-ordinating formula there, then "Back to Geneva!"

This description of an involved diplomatic process is designed to add a touch of novelty to facts which have not changed in the last ten years. As Mr. Carter could have guessed even without seeing their contents, the essence of the Egyptian proposals will be the withdrawal of Israel from "all the territories" as a first and obvious step. Israel's agreement to this proposal will be the condition for Egypt's resumption of the talks.

Israel, Mr. Carter assumes, will not accept this dictate — which he

regards as “a step in the right direction”. Thereupon the United States will put forward her own compromise proposal “as we have been doing” said Mr. Carter “for years”. It can safely be said that the United States will indeed propose a compromise between the Egyptian proposal and the “peace plan” of the Israeli Government. Its essence will be an appeal to the Egyptians not to be obstinate and to agree to accept the concessions already contained in the Israeli “peace plan”, and a demand of the Israelis not to be obstinate and to agree to the additional concessions demanded by Egypt. As concessions will be demanded only of Israel the US will ask Egypt to agree to a step-by-step timetable — so that Israel’s return to the 1949 Armistice Lines will be completed only at the end of (say) five years.

* * *

If Israel does not agree to this generous compromise she will be led off to Geneva. There inevitably she will run the gauntlet between two rows of Arabs. Senator (now Vice-President) Mondale once said to an Israeli friend: “Sadat will come to Geneva and demand Sinai, Assad will ask for the Golan, Hussein the West Bank and Saudi Arabia will demand Jerusalem. So why should you go to Geneva?” He failed to add only that the Arabs will be flanked by their colleagues from Moscow and Washington.

* * *

Every Washington proposal is directed at the same unchanging target. It is part of its diplomats’ job to divert the attention of the Israeli government and media from this target. Mr. Mondale is personally no doubt a friend of Israel, and when he visits us there is every reason to receive him with the warmth due to him as a person — beyond his status as Vice-President of the United States. There is also no reason to suspect Mr. Mondale’s political colleagues, nor the President himself, of having anything but a friendly attitude to Israel. Their business, however, is politics, and their policy is based on calculations of their own. These calculations derive from a doctrine which, if it is put into practice to its logical conclusion, would threaten Israel with destruction. If the attack on Yom Kippur had been carried out not on the banks of the Suez Canal but on the lines of the 4th of June, 1967 — to which the Arabs and the

Americans call upon us to return--that, as Mr. Abba Eban has pointed out, would have been the end of Israel.

The Government of Israel mistakenly believed that even if Egypt did not accept its "peace plan", at least the US would accept it, and take up a position moral and political, in support of Israel — against Egypt and the other Arab States. The head of the American Administration has completely different thoughts. His dominant idea is to satisfy the Saudi Arabians (and the other Arabs); and while he is listening to what the Israeli Prime Minister is saying, he is thinking feverishly as to how these words can be used to promote his, the President's purpose. His spokesmen make this explicit from time to time: "After all you cannot expect us to endanger our most important source of oil".

The Arabs are of course completely aware of this American attitude. They consequently do not intend, nor do they need, to agree to any compromise proposal. They have made this quite clear to Washington. Every request Sadat makes to the Americans confirms this truth. This being the case, the Americans will also not agree to any substantive compromise. When the present Israeli Opposition leaders were in power they were made painfully aware of this reality — from the days of the Rogers plan down to the unpleasant conversation between President Carter and Prime Minister Rabin in March 1977. The Americans use the word "compromise" in order to add an aura of apparent reasonableness to their attitude: American diplomacy packages the uncompromising stand of the Arabs in colourful wrappings: "compromise proposal", "moderate policy", "a step in the right direction".

Now the President of the United States has laid out the following steps. At every stage Israel will in fact be called upon to give up its position; and the Americans' propaganda will blazon forth the good news that their initiative has created a new opening to peace. In fact the exercise, for all its sophistication, is not intended to bring about peace but merely to secure an Israeli withdrawal. Of course the Americans want peace, and they do hope that somehow the problems will be solved; but first all Israel must withdraw and "then we shall see..".

The Israeli Government should meet this exercise by saying "nothing doing". A game in which the rules are not equal for all the participants is not acceptable. Israel throughout the years has insisted on the principle of direct negotiations without prior conditions; and the Prime Minister worked hard, in the first period of his incumbency, to make it clear that we shall agree to no conditions before negotiations are opened. Negotiations

can take place therefore only at a clean table. With the rejection of Israel's peace plan, the concessions it contains are valid no longer. The object of negotiations now shall be to arrive at conditions for peace, not to determine whether Israel has the right to sit down at the negotiating table with the Egyptian president. Negotiations imply that each side puts forward its proposals according to its own judgment and according to its evaluation of the other side's sincerity — in short, negotiations as conducted among the world's nations, normal negotiations between equals.

Should the government not insist on equality-in-foregoing-prior-conditions-and-concessions, she will be condemning herself and us to a new bout of purposeless suffering.

Ma'ariv 5.7.78

The Vance Team Prepares the Landmines

What merit is there in the Government's agreeing to a meeting at Camp David? If the object of the American administration is to ensure the renewal of direct negotiations between Israel and Egypt, it should persuade Sadat; Israel needs no convincing. It is doubtful whether it is necessary for this purpose to make Sadat go all the way to the US; there is certainly no need for Prime Minister Begin to travel. The American purpose is somewhat different: it is clear from the outset that at Camp David, perhaps already in the first tête-a-tête meeting, the Prime Minister of Israel will be asked to state the price he is prepared to pay for Sadat's agreeing to negotiate.

What moved Sadat to accept the invitation? His demands are known. He is behaving like a victor on the field of battle demanding unconditional surrender from the defeated enemy. The calculations of many of us that because of the economic difficulties in Egypt Sadat might be prepared to modify these demands have long since evaporated. The existential fact is that Sadat is now demanding an immediate undertaking by Israel to evacuate the Golan, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district — in addition to Sinai — as a precondition for negotiations. He declares over and over and over again that on territory he is not prepared to talk at all, period.

Indeed before the meeting of Foreign Ministers at Leeds Castle (in England) it seemed that the Americans tended to despair of the possibility

of early negotiations — not on account of Sadat's intransigence, to which they pay no attention, but because of Israel's "intransigence". The Israeli Government had declined to give a positive reply to Washington's questions — a reply which would "soften" Sadat once more. At Leeds Castle however Foreign Minister Dayan gave the Americans the desired signal.

Moshe Dayan's statement at Leeds Castle did not give the Americans everything they asked for, but it contains a kernel, healthy from their point of view, whose natural development will bring forth the operative plan, even the time-table, for the departure of the Israeli governing authority from Judea, Samaria and Gaza and its replacement by Arab control. Dayan's concession [providing for negotiations with Egypt, Jordan and the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza] was made.— as will be recalled — as Dayan's "personal idea". Only after it was adopted *post factum* by the Israeli Government and announced in the Knesset, could Sadat feel that he has solid ground under his feet — and then he co-operated with the Americans in planning the three-cornered meeting.

There, at Camp David — so Sadat has been promised — Carter with the concession made at Leeds (together with all the earlier concessions) in his "pocket", will exert all his influence to bring about the completion of the Israeli surrender. (It is not irrelevant that at this time Carter is in need of an impressive political accomplishment in order to stop the decline in his rating in the public popularity polls — and how can he possibly succeed except at the expense of Israel?).

The significance of the concession at Leeds, so sweet to the Arab palate and so far-reaching, is clearly reflected in the light of the attitude of Saudi Arabia — the inspector-general of Moslem and Arab national properties, and the most demanding and most honoured of America's allies. When Washington provided her with an explanatory forecast of what would happen at Camp David, Saudi Arabia announced approval of the conference.

* * *

For months now Washington has been co-ordinating her policy with Cairo. Its framework is simple, clear and well-known: Washington wants Israel to return to the 1949 Armistice Lines. The difference between the Administration and the Arabs is that the Administration proposes border

changes — though only insubstantial ones, and that it hopes — and is even prepared to pray on Sundays — that when Israel is compressed into that “death trap” (as Abba Eban called it) the Arabs will forget that they cannot tolerate the existence of a Jewish State in the territory that they have classified as “Arab” and will, as virtuous pacifists, not take advantage of its glaring vulnerability.

An unchanging element in American thinking is that the Arabs will not willingly agree to a “territorial compromise”. That is why Washington has always demanded total Israeli withdrawal, even if in stages. Its present view is that as an immediate Israeli withdrawal is unobtainable, it is enough for the present to find a formula which will include an undertaking — whatever its semantic form, as long as it leaves no room for doubt — that within a reasonable time, say five years, the withdrawal will be carried out. Hence Washington’s proposal a year ago, that Israel should set up a trusteeship regime which, at the end of five years, would be replaced by some form of Arab rule. The Israeli Government did not agree to this; but then it produced the peace plan (in December), and in it the Americans found the openings which could lead them towards their goal.

Ever since, in direct and indirect action, the Americans have been working consistently within the “framework” of the peace plan for the extension of two of its clauses by means of which Israel is to be manoeuvred towards complete submission. In the wake of the American success — to achieve Israeli agreement to reshape the content and the significance of those two clauses — Sadat will come to Camp David, bringing with him the declaration by the Israel Government that not only does it recognize the existence of other claims to sovereignty in Judea and Samaria and the Gaza district, and will leave the question “open”, as provided for in its peace plan; but that now (as announced by the Foreign Minister at Leeds) it agrees that the question shall be “negotiated” at the end of five years of the autonomy plan — with Egypt, Jordan and the resident Arabs.

All of this means that after the Leeds conference Israel is no longer tied to the “principle” that the subject of sovereignty shall remain open, but agrees to close it in those negotiations. Sadat therefore comes to Camp David confident that the three-cornered meeting will in fact consist of continuous pressure on Israel by Washington to broaden the formula so as to ensure also the *results* of those negotiations. In view of the concessions already made by the Israeli Government at Washington’s coaxing, Sadat comes to Camp David believing in the Arab future of Judea, Samaria and

the Gaza district. Only be patient — his advisers in Washington tell him — and all will be well.

It is not devoid of significance that while in Jerusalem reports are published of prolonged discussions and comprehensive preparations and thoroughgoing checking and testing towards the Camp David meeting, and American reports tell even of the setting up of a special team which is working in isolation in a private home remote from Washington in order to prepare the conference — Sadat sees no need to make announcements in Cairo about preparations, feverish or otherwise. He is tranquil. He regards everything as settled.

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This is the bitter truth that awaits the Israeli delegation at the opening of the peace talks. It will no doubt be swaddled in appropriate diplomatic habiliments — which are being prepared by the special team set up by Mr. Vance. As soon as these are discarded, however, the Israeli delegation will be faced by the tactics of political attrition as planned by the American President to the satisfaction of the Egyptian President and the Saudi King.

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Are the members of the Israeli Government the only players in the drama now unfolding who are unaware of these realities? Are they really blind to the central purpose of the Americans? Have they not learned enough from the methods of the Americans in order to realize that when their representatives appear as mediators, they direct all their advice and all their coaxing towards the central purpose of their own, which is lethal for Israel but which they regard as their national interest — and that is why they devote so much time and energy in its pursuit?

Do the members of the Government continue to believe — in spite of the evidence of their eyes and their ears — that Sadat, with complete American support assured, will “give” Israel peace on terms other than those which he is proclaiming incessantly — terms which ensure her exposure to attempts at her destruction?

As for Israeli policy the members of the Government know — at least those of its members from the “Likud” and “La’am” parties knew this well enough when they were in Opposition — that every one-sided concession only gives birth to demands for further concessions. Now, in power, they

have been learning this truth almost every day.

Will they not, even now, open their eyes to see where they are heading? True, it can be said in the defence of some, and maybe most, of them that time after time statements on concessions of fateful intent to the Jewish people have been made without their knowledge, without their knowing of any such intention in advance, without their being given an opportunity to consider and weigh the issues and implications involved. Time after time they have been presented with an accomplished fact and called upon to give it their retroactive approval.

That is what happened at the outset of the decline, when limitation of the settlements in Judea and Samaria was decided on in order to appease Washington. That is what happened in the latest phase — when the Foreign Minister gave a positive reply to the Americans' "questions" after the Government had several weeks earlier given a negative reply. But they have always accepted the situation. Now that they are able to view the trap opening at Camp David, are they under no obligation to give themselves an account of the consequences and implications of their complaisance?

It should be clear to the members of the Government, in the light of the undeniable facts coming out of Cairo and Washington, that the present political process will inevitably end either by their agreeing to a clear prescription for an ultimate withdrawal from Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district — or by their putting an end to their retreats and concessions and opening an unrelenting struggle over the fate of Israel. It should be clear to them that every present retreat from positions held, every concession, will not only add to the difficulties of the inevitable external struggle, but will gradually weaken the spirit of the people, sowing fatalism and scepticism — those most dangerous of internal enemies.

At this time, having agreed to participate in the meeting planned by President Carter, the Government has the opportunity to consider the full import of the situation at which we have arrived. It is most desirable that it should seek ways and means of extricating itself from it. Extrication now involves the most serious political difficulties; it demands a many-pronged national effort, the likes of which Israel has seen only in time of war. The alternative however is to be propelled still further in a process that threatens gradually to undermine our independence and to gnaw at our very being as a nation.

Ma'ariv 18.8.78

Illusions and Deceptions On the Road to Camp David

When you hear on the radio or read in the newspaper the statements of politicians, whether of the Government or of the Opposition, you often wonder whether they read the same newspaper and listen to the same radio news, and how they function at all when their memories are so weak even about their own utterances.

For two months, since Washington conveyed its “questions” to our Government, for nine months since Sadat spoke in Jerusalem, for the three years since the Brookings Institute report was published in the US, for the six years since Sadat *told Newsweek* and *Le Figaro* of his “conditions for peace”, for the nine years since the Rogers Plan was first published, both the Americans and the Egyptians, the two other parties to the Camp David talks, have made it clear, in varying degrees of politeness or discourtesy, that they are determined that Israel shall withdraw to the Armistice Lines of 1949.

Many people in Israel and in the US believe that in the American arena itself it was possible, and is still possible today, to set up an effective barrier, within the American people, against this now traditional policy of the Washington establishment, certainly against its implementation. Israel’s blunder in this field, the field of Information, is only one of the astonishing manifestations of identity between the Likud-in-power and the Alignment-in-power. The fact, however, remains a fact and in its light the utterances of political leaders sound divorced from reality.

Mr. Yitzhak Rabin claimed at *K’far Hamakabiah* on Saturday (19 August) that “from Israel’s point of view Egyptian readiness for a territorial compromise has not been adequately tested”. He saw no need to explain how a territorial compromise would be good for Israel’s security and its future. Let us assume that he knows. What degree of naiveté or of pretence, what depth of self-abasement are required in order to continue to hand the Arabs on a platter Israel’s readiness to surrender territory including portions of western Eretz Yisrael and how many more times do we have to listen to the unequivocal, harsh reactions of Sadat and other Arab spokesmen: “We shall not give up one centimeter of Arab territory, Arab territory is sacred, and in fact we are not prepared to discuss territory with you at all”? How many times does Mr. Rabin have to hear these utterances before it occurs to him that maybe Sadat has no intention of agreeing to a territorial compromise?

* * *

Mr. Rabin, however, is now in Opposition, and his brushing off of realities, though it does add to the public confusion, will not affect our foreign relations or the progress of the talks at Camp David. Far graver practical implications stare out of the Government's clinging to the "peace plan". The Prime Minister continues to claim that the plan is a good one. There is a large gulf between this view and the view — shared by this writer — that the plan, even in its original form, is dangerous to the future of Israel. From any point of view, however, the Prime Minister must have justified to himself the plan's boldness — the far-reaching risks it imposes on Israel, its abandonment of the past policy of the Likud, and of the political system for which the Prime Minister's camp fought for years — by the belief that in fact the plan would bring peace. But the plan was not accepted and from that point onward it became a trap. The Americans pounced on its main concessions and are using it as a lever to achieve further concessions on the way to the American-Arab objective. Sheer common-sense, security requirements and all the laws of rational political method, dictated withdrawal of the plan by the Government.

Sadat's reaction was not a simple rejection of the plan. It transpires that he stands fiercely by the traditional Arab formula. He reiterates this formula continually. Only a fortnight ago — eight months after the peace plan was published — the Prime Minister himself explained (to a delegation from Israel Bonds in the US) that Sadat's conditions mean the destruction of Israel.

The vital basis — and the only possible justification, for such a peace plan is the certainty that the other side — the aggressor who threatened Israel's annihilation in the past — now wants peace — peace with Israel and not (as the Prime Minister puts it) peace without Israel. It is clear that there are no grounds for such certainty.

Indeed, already in January the Prime Minister announced that if Sadat persisted in his demands, Israel would consider cancelling the surrender of Sinai and would insist on border changes. Since then it can fairly be said that Sadat has sharpened his formula. He now demands that all the Israeli settlements beyond the "green line" be dismantled.

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Nevertheless, despite the collapse of any possible rational basis for the plan, in spite of the developments in the region in recent months, especially the revelation of the strengthening of the military posture of Saudi Arabia

which is building an active front against us in the south (a development which emphasizes the increasingly vital importance of Israeli control of Sinai), in spite of the drastic changes in the Horn of Africa, (enhanced Soviet presence and domination of Ethiopia) which demonstrate the importance of our unhampered presence on the Red Sea coast, in spite of the worsening of all the conditions which the authors of the peace plan ignored from the outset — the Government has not abandoned the plan.

On the contrary, the trap was sprung; and the plan was changed to Israel's disadvantage. According to information conveyed already last February to a group of American Jewish leaders, Israel has agreed to go back on part of her modest demands in Sinai; and it appears that she has now agreed to retain only one airfield. None of this has been officially conveyed to the public in Israel.

What has been published, however, is most serious. It is untrue to say that no changes have been introduced into the autonomy plan: these have been introduced openly. They have the effect of turning one of its central provisions on its head, and magnifies the risks to Israel to such a degree that there is great rejoicing in the tents of the State Department and in the dwellings of all those who wish to see Israel removed completely from Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

The change was brought about by Israel's "Leeds Declaration", ratified by the Knesset three weeks ago. The original autonomy plan contained the astounding proposition that Israel recognizes that there are other claims to sovereignty. This recognition serves to "open" the question and is in fact reinforced by the specific provision that the question will remain "open" — which means that Israel will not take up her rights, and that other claims will not be foreclosed. Now, the Leeds declaration (made by Israel as a result of prolonged American pressure) promises that at the end of five years, the question of sovereignty will no longer be left "open", but will be "closed". It will be placed on the table at the negotiations — and will be decided.

* * *

Immediately after this concession was announced Carter began making preparations for the three-cornered meeting. It is most reasonable to assume that it is this concession — which is regarded by Washington as a "breakthrough" — that influenced Carter to strike the iron while it was hot, and to press Israel to complete the process. Hence the great activity

over the projected meeting, and the special inflated importance ascribed to it hence Carter's willingness to risk his popularity by calling and hosting it.

* * *

This is the source of amazement at the behavior of the Government. It refrains from cancelling its own plan, agrees to changes which enhance the risks the plan contains, and knowing what agonies await the people of Israel at Camp David, does not even do anything to steel the spirit of the people to meet them.

Ma'ariv 23.8.78

U.S. – Egypt Teamwork

The issue that will dominate the Camp David meeting is very simple. It has been stated by the Egyptian and by the Americans clearly and repeatedly. Nothing that has happened or that President Sadat has said in the past nine months has suggested a change in Egypt's demands on Israel.

In November, Mr. Sadat (having been promised Sinai before coming to Jerusalem) told the Knesset in emphatic terms that he had no intention of negotiating over "Arab territory"; not an inch of it would be surrendered. In the following months he did not alter his stand by one iota. Indeed he reacted in demonstrative anger to the small reservations in the Israeli Government's "peace plan" for Sinai — that Yamit and the villages in the Rafiah approaches, and the three airfields (comprising altogether some 2% of Sinai) should remain in existence though under Egyptian sovereignty. He even described Sinai as "sacred Arab territory", an absurdity more crass even than the ascription of "Arab sanctity" to Palestine. The official Egyptian "peace plan" is only a sharp restatement of the Arab demand for Israel's withdrawal to the 1949 Armistice lines.

With this demand the US Government is in almost complete agreement. Its one deviation from the absolute Arab territorial demands is that it is prepared to propose minor modifications (measured in metres) of the 1949 lines. This fig-leaf fails to conceal Washington's naked endorsement of the Arab purpose.

It is Washington's close identification with the Arab demands that moves Mr. Sadat to insist that the US become a "full partner" in negotiations with Israel; more bluntly, that the US twist Israel's arm until she complies with Arab demands.

American co-ordination with Egypt has indeed been the salient characteristic of the developments of the past nine months. Sadat (remember always, with Sinai more or less "in the bag") broke off direct talks with Israel when they had been no more than formally opened, and has to this day not resumed them. From the beginning he has insisted that Israel first comply with his prior conditions: before negotiations can start Israel must agree to withdraw from "all the territories". At this point, the US set in motion a major effort of pressure on Israel to find a formula that would persuade Sadat to resume negotiations. The various meetings of US diplomats with Israeli leaders this year have been aimed at obtaining some form of undertaking that will satisfy Sadat in advance that Judea and Samaria and Gaza are to be evacuated and handed over to the Arabs.

The tactic of the US diplomats has been of a professionally high order. They insist that they will not propose a plan of their own. They do not have to. So far, in order to achieve a breakthrough towards the Arab demands, they have simply used as a basis the Israeli "peace plan" — to which the Government continues to cling.

The peace plan contains concessions objectively dangerous to Israel's security. The threat from a Sinai in Egyptian hands is starkly evident. In the months since the plan was promulgated that threat has been compounded by the accumulating evidence of a major Saudi military build-up, buttressed by US arms, personnel and somewhat clumsy misinformation about its real purpose. Some of Israel's best-known military experts, including Professor Yuval Ne'eman, Aluf Dan Tolkowsky and Aluf Benjamin Peled felt impelled recently to urge upon the Prime Minister reconsideration of the "peace plan" in the light of the mounting danger in the south, and the vital importance of Israel's presence in Sinai to her essential security, indeed to the rational operability of the IDF. As for the autonomy plan for Judea, Samaria and Gaza, with its recognition, in addition, of the existence of Arab claims to sovereignty and its even more astonishing provision for the return of Arab refugees — this is a prescription for ultimate Arab rule in these areas. The only possible rational explanation for producing such a plan could be the certainty that the Arabs would sign an instant peace treaty.

From the rejection of the plan and Sadat's reiterated refusal to accept

anything but Israel's complete capitulation, the only rational and safe conclusion that could be drawn was that the Arabs have remained faithful to their purpose: to reduce Israel to a state where her annihilation could become feasible; peace, to be sure, but peace without Israel.

The "peace plan" in all rationality should have been withdrawn. As the Government, however, clings to it as its declared policy, Washington has quite legitimately turned to it and used it as the most effective instrument for pressure on its authors.

American persuasion has been directed at two clauses in the plan. The final clause originally provided for Israeli review of the plan after five years. But soon both the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister conceded in public statements that the "review" would be in the form of discussion with the other parties. The plan thus ended its career as a peace plan and became an interim five-year project.

To achieve a change of the other crucial clause was more difficult. Washington's logic was strong. Once Israel admitted the existence of other — Arab — claims to sovereignty in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, it could not insist that the question of sovereignty remain "open". The other claimants had a right to insist on stating their claims, that the question should be "closed", and that the sovereignty of the areas be established. (The Arabs do not recognize that Israel has any claims at all).

This was the thrust of the "question" put by Washington to the Israeli Government in June. At that time, the Government returned a negative answer; but the Americans did not despair. A month later the US Secretary of State initiated a meeting with the Foreign Ministers of Israel and Egypt, at Leeds Castle in England. There, in contradiction of the Government's declared attitude, Mr. Dayan gave (in his own name) the undertaking that Washington so badly wanted. The Government then reversed itself — and committed Israel to the principle that after five years, Judea, Samaria and Gaza could become sovereign territory and that the sovereign *might* be Arab.

This was "major progress" indeed, and this time Israel was praised in the United States for its flexibility. In consequence of the "Leeds concession," and now given President Carter's public assurance that the US would henceforth be a "full partner" in negotiations, Mr. Sadat agreed, not indeed to direct negotiations with Israel, but to a three-cornered meeting. There at Camp David, the American and Egyptian teams will exert what they hope will be the decisive squeeze on Israel.

1.9.78

Relations with United States Between Camp David Agreement and the Peace Treaty

No End to the ‘Salami Process’

When Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary of State, and Professor William Quandt, assistant to Professor Brzezinski at the National Security Council, make public statements, they should be accorded the utmost attention. They are key figures in the generation, formulation and application of US policy on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

With Alfred Atherton they possess probably more influence in this sphere than any other group of public servants in Washington. They are representative of the body of experts, usually Arabists, who long ago formulated the doctrine governing that policy. The Rogers Plan of 1969, later the Brookings Report, are the codified expression of their school’s determination to reduce Israel to its “natural” proportions — in the belief, of course, that this is good for the US.

There is a long tradition in the State Department of opposition to Zionism and of efforts to thwart its purpose. It was the State Department that in 1947 counterworked President Truman’s support for the UN partition plan (because it provided for a Jewish state). In March, 1948, it succeeded in achieving a reversal of that support and its replacement by a plan for “trusteeship” which, if implemented would have postponed Jewish independence indefinitely. It was the State Department that ensured the enforcement of an arms embargo, which might have been lethal to the newly-born-and-already-battered Israel if the Soviet Union had not come to its aid.

The story is a long one. Presidents, with their ideas and sympathies and foibles come and go. So also secretaries of state. But the spirit of the makers of policy in the State Department has not changed. With increased subservience to Arab demands it has only become more intense, more urgent.

* * *

Today, it is difficult to say to what dimensions the State Department would really like to see Israel reduced. Even before 1967, schemes were mooted in Washington for Israel to surrender parts of its territory, within the indefensible Armistice Lines of 1949. After 1967, when the second attempt by the Arab states to destroy Israel had failed, the State Department doctrine required a return to those lines.

Up to last year, this idea was rejected by successive Israeli Governments with undisguised horror at its implications. Mrs. Golda Meir, prime minister in 1969, when confronted with the Rogers Plan, said that accepting it would be equivalent to treason. In December, 1977, with the spontaneous proposal by Israel to hand over Sinai *in toto* to Egypt, and the “opening” of the question of sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Gaza, new hope was born in the old hands at the State Department.

The signing of the agreements at Camp David was their moment of triumph. Every line in the agreements bears their hallmark. Every paragraph bears the evidence of Israeli submission to their requirements. Pitiful are the pretences of our Government spokesmen that they had not reversed themselves even on those minimal safeguards and Israeli rights for which they had previously stood out, that there had not been a surrender, point after point, to Arab and American demands.

When, therefore, Saunders and Quandt, at present the authentic spokesmen for the US Administration, make statements on the Camp David agreements, on their implications, on the prospects of further agreements and, inevitably, Israeli concessions, their experience and ours should tell us that what they are saying today may well tomorrow be brought to the Knesset as a further “necessary risk for the sake of peace”.

* * *

They are now engaged in a campaign to persuade the Arab states to subscribe to the Camp David agreements and to ensure the opening of negotiations between Israel and Jordan for filling in the framework for Judea, Samaria and Gaza. In doing so they are making plain what the Camp David agreements have won for the Arabs (in addition to the total surrender of Sinai to Egypt).

To underline those achievements they are disseminating throughout the Arab countries the main differences between the Camp David “framework” agreement and the original Israeli “peace plan” — that is the extent and the detail of Israeli submission to American “corrections”.

Many of the proclaimed supporters of the agreements in Israel, euphoric over the promise of peace with Egypt, have refrained from studying, perhaps even from reading, their texts. Some of them, impressed by the Prime Minister's assurance of the good prospects for Israeli sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Gaza (for which there is no warrant in the agreement unless the Arabs hand sovereignty to Israel on a platter), tend to dismiss American statements as mere "interpretations".

They are likely to be encouraged by comments such as those of Wolf Blitzer from Washington who, reporting (in *The Jerusalem Post* of October 15) on an interview given by Mr. Saunders to Arab media, wrote that he had "presented the Camp David 'framework' agreements in the most favourable light to the Arab side — understandably, given the intended audience". This suggestion of exaggeration or beautification of the text is unwarranted.

Saunders said: "We felt that establishing self-government for that one-third of the Palestinian people (on the West Bank and Gaza Strip) in the land which they would like to see established as their homeland would be a remarkable start if we could achieve this in the next several months".

What does the Camp David 'framework' agreement say?

"In order to ensure a peaceful and orderly transfer of authority, and taking into account the security concerns of all the parties, there should be transitional arrangements for the West Bank and Gaza for a period not exceeding five years. In order to provide full autonomy to the inhabitants under these arrangements, the Israeli Military Government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing authority has been freely elected by the inhabitants of these areas to replace the existing military government..." (Emphasis added).

Moreover, according to the same report from Washington, Saunders pointed out with unexceptionable precision that the original peace plan had provided for the perpetuation of the military administration while only the civilian administration would be withdrawn, so that the Arab autonomy council would be subject to (and removable by) the Israeli authorities. The Camp David agreement puts an end to the Israeli military administration.

Saunders also explained the simple fact that while in the original peace plan internal security was to remain the concern of the Israeli authorities, under the Camp David agreement this, too, would no longer be the case. "Now," Saunders said, "there would be a strong Palestinian police force

responsible to the Palestinian governing body”.

Indeed, an examination of all the American reports on the published texts and factual content of the Camp David agreements do not reveal any significant distortion or exaggeration by Saunders. The only efforts at obfuscation have come, regrettably, from the Israeli side.

* * *

As our government is prepared, even anxious, to open negotiations with Jordan in order to hasten the institution of the full autonomy, and to set in train the process which will end in the discussion among Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza as to who is to acquire sovereignty, and the submission of their agreement to the veto of the elected representatives of the Arab inhabitants — why does Jordan hesitate?

Jordan is playing the hard bargainer. Hussein wants first to be assured not only that there will be no further Jewish settlements in the area, but that the 70-odd existing ones will be removed. He wants to be assured that East Jerusalem will be taken away from Israel and given to the Arabs. On Jerusalem, the Washington chorus is assuring him (and the Arabs in general) that the US is on his side. As for the settlements, Saunders has treated us to a revealing lesson on Washington’s methods in the negotiations (so self-evident, yet so obscured from the gaze of the Israeli negotiators).

“The art in this process,” he said “is to put the issues in sequence, so that one decision leads to another... An example of how this works is found in the decision by the Israeli Government to remove the settlers from Sinai. A few weeks ago that decision by the Israeli Government would not have been possible. But when the issue became the last remaining issue between Israel and the peace agreement with Egypt, then the Israeli people made the judgment that that issue should be resolved. I think it’s possible in dealing with the many complicated issues that concern the Palestinians to see a similar sequence of issues that could be resolved..”.

* * *

With most of the salami already promised, what the Arabs have to learn, as Egypt has already learned, is that if they will only let the State Department continue to do the slicing, it will not be long before it is all

theirs. This is the message Saunders and his colleagues bring to the Arab states.

20.10.78

The Chimera of Coordination

One of the persistent charges against the Likud government disseminated by Alignment spokesmen is that its troubles with the United States government began when they abandoned the tradition of coordinating policy with Washington. The latest assertion of this kind was made only last Friday, in a radio interview, by Yitzhak Rabin.

As Mr. Rabin was formerly prime minister and, earlier on, ambassador in Washington, his words might be regarded as important. In fact, they were pure fantasy. There was no such coordination, except perhaps in the minds of the Alignment leaders.

One could treat the statement lightly as a curiosity of history; but it bears implications relating to the present situation. It seems to ascribe a sort of superior wisdom to the Alignment leaders, but, much more significant, it tends to provide justification for American policy during their regime. After all, if there was coordination, American policy must have been reasonably satisfactory (at least to Mr. Rabin and the other Israeli co-ordinators).

Mr. Rabin's own experience illuminates the hollowness of his claim. His last personal contact with the US Administration — in March 1977 ended in a resounding angry disagreement with President Carter. The still new president insisted that setting up a Palestinian homeland was the essential solution to the problem in Eretz Yisrael. Mr. Rabin rejected the idea unequivocally.

Eighteen months earlier, in September 1975, the government had accepted the second disengagement agreement in Sinai. Premier Rabin claimed it as an achievement; and it may be that by some process of his own logic he convinced himself that it was an expression of coordination with the US. That was the agreement by which Israel gave up the oil of Sinai and surrendered control of the Mitla and Gidi passes.

In March that year the Rabin government had refused adamantly to make these concessions, insisting that they would jeopardize Israel's basic security. It was then that Secretary of State Kissinger left in a cloud of

anger and, back in Washington, instituted the famous “reappraisal” of policy towards Israel which necessitated the withholding of supplies to us until a suitably contrite government accepted his proposals.

One could, of course, discern an element of coordination in the terms of the disengagement agreement — the kind of coordination that exists between the hijacker and the hijacked.

One need only set Mr. Rabin’s coordination claim against events in the Yom Kippur War to recognize its absurdity. American pressure then was applied in threatening and ruthless terms that cowed the Golda Meir government into accepting the cease fire of October 22, and subsequently into saving the Egyptian Third Army on the east bank of the Suez Canal.

This cancelled the effects of the Israel Army’s recovery from the fearful opening phase of the war, and converted certain victory into defeat — and into a national disaster of historic proportions.

Mr. Rabin and his colleagues should really think again, and hard, before boasting about their coordination of policy with the US.

* * *

The fact is that there simply could not be coordination of any major policy matter, because Washington’s doctrine on fundamental issues in the Middle East, and on the dispute in Eretz Yisrael in particular, has been diametrically opposed to the Israeli outlook.

American policy after 1948, and most emphatically after the Six Day War, embraced a fusion of two elements: “commitment” to Israel’s survival, and the proposal of conditions that could only endanger that survival.

Specifically, the US gave Israel arms and financial aid while persistently demanding that Israel should again retire into the “death trap” (in Abba Eban’s definition) of the 1949 armistice lines. Since 1973, with America’s growing feeling of dependence on Saudi Arabia a distinct tilt against Israel has been manifest.

There is in the US a large body of opinion that rejects the policy and the concepts of the Administration, that has quite a different conception of the importance of a strong, self-confident Israel, with deterrent strategic reach, in the mosaic of America’s global stance.

There are many who believe that it is no accident that the decline of American power and influence in the world, and the shifting of the balance against her in the confrontation with the Soviet Union, have coincided with

her efforts to reduce and weaken Israel. There are many who believe that every inch of territory, every scintilla of prestige lost by Israel reduces America's own power and influence.

That these views are widely held in the US — they recently found expression in the statement issued by 170 lately-retired military leaders — does not alter the fact, unpleasant and even ominous for Israel, that the Administration has not changed its doctrine or its policy; and talk of “coordination” is both empty of significance and misleading.

* * *

The very fantasies of Alignment spokesmen, however, only emphasize the astonishing short-sightedness of the Likud government in the handling of its relations with Washington. At this very moment there is a resounding chorus of criticism in this country against the unprecedentedly unfriendly behaviour of the Carter Administration.

When the Israel government announces its refusal to be browbeaten into cooperating in making a farce of the peace agreement (by recognizing Egypt's right and obligation to make war on her as soon as the Arab states are ready), not only does Washington extend to Egypt its unqualified support, but launches an angry propaganda campaign against Israel, not hesitating to stray far from both truth and civility.

Precisely when President Sadat (perhaps through overconfidence) demonstrates that for him the peace treaty is no more than an instrument for bringing about the conditions that will make feasible a renewed attack by the Arab coalition on the existence of Israel — Washington rushes to his support, a loyal and devoted ally.

The consequent anger and sorrow, common to government and people alike, are natural. But why should there be a note of surprise?

Expressions of surprise by government spokesmen at Washington's negative attitude demonstrate the lack of realism, the unbelievable confusion in the policy towards the US since the autumn of 1977. No government has more consistently ignored the facts of Washington's collaboration with the Arabs. The Likud, which promised the people a new, imaginative and sophisticated foreign policy and information service; which would repair the grievous errors of its predecessors; which was so conscious of the need for speed; and which promised to mobilize the best elements in the US for the difficult task of creating a barrier against the application of the pro-Arab policies rampant in Washington — the Likud

did not, on taking power, even make a start on fulfilling its undertakings. On the contrary the government rushed off in the opposite direction, without recourse either to caution or to commonsense, or to the lessons of experience, in its effort to outdo the Alignment.

* * *

That is how it turned its back on one of the central principles of its political credo — that negotiations must take place directly with the Arabs, and only with the Arabs. It agreed, and in fact even proposed, that Washington should serve as mediator; and accepted without comment the astonishing declaration by Mr. Carter that he would in fact be a “full partner” in the negotiations — though his complete identification with the Arabs was being aired repeatedly. If this is the measure of Israeli political wisdom and caution, there seems little point in complaining at American resourcefulness in taking advantage of it.

Predictably, therefore — and as was indeed predicted — at every stage of the negotiations the screw was tightened; and the result was the long list of surrenders and concessions by Israel, subjected to the unrelenting squeeze between Egyptian immovability and American persuasion.

If this were not enough, Israel’s representatives did not miss an opportunity of singing the praises of the American President and his assistants — who did the persuading and the coaxing — for the “constructive part” they played in the negotiations.

* * *

Now the bubble has burst. There is no peace, and it is patent that the Arabs have no more intention of making peace with Israel than they had in the past; and the Americans reveal a growing unfriendliness, and an increasing unconcern for Israel’s ultimate fate.

Washington’s own shortsighted view of their interests in our part of the world is on a par with their shortsightedness in other parts of the world. Will not our government now grasp the realities of the situation, halt its headlong progress, assess the historic blunder it has been committing, reconsider all the elements of its policy, stop ignoring the fact of a firm alliance between Washington and Cairo, seek the ways and means of consolidating our friends in the US as a barrier to the obviously inimical aims of the Administration?

If the government is incapable of marshalling the will and the strength for making the necessary drastic changes — it should go to the people.

22.12.78

Irresponsible Attitude on Oil

President Carter is reported to be deeply disturbed at the failure of American Intelligence agencies to warn of the upheaval in Iran, which has already made nonsense of the most recent doctrine of the Washington experts on desirable and reliable alignments in America's global stance. The US government clearly had an altogether inadequate conception of the popular opposition to the Shah, and no conception of its militant nature.

One of the charges made against the Shah by the orthodox Moslem opposition is that he is selling oil to Israel. They promise that one of their first acts on coming to power will be to deny oil to Israel. Whether the revolutionary situation is resolved by the Shah's overthrow, or by his accommodating his opponents — it is a bold spirit who predicts that Iran's supply of oil to Israel will continue for long.

Indeed the crisis in Iran throws into bold relief the almost incredible amateurishness, the tight-hearted abandon, with which Israeli governments have handled the problem of the country's supply of oil, today the indispensable commodity for the progress and the security of the peoples of the world.

This spirit found vivid expression in a recent conversation between the Defence Minister and a group headed by William Levitt, a well-known businessman active in Israel's cause in the US., who was one of the early investors 10 years ago in the search for oil in Sinai.

After some characteristic vicissitudes, Levitt and his associates were accorded a 12 per cent share in the consortium which subsequently discovered, and has been operating the Alma oilfield in the Suez Gulf. Another US company has 25 per cent, and the Israel government 63 per cent. The total amount invested so far amounts to about \$100m.

Results have been good: the yield today is some 15 per cent of Israel's requirements. Prospects are better: with the exploitation of proved resources, the yield will provide half of Israel's present consumption. Surveys already made beyond that, suggest a far greater potential, more than Israel's requirements. This could have a tremendous impact on

Israel's security, a healthy effect on her economy and, in the best case, a substantial lightening of her economic dependence.

What government in the world, even the government of a country which was not surrounded by a coalition of countries threatening her destruction, would agree to relinquish these vital assets, existent and potential?

* * *

Following the Camp David agreement, William Levitt and his associates took up the matter of the Alma oil with the Defence Minister. Accepting Camp David as an established fact, they expected at least a rational explanation for the Israeli government's not having made even a serious effort to ensure that the oil Israel had discovered would remain in her hands.

Logic alone, commercial ethics alone, surely dictate that — having made the unprecedented gesture of recognizing Egyptian sovereignty — Israel should be granted the right (through her National Oil Company, which had discovered the oil) to continue operating the field and handling the distribution.

Egypt would receive her income and would not lose a cent. Israel would receive the minimal recompense for her enterprise, and her security concerns, as far as oil supplies are concerned, would be assuaged.

Why, if Sadat really wants Israel to live in peace, should he refuse this reasonable, equitable arrangement? Levitt and his associates received a three-word reply from the Minister, breezy and illuminating: "Forget about it!"

The truth appears to be that while cardinal elements of Israel's basic security were surrendered with at least some ripple in the negotiations with Egypt (before and during Camp David) the question of oil (like the claims for restitution of the 75,000 Jews who were forced to flee Egypt after 1948 leaving behind wealth estimated today at nearly \$2b.) was not raised seriously and perhaps was not raised at all.

Maybe Ezer Weizman and his colleagues were afraid to spoil the pleasant atmosphere in which they surrendered to the long list of Egyptian and American demands. "Forget about it" was not only a friendly word of advice to a concerned American Jew. It was in effect a motto which inspired much of the content of the negotiations from beginning to end.

That was why only a few short weeks ago, the Defence Minister predicted confidently the early signing of a peace agreement. He was

“forgetting,” or presumably had not thought in the first place, about minor matters that might slow down the process; like, for example, the cause of the present impasse, which has exposed the shallowness and fecklessness of his own repeated, even angry, pontifical insistence on the certainty of Sadat’s peaceful intentions towards Israel.

* * *

To return to oil. The process began with the Alignment government’s surrender in 1975 to the brutal pressures of then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

It was Kissinger, in his continuing pursuit of Sadat’s friendship, who, by withholding supplies, cowed the Israeli government into giving up the oil of the Abu Rodeis area.

This was then Israel’s only significant independent source of oil, accounting for 60 per cent of her needs. There was no justification in law and equity for her giving up the oil. There was no pragmatic reason for her to succumb to the pressure (which was being exerted, without concealment, for immediate American interests — as Dr. Kissinger saw them) and to make concessions dangerous to her security.

The Rabin government did so. In exchange they were given Kissinger’s heartfelt expressions of gratitude, together with promises which the successor Carter Administration kept only at further cost to Israel’s security. The F-15 planes, which were to be Washington’s recompense to Israel for her 1975 concessions, were in 1978 denied Israel until a reluctant Congress accepted the condition that similar planes should be given also to Saudi Arabia (busily building her offensive potential against Israel).

From the Egyptians Israel was “given” the right to send her cargoes through the Suez Canal, though only in foreign ships (which was less than the right which Israel is supposed to share with every other nation under the Constantinople Convention of 1888 — free passage of her ships through the Canal); and three years of “peace,” as though peace was a one-sided gift, and as though Egypt had the capacity then to go to war...

That was how Israel again became completely dependent on Iranian oil, backed by an American guarantee, whose value has yet to be tested if a crisis arises.

* * *

The government's bargaining position over Alma is in all respects much stronger than it was over the Abu Rodeis oilfields, which Israel had found already in operation, and which an Italian company had developed. With so much at stake, with so much conceded already, there was every reason for simply insisting on an equitable arrangement, and for standing firm.

However, we are today faced with the fact that after the signature of the Camp David Agreement, in all its far-reaching, dangerous implications, Israel remains without her present independent source of oil, dependent on foreign governments — on the US, which may, under precedent, present her with new conditions; maybe on some new supplier — but always on a foreign nation which, as happened with the governments of Europe during the 1973 war, may decide at a moment of crisis that some overriding interest requires that she tell Israel to fend for herself.

Now, after Camp David, Israel has allowed herself to be reduced to going cap in hand to Egypt to ask her at least to sell us oil, and to plead for special conditions in view of the fact that, after all, Israel searched, and found, and developed the oilfield.

But even this Egypt refuses. Her representative rolls his eyes heavenwards and says "Oh, no. We cannot do that. You see, in December 1974(!) we gave an undertaking to an American Company called Amoco that they would handle the sales of oil in this zone, when we recovered it. You will have to apply to them". Amoco is a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Co. of Indiana, one of the companies in the coils of the Arab States...

All this — while the oilfield itself is still completely in Israel's hands.

The pattern of the government's behaviour on oil follows closely the policy on Sinai altogether: as though Israel were a heavily defeated people, forced inexorably to accept crushing terms in return for a peace treaty.

The subject is thus not oil. It is the way our governments have allowed themselves to be treated, the cowed status to which Israel is allowing herself to be pushed.

The story of oil reflects first of all the dangers we face from our own show of weakness. It is not an essential weakness; it is not the consequence of objective circumstances too strong for us, nor of external forces we cannot overcome.

It is an induced weakness, deriving from a weak leadership, outwitted and resourceless. But the effect is — to paraphrase Shakespeare — that the fault will lie not in our stars but in ourselves that we allow ourselves to be treated like underlings.

8.12.78

The Truth About Egyptian Policy

From No-Man's Land to "Sacred Soil"

Several days ago Deputy Minister Yoram Aridor told the Knesset that Egyptian sovereignty over Sinai had never been recognized and that some time ago the jurist Peter Elman had prepared a detailed memorandum for the Ministry of Justice showing that there was not, nor had there been, Egyptian sovereignty in Sinai.

That is so. Since the Ottoman Empire surrendered its control over the territory after her defeat in the first World War, no sovereignty has been established over the peninsula. By virtue of their victory in that war the British possessed it and they could determine its future as they saw fit. They could include it in their Protectorate over Egypt, they could include it in the territory of their prospective Mandate over Palestine, they could also proclaim it a separate political unit under their protection. This course was in fact recommended to Prime Minister Lloyd George in 1919 by Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, the Political Officer in the British Military Administration in Palestine. He argued that the Sinai desert in British hands would serve as an effective buffer area between Egypt when she became independent and the future Jewish State in Palestine.

For reasons of convenience the British continued to maintain Sinai under their administration in Egypt, and appointed a governor for the purpose. Land communications between Egypt and Palestine however were maintained by means of the Palestine Railways. When you travelled from Egypt to Palestine, the border control was at Kantara on the Suez Canal. Even when British rule in Egypt came to an end Egypt never proclaimed sovereignty over the peninsula. The handful of its inhabitants were not granted Egyptian citizenship. Needless to say the Egyptians did not lift a finger to develop and bring life to the desert. The only economic activity in the territory was that of an Italian company which developed the oilfields in the Abu Rodeis area. It is no exaggeration to say, indeed it is a simple fact, that the only use to which the Egyptians put Sinai between 1948 and 1967 was as a base for war on Israel.

When, therefore, President Sadat described Sinai "sacred Egyptian ter-

ritory” he was, with all due respect to him, talking nonsense even more arrant than the usual nonsense of Arab propaganda.

This fact is the key to the determined, uncompromising refusal of Sadat to agree to any Israeli presence in Sinai, not even in the Rafiah salient, even after Israel proposed to return the whole peninsula to Egyptian rule, and to recognize her sovereignty there. The Rafiah salient comprises less than one percent of the total area of Sinai. To Egypt this is a minute strip on the far edge of the desert. For Israel it is a stronghold of great importance in her defence against attack from the south. Sadat knows — and who better than he — how many times Egyptian forces have attacked through this area. He knows — and who better than he — its importance to Israel’s security.

If there had not in the past three months been other sufficient indications, then Sadat’s angry refusal to make microscopic “concessions” in territory where Egypt has had no sovereignty, which is certainly not “sacred” and which is of no importance to Egyptian security — but which is important for an attack on Israel — are enough to demonstrate that this man does not envisage peace with Israel but (in the words of the Prime Minister) peace without Israel.

* * *

The Alignment Government, after much cogitation and calculation, established Israel’s absolutely minimal security requirements in the south. These included “territorial continuity” to Sharm el-Sheikh and retention of the Rafiah area. Flowing from this determined decision they began building two air-bases which assured adequate air space for our planes in the south, and initiated the establishment of a network of agricultural communities in Rafiah salient, and at their centre a new pioneer city: Yamit. “Incidentally” the desert for the first time in thousands of years began to bloom.

They laid it down in fact that while Israel would not demand sovereign rights over the whole of Sinai, she would stand firm in any negotiations for peace, on her minimal right, well-established in international law and custom, not to mention equity and justice, to the territorial adjustments indisputably required by her security.

* * *

After the Six Day War all the leaders of Israel swore that Israel would never, never again resign the defence of her borders to United Nations soldiers. No force in the world will prevent the UN from complying with an Egyptian ruler's demand to evacuate Sinai when he finds it convenient or necessary to make such a demand. The grounds for this emphatic vow were unquestionably reinforced by the attitude adopted towards Israel by most of the members of the United Nations, especially in view of the fact that it is impossible to foresee in what circumstances a crisis would occur in the future.

They also swore that Israel could not put its faith in demilitarized zones. Demilitarization becomes a fiction precisely when the aggressor decides that he no longer needs it. Nevertheless the possibility was broached in the period of Alignment government. Finally however it was decided that whatever "arrangements" might be made in a peace treaty for the rest of Sinai, Israel must be sovereign in the territorial strip from the Mediterranean to Sharm es-Sheikh, including the Rafiah salient.

* * *

The decision of the "Likud" government to propose to Egypt on the one hand sovereignty over those areas and on the other hand to insist that they are essential to Israeli security does not lend itself to rational analysis. If Sadat had accepted the proposal the agricultural villages and Yamit town would have become a part of the Egyptian economy, the children born there would be Egyptian citizens by birth, the young men would be liable to Egyptian military service, apart from other consequences and implications.

The practical prospect is however quite different. In 1970 when Egypt and Israel signed a cease-fire and "standstill" agreement, the Egyptians broke the agreement within twelve hours. The SAM 6 missiles were moved 30 kilometres and brought down to the Suez Canal. Who can calculate how many Israeli lives were lost as a result of that breach when the Egyptians attacked on Yom Kippur three years later? (Who, incidentally, does not remember how the Americans declined "to see" the missiles and successfully pressed Israel not to insist on their being moved back in accordance with the cease-fire agreement)? If Sadat had accepted the peace terms offered him — of sovereignty over all of Sinai but with an Israeli force to guard the settlements — not many days would pass before every Israeli remaining in Sinai — north or south, pilot or farmer — would

receive the order from the Egyptian president: “Out!” Maybe Sadat would not wait even 12 hours. To whom would the Israeli Government then appeal? To the United States? To UN Secretary-General Waldheim?

* * *

Sadat is in fact being kind to Israel by rejecting the smart idea of Israeli security in the embrace of Egyptian sovereignty. It is the Israeli Government that should jump at the opportunity promised by that rejection. Even on the strictest formal reading there is no justification for its clinging to its “peace” proposal. The national interest certainly requires its instant abandonment. The blunders already made will no doubt complicate the task of explaining it. Overcoming the difficulties of delayed explanation of a logical and just case, and of the truth about the whole question of Sinai, however, is preferable to the bewilderment and derision and contempt which are our lot today in the world, even among good Jews and among non-Jewish friends, in the face of the contrived “cleverness” of the peace plan. In the circumstances — of Sadat’s insistence that not a single Israeli may remain on a single square centimetre of “Egyptian sacred soil” — the Government should make a bold and courageous statement to the people and to the world at large, that it withdraws its offer.

The Prime Minister, famous for his drafting capacity, can surely compose the appropriate text — and bring reassurance not only to the population at Yamit but to the Jewish people as a whole.

Ma’ariv 28.2.78

The Bare Realities

An official statement has explained that the 76 Arab terrorists released by the Government — all of them convicted of murder, or attempted murder of Israeli civilians — were exchanged for one prisoner held by the PLO. This explanation of a monstrous act is a new government insult to the public intelligence. The truth is that for some time Egypt had pressed the government to add various “gestures” to the price she is already paying for the “peace treaty”. One of them was to release “security” prisoners.

The release of the 76 was a characteristically irresponsible exhibitionist

gesture of “goodwill”. Since the release, the government has actually sat in conclave to consider the Egyptian request to free more prisoners.

Why does Sadat press for the release of PLO terrorists? They are not Egyptians. Their propaganda machine is waging a violent war of words against him, and against Egypt. Why, on the eve of signing a treaty with Israel, did he demand this self-mutilating gesture from Israel?

There is, in fact, no mystery. Sadat knows that their release appreciably strengthens the PLO’s fighting arm, and fortifies the morale of the whole Arab terrorist community. He knows it is a mathematical certainty that the release will cost the lives of more Israeli men, women and children.

At this moment, such requests of Israel are the only way Sadat can fulfill the Egyptian pledge to help the PLO attain its objective — a pledge he constantly reiterates. The very act of asking for the release of PLO members, is stark testimony to Sadat’s attitude to Israel, to its people, especially to the mothers whom he has claimed as his “allies” in Israel — and to the nature of the peace he has in mind for Israel.

* * *

Sadat’s promotion of the PLO cause is part of his brilliant performance to ensure for himself in the “peace” treaty an escape clause from the single undertaking that could have any meaning: to keep the peace. He inserted in the heart of the treaty a legitimization of Egypt’s future adherence to the all-Arab purpose of making war on Israel when the time is ripe. Hence the crisis in the negotiations after November, and the subsequent peripatetic diplomacy between Jerusalem, Washington and Cairo.

Article Six of the treaty — denied him that legitimization. As it stood, Egypt could not in any circumstances claim that going “to the aid of an Arab state attacked by Israel” was sanctioned by the treaty. Then, acting boldly as usual, and knowing that even his most outrageous demands on Israel would be backed by Washington, Sadat made this most outrageous demand that the treaty be suitably tailored and turned into a sham, a treaty for war, as the prime minister described it.

* * *

The government had pledged itself not to give an inch, not even to negotiate, on Article 6. How indeed could there be any negotiation about what the prime minister had described as the “heart of the treaty?”

But negotiate he did. Now we have a supplement to Article 6, which denudes it of any coherent meaning. This is how it reads:

“It is agreed by the parties that there is no assertion that this treaty prevails over other treaties or agreements or that other treaties or agreements prevail over this treaty. The foregoing is not to be so construed as contravening the provisions of Article 6 (5) of the treaty which reads as follows:

“Subject to Art. 103 of the UN Charter, in the event of a conflict between the obligations of the parties under the present treaty and any of their other obligations, the obligations under this treaty will be binding and implemented”.

The plain effect of this document is to replace the unequivocal ban on Egypt’s making war on Israel by an ambiguous mishmash which will enable Egypt, when she makes war on Israel in concert with other Arab states, to flaunt this document.

It is true that Israel’s prime minister will then be entitled to take the first plane to Washington, together with his legal advisers, and there, meeting the President with *his* legal advisers, complain bitterly.

* * *

This was, of course, not the only condition the prime minister and the foreign minister previously had described as “impossible,” which was in the end accepted by a bewildered Cabinet. That had been the obviously sane reaction to the suggestion that Israel should agree to a timetable for implementing the autonomy plan laid down in the Camp David agreement.

Now we have a timetable. Negotiations are to be opened one month after the signing of the “peace” treaty, and Israel has undertaken to complete the negotiations within a year.

With whom will Israel negotiate? Neither Jordan nor the Palestinian Arabs show any signs of willingness to do so. Israel can, rationally, negotiate only with Egypt. These undertakings are patently nonsensical. Yet there may be method, American and Egyptian, in this madness.

Why should the Palestinian Arabs and Hussein not be prepared to negotiate? They are, after all, perfectly aware of the magnitude of the concessions Israel has made in the plan for full autonomy, and the decisive power they will be wielding in the negotiations on the final sovereignty of

Judea, Samaria and Gaza. But their very intransigence strengthens Sadat's (and Washington's) hand in their insistence on further, immediate, Israeli concessions.

"Come now," Sadat will say. "You offered me Sinai as a preliminary gesture before we ever started negotiating. You cannot be less generous to the Palestinians, or to Hussein". From Washington, the Saunders and the Athertons energetically will renew the specific demands which they have been proclaiming for many months. The central demand, of course, is for Israel to give up "eastern Jerusalem". This much-publicized many-pronged American campaign, opened immediately after the Camp David accord, already has inspired Arab militants in the Old City to launch some tentative, teenage violence.

Indeed, the peace treaty had not yet been signed when Sadat was already calling for a number of "gestures" — such as the withdrawal of Israel Army Headquarters from Beit El in Judea and from Gaza (which should, under the Camp David agreements, be part of the withdrawal *after* the setting up of the autonomy administration). The demands for "gestures" will now rain down thick and fast upon the Israeli Government — in order to bring about a dismantling of Israeli authority and the Facilitation of chaos and violence; in order to "encourage" the Palestinians and Jordan to negotiate, or to "bring home" to Israel that her best course is to give up Judea and Samaria and Gaza without more "ado".

* * *

What will this government do? We can only judge by its record. This is the government that started the process by unilaterally offering up Sinai, while announcing it would hold on to airfields and on no account abandon Jewish settlements. Before he went to Camp David, the prime minister personally assured residents of Yamit that if he were pressed to dismantle the settlements he would pack his bags and come home. Then he, and the government, agreed to give up both airfields and settlements.

This is the government which unilaterally proposed a plan of administrative autonomy for Judea, Samaria and Gaza *to follow* the peace treaty; then agreed on a plan of full autonomy for the "West Bank" which would put an end to Israeli rule, *before* negotiations for a peace treaty with Jordan.

This government started out in its autonomy plan by laying down that the internal security in the area would be controlled by Israel, and ended

up by agreeing to the control of internal security by the Arab autonomous council which will set up its own “strong police force” for the purpose.

This is the government which began by predicating the maintenance of Israel Defence Forces strength and dispositions in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, and ended by agreeing to a “withdrawal” of the army and the redistribution of its reduced strength in “locations to be agreed on”. As this was being written, Israeli Radio announced that the government has already agreed, as a gesture, to withdraw the army headquarters from Gaza and from Beit El (as requested, without any pressure, by Sadat).

This is the government, which laid down, in its autonomy plan, that Jewish settlement in Judea, Samaria and Gaza would continue (which was, on the face of it, reasonable, as control of government lands would be in Israel’s hands); and then signed the Camp David agreement, where no mention is made of Jewish settlement.

This is the government which signed the historic Camp David agreement, which contains not one single word about the relationship of the Jewish people to Eretz Yisrael, nor of its historic and political rights to its only homeland, nor even a hint of the true cause of the conflict (which led the Arab states, including Egypt, to try to prevent its very birth in 1948).

Not one single word. But the agreement is replete with the rhetoric of Arab propaganda. It implicitly accepts the Arab version of the conflict (the “Palestinian problem”), and explicitly announces its acceptance not only of the Arab formula of “the legitimate rights” and the “just aspirations” of the Palestinian people, but spells out the principle that in the determination of the future final status of the “West Bank” and Gaza, it is the Palestinian Arabs who will have the last word.

The catalogue is long. This is the government which, step by step, whether with or without initial resistance, surrendered Israeli position after position, succumbed to every Egyptian or American demand until, in order to find more favour in their eyes, it even let loose those 76 dedicated terrorists.

Perhaps this is the most significant indication of how the government is likely to behave under pressure in the fateful coming months.

30.3.79

Clouding the Issue

The Camp David agreement is the charter for the impending negotiations on the autonomy proposed for “the West Bank” and Gaza. It is a public document signed in Washington on September 17, 1978 by Premier Begin, President Sadat and, as witness, President Carter. Drawn up and signed in the English language, it includes clauses which provide for further negotiations. It also contains clauses which, by accident or design, are open to more than one construction. On the whole, however, the document is drafted in adequately clear language, and on the essential central issues there is neither provision for further negotiation nor room for doubt.

It is on these central issues that the campaign is in progress in Israel to befuddle the people, to bulldoze them into believing that what was signed at Camp David does not mean what it says, and what was written is not there; that in fact, in the negotiations about to begin, the Israeli spokesmen will be unfettered by commitment on any substantive issue.

Many persons, ministerial and others, and many bodies, like the National Religious Party or the Committee of Directors-General headed by Dr. Ben-Elissar, have vied with each other in this irresponsible pretence. A characteristic example, however, is the remark of Deputy-Premier Yigael Yadin, who proposed that Israel’s case at the negotiating table should be based on the original autonomy plan the Prime Minister announced in December 1977.

No doubt Israel’s proposals may reasonably include those clauses from the original plan that were not covered by the Camp David agreement. Indeed, the Prime Minister himself has offered them to the ministerial committee framing Israel’s platform for the negotiations. He still holds, for example, that 18 is the age at which the Arab residents of Judea, Samaria and Gaza should be eligible to vote in the elections for the autonomy council, and that the seat of the council should be in Bethlehem. He is also still firmly of the opinion that the council should elect its own chairman.

But the central, the crucial elements of the autonomy as proposed originally by Mr. Begin, died at Camp David; they are buried there and their remains are immune even to the archaeological skills of Professor Yadin. Maybe Israel’s leaders believe it is their right to hoodwink their own people; but insulting the intelligence of the Americans and the Egyptians is an altogether unnecessary addition to Israel’s heavy diplomatic burden.

The Prime Minister's original peace plan opened the doors and paved the way to the far-reaching and disastrous concessions at Camp David. This was the great achievement of President Carter in the months that preceded Camp David (when point-by-point Israeli surrenders made it possible to persuade Sadat to come to Camp David). At Camp David itself, the remaining obstacles on the road to the common objective — squeezing Israel back into the pre-1967 lines — were removed. Indeed it is the differences between the original plan and the Camp David agreement which illustrate the extent of Israel's plight, and the brazenness of those who are now actively trying to sweep the truth under the carpet.

Under the original autonomy proposal, the supreme authority in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, remained vested in the Israeli Military Government; and the Military Government was to be the source of authority for the autonomy council to be elected. Only the civil machinery of the Military Government was to be dismantled. Thus all matters and prerogatives not covered by the specific departments of the Autonomy — *such as the control of state lands and of water resources* — remained within the authority of the Military Government. Under that plan Israel could legitimately even put an end to the autonomy regime. For these very reasons the Carter Administration, from the moment the plan was unveiled, urged the replacement of the military administration.

The Camp David agreement abolishes the authority of the Military Government. Moreover, it takes out of Israel's hands the authority to establish the autonomy. It is no longer to be an autonomy "granted" by Israel. Israel, with her own hands, gave Egypt and Jordan equal authority in establishing the autonomy. The Camp David agreement says:

"Egypt, Israel and Jordan will agree on the modalities of establishing the elected self-governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza... The parties will negotiate an agreement which will define the powers and responsibilities of the self-governing authority to be exercised in the West Bank and Gaza".

Whatever those powers and responsibilities may be, the Camp David agreement ensures that no Israeli governmental authority shall remain in the area. It lays down that "the Israeli military government and its civilian government will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing authority has been freely elected by the inhabitants of these areas". It seems incredible that Government apologists are trying to inject into the phrase "will be

withdrawn” the meaning that the Military Government will only be moving house and will continue to “run the West Bank” from some new address within the Green Line. This is a desperate clutching at the wind. The Camp David agreement lays down explicitly that the Arab self-governing authority will “replace the existing military government”.

Do the Israeli spokesmen at the negotiations (headed by Interior Minister Burg) seriously intend telling the Americans and the Egyptians, with a straight face, that these formulations — to which the Prime Minister solemnly set his signature — do not mean what they say, and the full autonomy for the inhabitants of the “West Bank” as promised by Israel in the agreement really means that Israel will continue to exercise her over-all authority in the area?

* * *

Equally unequivocal is the change achieved by the US and by Egypt on the subject of the internal security of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. The original peace plan was explicit on the subject:

“Security and public order in the area of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district,” it said, “will be the responsibility of the Israeli authorities”. From the Camp David agreement it is equally clear that internal security and public order will *not* be the responsibility of the Israeli authorities. It says (in Clause 1(b)):

“The agreement (between Egypt, Israel and Jordan on the powers and responsibilities of the self-governing authority) will also include arrangements for assuring internal and external security and public order. A strong local police force will be established, which may include Jordanian citizens”.

Moreover, the document clarifies this further (in Clause 1):

“All necessary measures will be taken and provisions made to assure the security of Israel and its neighbours during the transitional period and beyond. To assist in providing such security, a strong local police force will be constituted by the self-governing authority. It will be composed of inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza”.

The Israeli part in these arrangements is not left undefined. “The police” Clause 2 continues: “will maintain continuing liaison on internal security

matters with the designated Israeli, Jordanian and Egyptian officers”.

But ministers and other spokesmen continue to go round the country cheerfully proclaiming that of course Israel will continue to be responsible for internal security. The Minister of Agriculture even adds that “it is inconceivable that the IDF shall not be free to go into the Casba at Nablus in order to deal with terrorists”.

Inconceivable? What has been done to Israel in the Camp David agreement is indeed inconceivable. Mr. Sharon had better digest the fact that if the autonomy plan is implemented in accordance with the Camp David agreement, the IDF will not be allowed to go into the Casba at Nablus unless it gets permission from the autonomy authorities. He is no doubt right in believing that Israel may be compelled to send in the IDF; only now such an entry will be greeted throughout the world with an even louder howl of protest than is raised at Israel’s essential incursions into Lebanon. For Israel will then, after all, also be breaking a solemn agreement...

* * *

Is the public aware of the full proportions of the surrender at Camp David?

It was no less moral than political. Every concession to the Arabs is spelt out in the agreement. All the elements which are supposed to be “good for Israel” exist only in the speeches of government spokesmen; they do not appear in the agreement. All the safeguards (however temporary, however fragile) for Israel’s governmental role, or even for the assurance of Jewish rights in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, that were contained in the original autonomy plan, were eliminated, erased. Nothing is left of them in the Camp David agreement. For example, the right of Jews to live there.

In the Camp David agreement there is not one word of Zionist or Jewish inspiration. In this historic document there is not one word about the affinity of the Jewish people to Eretz Yisrael, about its historic connection, about its political and moral right. There is not even a hint that the war to which these agreements are supposed to put an end was a war for the openly declared Arab purpose of eliminating Israel from the map. On the contrary, any reader over the age of ten will recognize that the document is permeated with the phraseology of Arab propaganda.

Its whole thrust is for the transfer of the “West Bank” to Arab hands.

The very purpose of the now impending negotiations is described in terms of Arab propaganda: “The resolution of the Palestine problem in all its aspects” (with the obvious corollary that this is the cause of the dispute). The agreement takes it for granted that there shall be a peaceful and orderly “transfer of authority”; and that towards that transfer the autonomy represents “transitional arrangements” (for a period not exceeding five years). During those five years, not Israel but the Arabs will be the rulers of the area.

Then, as it approaches the handling of the period after the autonomy, the Camp David agreement has veritably no eyes for anything but the “Palestinians,” their future and their rights. There will be negotiations on the final status of the area.

“Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank” will take part. The agreement reached (in direct quotation from Arab formulations of their demands) must “recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements”. When, moreover, agreement has been reached, it will be submitted once more to a vote by the representatives of the Arab inhabitants. The Zionist Prime Minister of Israel thus recognized the superior claim of the Arabs to decide the fate of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

* * *

The continued talk about the perpetuation of Israeli control, including the control of internal security under the autonomy plan, and the brave words about Israel’s ultimate insistence on her rights to sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Gaza are no more than a snare and a delusion. They only add to the dimensions of future shock.

If the nation’s leaders are really serious about trying to prevent the grim developments that flow from the agreement signed by the Prime Minister eight months ago — they can still do so. But then, as a first step, they must stop their deceptions of the public. They would then have to rouse the people to the gravity of the plight from which Israel must rescue herself.

1 8.5.79

Egyptian Intransigence

Why is Israel transferring El-Arish to Egypt precisely now? Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty in which it was laid down, after wearisome negotiations, that Israel's first withdrawal in Sinai would be after nine months. No government spokesman has even tried to explain why the government had to make a further "gesture," and hand back El-Arish months ahead of the timetable. And after Israel made the gesture, we have been treated in the past few weeks to the astonishing picture of an imperious Egypt denying the humble request of Israel for some small favours in the area Israel is surrendering.

Several questions immediately come to mind. When the government agreed to return El-Arish immediately to the Egyptians — entirely as an act of grace — why did it not make it clear that the area of the laundry and the vegetable garden of the Neot Sinai village were not included in the gesture? The same applies to the rights of the Bardawil fishermen to continue to fish, and the Israeli enterprises in El-Arish.

There is no reason to expect, nor need to wait for, an answer. In their gushing eagerness to satisfy Egyptian whims, Israel's negotiators just did not "realise" that there were any such human problems affecting their own Jewish citizens. They did not think and did not ask.

Just as Defence Minister Ezer Weizman acceded on the spot, unhesitatingly, to a small Egyptian request to be allowed to prospect for oil immediately in the Alma oilfield area, as though it were some private bauble of his own. The rights were long conceded to the American Neptune Company, which has been operating the oilfield (and which, if Mr. Weizman's nonchalant gift to his Egyptian friends were consummated, would no doubt sue Israel for millions of dollars in damages.)

El-Arish provides, in miniature, a reproduction of the historic irresponsibility in the government's actions since the opening of the "peace process". This, after all is how the surrender of Sinai, lock, stock and barrel was conceived.

Not one of the problems of Israel's security was seriously considered, nobody in the defence establishment was told of the proposal.

Not one of the complex economic consequences occurred to the minds of the two exclusive sponsors of the scheme. The first step they took was to rush to Sadat to offer at one blow, the complete structure of Israel's vital defences in the south (training and manoeuvre area, airfields, unique naval base).

The spontaneous light-headedness over El-Arish, however, also reflects the equally abysmal failure of the members of the government to grasp the Egyptian motives. Of this El-Arish is also a faithful miniature. The Israeli negotiators were manifestly taken by surprise at the Egyptian refusal of even a grain of consideration for the human problem of the Israeli villagers at Neot Sinai and at Bardawil, and the handful of businessmen in El-Arish.

There was no intelligent reason for surprise. Sadat does not concede an ounce of recognition to Israeli gestures. He does not give a single centimetre, and he will not tolerate a single Jew from Israel in his territory.

What the members of this government do not understand, or do not even try to understand, is that the inconsiderateness of the Egyptians, their harsh intransigence over every last detail, is a reflection of their unrelieved and unchanging purpose towards Israel and the Jewish people.

Anwar Sadat has never recanted his anti-Semitic utterances. Seven years ago, speaking in a Cairo mosque in celebration of the birthday of Mohammed, Sadat described the expulsion of the Jews from the Arabian Peninsula as the Prophet's greatest achievement.

"The Jews are a people of plotters" Sadat said "of deceivers and traitors. They were born to lie and to betray... I promise you that we shall restore them to their previous state. As it is written in the Koran: 'they are fated to be oppressed and downtrodden'". After he had visited Jerusalem, after Israel had made her peace offer, Sadat persisted in his anti-Semitic remarks, and they were published in the weekly journal "October" — a regular fountain of vulgar antisemitism. His lifelong admiration of Hitler, his continued demonstrative pilgrimages to Berchtesgaden — are all of a piece.

Nor, of course, had there been any softening, any refinement, of his demands on Israel. From his public statements since he took office — in 1971, in 1974, his speech in the Knesset in 1977, and down to his latest pronouncements — there emerges an absolute unswerving consistency. Israel must "restore all the Arab lands" (including eastern Jerusalem), the "rights of the Palestinians" must be restored and the "Palestinian people" given the right of self-determination.

* * *

His indeed is the moderate version of Arab demands. On the eve of the negotiations on the autonomy scheme, those demands assume a more immediate significance. Sadat looks forward to their full and precise

fulfillment. On Israel withdrawing behind the 1949 Armistice Lines, he assumes that a Palestinian State (hopefully under Egyptian tutelage) will be established in Judea and Samaria. The campaign for the restoration of the rights of the Palestinians will then be intensified, that is, Israel will now be pressed by the combined Arab world to follow the 1947 partition scheme and thus hand over Jaffa and Lod and Ramla and Western Galilee to the Arabs. Whether achieved by diplomacy or by war, this would involve, or be followed by, the dismemberment of the Jewish State and the restoration of the “unity of the Arab world”.

If Sadat does not reasonably expect to preside over the whole of this process — which would necessarily take a number of years — he certainly has good reason to believe that he is achieving for his successors the maximal conditions for the final blow to Israel. In the south, with Israel out of Sinai after three years, those strategic conditions will be within his grasp. In “*Falastin*” the process will be much more complicated but the Camp David agreements established a reasonable basis for the effective disappearance of Israeli power and control. What more could an Arab statesman demand of himself, what more could the Arab nation demand of him?

* * *

Do not the other Arab leaders realize what Sadat has already done and what he is doing for the Arab nation? Have they not read the Camp David agreement — with its replacement of the Israeli military government by an elected Arab autonomy council, with its five-year term for the autonomy, and the obligation by Israel to negotiate with Egypt and Jordan, as well as with the inhabitants of the “West Bank” in order to reach an agreement on the future sovereignty; and the obligation undertaken, by Israel as well, to take into account the rights (which they know never existed) of the Palestinian people?

Do they not realize that in this one phase, and without any bloodshed, Sadat is achieving for all of them a historic defeat of the Jewish State? Do they not see that the Camp David agreements (of which one part is already in process of consummation) contain the essential seeds for a reversal of the traumatic Arab defeat of 1967? And without giving up the options for the final overthrow of the “Zionist invasion?” Why then have they rejected the peace treaty, why are they proclaiming economic measures against Egypt, filling the air with bellicose sounds of utter hostility?

The answer is close at hand. The Arab leaders certainly do not want a united Arab world to go on record as recognizing the legitimacy of an “intrusive Jewish State in the Arab world”.

But if they are interested in ensuring maximum pragmatic success for Sadat’s efforts, they will be doing precisely what they are doing now. They will organize the fiercest opposition to him and to his actions. They will proclaim a major boycott in trade, in culture, in diplomacy.

If Sadat himself did not actually plan this with his colleagues in the Arab States, they are quite possibly collaborating with him in the execution of the programme. The fiercer and the louder the opposition of the Arab States, the stronger becomes Sadat’s stance in his negotiations with Israel, the more clearly delineated becomes the picture in the West — and especially in the US — of this brave leader, undaunted by the hostility, even the enmity, and the boycott and the threats, of his brother Arabs, fighting the cause of peace and the cause of the poor oppressed Palestinians. Will Israel not then relent? Will she not, at least as a gesture to hard-pressed Sadat, give up her intransigence for example, over Jerusalem?

Precisely because the stakes are so high and the prospective difficulties in negotiation with Israel great, Sadat *needs* the unbridled attacks of the other Arab leaders. Even the boycott should appear as realistic as possible. (In fact, some of the measures noisily threatened are figments of the imagination. Egyptian trade with the other Arab countries is minimal, and as for oil, she has more than enough of her own.)

Is this scenario not too fanciful? Not at all. Sadat has proved he is a past master at the art of grandiose bluff. In 1972, he heralded Egypt’s famous rift with the Soviet Union by expelling the 30,000 Soviet advisers who had been helping build up and train the Egyptian Army. The expulsion was followed by a long period of mutual recrimination, which pervaded Egyptian society at all levels. The war of words went on for fifteen months — until the Yom Kippur War. In fact there had been no rift at all, but a brilliantly conceived and no less brilliantly executed hoax upon the world and especially, of course, on Israel and the US.

In fact, the rift was a smokescreen behind which the Soviets had helped Egypt prepare what became the Yom Kippur War. A detailed account was published in 1974 (in “The Six Hour War” by Abd el-Satar al’Tawila), and subsequently Sadat himself (in a radio interview on October 24, 1975) boasted of his expulsion of the Soviet advisers as “a strategic cover... a splendid strategic distraction for our going to war”.

* * *

However, whether there is Egyptian collusion or not in the anti-Egyptian campaign now raging, its helpful impact on Sadat's effort to reduce Israel is beyond question.

Nor is there any doubt of the unity of the Arab purpose, nor of the unusually brilliant leadership of Sadat in the struggle for its achievement.

25.5.79

Time to Take Stock

A lively correspondence has been in progress between Jerusalem and Washington on the function of the United States in the negotiations now starting on the autonomy in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Israel rejected the Egyptian-American proposal that Washington should be a "full partner" to the agreement. There can be no doubt, however, that the American representatives will play a full part in the negotiations themselves. But they will not sign any agreement that is reached.

Nobody has bothered to explain to the Israeli public how and why the Americans, who cannot be mediators because they have completely identified with the Egyptian attitude, are to be a party to the negotiations. Indeed, nobody has bothered to explain why these negotiations are being held at all at this point, and what they are expected to achieve. At best, they will be an exercise in futility. In fact they will develop — gradually or more precipitately — into an instrument of pressure on Israel to make speedy and far-reaching concessions in Judea and Samaria over and above what is surrendered in the Camp David agreement.

The Israeli team proposes that the agenda for the talks should concentrate on implementing the immediate relevant clause of the Camp David accord — to lay down "the modalities for establishing the elected self-governing authority in the West Bank and Gaza". This means that a decision should be reached on the system by which the autonomy council should be elected; on the criteria for the franchise; on the scope of the council's authority.

Assuming that agreement on these questions can be reached between Israel and Egypt (with American approval), their practical impact will be negligible. Two vital elements to these negotiations are missing. Jordan is

not participating as required by the Camp David agreement, nor are any of the Palestine Arabs who could be included in the Jordanian (and the Egyptian) delegation. Moreover, every day brings an indication or pronouncement that (to put it mildly) Jordan does not intend to take part in the talks. As for the various “Palestinians,” they totally denounce the Camp David agreements. In short, therefore, there are neither electors nor candidates in sight for the elections to the autonomy council.

* * *

Why, then, did Israel’s government agree to enter into these negotiations? True, the Israeli negotiators did at first object to any “impossible” timetable for the negotiations. However, precisely as in the case of every other “impossible” demand by Egypt and the US, the Israeli team gave in to the demand that the negotiations had to begin by a given date; and they meekly encased themselves in the strait-jacket of a one-year time limit for concluding the negotiations.

What was the purpose of the Egyptians and the Americans? These negotiations, after all, cannot possibly reach the conclusion laid down in the Camp David agreement unless there is at least Jordanian approval and a Palestinian Arab constituency established for the election of the autonomy council — which is the heart of the autonomy project.

Washington has indeed been making great efforts to induce Jordan and some of the Palestinian Arabs to join in, holding out the assurance that Israel will make the necessary additional concessions as it did in the earlier negotiations. These American efforts have failed — and now, as was obviously foreordained, a campaign of pressure will be mounted on Israel, within the framework of the negotiations and outside them, to “do something,” to make a “gesture of goodwill” that will “enable” Jordan and the Palestine Arabs to join the talks. If the first gesture is not enough, there is always room for more.

The American — like the Egyptian — interest in the negotiations is primarily as a further step towards the realization of their overall purpose; an Israeli withdrawal to the 1949 Armistice Lines. Their own participation is a calculated means of exerting continuous pressure on Israel (as they did successfully throughout 1978), this time to ensure the implementation of Israel’s concessions under the Camp David agreement (first of all the replacement of the military government by the Autonomy Council) and to achieve further, far-reaching concessions beyond anything in the

agreement. The declared purpose of the exercise will of course be to offer an inducement to Jordan and the “Palestinians” to agree to talk.

* * *

The Israel Government, therefore, which agreed at Camp David to conduct negotiations with Egypt and Jordan on the ways and means of establishing the autonomy, will find itself engaged — immediately or a little later — in negotiations with Egypt and the US in pursuance of the Arab-American objective of squeezing out her acquiescence in further retreats towards her ultimate withdrawal to the 1949 lines — before the autonomy comes into being. The thrust of those pressures is already known: East Jerusalem to be surrendered to the Arabs, and the suspension of all new Jewish settlement in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

The prevention of the development of Jewish life in Judea, Samaria and Gaza is a symbol and an outcrop of the central issue: that total expulsion of Israel (and of all Jews) from these areas — as a first step towards eliminating it from the rest of Palestine.

Only last week Jordan’s Minister of Information Adnan Abu Ouda announced (in a radio interview):

“Jordan will not join the peace effort even if Israel stops establishing settlements. This will not alter the situation. Israel must announce its readiness to withdraw from all the Arab territories, dismantle its settlements, recognize the rights of the Palestinians including the right of self-determination and agree to the participation in the talks of all parties including the PLO”.

* * *

At this juncture the Israel government should perform the exercise (for the first time perhaps since it was formed) of standing back for a moment and examining the overall situation in which Israel finds itself, and from which they are launching themselves into the new set of negotiations.

If they face the truth and are honest with themselves they will find the picture and the prospect highly disturbing — not perhaps for the next two or three weeks, while the parties are easing themselves into comfortable postures, but for the future of Israel as it has already been mapped out by

their earlier, irresponsible decision and as it is likely to be affected by every detail in the negotiations about to begin.

The Arab demands on Israel remain exactly what they were before December 1977. The latest Jordanian statement is but a reflection of the Arab consensus; Israel must go back to the death-trap of the 1949 Armistice Lines — and there gird itself for the final assault on its life. American support for the Arab demands has also remained constant. Prime Minister Begin's naive gamble with Sinai did not diminish by one whit the extent of Arab demands; nor did it blunt the American diplomatic thrust. Now, unless Israel, having surrendered Sinai, accepts in full (though, in the circumstances, not all at once) the demands for surrender in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, it will be faced with the same threat of war as existed before 1977 — except that that threat will be compounded by Israel's loss of the territory of Sinai and the priceless strategic assets — both the natural assets and those it built so laboriously and at such great cost in the peninsula.

Sadat not only ensured for his nation the removal of Israel's effective security belt — down to the last grain of sand and the last Jew — which would protect it in a future war, but, despite Begin's protestations, he also in fact achieved (by the addendum to Clause Six of the Peace Treaty) adequate formal legitimization for joining a future all-Arab war against Israel, under whatever pretext may then be available to Egypt.

Nothing has changed fundamentally in this respect. It should not be forgotten that Egypt never "went it alone" in war with Israel, and that in December 1977 Egypt was in no state to go to war at all. Egypt represented a part of the overall Arab threat of war; and that threat, after all the convolutions of Camp David and the peace treaty, remains valid today and until the day the pretext is required.

* * *

That situation, that pretext, will predictably arise out of the developments in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Even during the autonomy negotiations — over Jerusalem, over dismantling settlements, over an Israeli failure to hand over authority as provided for in the Camp David agreement — that threat will continue to hang over Israel's head. And it will so continue until the last concession has been extracted.

Even more immediately, of course, in the diplomatic situation into which Begin and Dayan have manoeuvred Israel, it will be faced at every clash or

crisis in the talks with a universally orchestrated charge of being to blame for the abortion of the autonomy, for hindering the peace process, for endangering the peace itself.

Israel is about to experience, even if in stages, the full impact of the egregious blunders and surrenders of the past 18 months. Behind the bland discussions over this or that item in the agenda of the autonomy talks hovers our greatest and most dangerous crisis since 1948.

22.6.79

Deaf Ears in Jerusalem

Ephraim Kishon some time ago placed his inimitable finger on one of the strange weaknesses of our society: people do not listen to what is being said to them. One example he offered ran roughly as follows: a man standing in a crowded bus stamps on his neighbour's foot. The victim turns round angrily, only to encounter the conciliating smile of the culprit, who says very sweetly: "I did that on purpose". The victim mutters, "Oh, that's alright. No harm done".

A stormy reaction greeted the comparison recently drawn by President Carter between the Palestinians and the American civil rights movement; and Vice-President Mondale's lame interpretation only served to emphasize the obscenity of the equation. Mr. Carter, however, in that "New York Times" interview made a statement whose practical implications may be much more far-reaching. He said:

"If the Israelis permitted Palestinians to come back to the West Bank, they would be satisfied with just that right to do it. But relatively limited numbers scattered throughout the Arab world would want to return to the poverty of that area".

It would be a useful exercise to estimate the measure, and evaluate the significance, of untruth in this outrageous statement. Its message is simple: the problem between Israel and the Palestinians began with the conquest of the West Bank by Israel in 1967, and relates to the poor refugees who fled then from this area. All the Palestinians are asking for is to be allowed to return to their homes on the West Bank — and the intransigent Israelis are refusing to grant them this small boon.

Apart from the explicit untruth as to what the Palestinians would be “satisfied” with, there is no hint as to why the Palestinians came to leave the “West Bank,” nor any pointer to the fact that they fled before the arrival of the Israeli Army, as it repelled the second Arab attempt to destroy the Jewish State, then within the 1949 Armistice lines. Nor is there a hint from the US President to suggest why, when nowhere in the world have refugees, even when they were forcibly driven from their homes, been enabled to return, Israel alone — which did not drive them out — is expected automatically to enable them to do so.

* * *

The fact is, of course, that the Arabs have been proclaiming the principle of the “right of return” since long before there were any refugees from the West Bank. The thrust of their demand is directed at the territory of Israel before 1967. It relates to the Arabs who fled in 1948, to the homes they left in Jaffa and in Haifa, in Acre and in Ramie. It has been the central theme of the Arab propaganda offensive against Israel ever since 1948. The refugee camps were allowed to exist all the years after 1948 only as a weapon to be used against Israel, the “bomb that would blow up the Jewish State,” as President Nasser of Egypt felicitously described it. The “right of return” has been a central theme of the Arab terrorist organizations since Fatah was founded in 1964. It was the flash-point of the rally of the Arab notables on the West Bank a few months ago. Their eyes and thoughts, they said, were directed at Jaffa and Acre.

President Carter cannot claim to be ignorant of these elementary facts. His bland misrepresentation of the content of the conflict, largely unnoticed in Israel, is further grave testimony to the campaign of unprincipled propaganda designed to secure public support for Washington’s pressure on Israel. The aim of that pressure is not indeed to get Israel to accept refugees on the West Bank, but to induce her to hand over that West Bank to the Arabs, and to barricade herself within the indefensible borders of June 4, 1967 (the 1949 Armistice lines).

* * *

No less significant are the remarks made in Israel last week by the Egyptian Minister of State, Dr. Butros Ghali. He found the moment opportune to lecture the Israelis on their “fears of a Palestinian State”. In

fact, he said, Israel had nothing to fear from such a state. After all there were many ways in which Israel's security could be guaranteed. His remarks could, of course, be dismissed as self-serving blarney; but they may suggest a great potential peril to Israel.

Dr. Ghali knows very well why the Arabs wish Israel to surrender Judea, Samaria and Gaza. It is not only because they want Arab rule there. If Israel were to withdraw from Hebron, from Ramallah, from Nablus, Egypt and her sister states would start making preparations to help "restore the rights of the Palestinians" in Jaffa and Haifa and Acre. Indeed, Egypt assured for herself, in the "peace treaty" a legitimation for the future attack on Israel.

Dr. Ghali is no doubt relying on short memories in Israel or, probably, on the Israeli penchant for not listening. Last November the peace negotiations broke down temporarily because Egypt insisted on the nullification of Article 6, which precluded her making war on Israel, as she might be required to do under her earlier agreements with the other Arab states. This insistence was accompanied by a series of public statements by President Sadat that Egypt would in all circumstances honour its obligation to come to the aid of any Arab state if "attacked by Israel". Sadat moreover spontaneously reaffirmed Egypt's pledges under the Rabat agreement of October 1974. That agreement obliges Egypt to go to the aid of the PLO (as the representative of the Palestinian people) in the struggle for its objective. That is, the destruction of Israel.

* * *

It was precisely Dr. Ghali — this very Dr. Ghali now offering avuncular advice to Israel — who then (last December) provided the most explicit clarification of Egypt's purpose. He explained that the model of the circumstances that would oblige Egypt to go to the aid of an Arab state attacked by Israel was "Egypt's entry into the war of 1948". Not 1973, nor 1967, but 1948. In 1948 the Arab states invaded *Eretz Yisrael* and launched their offensive with the declared purpose of wiping tiny new-born Israel off the face of the earth.

The pattern envisaged by Dr. Ghali is clear. The Egyptians believe that sooner or later the Camp David agreement will result, under American pressure, in the West Bank's coming under Arab rule. With Israel then inside the indefensible 1949 lines, Egypt, in concert with the other Arab

states, will proceed to fulfill her obligation to the Palestinians — to help “restore their rights” in the rest of *Falastin*.

Meanwhile, it does no harm to his cause for Dr. Ghali to try to induce in Israel a sense of security: “You have nothing to fear from a Palestinian state”. This is an expression of the hoax the Arabs have perpetuated, with much success, throughout the world: that the dispute is a clash between a strong Israel and a small, poor Palestinian people, and that the heart of the troubles in the Middle East is the “Palestinian problem”.

Once that problem is “solved” by Israel’s total withdrawal, and the clock is turned back to 1949, then the Arabs will permit themselves the frank and, indeed, triumphant avowal once again (as in 1948) of the real cause of the “dispute”: their determination to eliminate the Jewish State from the “heart of the Arab world”.

Which is more alarming — the knowledge of the lengths to which Washington and Cairo are prepared to go in their psychological warfare campaigns designed to befuddle and lull the public — or Jerusalem’s deaf ear?

17.8.79

Dilemma For Linowitz

In the autumn of 1977, Sol Linowitz was engaged in mobilizing public support for the agreement for handing over the Panama Canal to Panama. This writer, on a visit to the US, had the opportunity then of hearing a very impressive public address. Linowitz held his audience with a historical account marshalled in masterly detail, going back 75 years to the origins of the canal — and of the problem. He had certainly made a deep study of the literature.

Mr. Linowitz’s present assignment, as US special Middle East envoy, may well affect the prospect for peace in Palestine, it may affect the future, indeed the fate, of the Jewish State; it may bear implications for the security of the Western world. One would consequently expect Mr. Linowitz to apply his undoubtedly unusual capacities to a no less thorough and energetic study of the facts — even if they go back more than 75 years. Has he done so?

He said last week that if he were a Palestinian he, too, would not be satisfied with the terms of the government's autonomy proposal. This was rather a surprising one-sided statement for him to make. Nevertheless, it is perfectly logical. If he were a Palestinian he would naturally think and feel and behave like a Palestinian. Yiddish wit long ago evolved the appropriate proposition that "if grandma had wheels she'd be a bus". If Mr. Linowitz were a Palestinian he would undoubtedly be an eloquent and sophisticated exponent of the outlook and the mood of dissatisfaction of the Palestinian Arabs.

The reasons for dissatisfaction are not secret. Arab demands have, indeed, been meticulously codified in the "Palestinian Covenant," and during the past decade have been worked over and precisioned. To convey their essential content and the heady flavour of their passion it is enough to recall that the Covenant lays down very simply that the whole of Mandatory Palestine — that is, Palestine on both sides of the Jordan — is the property of the "Palestinian people," and that the Zionist state is to cease to exist.

The intended fate of the Jewish population of Israel is not specified, except that only Jews who were living in Palestine in 1917 would be granted the right to be regarded as Palestinians. These are the official aims of the "Palestine Liberation Organization," and this organization has been recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people by all the Arab nations (as well as by others) and has clearly imposed its will on the Arab population of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

What possible proposal, then, could "satisfy" Mr. Linowitz, if he were a Palestinian, unless it ensured or brought within immediate sight, the conditions for dissolution of the Jewish state?

* * *

If he were a Palestinian he would know that the purpose of eliminating Israel was not born with the PLO in 1964. It has been the established central national purpose of the Arab nation — that is, the totality of the Arab peoples and states since Israel came into being — a purpose on which they are unanimous whatever other areas of difference may subsist between them. The Arab League states launched war on the nascent Jewish state in 1948 with the proclaimed intention of preventing her birth and of wreaking destruction upon the Jewish population. Having been defeated in that purpose, they tried again in 1967 (after 19 years of

economic, diplomatic, psychological and paramilitary warfare, during which their leaders unremittingly threatened, and their teachers and clerics and writers preached and taught, the destruction of an illegitimate and evil Israel). Then, as in 1948, the concerted attempt on Israel's life was made when she was confined within a miniscule area, indefensible except by pre-emptive action.

Well-meaning friends could then not pretend that the reason for Arab hostility and attacks was Israel's holding Judea, Samaria and Gaza; she did not hold them. The well-worn phrase that "the Palestinian problem is the heart of the conflict," has meaning only if the "Palestinian problem" is defined as the inability, so far, of the Arabs to destroy the Jewish state.

That is why the PLO is recognized and given diplomatic cover by the Arab states; that is why it is given training facilities, and why it is armed and financed by the wealthier among them. It is their creature (even if sometimes unpredictably recalcitrant), and all of them are pledged (formally since the Rabat Conference of 1974) to come to its aid in the fulfilment of its objective. None of them has dissociated himself from the political content and the implicit genocidal intent of the Covenant. On the contrary, all, including Egypt, continue to declare the sanctity of their pledge to the PLO.

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If Mr. Linowitz were a Palestinian he would know (though, being a Palestinian, he would not admit) that it was precisely in order to further this purpose that the "Palestinian people" came into existence at all.

When the Palestinian state of Transjordan (later called Jordan) occupied and illegally annexed Judea, Samaria and Gaza, the Arabs in these areas of Western Palestine evinced no sign of a desire for a second Palestinian state; no urgent sense of separate nationhood, which is trotted out nowadays to justify every murderous outrage against Israeli, and indeed other civilians.

The "Palestinian people" came into being as a central element in the campaign to erase Israel. To gain world sympathy and support it would not "do" to present the truth: of 20 states, sprawled over 14 million square kilometres of land and controlling resources of untold wealth, as being pitted against the one tiny Jewish state. Somebody's brainwave produced the far more effective and persuasive picture of a small, homeless Palestinian people, deprived of its rights and its territory, robbed by a predatory Israel.

Mr. Linowitz may himself even remember that only a while ago, in our own time, the name Palestine was not associated in the public mind with the Arabs — but, as it has been for nearly 4,000 years, with the Jewish nation.

He will no doubt remember, for example, that the Palestine Foundation Fund was not an Arab institution but the central Zionist fund, that Palestine songs were Hebrew not Arabic — that list is endless. Palestinian Arabs actually objected to being called Palestinian. For a long time they insisted on being called Syrians; and in 1947 an Arab trade union leader, Sarni Taha, was assassinated in Haifa when he proposed the establishment of a Palestine (and not an Arab) state.

Mr. Linowitz lived through the Nazi period and he can remember the great truth on which the Nazis based their propaganda: that the greater the lie, the more readily will it be believed. This is what the Arabs have applied in their effort to erase the exclusive national Jewish affinity with the Land of Israel, an affinity unique in the history of the nations.

When the Arabs demand “the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people” — this means, in fact, the return to a Palestinian people that never existed, of rights it never had. What they are actually asking for is the right of the Arabs, already in possession of three-quarters of Palestine, east of the Jordan, to take over — even if in steps — the rest of the country, and suitably dispose of its Jewish population.

The younger generation of Arabs, brainwashed all their lives, embrace the Palestinian myth innocently. Mr. Linowitz is old enough to have witnessed its birth and development. He would, however, if he were a Palestinian, purvey it without qualms: the Moslem religion expressly permits prevarication in a good cause — like the interests of the Arab people for the greater glory of Islam.

* * *

When Mr. Linowitz announces that he is going to hold discussions with Palestinians, and before doing so he gives them to understand that he is on their side — what can the content of his discussions with them be? A cosy consultation between people of like mind on the best way of achieving their agreed objective? Has Mr. Linowitz really studied the facts?

28.12.79

Time for Truth

A seemingly unlimited capacity for self-deception, and a determined, even reproachful, refusal to face unpleasant facts, have been demonstrated anew in the reactions of the Israeli establishment and much of the media to Hassan Tohami's interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper *El-Siassa*.

Tohami is not a free-lance journalist, nor an oppositionist in exile. He is deputy prime minister of Egypt and by any criterion the third or fourth most important member of her government. Nor is there any indication that he ever raised objections internally to the negotiations with Israel. On the contrary: he was designated to conduct the first talks with Foreign Minister Dayan, and by all accounts played a substantial, and not obstructive, part in the negotiations at Camp David.

In the interview, he made not the remotest suggestion that his statements could conflict with the "peace process" which he helped set in motion. He is all for it. He was only describing the kind of peace he and his colleagues envisage; and one of the elements in that picture is, it so happens, a highly uncomplimentary view of Israel and its people.

In fact, the gut attitude, reflected in his interview not only towards Israel but to the Jewish people in general, is not new. It is standard thinking and teaching for Arab Moslem leaders. Arab literature is redolent with it; and Arab schoolchildren imbibe it in their textbooks.

It is indeed an accurate paraphrase of a public vow made by President Sadat himself. In the El-Hussein Mosque in Cairo on April 25, 1972, Sadat not only attacked Israel over its "occupation of Palestine" but promised that he would "crush Israel's arrogance and return them to the humiliation and wretchedness established in the Koran". The Jews, he added, "are a nation of liars and traitors, contrivers of plots, a people born for deeds of treachery".

* * *

Still, why did Mr. Tohami choose to make his hideous statements precisely now — when negotiations are still in progress? This is perhaps the most ominous aspect of the interview: evidently neither he nor Sadat, nor the Egyptian government, is particularly concerned at possible Israeli reactions. And with reason. Tohami's interview coincided with the transfer of the major part of Sinai to Egyptian hands; Israel has given up her only independent source of oil; the oil weapon is being brandished by the Arab

states, and the US and the other Western nations are all exerting pressure on Israel to go even beyond the dire terms of the Camp David agreement and assure immediately that Judea, Samaria and Gaza shall become Arab sovereign territory. Perfectly logical, then, was Tohami's opening statement: "The time has come to tell the truth".

One of Tohami's central themes was that Israel is a spiritually defeated nation. He referred in contemptuous terms to Israel's "love of remaining alive, which will lead them to give up land". He consequently does not believe that a war will be necessary. A process of spiritual attrition among the Jews of Israel — through this overriding desire, as he sees it, to save their skins — will bring about their submission to the "900 million Moslems who want Jerusalem restored to its Arabic character".

Never was a more effective, and tragically well-deserved, rejoinder given to those muddle-headed Israelis — including proclaimed leaders and moulders of public opinion — who insist that the Jewish people must on no account claim its historic right to the land (that we should in fact, collaborate with the Arabs in erasing our history) but must confine itself to demanding conditions that will assure the bare bones of the state's security.

Since Tohami draws his conclusions from repeated statements emanating from Israel, and knowing what strategy he and his colleagues have mapped out for the further stages of the "peace process," should we be surprised that Tohami finds it reasonable to foresee the end of the Jewish "demi-state"?

* * *

Mr. Tohami, moreover, has now found it safe to spell out the truth about the beginning of the "peace process": the hoax known as the "Sadat initiative". The notion that, after 29 years of hostility and war, the Egyptian statesman, manifesting unparalleled courage and an unequalled passion for peace, came suddenly flying to Jerusalem to seek peace, tangibly changed the course of history: overnight Sadat became a world hero. His prestige, and Egypt's, in the US and through the West, soared to dizzying heights.

In contrast, when Israel did not immediately announce far-reaching concessions of territory in response to Sadat's visit, she was not only belaboured by her regular critics but criticized by her regular friends. All that followed was coloured by the immediate impact of the Sadat initiative.

Now, Tohami has confirmed that there was no such initiative. Sadat paid his spectacular visit to Jerusalem only after he had received assurances from Begin (at earlier meetings between Tohami and then Foreign Minister Dayan) that Israel was prepared to give up all of Sinai to Egypt.

* * *

The truth did not remain a complete secret for long, but it never received wide publicity. Too many people in government and the media who had gone overboard in glorifying Sadat, were interested in maintaining the pretence that an Arab leader had taken the first great step towards peace.

Nevertheless, the thrust of Sadat's thinking soon became apparent. First, the offer of Sinai was made public (as though in response to the Sadat visit): then there was the revelation that Sadat vehemently rejected even the slightest easement — such as permitting the residents in the Yamit district to continue living there under Egyptian sovereignty. And there was his utterly absurd attribution of “sanctity” to the soil of Sinai. It did not take long for it to become obvious that the only material and irreversible change that was taking place was a major surrender of territory by Israel and the jettisoning of the minimal conditions for her security in the south (as planned and built by the most moderate of Alignment governments).

As negotiations proceeded, the Egyptians' overall purpose continued to be stated without reservation: Israel's withdrawal to the 1949 armistice lines, and “self-determination for the Palestinian people”.

Sadat also insisted adamantly, and was successful in ensuring, that the peace treaty would not even formally bind Egypt to keep the peace if she is called upon by any Arab state or states to make war upon Israel. In brief, Egypt is as committed as she ever was to war with Israel for all-Arab objectives.

Only she is now faced by an already weakened Israel. Mr. Tohami in his interview added the fascinating, and significant, detail that it was the first contacts with Dayan that “opened the door to *our thinking* that a policy of action, military or political, would reduce Israel to a state of complete attrition, where the love of remaining alive would lead the Jews to give up the land”.

The pattern is now clearer than ever. The Egyptians want peace — the kind of peace outlined by Mr. Tohami. They hope to achieve it by the continued attrition of the people of Israel. In case that does not succeed,

they will go on labouring to ensure the best possible strategic conditions for the Arab side in a future war. Is it not time, as Mr. Tohami said, for the truth to be told — and faced — by Israel as well?

15.12.80

Into the Jaws of Catastrophe

The idea that a foreign force stationed in Sinai will serve as a buffer protecting Israel is no more valid than was the idea behind the UN force stationed there in 1957. It will serve as a buffer only until the Egyptians and their allies are ready to attack Israel. It will then evacuate “Egyptian sovereign territory” within 24 hours of being ordered to do so by an Egyptian president. The discussions now in progress about such a force are a bad joke.

* * *

It is preposterous and hypocritical to suggest that any valid reason remains for Israel to consummate the remaining territorial terms of the treaty.

An international agreement remains valid only as long as there has been no change in the substantive circumstances prevailing at the time of signature. The maxim is famous: *Rebus sic stantibus*. And circumstances have changed radically, even derisively, since March 1979.

This is not a theoretical rule. It is being used against Israel at this very moment. Indeed, agreement after agreement with Israel has been broken on the ground that “circumstances have changed”. The American undertakings in return for Israel’s sacrifice in 1975 — of vital oil and territory — were flagrantly broken in 1978 when their fulfillment was made conditional on Senate approval of the supply of F-15 planes to Saudi Arabia and F-5 planes to Egypt, because “circumstances had changed”. The Senate approved that deal after being given an undertaking that the planes would not be fitted with the additional offensive equipment asked for by the Saudis. The US administration is now struggling hard for approval of her intention to break that undertaking as well. The reason: “changed circumstances”.

Has it not been noticed that the very breach of the 1978 undertaking

changes the circumstances much more drastically for Israel. Thus equipped, the F-15 planes assume a dramatic five-fold offensive capacity against Israel. Is *Rebus sic stantibus* a valid justification only when it is applied against Israel, to Israel's disadvantage and mortal danger?

The circumstances affecting the peace treaty with Egypt have changed not only by the algebraic increase in the offensive capacity of all the Arab states, especially of Saudi Arabia and of Iraq, nor only in the dramatic implications of the events in Iran and Afghanistan, but precisely in the fact that the peace treaty itself has been, and is being, flouted by Egypt, and that it has become what the prime minister once described as a "sham" and "a treaty for war".

* * *

Reason and its plain duty to its people dictate that the government halt the so-called peace process, and call for re-negotiation of the treaty. In this context, it is not at all irrelevant that the Americans have no difficulty in suggesting that the treaty be changed — by Israel's leaving the Sinai airbases intact (and not dismantling them).

Of course, the purpose is to provide airbases for American use. But they will then become. Egyptian sovereign property and they will be used by the US only for as long as the Egyptians allow them. This proposal makes nonsense of the idea of a demilitarized zone — which was supposed to be the central safeguard for Israel in leaving Sinai.

At a given moment, chosen by the Egyptians and their allies, one of the most sophisticated airbases in the world will be in Egyptian hands a few kilometres from Eilat, with potentially decisive impact against Israel when war is launched against her.

But what is immediately significant is that nobody bats an eyelid at this proposal for drastic alteration of the peace treaty.

It is also not irrelevant to add that the only safe means of ensuring unhindered use of these bases by the Americans is by their remaining in the hands of Israel and not subject to the whims, longevity or pacific intentions of an Arab ruler.

Those who balk at the idea of Israel halting the peace process and demanding renegotiation of the treaty fear the diplomatic battle. On the contrary, she will be so hounded and harassed by the same international coalition to vacate Judea, Samaria and Gaza, and withdraw into the 1949 Armistice lines.

If she is not to countenance a direct attempt at her annihilation within those lines, she will have to make a stand somewhere. The alternative to a diplomatic struggle now is not diplomatic tranquillity — and peace — later. The choice is between a strong stand now and a postponement of war —and a diplomatic defensive later in straitened military circumstances, with an emasculated southern front and the much more credible threat of war if Israel does not submit to the last Arab demand.

This is the issue which should be engaging the government, the message it should be conveying to the nation, in Israel, to the US Government and people — and to the Jews of the world whose own fate is inextricably and even more clearly bound up with Israel's safety and future.

3.4.81

Sadat's Next Task

The administrative changes in Judea, Samaria and Gaza announced by Defence Minister Sharon have little to do with the essence of the autonomy plan enshrined in the Camp David agreement. There it is laid down that a self-governing authority must be elected by the inhabitants. This obviously can only be achieved if elections are in fact held; to that end there must be voters and candidates. These will not be born out of cosmetic administrative arrangements in the Israeli authority.

The first step required by Camp David is an accord between Israel, Egypt and Jordan on the "modalities" of the election and on the "powers and responsibilities of the self-governing authority." With Jordan not co-operating, Egypt and Israel agreed to proceed without her; that is what they have been doing since May 1979, except that for 17 of these 28 months they have not been doing it at all.

The logic behind the freeze is simple. At the outset of the negotiations Egypt, acting as uninvited spokesman for the Palestinian Arabs, pressed for concessions by Israel over and above the Camp David agreement on the ground that this way is the way to "win their confidence" and get them to embrace the autonomy plan. The Israel government declined to make the substantive concessions required: the inclusion of east Jerusalem in the Arab autonomy territory and the suspension of settlement activities.

On the other hand, the government, whose negotiators at Camp David had lightly agreed that the Arab self-governing authority would replace (a plain English word meaning “replace”) the Israeli military government, did try to mitigate the disaster. Dr. Burg and his colleagues at the autonomy talks put forward proposals whereby an Israeli authority would not in fact be replaced but would continue to function — and control both land and water resources, as well as internal security in the area.

The Camp David agreement had laid down specifically how internal security would be a function of the Arab self-governing authority. It said: “A strong local police force will be constituted by the self-governing authority. It will be comprised of inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. The police will maintain continuing liaison on internal security matters with the designated Israeli, Jordanian and Egyptian officers”.

The gap was not closed, and Sadat suspended the talks.

* * *

Now, in response to new proposals made by the Israeli government, they are being resumed. Instead of Israeli control of the water resources, the suggestion is for joint control, that is, equal authority for the Autonomy authority and the Israeli government. Joint control of internal security is also suggested.

It is not clear how “joint control” in these two spheres will work. The government has, however, proposed joint control in another sphere — over the state lands in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip — and there the implication is very clear indeed: Israeli renunciation of the right to further settlements beyond the Green Line.

Indeed, when the proposal was raised at one of the meetings in Alexandria, the Egyptian ministers (Hassan Kamel Ali and Butros Ghali) made their point immediately. “When you say joint control, you must realize that you will not be able then to put up any new settlements”.

The Israeli ministers (Burg and Sharon) were not fazed. They understood the problem, and had indeed a marvellously simple solution for it. There would be no new settlements, they said, except for thickening existing settlements; Israel was now terminating its settlement programme in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

Having taken note of this explicit historic undertaking, the Egyptians graciously consented to fix a date for the resumption of the talks.

Information about these undertakings to the Egyptians was subsequent-

ly conveyed to the Americans during the Washington talks, but has been withheld from the public in Israel. When Mr. Sharon this week addressed the central committee of the governing Herut Party, his long discourse contained not a word about the end of *hityashvut*. Thus, the Herut stalwarts will be able to continue boasting about “settling Eretz Yisrael” and delude themselves that their leader has some secret plan for achieving sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

As for the leaders of the Alignment opposition, who have surely been informed by their own contacts in Egypt and America of the proposed act of renunciation — they are refraining from disclosing this information presumably because they wish to be *able* to continue to pretend that they believe that the prime minister intends to “annex” the West Bank.

* * *

President Sadat, however, has a much stronger motive for consenting to resume the autonomy talks. He has not the slightest intention of resigning himself to any protracted Israeli control in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. The autonomy plan interested him only as a stepping-stone to his unchanging goal: the ousting of Israel from “all the territories”. He has made no secret of his determination that the Israeli concessions at Camp David shall remain only transitional steps towards the end, and to consequent “Palestinian” (or other Arab) rule. Israeli proposals or counterproposals are important to him only in so far as they contain more concessions. For the rest, they are a waste of time.

The essential value to him of the resumption of the talks is that they conjure up a sense of movement, of “momentum” and may thus engender a tranquil atmosphere in Israel — while, step by step, Israel relinquishes her hold on Sinai. The momentum and the atmosphere are to be maintained for six months, and that will be enough. Then Sinai will be in his hands.

It is highly doubtful whether the autonomy plan will then serve any purpose of his at all. With Sinai in his hands, what use will he have for a transition stage in Judea, Samaria and Gaza before their final status is determined?

It will therefore not be surprising if, soon after 26 April, 1982, Sadat proposes to “my friend Menachem” that as the autonomy plan is a non-starter anyhow, it is futile to postpone the negotiations on the final disposition of the West Bank.

The Camp David agreement — to which the prime minister is so attached

— need not be abandoned. The relevant parts — e.g., ensuring the “legitimate rights and just aspirations of the Palestinian people” — will be retained as a basis for negotiation.

* * *

In any case, after the Egyptian festivities in Sinai are over in April, Sadat will be able to devote all his attention and energies to the campaign for Israel’s total withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. He has given ample warning even of this intention. Three months ago his mouthpiece Butros Ghali, at a meeting of foreign ministers of the Organization of African Unity, called for a united front against Israel.

More significantly still, on July 29, 1980, Egypt voted, in flagrant breach of the peace treaty, for a resolution calling on Israel to withdraw immediately from all the “occupied territories” — thus denouncing the Camp David agreement itself.

With Sinai in his hands (and the danger of Israeli reaction thus eliminated); with his exclusive attention now dedicated to Palestine, there will be no great difficulty in his being welcomed once more into the bosom of the Arab States. They have a common declared goal: Israeli withdrawal to the 1949 Armistice lines — an adequate basis for a combined diplomatic campaign. They will be able to call on the European states — already committed to that cause at Venice in June 1980 — for their energetic cooperation; and unless Washington has by then realized the folly of automatic response to Saudi Arabian wishes, they may well enjoy the prospect of American pressure on Israel as well.

In return, then, for Sinai a grievously weakened Israel will be subjected to a “diplomatic” offensive such as it has never experienced before, aimed at forcing her to return to what Eban once described as the “death trap” of the 1949 Armistice Lines. Beyond the diplomatic offensive, there is already a mounting threat of “...or else, war,” reflected in the feverish build-up of armaments by all the Arab states (including, it goes without saying, Egypt).

There is no rational justification, or even any clear warrant in international relations, for Israel to continue the process of surrendering its vital security belt in Sinai. That is the issue to which the government, even at this late hour, should be addressing itself — and not to the futile exercise of winning Sadat’s heart by more concessions in Judea and Samaria. An Israeli presence in Sinai is Tel Aviv’s security belt.

25.9.81

Peace Hoax

President Hosni Mubarak's reluctance to visit Jerusalem is perfectly justified from his point of view. Egypt does not recognize Jerusalem as part of the State of Israel. Why should he cast doubt on that non-recognition? Why incur the criticism of Egypt's Arab sister-states?

It is true that Anwar Sadat did come to Jerusalem, indeed performed one of the most dramatic political acts of the age by doing so — but that was when he had in hand only a promise by Premier Menachem Begin that the whole of Sinai could be his. Sinai was not yet physically in Egypt's possession, and the visit to Jerusalem was a small price to pay for beguiling Israelis into believing that he had the same concept of peace as they had.

That a gullible prime minister jumped to the conclusion that Egypt thereby recognized Jerusalem as the legitimate capital of Israel was also not unhelpful to Sadat's public relations campaign.

Now that phase in the "restoration of the Arab lands" is almost over. Only a few weeks separate us from the date set for the departure of the last Israeli soldier and the expulsion of the last Israeli civilian from the soil cynically proclaimed "holy" by Sadat.

If, as the prime minister has said, Israel prefers Mubarak not to come at all if he will not visit Jerusalem, he could not care less. He is not dying to visit the Jewish state. On the contrary, nothing could now better suit his programme for the reestablishment of public Egyptian relations with the other Arab states than a tiff with Israel over Jerusalem. Egypt is already on the way back into the Arab fold — bearing with her the tremendous prestige and the tremendous strategic gains of Israel's surrender of Sinai — while yet remaining no less committed to the dismantling of Israel than she was before the peace treaty. Maintenance of diplomatic relations and a modicum of commercial and cultural contacts need not disturb Egypt's activity, in concert with the other Arab states in the coming campaign for the next phase of the shrinking of Israel. That campaign has been promised publicly by Mubarak ever since he took office in precisely the terms employed by Arab leaders and spokesmen before the peace treaty. Who can now deny that on April 27 Israel will have attained no greater prospect of peace than it had in September 1977? Who is so blind as not to see that the central consequence of the peace treaty is that it will have been weakened grievously by the loss of Sinai and by the torrents of sophisticated arms pouring into all the Arab states, including Egypt? Who

can deny the manifest bankruptcy of Begin's peace policy?

* * *

The prime minister has indeed recently manifested signs of a guilty conscience. On the most controversial and most sensitive of his surrenders at Camp David he has been trying to shake off the blame from his shoulders.

It is salutary to recount the story.

In his original peace plan, Begin proposed that the Jewish settlers remain in Sinai under Egyptian sovereignty. Months of subsequent dispute with the Egyptians and Sadat's angry insistence on Sinai becoming *Judenrein* caused grave concern among the Sinai Jews. Before leaving for Camp David in September 1978, Begin visited the Yamit zone and there made a solemn promise that in no circumstances would he agree to the dismantlement of the settlements. If at Camp David he should be pressed to do so, he said, he would instantly pack his bags and come home.

At Camp David, Sadat did not budge from his stance. Begin subsequently reported to the Knesset that Sadat had said simply that he could not agree. "I shan't be able to go home. I shall not accept. I shan't be able to sign any agreement".

Whereupon Begin did not pack any bags. He signed the agreement; and came back to Jerusalem with the explicit proposal to the Knesset to approve the dismantlement of the settlements.

He told the Knesset: "We could not say no... The Camp David conference would have collapsed. No agreement would have been signed. The Egyptians would have gone back to Cairo, we to Jerusalem, the Americans to Washington". The agreement, of course, would be null and void unless approved by the Knesset.

Not content with this warning, he went on to intimidate the Knesset with the threat of war. The choice before them was "peace or settlements". "It is the duty of a prime minister," he said, "that there shall no longer be war, that there shall be no more slaughter, that there shall be no more bereavement of widows and orphans... I had no choice... There is no other way... no other way".

The Knesset thereupon passed by a large majority, including most of the Alignment opposition, the resolution empowering the government to remove the settlers and relocate them.

No evidence whatsoever was produced, then or later, that anybody at

Camp David had threatened the prime minister with war.

* * *

Suddenly, nearly three years later, Begin “explained” — in a letter to Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren subsequently published that the Knesset decision to approve the removal of the residents from Sinai was the fault of the Alignment opposition. He, Begin, in putting up the Camp David agreement for Knesset approval, had suggested that there be a separate vote on his proposal to approve the abandonment of the settlements. The Alignment, upon whom the prime minister had impressed the fact that the Camp David agreement would be cancelled if the Knesset did not agree to the dismantlement, opposed a separate vote. Because of their opposition (so Begin claimed), the vote was combined. “Thus we were *forced*,” wrote Begin to Goren, “to agree that the Rafiah settlers should be settled elsewhere”. What Goren made of this farrago of nonsense has not been recorded.

Now even this monstrous distortion evidently seems inadequate to Begin. With the approach of the final withdrawal from Sinai, the fierce resistance among the settlers themselves — and the growing sense in the country that the “peace” is a dangerous hoax — Begin has blandly produced a new version of the Knesset vote. He told Richard Fairbanks, the new US delegate to the autonomy talks, that in fact he would “not have minded” if the vote in the Knesset had been negative. The only consequence- would have been that the negotiations would have been reopened.

He even added that this had been agreed upon at Camp David (*Ha'aretz*, February 21, 1982).

* * *

Now the vials of his wrath are being poured out on the main individual victims of his submissiveness to the Americans and the Egyptians — the residents of the Yamit zone. They understand clearly that the sacrifice being forced upon them, and the sacrifice being offered up by the people of Israel, is a vain sacrifice; and that their human tragedy is wrapped in a national tragedy which will have repercussions for generations.

* * *

Mubarak's refusal to come to Jerusalem is directly related to the expulsion of the Jewish settlers from Sinai.

Until recently, there were signs that Cairo entertained doubts as to the sincerity of the Israel Government's intention of completing the evacuation of Sinai. On the Israel Government's demonstration that it "means business" and is ready to drive the settlers by force from their homes and farms, Cairo put an end to the wordy evasions about the projected visit by Mubarak to Israel.

Mubarak performed his first significant political act towards Israel: he told Jerusalem that he did not intend to visit Jerusalem. A non-visit to Jerusalem by President Mubarak is as much a political act as was the visit paid by President Sadat in 1977.

Mubarak's act is Egypt's signal to the other Arab states that a new era is already opening. What the signal means is: "With Sinai safely behind us, we can now all together concentrate on the means at our power on the struggle for Israeli withdrawal from all the other occupied Arab lands and particularly for the end of Israeli rule in Jerusalem".

5.3.82

Return to Square One

On Thursday of last week, the Egyptian delegation at the conference of "Non-Aligned" nations in Kuwait announced its "plan" for the settlement of the "Palestine problem". It requires Israel's total withdrawal from all the territories occupied in 1967, including the dismantling of the "settlements," and the establishment of a Palestinian state in Gaza, Samaria and Judea, including east Jerusalem. In addition, the "refugees" (the Arabs who abandoned their homes in 1948 so as not to encumber the invading armies of the Arab states) must be allowed to return — with their descendants — to those homes, in Haifa, Jaffa, Acre, Ramla *et al.*

The Kuwait occasion was surely historic. Egypt's plan was proposed openly to the assembled delegates. This was the first time since Egypt signed the peace treaty with Israel that it has attended, or been welcomed at, an inter-Arab meeting: Egypt is back in the family of Arab peoples. With only two weeks to go before all Sinai is in its hands, there is no longer any need to pretend that it is suffering the terrible deprivations and agonies of isolation from her sister-states — for the sake of peace.

The terms of her plan — effectively the same as that of the Saudi Prince Fahd — will now become the spearhead of the international campaign for the two-stage destruction of the Jewish state.

* * *

The report in Davar of the Egyptian plan quaintly described it as “new” — implying that the Egyptians have hitherto concealed their intentions. This description is grossly unfair to the Egyptians. They have published the essentials of their purpose time after time. It is only bemused Israelis who have swallowed and then peddled the myth that the Egyptians — not being really Arabs — were no longer interested in the Arabs’ problems, or in Palestine, or in the Palestinians. They simply wanted to get back “their” Sinai (which, for some unknown reason, the Israelis had taken away from them) and thereafter mind their own business which, as it happens, was in very bad economic shape.

The Egyptians themselves have ensured that they should not be suspected of this deceit. They have insisted throughout that the “Palestinian problem” and the rights of the “Palestinians” are their major concerns. They have never suspended their support and sponsorship of the PLO terrorists; and they have remained wholly identified with the aim of the unification of the Arab world — which involves the elimination of the Jewish state from the map.

At least twice after signing the peace treaty in 1979 they supported UN resolutions approximating to the plan they have now put forward in Kuwait. That was in July and December 1980 — in Anwar Sadat’s lifetime.

When President Hosni Mubarak came to office six months ago, he promised the Egyptian parliament precisely what his emissaries have now affirmed in Kuwait.

All these statements represent a clear recantation of the Camp David Agreement. That agreement, it is true, opened up the prospect of Arab sovereignty in Judea, Samaria and Gaza; but that would become feasible only after the five-year transitional autonomy period and only as an outcome of negotiations.

The Egyptians aim simply at cancelling the “delaying” process. They want an immediate Israeli undertaking of unconditional surrender. Indeed, throughout the autonomy negotiations, the Egyptians have pressed for Israeli agreement to an interpretation of the Camp David Agreement

which would effect that cancellation — in fact, a return to the Arab demands as formulated before ever the peace process began.

Now, with Sinai behind them, they may continue with these tactics; or they may simply announce that no agreement on autonomy is possible and therefore they offer their plan for a short-cut solution, with pan-Arab and international support. This way or that, the struggle over Judea and Samaria has begun.

The only real difference to Israel's security that the peace treaty has wrought, therefore, is that now it is upon an Israel which is shorn of Sinai that the Arabs will direct their pressures and their threats.

The Egyptians themselves have, since the signing of the peace treaty, been reorganizing and increasing their armed strength. In the year before the "peace process" (1976-77) they spent \$2.25 billion on arms in 1981-82, they spent an estimated \$3.5 billion (not including arms acquired but not yet paid for).

Nor are they making any secret of it. Only last month, Mubarak announced that the existence of the peace treaty did not mean that Egypt was reducing its armaments (thus confirming the infinite gullibility of the Israeli negotiators of the peace treaty).

Neither in the lethal purpose towards the Jewish state, therefore, nor in martial preparation, has the peace treaty made any change in the Egyptian attitude to Israel. To add a pathetic footnote to the facts — the government of Israel last Sunday handed the Egyptian Government a protest against breaches of the military provisions of the peace treaty, and against the plan presented at Kuwait as conflicting with the Camp David Agreement.

Surely clear for all to see is the complete bankruptcy of the "peace policy" — and the dire prospect which now awaits Israel.

* * *

The events accompanying the expulsion of the Jews from north-western Sinai are charged with indescribable anguish. They are only one expression of the national tragedy that marches with the peace treaty.

Mindless and malicious criticism and denigration have been heaped upon the Jews at Yamit. Yet it is that remnant, straining with their faith and their bare fingers to stop the withdrawal from Sinai, that will be inscribed, in cold political terms, as the saving manifestation of national sanity in this chapter of our history.

Even if the Egyptians had not been so **frank** about their unchanging

purpose, there need never have been any doubt about the implications and consequences of the Camp David Agreement and the peace treaty.

The prime minister, however, dominated by the desire (as Moshe Dayan once described him to the Americans) to be remembered as the man who brought peace, failed to heed the warnings that the Arab-Moslem doctrine would not permit co-existence with an independent Jewish state if there was a fair chance of getting rid of it.

He shut his mind to the knowledge — which he himself had so often disseminated — that surrender of territory, far from advancing peace, and weakening, as it must, the power of Israeli resistance, would only strengthen Arab belief and confidence that Israel could be overrun, even if in stages.

The Alignment opposition, though not responsible for national policy, was morally no less culpable than he. Wedded as they were to the theory of territorial “compromise” — that is, that surrender of territory would bring peace — they had indeed laid down the very minimal territorial requirements compatible with Israeli security: the surrender of almost all of Sinai, but insisting inexorably on retaining the strip between Rafiah and Sharm-el-Sheikh. It is they who planned the great naval base at Sharm and the three new airfields; it was they who called for volunteers to settle and fructify — and fortify — the desert at Yamit. Faced with Begin’s surrender of all of them, they crumpled and fell in line behind him. (Not one of them ever went to Yamit, even to apologize). Only one of their leaders appears to have retained a grasp of reality. According to the minutes (recently published by *Ma’ariv*) of the meeting of the Labour Party leadership before the vote in the Knesset on the Camp David Agreement, Golda Meir said she did not believe that Sadat would have come to Jerusalem if he had not had Sinai in his pocket in advance.

Today, again through sheer factionalism, they *are* participating in a new major act of deceit. They are promoting the Likud’s pretence that it intends to achieve Israeli sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Gaza. This is cruel nonsense. The prospect of Israeli sovereignty there was thrown away at Camp David, and Begin insists on the sanctity of the Camp David Agreement.

Unless that agreement is abrogated, the danger to Israel is that in any negotiations on Judea, Samaria and Gaza, the Likud government will, under pressure, repeat there the kind of disaster it brought down on Israel in Sinai.

16.4.82

Relations with U.S. From Peace Treaty to Reagan Plan

Words Versus Deeds

President Carter may have seen himself merely as a candidate making an election speech when he addressed a U.J.A. conference in Washington on the eve of the New Hampshire primary. As an incumbent, however, he has behind him a record of three years of presidential performance and carries on his shoulders the responsibilities of his remaining months of office. Certainly we, in Israel, who do not vote in US elections, must regard any statement by the president as a reflection of policy. How seriously can Carter's remarks on Monday be taken?

He was, it is true, applauded heartily when he referred to Israel's strategic value and emphasized that aid given to Israel was in America's interest, strategic as well as moral. The applause was undoubtedly sincere. One must be blind or biased not to see that Israel is an unparalleled strategic asset to the West in the Middle East, and that the friendship between the US and Israel rests on the pillar of their perceived common security interests, in addition to shared conceptions of democracy and civilization. The president thus touched a sensitive chord among his audience.

But there is a yawning gap between Carter's statements and his operative policy towards Israel. If Israel were to conform to the demands he makes on her, the weight of her strategic value to the US and the West would be nullified — not to mention, of course, that her own survival would be imperilled.

On 2 August, 1939, as the German threat to Poland loomed, the British Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax reported to the Cabinet that Winston Churchill, then a backbench MP, had called on him and said that "he had no wish to be more Polish than the Poles but he was anxious the Government should not put pressure on the Polish Government to take action which, in their view, would be destructive of their State".

Churchill was thus enunciating a sound axiom of international relations, that a sovereign state has the right to formulate its own doctrine of national security. As Abba Eban once put it: "We shall say to the

Americans: 'It's our house that's in danger, and you have to accept our view of our security!'

* * *

Carter did not mention to his UJA audience that he is pressing on Israel a policy designed to realize the ideas of the Brookings Report, long enunciated by his adviser on national security, Zbigniew Brzezinski. Its central proposal is that Israel, shrunken to the 1949 armistice lines, would be accorded guarantees by the United States and, to add to the general joy, perhaps also by the USSR. The doctrine makes plain that its application would so weaken Israel as to make her incapable of defending herself adequately if attacked.

When Israel's former Prime Minister, Golda Meir, was confronted with this proposal, she reacted spontaneously: "What use would guarantees be? By the time you got here we wouldn't be here".

Carter, a democratically elected president, should surely be sensitive to the perception of Israel's national security held by its elected Government. On the essentials of this perception, there is an overwhelming national consensus. These essentials rule out any possibility of a freely-arrived-at Israeli accommodation with the thrust of Carter's policy.

The overwhelming majority of Israelis accept that Israel's life depends on her controlling the central mountain range. The Jordan river as the country's "security boundary" was always a fundamental tenet of the policy of the Labour Party when in office. Even today, when its spokesmen proclaim their faith in a "territorial compromise," they are either vague about specifics or, as in the Allon Plan, their proposed surrender of territory is not only made conditional on a chimerical Arab agreement to demilitarization, but leaves unconditionally in Israel's hands the Jordan Valley and the Etzion bloc.

Carter's reference to Israel's strategic value can mean only that the US interest requires the integrity of Israel's basic security and the rational "strategic reach" in case of need; and fate has so ordained it that these minimal objectives are unattainable, unless Israel retains control of all of western Palestine. Thus, it does not make sense for an American president to extol Israel's strategic value while moving heaven and earth to deprive her of the minimal territorial depth upon which her strategic capacity rests.

There is cold comfort in the thought that the logic displayed in the case of Israel is fully in keeping with that behind the overall policy of the

administration and its predecessors in their global confrontation with the Soviet Union. The inanity of that policy was recently admitted by the former Secretary of State Dr. Kissinger.

* * *

The gravity of US policy for Israel — and for the Western interest — is magnified by the other side to the doctrine. If Israel is to be squeezed into the 1949 Armistice Lines, the vacuum must be filled.

Carter assured his UJA listeners that he had rejected the idea of an independent Palestinian state. It makes little difference to Israel in the final analysis whether the honour of spearheading the “final” Arab offensive against the emaciated Jewish state is entrusted to a “Palestinian” state or to Jordan. Carter, however, is badly mistaken if he imagines that, with Israel out of Judea and Samaria, it is the President of the US who will decide whether there is to be a Palestinian state or not. All the Arab leaders, who without exception are pledged to the PLO, have asserted that the Palestinians alone shall decide their own future. The prevailing mood in Judea and Samaria and the PLO methods of intimidation leave little doubt as to what that decision will be.

If Israel were to surrender the territory, the Arab states would probably not wish to see the rise of a Palestinian state. But Arafat, on his frequent visits to Moscow, has certainly assured himself of eager Soviet backing. Carter may thus rest assured that if Israel’s locks are shorn as he demands, there will be one western bastion less in the Middle East, and one more Soviet bastion, in the heart of Palestine.

Soon after assuming office, President Carter met with Syrian President Hafez Assad, who lectured him on the “Palestinian problem” and explained that Israeli withdrawal from “all the territories” was only one part of the solution. It had to be followed by the return of the refugees to their homes (in Jaffa, Lod, Ramla *et alia*), the traditional formula for the dismantling of Israel. Carter then publicly described Assad as a “moderate”.

Now, in these last weeks, voices in Washington have been propounding a new reason for Israel to knuckle under. Only then, they say, will Syria, Iraq and the other Arab states cooperate in constructing a counterstrategy to the Soviet threat.

This ingenious nonsense can easily be laughed off. Yet we shall probably soon be hearing the theme developed in a new propaganda

campaign, in which the Arabs will cooperate energetically. Israel will be called on, as Sy Kenen put it in a recent number of "Near East Report," to strengthen the "lifeline" of the US by "surrendering its own lifeline to the PLO".

Most of the presidential hopefuls have thought it necessary to express their views on the Arab-Israel "dispute". It is surely not improper to suggest that Americans who are well-informed and sensitive to the profundity of the common interests with Israel should call on the candidates not to content themselves with generalities on friendship and concern for Israel, but to explain how they will deal specifically with the dangers facing Israel and the West from the Soviet thrust and in consequence of past American policy blunders.

29.2.80

Fruits of Myopia

Nobody need doubt president-elect Reagan's benevolent intentions towards Israel. With his realistic understanding of the Soviet Union's expansionist aims, it is sheer common sense for him to see Israel as an integral component of a sane American global strategy.

Reagan inherits a daunting situation. For nearly two decades the USSR has been building up purposefully a potential for global domination. She has spanned the continents and the oceans. Combining an imperialist appetite nurtured over two centuries with an unwavering doctrinal determination to achieve the world-wide victory of socialism over capitalism, she has achieved a commanding posture in areas of major significance to the security of the West: the Middle East and Africa. The director of the Soviet Institute of Africa, Dr. Anatoly Gromyko, was not boasting altogether vainly when he wrote recently (in Moscow's *Asia and Africa Today*, July-August 1980):

"Lenin's cause lives and triumphs... The enemies of Leninism vainly try to confine it to certain geographical boundaries. There are no such boundaries. It was under the direct influence of the ideas of the great Lenin that the National Liberation Movement in Africa has scored its spectacular victories..."

The principle that has guided Soviet operations, says Gromyko, is Lenin's idea of "proletarian internationalism". It was active in Angola, in Ethiopia and other countries and, says Gromyko, it is "currently in action in Afghanistan".

Whether as a result of her own initiative or by grasping opportunities, the Soviet Union's far-flung and often predominant influence throughout Africa is creeping steadily towards her prime strategic target, the South African republic. Control of South African mineral resources and of the Cape sea-route — for transport of essential raw materials and oil to the West — would place the West at her mercy. Her thrust southward is comparable in strategic significance to her more spectacular progress in the Middle East.

* * *

Unlike President Carter, Reagan did not need the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan to wake him up to the realities of the Soviet purpose, nor to the grim implications of Moscow's bold military intervention outside of Europe. It is patent, moreover, that beyond Afghanistan, with the Iran "bastion" in shambles, the Middle East assumes more and more the aspect of a soft underbelly for Soviet infiltration and, if need be, aggression.

The Middle Eastern legacy now deposited in Reagan's hands has accumulated primarily and largely through the myopia of the West. Britain's precipitate abandonment of the area "east of Suez" at the end of the Sixties — leaving a vacuum — began the process; but it reflected in fact the growing political and moral flabbiness which has pervaded Western Europe ever since.

At this very moment, a distinct tendency is emerging among nation-members of NATO in Western Europe to renege on undertakings given only some months ago to increase their defence outlays by 3 per cent. These undertakings were given in response to the realization of the growing inferiority of NATO armament capacity compared with that of the Soviet Union. Such a perception of priorities, and of Western solidarity does not presage a happy beginning for Reagan's relations with Western Europe.

Europe, however, was for years given an unfortunate American lead and example. The grand design of "détente" with the USSR (seen by Moscow as a wonderful means of increasing her global military capacity) was largely of American manufacture. A meeting of experts on strategy and on

Soviet policy in Brussels in September 1979, was privileged to hear a startling confession by détente's leading exponent. After describing the tremendous recent advance in Soviet strength and the consequent dangers to the West, he said:

“The amazing phenomenon about which historians will ponder is that all this happened without the US's attempting to make a significant effort to rectify that state of affairs. One reason was that it was not easy to rectify.

“But another reason was the growth of a school of thought to which I myself contributed... which considered that strategic stability was a military asset, and in which the amazing theory developed — that is, historically amazing — that vulnerability contributed to peace and invulnerability contributed to the risks of war... The strategic vulnerability of the United States was seen as a positive asset... It cannot have occurred often in history that it was considered an advantageous military doctrine to make your own country deliberately vulnerable”.

The speaker was, of course, Prof. Henry Kissinger, the former Secretary of State.

* * *

It was not only the US and the West at large that became the victims of the consequences of this amazing doctrine. In its pursuit the Suez Canal was opened in 1975 — and thus tremendous impetus was given to the great Soviet leap forward into Africa, into the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf area, and to the overturn of the balance of power in the whole region. To achieve the opening of the Suez Canal, Israel had to be pressed into retreating in Sinai; thus began the shrinking of Israel, and the contraction of her strategic reach.

The policy of shrinking Israel has in itself, however, been a function of US political doctrine in another area: the perceived need to please and appease the Arabs. It has been pursued vigorously and relentlessly, and it remains the *leitmotif* of Washington's policy to this day.

We are thus the witnesses to a paradox no less grotesque than that confessed by Kissinger. Israel, the only state in the area capable of serving as an effective deterrent to Soviet advance towards control of Middle East oil, is pressed to withdraw into the indefensible 1949 Armistice lines, where she would be reduced to concentrating on the defence of the bare bones of

her security, where she would be of little value to the West; and the vacuum created in the heart of Eretz Yisrael by her withdrawal would be filled by a Soviet or a Soviet-manipulated presence — all this on the very borders of Saudi Arabia.

This is not theoretical vision. It is not only European statesmen, obsessed by their thirst for oil and their hunger for petrodollars (and, some of them, activated by the germ of doctrinal anti-Zionism) who demand of Israel that she agree to this form of self-immolation. A close examination of State Department formulations, going back to 1948, will reveal the stark truth. They carry the same implication.

It is only fair to the European statesmen who recently offered “guarantees” to an Israel vulnerable and all but emasculated (if she were to accept their dictation to give up her own security belt) to recall that this chilling prospect, too, was first held out by an American statesman — Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, after the Yom Kippur War (on November 13, 1973).

* * *

If Reagan’s performance is to match his grasp of the Soviet challenge, he faces the formidable task of a considerable reassessment, even a reversal, of fundamental assumptions in American policy in the Middle East. The vital need to the West of a strong Israel requires that she be not weakened but strengthened; and that means, first of all, the cessation of pressures for shrinking her territorially.

It is surely obvious moreover that in the geopolitical circumstances that have arisen the Arab striving to eliminate Israel (step by step or at one blow) conflicts with the interests of the Western nations determined to uphold their security and their civilization against the Soviet onslaught. Far from permitting the continuance of Arab dictation of US policy towards Israel, a president committed to the revival of American power in the world and, more closely, to the containment of Soviet expansion, must make plain to the Saudis, and to their fellow-Arabs ostensibly committed to the Western cause, that the US will not countenance the further weakening of Israel.

This is no small part of the magnitude of the tasks facing Ronald Reagan as president. But he will no doubt discover — indeed he probably knows already — that he cannot overcome his problems unless he first corrects the blunders of his predecessors.

14.11.80

Reagan — More of the Same

In September, 1975, the Israel Government succumbed to the pressures of US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and agreed to a withdrawal whereby Israel gave up control of the strategic Mitla and Gidi passes and her only source of oil — in the Abu Rudeis region — which supplied 60 per cent of her needs.

Kissinger was lavish in his expression of US gratitude for these grievous concessions and, in recompense, even gave written undertakings to Israel. When, in 1978, the time came to supply Israel with F-15 planes in fulfilment of that agreement, the US Government suddenly made a condition. It would not supply the planes to Israel unless Congress agreed that F-15 planes should be supplied also to Saudi Arabia (and F-52s to Egypt). This ultimatum was accompanied by a vigorous public campaign depicting the Saudis as paragons of all the democratic Western virtues.

Nevertheless, it was only by promising that the planes would not be equipped with offensive weapons that the administration overcame, by a small majority, the strong objections of senators to this threat to Israel's security — and to American credibility.

Now, three years later, the new administration proposes to renege on that promise as well, and to equip the Saudi F-15 planes with the previously barred weapons. Saudi Arabia will thereby acquire what experts regard as the most dangerous aerial weapon in the future war against Israel.

* * *

This is not the only shock the Reagan Administration has administered its friends in the very first few weeks of its tenure.

Only a fortnight ago its spokesman announced, reasonably, that the administration was studying the issues and that it would take some time to evolve a policy. Yet this was followed within days by a series of policy statements. These revealed that the administration did not recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel; that some of the PLO were not terrorists; and that Israel's establishment of "settlements" hindered the peace process.

The Washington spokesman's statement that the administration was studying the issues was thus not altogether true. It is evident that on these issues, all it has done is simply to repeat some of the Carter

Administration's formulations, perhaps without realizing their damaging, even outrageous, implications.

* * *

The unsolicited testimonial to unidentified (and, in fact, unidentifiable) elements in the PLO suggests that the Reagan Administration is adapting to the Carter search of seeking ways to "legitimize" contacts with the PLO.

The testimonial itself bears no relation to facts, nor to the underlying truth that even if the PLO as a whole were not what it is — a barbarous terrorist organization (and one, moreover, that is contributing strength and dimension to terrorism all over the world), even if it were not a protege of the Soviet Union — its only coherent doctrine, enshrined in a hate-filled document of historic mendacity called the Palestinian Covenant, is the destruction of the Jewish State.

No less grotesque, and even more far-reaching in its implications, is the flat statement that Jewish "settlements" hinder the "peace process". Which peace process? Peace with whom? There is after all no peace process in progress, even formally. This well-worn cliché of the Carter Administration is more significant than its shallow illogic would suggest. The demand that Israelis refrain from settling in Judea and Samaria and Gaza is merely a function of the demand that Israel simply accept, even without negotiation, the Arabs' insistence that she give up these territories to them.

Even if the Arabs were benevolent friends of Israel, Israel has a right to hold these areas and to allow and encourage and promote Jewish settlement in them (a fact of which President Reagan has publicly stated he is aware).

That the Arabs reject this idea (to put it mildly) is precisely what the dispute is about. They claim the Jews have no right whatever in Eretz Yisrael. In the name of what logic, what commonsense, what diplomatic practice, what concept of justice, should Israel promote the case of its antagonist, by accepting their central demand?

If the US Administration believes there is a peace process going on and that it must make an immediate statement on the subject, logic and justice would dictate a somewhat different text: "The peace process is being hindered by the endless repetition of the demand that Israelis refrain from settling in Judea and Samaria and Gaza".

Indeed, it may be salutary to draw the attention of President Reagan and Secretary of State Alexander Haig and their subordinates to some of the salient facts bearing on the subject, which they evidently have not had the time to study. Palestine is the Jewish national homeland; and the Jewish people's unique connection with this land was in our own time given international recognition, enshrined in the Mandate for Palestine in 1922.

No Arab national entity ever existed in Palestine until Britain, for her own imperialistic reasons — and at the expense of the Jewish people — created “Transjordan” in Eastern Palestine. This became the Kingdom of Jordan, the Palestinian Arab State. The present claims of a *second* Palestinian people were voiced only after the Jewish nation began restoring the land from its centuries of neglect.

But the Arab nation dominating a vast territorial domain (covering 22 sovereign states) finds it intolerable that a non-Arab, non-Moslem state should exist in the heart of what they call the Arab world. This is the origin of the dispute, fuelled by traditional Moslem hatred and contempt for the Jewish people as such.

That is why, when the Jewish leaders in 1947 — in the naive belief that this would appease the Arabs — agreed to set up their state in only a part of Palestine, the Arab nation refused to cooperate.

Believing in their military capacity to destroy Jewish independence in embryo, seven Arab states launched a war for its annihilation. Israel then did not include Judea or Samaria or Gaza. Only at a cost in lives greater for size of population than the total losses suffered by the US in World War II did the fledgling state ward off the Arab attack.

After that war Judea and Samaria (renamed by the Arabs “the West Bank”) and Gaza remained in Arab hands. No Jewish settlements were permitted. It did not bring peace. On the contrary. The tempting vulnerability of the tiny state triggered a further offensive in 1967, for her annihilation. This, too, failed; but this time Judea and Samaria and Gaza remained in Jewish hands. The present demand for Israel's withdrawal is in fact no more and no less than a demand for the restoration of her pre-1967 vulnerability.

* * *

If the members of the new US administration were really to make a study of the issues, they would soon confirm that their recent statements

are largely identical with the Arab formulations as disseminated by the Carter Administration. They would also reach the unavoidable conclusion that the consummation of those demands would bring about not only a mortal danger to Israel but a power vacuum in Western Palestine to be filled inevitably by the Soviet sponsors of the PLO. It would deepen inordinately the state of American insecurity in the Middle East; and it would effectively neutralize in favour of the USSR whatever other measures might be taken by Washington to strengthen her posture in the Persian Gulf region.

The most disturbing aspect of the surprising series of statements from Washington is that the new administration is *not* studying the problem in depth. It is apparent that, precisely like the Carter Administration, it is motivated by the over-riding purpose of appeasing Saudi Arabia.

If readiness to supply offensive equipment for Saudi F-15s (in addition to vast quantities of other arms) were not enough, we have now been provided with a startling indication of the thinking of Haig when facts are thrust at him.

The Paris *L'Express* recently published an interview with him. He was there confronted with a statement by Saudi Prince Fahd that “only a holy war can resolve the Israeli-Arab conflict. Peace with Israel is only a myth”. To this Mr. Haig replied: “I am confident that Saudi Arabia will continue, as in the past, to play a constructive role”. Period.

6.2.81

Closing the Circle

Four years ago the Saudis asked the US Government to tell the Israelis to stop their overflying surveillance of Saudi territory. The Saudis were then busy establishing an additional front against Israel. They were building, *inter alia*, the airbase at Tabuk near the Israel border. Nobody pretended that the Saudis needed a sophisticated airbase on Israel's doorstep for fighting the Soviet Union. The story then concocted by Washington was that it was needed for protecting the oilfields — at the other end of Saudi Arabia's vast expanse, and against attack from Iraq — 800 kilometres distant.

This fairytale was invoked by the State Department only after an earlier

tale had been exposed: that Tabuk was an inoffensive civilian airfield. It was because he had been misled into disseminating this fib that a senior official at the White House, Mark Siegel, then resigned in angry public protest.

By then US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance had unblushingly conveyed the Saudi request that Israel stop taking an interest in the preparations being made against her; and Prime Minister Begin granted this boon with his customary generosity.

Now the new US administration is closing the circle. The Saudis have insisted on being provided with AWACS planes. AWACS (Air-borne Warning and Control System) contains the most sophisticated instruments available. It would enable the Saudis to spy upon every movement in Israel 24 hours a day — and to do so from within their own borders.

Nothing that moves in Israel would be hidden from their view (and, consequently, from any of the other Arab states).

* * *

It has been painful to watch spokesmen of the administration outdoing their predecessors in their efforts to explain away the decision to grant the Saudi demand. The declared purpose in placing the AWACS in the hands of the Saudis — like the explanation for adding offensive equipment to F-15 planes — is to strengthen their capacity to defend themselves against the Soviet Union.

This is transparent nonsense. If Soviet forces were preparing to attack Saudi Arabia, nobody would depend on the Saudis for the defence of the area. Indeed, as US Senator Howell Heflin said recently: “In the final analysis, the Saudi Arabians cannot defend themselves against any credible threat, no matter how much equipment we provide them”.

To the fierce Israeli — and American — objections to the AWACS deal, administration apologists have offered for publication an amusing, if frightening, variety of answers.

First (of course), the AWACS are not really a threat to Israel.

But, we ask, if they are not a threat to Israel, how do you see them as a threat to the Soviet Union?

Well, comes an alternative explanation, they are in fact a threat to Israel; but then, after all, the Israeli Air Force could easily shoot them down.

But the immediate and dire danger of the AWACS is in their operation

in time of “peace” from inside Saudi airspace. They would be recording every security secret in Israel and, in the words of the *Baltimore Sun*, they would be “taking from Israel much of the element of surprise that has enabled it to survive”.

The Israeli Air Force should then in all logic and in desperate defence of Israel’s basic security shoot down the AWACS planes inside Saudi territory as soon as they take to the air. Is *that* what the US wants? Well, comes excuse number three, in the first period the planes will be operated by American pilots.

But this only makes things worse. Israel’s vital information will still be in the hands of the Saudis (and their allies); and Israeli pilots will be expected to shoot down American pilots. Is *this* what the US wants?

Now US Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker has made the proposal that the AWACS should not be equipped with the full range of material that makes them so dangerous. In that case, we ask, what do the Saudis need them for? How will they then “defend themselves against the Soviets”?

* * *

Senator Baker’s suggestion has a familiar and sinister ring. In 1978, the Senate reluctantly approved the sale of F-15 planes to the Saudis — on the explicit undertaking that they would not be supplied with the additional lethal equipment. The Reagan administration now insists on giving them the equipment. Clear?

Finally, the administration has produced what it evidently believes to be an unanswerable justification of the AWACS deal. It claims it was the Carter administration that secretly promised the Saudis these weapons (together with the equipment “enhancing” the F-15 capacity).

Such a dishonourable undertaking could only have been given by the Carter administration on the understanding that it would be honoured if Carter were re-elected. It could not bind his successor. It violated the solemn, written, public undertaking to the Senate; and, for the second time, an equally solemn agreement with Israel. Is this the kind of “undertaking” the Reagan administration feels morally forced to implement?

The significance of this plea by the administration is far more disturbing than it appears on the surface. Assuming even that a promise to the Saudis had been made openly, why does the Reagan administration blandly assume — and expect everybody else to concur — that a promise to the

Saudis automatically renders null and void the previous undertaking to Israel? This question touches the roots of the relations between the US and Israel.

* * *

The administration did indeed explain its intended violation of the undertaking to the Congress.

In its first announcement of the proposed deal, the State Department said (on March 7):

“We are aware of the assurances the previous administration gave to the Congress in 1978 regarding these items. The critical fact today is that circumstances in the region have changed dramatically. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the turmoil of the Iranian Revolution, the Iran-Iraq War and the Soviet presence in South Yemen and Ethiopia underscore the instability in the region and the dangers of Soviet penetration and exploitation”.

This is precisely where the process of obfuscation began. The changed circumstances are quite irrelevant to the sale of these weapons to Saudi Arabia. These weapons will not prevent or impede “Soviet penetration and exploitation”. They will not be used to defend Saudi Arabia against the Soviets. These weapons, like all Saudi weapons, are intended for use against Israel. This has never been a secret. Indeed, the day after Secretary of State Haig’s visit to Riyadh, a Saudi spokesman denied that his country was concerned primarily with a Soviet threat: “Israel is the enemy,” he said. This is the unchanging policy of all the Moslem states; Israel must be eliminated. Nothing else matters.

We must face the fact, therefore, that at this moment, the Reagan administration is pressing — no less than the Carter administration — for the delivery to Saudi Arabia of highly lethal weapons knowing that they are intended for use against Israel.

* * *

Why? Why are they acceding to the most outrageous and dangerous demands of the Saudis? For years the myth was successfully disseminated that the US, and the West in general, must pursue policies congenial to Saudi Arabia or they will not be sold oil.

This myth however has long been exposed. Survey after published survey has shown that the Saudis need every cent they are getting for their oil in order to fund their gigantic and over-expanding development projects. They cannot afford to reduce their production; and their bluff can be called without difficulty.

No. The decisive element in U.S. policy in the Middle East is evidently still the tremendous profits of banks and businesses — including the oil firms — from the Saudi development projects.

It is, of course, these elements in the US economy that have disseminated the Arab myths on the “dispute” with Israel and on the “moderation” and progressive character of the Saudi state.

Promotion of the F-15 and AWACS deal is but one specially chilling expression of that collaboration.

We, in Israel, and the large camp in the US who believed in the great and salutary change President Reagan was to bring into the conduct of American policy, should put it to him: *Et tu, Ronald?*

30.4.8 1

Arabian Nights in Washington

Not the least regrettable feature of the ongoing debate over the AWACS planes is the ridiculous posture into which the Reagan Administration has maneuvered itself.

True, it inherited from its predecessors an absurdly obsequious attitude to Saudi Arabia, but it has embraced its inheritance eagerly and has proceeded to embellish its absurdity still further.

The previous administrations indulged in incredible flights of fancy — in praise of the desert kingdom as a progressive, liberal, nearly democratic modern state — in order to justify the sale of gigantic quantities of sophisticated arms which far outrun the Saudis' capacity to employ them.

These fancies are now being perpetuated and even improved upon. Now, threatened by the possibility of defeat in both houses of Congress on its proposal to sell the Saudis AWACS planes and enhanced equipment for their F-15 planes, the administration is casting about in apparent desperation for arguments to justify the deal, regardless of logic, of rationality — or of truth.

One crucial question that has been asked in the past is why the Saudis

need such large quantities of arms. Washington's answer has been that Saudi Arabia has to be prepared to defend itself against potential Soviet aggression.

There is nobody in Washington, however ignorant, who believes that the Saudis could or would stand up to Soviet forces. The rational defence of Saudi Arabia, as a vital source of oil for the West, requires an American force on Saudi territory. This the Saudis refuse to countenance; and now they are refusing to allow US joint control over the AWACS they have ordered — an arrangement which many opponents of the deal believe would provide all of Saudi Arabia's necessary security requirements while ensuring that the planes would not leave Saudi hands.

This seems rational; but the Saudis, after all, can do no wrong. The administration then, hard put to explain the Saudi refusal, has dug up a brand new argument. In an ABC television interview last month, Secretary of State Alexander Haig said:

“After all, Saudi Arabia is a country that has experienced the vicissitudes of colonialism, and like so many other... countries in the region... they are very, very opposed to the establishment of American bases or pervasive American influence in their country, and I understand that, and I think we Americans have learned that lesson”.

This is pure fantasy. Saudi Arabia is a country that has definitely *not* experienced the vicissitudes of colonialism. It has been a self-governing kingdom for over 200 years. Indeed, the shoe of “colonialism” is very much on the other foot. A more predatory acquisitive country it would be hard to find; it attained its present borders by a long series of aggressions against its neighbours — including the Hashemites of Hejaz.

* * *

In their refusal, however, the Saudis are surely justified. For their specific requirement of “policing” the Gulf zone, the four AWACS already operating on their soil are adequate. These are owned and operated by the Americans, and it is the Saudis who invited them to come.

When the Iran-Iraq war broke out and there was some likelihood of danger, the Saudis forgot that their national honour does not sit well with American forces on their soil.

The AWACS they are now asking for are needed for their own central purpose — to spy on Israel. For this purpose, the last thing they need is American pilots sharing operational control of the planes.

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As for the danger to Israel, the US Administration has not, it seems, succeeded in convincing critical senators that the AWACS have the Jekyll-and-Hyde quality of being vitally important to Saudi security in the east, and becoming emasculated when they reach the Israeli front.

Senator Henry Jackson is said to have commented that according to the administration, the AWACS plane is no more than junk; and an unnamed Saudi official is said to have been so impressed with the planes' alleged inadequacies that he proposed cancelling the order.

The administration has, however, produced a new argument: the sale is needed for the peace-making process. This comes straight out of Alice in Wonderland.

The Saudis have, it is true, participated in all the wars against Israel, though in a minor role, because they regard a Jewish state as an offence to Islam. The only rational relationship between a peace-making process and the Saudis' desire for the AWACS and the enhanced capacity of the F-15s is that these weapons would enable them to inflict considerable damage on Israel and thus hasten the peace-without-Israel process, of which the Arab leaders dream.

* * *

When all other pleas denying the danger to Israel have failed, administration spokesmen have come up with the news of a truly effective antidote. Thus Richard V. Allen, the president's adviser on national security, wrote in an article issued by the White House on September 19: "We repeat: the president is irrevocably committed to protecting Israel's security and to preserving Israel's ability to defeat any combination of potentially hostile forces in the region".

This promise requires particular attention. Nowhere throughout the long statements by the administration is there the hint of a mention that the proposed package constitutes a breach of undertaking to Israel, and to the US Congress.

In 1975, Israel succumbed to Ford Administration pressure and withdrew from the vital Mitla and Gidi passes and the Abu Rudeis oil wells. The sacrifice was recognized by Washington as a serious contribution to US political plans in the region. To offset in part the advantages this conceded to the Arabs, Israel was promised F-15 planes.

In 1978, the Carter Administration reneged on this undertaking. A new condition was attached. Unless Congress agreed to the sale of F-15s to

Saudi Arabia as well, and to the sale of F-5 planes to Egypt, Israel would not get her planes.

There was a strong opposition in Congress to this “deal,” which was finally approved only after a written undertaking by President Carter that the F-15 planes to Saudi Arabia would not be equipped with the additional fuel tanks and missile equipment which the Saudis were already then asking for.

These were recognized as adding a new and grave direction to the potential danger to Israel.

Now, the Reagan Administration is backing out of this undertaking as well. Moreover, the supply of AWACS undermines the qualitative superiority hitherto enjoyed by Israel and “guaranteed” by Washington against the considerable quantitative superiority of Arab arms.

This regrettably is the factual context of Allen’s tranquillizing statement. The danger and the antidote are equally clear. For the Saudis — AWACS planes and enhanced equipment for their F-15s. For Israel — the expression of good intentions of an administration busily engaged in tearing up previous solemn undertakings.

Quaintly enough in this context, another argument advanced for the deal is that US credibility is at stake. President Carter, in spite of his undertakings in 1978 to Congress and to Israel, secretly (and of course illegitimately) promised the Saudis that they would nevertheless get the forbidden arms and equipment if *he* were re-elected. How — the administration spokesmen ask — could President Reagan fail to honour such a solemn undertaking?

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The narrative, necessarily abridged, would not nevertheless be complete without reference to its humorous touches.

One relates to Lebanon. When the Israeli bombing of PLO installations had brought the terrorist organization to a state of near-collapse, Yasser Arafat appealed urgently to King Khaled to exert his influence with the Americans to press the Israelis to stop their attacks. The Saudis at once demanded American intervention to save their protege. Washington accordingly pressed Israel, and Israel agreed to a cease-fire. Saudi Arabia then achieved Arafat’s agreement to a cease-fire (and to being given the opportunity to rebuild his forces).

Now Washington cites as another reason for giving the **package** to the

Saudis their wise and benevolent behaviour in providing their “good offices” in achieving the cease-fire in Lebanon.

No less funny is the reiterated suggestion emanating from Washington that the existence of a majority in the House and in the Senate against the deal in spite of the flood of administration briefings, is the fault of Israel.

What can Israel be offering these legislators to unsettle their perceptions and their judgment of American interests? Israel has no oil, nor petrodollars, nor has she big contracts for their constituents. What mystic Israeli commodity has beguiled so many American legislators?

The turn the debate in Washington has taken would indeed be humorous if it were not so ominous.

9.10.81

Cards On the Table

Five years ago, in July 1976, Norman Podhoretz, editor of the American monthly *Commentary*, wrote an article entitled “The Abandonment of Israel”. It was one of the most perceptive analyses of the decade. He wrote:

“Given the intransigent determination of the Arabs to do away with a sovereign Jewish state in their midst, and given their belated discovery that the oil weapon is so potent an instrument for accomplishing this purpose, why would they stop using it after the first victory (the return of Israel to the 1967 boundaries) or even the second (the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank) were won? With Israel reduced and weakened, the way would be open for a military *coup de grace*.

“Even if Israel’s existence were guaranteed by the United States or some combination of countries, the Arabs would have no great cause for concern. After all, if the United States and the other Western nations are so afraid of an oil embargo now, and so reluctant to use force against the threat or even the actuality of one, why would they be any the less fearful then?

“The logic is as inexorable as it is terrible: a Middle East policy based on oil is a policy based on the eventual abandonment of Israel”.

Last week, a formidable step forward towards fulfilment of Podhoretz’s vision was taken by the US Senate.

* * *

The administration's victory in the Senate for the AWACs and "enhanced" F-15s deal with Saudi Arabia was accompanied by a chorus of avowals from President Reagan and other spokesmen, of undiminished fidelity to the US obligation to ensure Israel's security. These declarations underline a phenomenon not envisaged in Podhoretz's essay: how each step in Washington's undermining of Israel's security would be accompanied by solemn and unblinking protestations of concern for her security.

* * *

The sheer physical danger posed to Israel by the combination of AWACS and "improved" F-15 planes was described over and over again during the long public debate. The capacity of the AWACS to follow the movement of every plane and helicopter in Israel will deprive Israel, at a single stroke, of the capacity for surprise, a vital element in that qualitative superiority — so often and so solemnly "guaranteed" by Washington.

The information so gathered by the Saudis will indubitably be passed on to her Arab allies. This activity will naturally be pursued in "peacetime" — that is, during Arab preparations for the next onslaught on Israel.

The AWACS could continue to operate in wartime, too, with relative impunity. To this end they could (as has been pointed out by an ex-chief of Israeli Air Intelligence), be sent out to international waters on civilian air-routes opposite Israel's shores.

The AWACS, moreover, are not merely a magic radar instrument. They are equipped to co-ordinate action by battle aircraft. For example, the F-15 planes will be able to select their targets in Israel by guidance from the all-seeing AWACS. That is one reason why General George Keegan, the former chief of US Air Intelligence, testified to a Senate committee that Israel would not be able to stand up to the combination.

There is no antidote to the AWACS; and the assurances of administration spokesmen that they would continue to ensure qualitative superiority for Israel's arms is as hollow as the many other ludicrous and reckless statements made by those spokesmen in their struggle to win the battle in the Senate.

* * *

The US Administration has given a tremendous boost to the Arab dream of removing Israel from the map of the Arab world. Are the American

policy-makers really unmoved by the threat projected for the elimination of the Jewish state? The answer is not unequivocal. A study of State Department attitudes to Zionism before 1948 and to the State of Israel reveals that there have always been elements in the US Administration which could not care less.

Their influence has not been decisive. Yet a scrutiny of the speedy development of the now sharp features of the Reagan Administration's policies leads to the inescapable conclusion that their thrust is similar to Washington's policy towards the nascent Israel in 1948. If it had then achieved its purpose (by way of the arms embargo) Israel would not have come into existence.

In today's specific circumstances that policy can be summarized thus: when the Israelis see the "hopelessness" of resistance to Arab demands backed by overwhelming superiority (now also qualitative) in arms, and backed by a formidable looking array of international pressure, not excluding American "advice," their leaders will be wise enough to give up and try to get the best terms they can from the Arabs.

A bitter foretaste of the role the Reagan Administration is prepared to play in "persuading" Israel was provided by the recent sanction of withholding F-15 planes (paid for twice over by Israel) and F-16 planes — in order to enforce a Saudi demand that Israel stop destroying the infrastructure of the PLO in Lebanon.

Now this policy has been lit up vividly by another dramatic and obviously carefully timed development. The ink had hardly dried on the Senate's approval of the deal with Saudi Arabia when there was a sudden orchestrated outburst of praise from administration spokesmen for the Saudis' eight point "peace plan". The plan has been unequivocally denounced by the Israel Government for what it was: a prescription for the destruction of Israel.

Why did Reagan choose that moment for this new betrayal of trust — thus publicly twisting the knife in the new wound inflicted on Israel by the AWACS deal? There was surely an overriding reason for such harsh behaviour. There was indeed.

Almost simultaneously with words of Washington's praise for the Saudi "plan" came the news that the West European states — with the exception of Greece — had decided to participate in manning the multi-national force in Sinai, a decision they had previously declined to take.

Here then was manifestly an exercise in reciprocity between the US and the Europeans. The Europeans, who had been falling over each other to

express degrees of praise for the Saudi plan, now agreed to come to the aid of the Americans over Sinai in return for immediate US announcement of a positive attitude to the Saudi plan.

But the multi-national force in Sinai has been anathematized by Saudi Arabia and the other “rejectionist” Arab states because it is an outcrop of the Camp David agreement and the “peace treaty”. The Europeans have consequently some explaining to do to their oil and petrodollar masters. Hence the journey of Lord Carrington to Riyadh to beg Saudi approval. (Formal announcement of the Europeans’ decision was unblushingly postponed until Carrington’s return).

There can be no doubt about the main arguments he is putting forward in Riyadh. First, failure to establish the multinational force would be adequate grounds for Israel not to complete its withdrawal from Sinai. Second, US praise for the Saudi plan represents a most significant step towards Washington’s collaboration with Europe in “amending” the Camp David agreement in the spirit of the Saudi plan — and towards the bright prospect of a united international front for the subjugation of Israel.

Thus, even before Israel’s final abandonment of Sinai, the groundwork is hastily — and openly — being laid for the coalition of forces for the next step in the Arab campaign — the squeeze on Israel to return to the 1949 lines and the establishment of Arab rule in Judea (including East Jerusalem), Samaria and Gaza — the prelude to the final solution.

* * *

Israel should be thankful that the cards have thus early been laid on the table — clearly visible, moreover, to an American public opinion in which, at this moment, there is widespread suspicion and hostility towards the administration’s reckless dealings with Saudi Arabia.

These dealings have altered, transparently and dramatically, the circumstances of Israel’s basic security. They project, now for all to see, a state of unacceptable weakness and vulnerability.

No nation in its senses would add to its own weakness and vulnerability. Not to halt now the withdrawal from Sinai is an act of historic irresponsibility — the more emphatically so in the light of Egyptian breaches of the peace treaty and its obvious intention to join actively in the campaign for Israel’s further shrinking and ultimate elimination as soon as the Sinai bastion is safely in its hands.

A halt to the withdrawal must however, be accompanied by a drastic

change in internal policy, tightening of the national and the individual belt so as to reduce Israel's economic dependence — and, to these ends, the formation of a government of national unity to face and withstand the storm already whistling and growling around our country and our people.

6.11.81

Beware of Washington

Twelve years ago then Foreign Minister Abba Eban said in Jerusalem: "We shall not yield to outside pressures, even if we are denied certain essential supplies. We can manage with our own resources, military and other, for a considerable time".

Sanctions? With the Labour Party in power?

What could Eban and his colleagues have done to provoke an innocent and benevolent world? There was indeed no immediate reason; but as a matter of public education, he was envisaging a situation in which this country would reject international dictation to withdraw to lines that Israel's democratically elected government regarded as dangerous to the country's security.

"Sanctions" were in fact to come to pass, in brutal and cruel fashion, four years later. After the first days of the Egyptian-Syrian aggression in 1973, Israel was universally perceived to be tottering on the brink of national disaster. The friendly governments of Europe with one accord denied Israel even the minimal assistance of allowing US planes carrying urgent supplies to land and refuel in their territory.

For all they knew, the punishment they thus meted out to Israel might have been crucial. Portugal alone, committed by a treaty with the US, responded to Washington's request, to host those planes.

When Israel had recovered from initial setbacks and was on the verge of a stunning victory, the US joined hands with Egypt's Soviet patron and secretly agreed to coerce Israel into a posture of defeat. The Israel Government was threatened subsequently with the sanction of abandonment by the US. To top it all, after the war, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger made it plain that he regarded the Arab aggression as excusable.

* * *

The friendship of the European governments was thus demonstrated seven years before their Venice Declaration, whose ideas, if followed, would bring about Israel's dissolution, and eight years before the Reagan Administration's sanctions against Israel.

In 1973, Israel was not governed by Begin and the Likud, but by the Labour Party, whose leaders know perfectly well that the bullying of Israel has been continuous ever since. It is rank, self-serving dishonesty for them to encourage US and European politicians to pretend in 1981 that inimical policies towards Israel are somehow the fault of Menachem Begin personally.

* * *

It is an incontrovertible fact that Israel's prime minister is blessed with a style that makes him appear unbending even when he is engaged in the most far-reaching and dangerous concessions. It was he, after all, who offered Egypt all of Sinai; who signed the disastrous Camp David Accords — an Arab-American document with a few Israeli amendments; who signed a peace treaty with Egypt containing a clause legitimizing future Egyptian war against Israel.

The personal style of the prime minister is a convenient excuse for hostility to his people. In the current onslaught on Begin over the Golan Law, its opponents pointedly ignore the fact that for years there has been an overwhelming public demand for the annexation. Some 750,000 citizens signed a petition to this effect, and something like three-quarters of the legislature favour it.

But the style of one prime minister or another is utterly irrelevant to the central facts with which Israel, and indeed the Jewish people, are being confronted by the Western nations. The European attitudes codified in the Venice Declaration of June 1980, and the evolving policy of the US, as it emerges unblushingly in Washington's words and deeds, are all definable as a substantive accommodation to the Arab purpose.

That purpose is being articulated most clearly by Saudi Arabia. United States policy towards Israel, no less than that of the European government is, in essence, being dictated by Saudi Arabia.

* * *

This has long been clear. It was dramatized painfully in the Senate

debate on the AWACS and enhanced F-15 package deal. The debate will surely be remembered as a shameful episode in American history.

To illustrate the essential continuity in Washington's policy of strengthening Saudi Arabia against Israel, it is necessary to recall only that in 1978 the Carter Administration pretended that the new airbase at Tabuk, near the Israeli border at Eilat, was an inoffensive civilian airfield. When this was exposed as a fabrication, the administration claimed that it was intended to protect the oilfields — at the other extreme of Saudi Arabia.

To enforce its policy, the US administration has now, for the second time, "punished" Israel. Earlier this year it withheld F-15 and F-16 planes — duly paid for by Israel in cash and in security concessions — because Israel had dared to destroy Iraq's atomic reactor; and had dared to attack the PLO headquarters in Beirut, sited characteristically in a residential complex. From those headquarters came a campaign of murder and destruction, conducted against the civilian population in northern Israel and the Christian enclave in Southern Lebanon. Now Israel is being "punished" for the annexation of the Golan Heights.

The cant that accompanies every blow at Israel states that there has been no weakening of the American commitment to this country's security. This is a transparent cover for the undeniable thrust of American policy — the reduction and emasculation of Israel in accordance with Arab prescriptions.

It should now be clear to all that we are faced not by isolated phenomena, but by a many-pronged American policy. Nevertheless to judge by their behaviour, neither the Government of Israel nor the Labour Opposition comprehend the grim proportions of that policy and the danger it represents to the Jewish state.

* * *

The Prime Minister woke up belatedly to Washington's intolerable practice of persistent public insult, of hectoring and threatening and "punishing" Israel. The fierce but well-deserved riposte that he conveyed through the American ambassador, however, contains no indication that he intends to meet the larger, overwhelming threat with which Israel — and the Jewish people — are to be confronted.

Completion of the evacuation of Sinai will be followed by a campaign of pressure, with Egypt participating. It will be a concerted effort by the Arab

states and Europe, with US collaboration, to squeeze Israel into the 1949 Armistice lines. And Israel is to surrender sovereignty over Jerusalem.

Refusal will be met by the threat of sanctions, and the gradually materializing threat of war with the Arabs. Israel will lack its security belt in the south, the Sinai peninsula being in Arab hands.

It is not for nothing that what the Arabs and their supporters today fear most is an Israeli decision to halt the withdrawal from Sinai on the grounds of dramatically changed circumstances — a principle enshrined in international law and used more than once by the US against Israel.

The Arabs and their supporters know well that the surrender of the Sinai security belt now, when its dire consequences are plain for all to see, would be for Israel an act of historic irresponsibility.

* * *

To halt the withdrawal would require great courage, and it would necessitate other supplementary steps, notably establishment of rational machinery for information, in order to mobilize Israel's multitude of friends throughout the world against delegitimization of Jewish statehood and Israel's physical elimination; a serious attempt to set up a national unity government; and a drastic belt-tightening economic policy, to put an end to Israel's dependence — indeed, to implement Abba Eban's 1969 forecast: to "manage with our own resources for a considerable time".

25.12.81

Travesty of Truth

Politicians everywhere often tend to treat their publics as if they were a class of know-nothings and remember-nothings. American statesmen are no exception. One of the key passages in President Ronald Reagan's television address on September 1 is an example of grand dissimulation.

"The United States," he said, "has thus far sought to play the role of mediator; we have avoided public comment on the key issues... but it has become evident to me that some clearer sense of America's position on the key issues is necessary to encourage wider support for the peace process".

Nothing could be more misleading. In the process that brought about

the Camp David agreement, it was Washington that initiated all the changes in the original Israeli “peace plan”. US mediation consisted almost entirely of pressing the Israeli negotiators to make concession after concession — “otherwise Sadat won’t agree to negotiate”.

The US has, in fact, very seldom played the role of mediator. It has had a very definite policy of its own throughout the dispute.

Since 1967, its objectives have been fixed by the principle that Samaria and Judea (including east Jerusalem) are “occupied Jordanian territory”. It has thus erased from the official national memory Trans-Jordan’s rape of Western Palestine in 1948; and legitimized its annexation and the renaming of Judea and Samaria.

This grotesque travesty of historical and political truth, and of accepted norms of international behaviour, is encapsulated in the “operative” proposal that Israel must withdraw into the 1949 Armistice Lines (“with minor modifications”). All American diplomacy has worked towards that end since 1969. Mediation, indeed.

* * *

It is all the more amusing that Washington has described President Reagan’s plan as “new”. It is, in fact, the same old plan with cosmetic adjustments. Its essence: Israel’s withdrawal from “all the territories” and their transfer to Arab rule. Period.

The notions ventilated by Washington that the US would thereafter somehow influence the form of Arab government and its policy towards Israel are patently absurd.

(Five years ago, Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski, then President Carter’s national security adviser, suggested, in conversation with me, the kind of plan now put forward by President Reagan. He even added demilitarization as bait. When, apart from other objections, I said demilitarization did not work and that nothing could prevent, for example, a Soviet airlift of arms, his reaction was that “Israel could always go back in”. I replied that then he would be the first to denounce Israel for invading Arab sovereign territory and to demand that Israel withdraw within 24 hours. He smilingly refrained from denying the imputation).

* * *

The key elements in the “Reagan plan” were proposed in formal terms

in December 1969 — by Secretary of State Rogers. They included just about all the cosmetics of the Reagan version. The Rogers plan, too, emphasized its adherence to Resolution 242, including the provision for “secure and recognized borders” (though hastening to add that only minor modifications of the 1949 Armistice lines were envisaged). It even emphasized that Jerusalem must remain united. The Reagan plan differs from it in substance only by providing for local autonomy for the Arabs of the “West Bank” and Gaza — within Jordanian sovereignty, of course.

The Israeli Government rejected that Rogers plan outright — after calling Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin from Washington for consultations. Prime Minister Golda Meir attacked the plan in two trenchant speeches in the Knesset. She was quoted as saying privately that acceptance of the plan would be an act of treachery.

* * *

What is truly new then about the Reagan plan is the friendly response of the Labour Alignment. Mr. Peres and his colleagues (who endorsed the Camp David agreement) pretend not to be aware that the very promulgation of new proposals itself undermines that agreement, preempting the negotiations which, under the agreement, are to take place years ahead, and replacing them by a precooked outcome.

Though the plan calls for complete Israeli withdrawal (slightly modified) — the Labour leaders pretend that it is similar to their own idea — which is to partition Western Eretz Yisrael. The Labour plan (unless it has been secretly changed) involves the retention under Israeli sovereignty of the strip along the Jordan, the Etzion-Hebron bloc, several areas in Samaria and united Jerusalem. Mr. Peres and his colleagues cannot but be aware that this plan is as unacceptable to the Arabs — and thus to Washington — as any other plan which does not guarantee the complete surrender of “all the territories”.

They have turned their backs on Golda Meir’s sanity of purpose — and their motives are transparent. They aim at inducing the Israeli public to believe that their “moderate” policy of “compromise” will find favour in the eyes of Washington. They assume that this could be a major factor at the next election, or maybe even earlier; that the sense of dependence on the United States in Israeli society is strong enough to assure them of a majority.

Nothing could suit the American policy-makers better. Indeed, they are

uninhibitedly happy about the internal opposition which they expect Labour (and its fringe-group allies) to develop to the government's policy. They hope that this will impose restraints on Begin when, as they believe, he agrees to negotiate with them on the substance of the "plan".

It will be presented to him as an adjustment of the Camp David agreement: allowing the participation of the Arabs of east Jerusalem to take part in the election of the autonomy council for the "West Bank"; freezing settlements in Judea and Samaria — to encourage the Arab inhabitants to join the autonomy process; and, on' he assurance that King Hussein and not Yasser Arafat will be sovereign in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, an Israeli promise to surrender "all the territories" (with, of course, minor modifications).

Diplomatic pressure will be accompanied by a campaign in the media; it will inevitably be orchestrated with European diplomacy and with world-wide Arab propaganda.

This prospect is one reason why Secretary of State George Shultz reacted calmly to the passionate declarations by the prime minister in the Knesset that he was entering upon the struggle for Eretz Yisrael which, as he rightly declared, was a matter of politics to the United States, but a matter of life to the Jewish people.

* * *

There is, however, another reason for Mr. Shultz's cool comment that Mr. Begin's speech was merely the opening gambit in negotiations. The Americans have heard it before; and the State Department experts have in front of them the Camp David agreement and the minutes of the discussions.

There is no hint there of Zionist inspiration. There is not a single word there about the unique relationship of the Jewish people with its historic homeland, not a word of its rights to the country.

The agreement accords to Egypt and Jordan equal rights with Israel in deciding on the final disposition of the "West Bank," and accords a veto right on that crucial subject not to the Jewish people, but to the Arab inhabitants.

All this was signed and approved by the prime minister of Israel. Why, then, should the Americans not assume that when Mr. Begin reverts to his pre-Camp David formulations they are anything more than an opening gambit?

The prime minister's reply to President Reagan's letter compounds the blunders of the Camp David agreement.

The agreement *did* give the control of internal security to the Arab autonomy council, not to Israel. The agreement *did* accord Jordan a status in Western Eretz Yisrael.

But this is not the time and these are not the circumstances to argue with Washington over this or that clause in the Camp David agreement. The US, like Egypt, is no longer interested in the Camp David process.

If the prime minister wishes the Americans to take him seriously, and if he understands that the issue is once more Eretz Yisrael or Falastin, and truly intends to rally the people in Israel to the banner — he must, without delay, make it clear that for him, too, the Camp David agreement, holus bolus, is dead.

17.9.82

Palestine The Land of Israel

The Blunder Functions

After his resignation from the White House staff Mark Siegel published his reasons. Among them was his sense of shock at the harsh tone adopted by Zbigniew Brzezinski at his meeting on 23 February with a group of leaders of the Jewish community.

It transpires that there are also grounds for concern at what the Jewish delegation had to say. In conformity with the policy of the administration in the past few months Mr. Brzezinski forcefully introduced as his central subject the opposition of the American government to “the settlements”. It appears from the report of the leader of the delegation (which was not published) that the Jews were not intimidated by Mr. Brzezinski’s harsh tone; and they criticized pretty sharply the attitude of the administration and the pressures it is exerting on Israel. Precisely this forthrightness emphasizes the weakness of their reaction on the question of the legality of the settlements. They did not utter a single word to refute the administration’s claim, and it appears that, as the conversation proceeded, they just did not know how to reply.

On the contrary, they answered Mr. Brzezinski in the plaintive tone of a schoolboy caught out in a misdemeanour. “As for the illegal acts with which Israel is charged” they said, “the United States should bear in mind the illegal acts committed by the Arab peoples against Israel”.

Can one blame these good Jews? They live in a country ruled by law, and the charge that the settlements are illegal is being voiced day after day, one day by the President of the United States, the next day by the Secretary of State; then again by the adviser on National Security Prof. Brzezinski; and they are accompanied volubly by most of the media with a frequency which suggests a guiding hand. Every commentator on radio and television informs his audience, with the textual consistency of a regular prayer, that Israel is engaged in an illegal operation (which is also an obstacle to peace). This is highly effective propaganda: its practitioners are among the most respected personalities in the land, its content is simple, on target and easily grasped; and it is disseminated with the intensity of a flood.

The American Jewish leaders do know of course that the Prime Minister

of Israel claims that the settlements are legal, but it appears that they are not prepared to endorse this plea. It can be said with certainty that the reason for this is simply that they do not know that the charges of the administration, and the newspapers and the radio and the television are completely without foundation. But why do they not know?

First of all, because the evidence that reaches them from Israel rather tends to confirm the charges from Washington. Reports on the freezing of settlements are not likely to strengthen belief in their legality; and the acts of camouflage committed by the Israeli government have tended to persuade many Jews that there is in fact something wrong, something dishonourable about the settlements. Pretending the settlers are soldiers in a military camp provides very plausible evidence; and thousands of words of explanation will not erase the ridicule evoked by the fable that the eight families of settlers at Shiloh are not settlers but members of an archaeological expedition.

It might have been possible, at least after the event, to explain, at least to friends, that these acts of camouflage were resorted to as a result of unfair, unreasonable, or “brutal” pressure by the American administration. But the ground has been pulled from under this argument, and the friends of Israel have been left open-mouthed and helpless. The Israeli Foreign Minister, who is also the Minister of Information — that is, the highest authority in Israel for stating Israel’s case to the world — not only did not trouble to provide ammunition to Israel’s friends to explain, to react, but when he himself was given the opportunity of demolishing the foundations of the untruth, pointedly evaded the question. When Moshe Dayan was asked in a television interview about the legality of the settlements, this is what he said:

“We are not in a court of law. We live in a political world”.

Is there anybody among his listeners in the United States who, after this reply, will believe that the law is on Israel’s side and, what is no less relevant, that the government of Israel itself believes in the legality of the settlements?

* * *

It is difficult to find a rational explanation for this major blunder. There is in Israel, it is true, a school of thought that dismisses with derision any

appeal to international law. Certainly nobody knows better than the Jewish-people how problematic is the weight of international law in international relations, all the more so in relation to an ongoing dispute.

Now, at this moment, however, the question is not academic. It has burst beyond the bounds of theoretical discussion. The question of the legality of our actions has become the central indictment in a many-voiced political campaign, whose influence may well be most destructive. Our chief opponent in the debate — non other than the Government of the United States — has cleverly and cunningly unsheathed the sharp weapon of “legality”, and is employing it with skill and maximum exposure in order to achieve a purely political purpose. There is not the slightest doubt that Washington knows full well how ramshackle its charge is, and how malicious — but it works; and it is smiting us hip and thigh in the battle for public opinion.

And we? We, whose fateful interests are in the balance, we shove our hands in our pockets and say “We are not playing”, we are not taking a part in the act (“we are not in a court of law”), abandon the field to the opposing side, and so ensure for ourselves the addition of another defeat to the many defeats we have already suffered.

* * *

Why could the Jewish representatives not reply to Mr. Brzezinski with dignity, in terms, for example, like the following:

Our presence in the whole of Palestine, and our right to settle and live there, which flow from the Jewish people’s exclusive national relationship to its land, are deeply embedded in the world’s history and in the foundations of Western culture. It was by virtue of this connection and of these roots that international recognition was accorded, solemnly and by practical measures, to the renewal of our national life in the country, in the Mandate for Palestine in 1922.

This recognition is part of the modern law of nations, and we regard the attempt to deprive us of this right a negation both of international law and of morals and justice.

As for the legal situation created in 1948 after the violent and illegal invasion of Judea and Samaria by Jordan and of Gaza by Egypt, our rights were not thereby diminished. Jordan, which announced the annexation of Judea and Samaria (calling them “the West Bank”) and

Egypt, which did not even pretend to “annex” Gaza, did not thereby acquire any rights under international law.

Even within the narrow legal frame from which you are trying to derive sustenance for the denial of our right — the Fourth Geneva Convention for the Protection of Civilians in Time of War — your case can be dismissed out of hand. The Fourth Geneva Convention is completely irrelevant to Western Palestine. From its Paragraph number 2 it is clear that it relates to the occupation of the sovereign territory of a State. Judea and Samaria were not sovereign territory of Jordan, nor was Gaza sovereign territory of Egypt. In this context there is consequently nothing to discuss.

Even as far as Sinai is concerned — it is highly doubtful if the Convention is applicable, as Sinai was not under Egyptian sovereignty. Its inhabitants were not even given Egyptian citizenship.

The remaining area is the Golan, to which the Geneva Convention may be applicable as a whole (because it was Syrian sovereign territory). But the specific clause in the Convention which you are using in order to try to delegitimize our settlements does not relate at all to our case in any of the territories. It was drawn up after the Second World War in consequence of the methods employed by the Nazis towards the populations of the territories they occupied. They drove out the inhabitants, either to the death camps or to replace them by Germans. The purpose of the Clause in the Convention was to outlaw a repetition of such behavior.

In the establishment of Jewish villages in Judea, Samaria and Gaza there has been no hostile treatment of the Arab inhabitants in the area, nor were they displaced.

Furthermore, there is nothing in international law, including the rules of the Hague Convention of 1907, to prevent citizens of the State occupying the territory from going into it and living in it.

* * *

Why indeed could they not have said all this? Everything that has been said here, incidentally, is nothing more than the essence of policy of all the governments of Israel since its birth; and one could expand upon the subject beyond these 18 sentences. Moreover they can be used as a means of escaping from the illogical posture of defensiveness to which we have been reduced and, in fact, convert them into a sharp weapon for a fighting campaign. After all it was the absence of such a campaign that we deplored when the Alignment was in power, the years of the Arabs’ temen-

dous successes; it was after all such an initiative that so many in Israel expected when the government passed into the hands of the Likud.

By all the signs there is no hope of an early cure. Just as during the years When Aba Eban and Yigal Allan presided over the Foreign Ministry and their inept Information services, the Arabs succeeded in injecting into the consciousness of the world their mendacious claims to national rights in Eretz Yisrael — so now, with the perpetuation of the Information blunder by Moshe Dayan, the American administration is making good progress in disseminating the lie of the illegality of our presence in the heart of our land.

Ma'ariv 14.4.78

Hanging Security on Thin Air

When President Sadat in his speech in the Knesset last November reiterated the Arabs' abiding determination not to give up a single centimeter of "Arab land" he emphasized that there was simply no room for discussion on the subject. "The nation's land", he said, is sacred — "as sacred as the valley in which God spoke to Moses". Indeed the idea of sanctity recurs time after time in Sadat's utterances. He does not omit even the "sacred land" of Sinai.

These assertions have no foundation in fact. They are, simply, absurd. Neither Sinai, nor even Palestine, was sacred to the Arabs or to the Moslems in general. The Holy Land, in which Jesus lived and worked, was the cradle of the Christian religion, but the country played no role in Islam. Even in the hundreds of years in which the land was ruled by Moslem empires no myth of sanctity was woven round it. It was not accorded a special political status, nor was such a status developed in it. In the various Moslem empires it did not even constitute a separate administrative unit. All of them treated it as an unimportant and unconsidered province. The most noteworthy effect on Eretz Yisrael of Moslem rule — by Arabs, by Turks and all the rest — was its gradual destruction. Even the two mosques on the Temple Mount (which are legitimately Holy Places) were, in the final analysis built as a function of the Arabs' recognition of the sanctity of the place to the Jews.

The Arab propagandists, however, in their fight against Zionism and the Jewish State, discovered soon enough that a major distortion of history

was essential to their claim of ownership of Palestine and to their effort to oust the Jews from it. They recognized the importance of a historic connection, even a mystic connection with the country. As no such connection existed, they manufactured one. In a continuous, comprehensive, unconscionable and uncompromising campaign they laboured to implant it in the world's mind. They understood, and they believe, that if they can convince the peoples of the world, that Eretz Yisrael has belonged to the Arabs from the beginning of time and that its land is sacred to them, this conviction alone will make it plain to the world that the Arabs "simply cannot" agree to even the slightest concession of territory for the benefit of the Jews.

* * *

Simultaneously, with similar intensity and perseverance, the Arabs are conducting a propaganda war to disseminate the complementary idea that the Jewish people has no historic association with Eretz Yisrael or any historic right in it. At first glance it would seem that this fabrication is so absurd, so abysmal that the Arabs would be too stupid to use it. The connection of the Jewish people with the Land of Israel is built into the foundations of Western culture, it is entwined in the warp and the woof of the West's thinking and its experience for two thousand years.

But the Arabs persisted and persist with their effort in a thousand and one ways. They have learnt that it is possible to instil any lie, however nonsensical and ridiculous, if it is repeated tirelessly and is presented forcefully, with assurance and with plausible emotion. In all their propaganda texts they take care to include the two aspects of their basic claim: that "Falastin" (they' have no Arabic name for this Holy Land) belongs to them and that the Jewish people has no right to the country.

Before our very eyes they have built up a complete mythology. They do not bat an eyelid when they depict "Falastin" as the national possession not merely of the Arabs but of "the Palestinian people" for 1300 years (and sometimes they expand it to 2000 years — who can prevent them?). Respectable newspapers in the West, even journals with intellectual and scientific pretensions, repeatedly publish these fairy-tales. Their theme is that in this country there existed for hundreds of years some kind of flourishing Arab State — until the Zionists came and robbed it from its masters. Hence Zionism — an artificial creation of the 20th century — is by its nature fundamentally an act of continuing aggression; and consequent-

ly all the attempts of the Arabs to destroy the Zionist State are no more than acts of legitimate defence.

Apart from a handful of uninfluential Arabs, there does not exist in our generation a single Arab spokesman, even among those described as moderate, who will give expression to the notion that the Jews have any right to Eretz Yisrael. It was not always so. Not only Prince Feisal who after the first World War signed the agreement with Chaim Weizmann based on mutual recognition — by the Jews of Arab sovereignty in the Arab State due to arise and, by the Arabs, of Jewish sovereignty over Palestine — but also his father, Hussein, the Shariff of Mecca, the founder of the Hashemite dynasty, wrote in praise of the “original sons” of Palestine returning from exile to their homeland. Even those Arabs who today create the impression that they are prepared to accept the reality of a Jewish State (albeit grotesquely attenuated) do not give even the slightest hint that they are thereby according recognition to Jewish historic right even to the coastal strip. The falsehood in Arab propaganda is total.

* * *

This effort by the Arabs to erase the history of the Jewish people dovetails substantively with the important element in Western antisemitism which presents the Jewish people as a parasite feeding on the bodies of the nations, rootless wherever they find themselves. By merely adopting the Arab thesis the antisemites of our day provide themselves with the means of camouflaging their incitement against the Jews as being an expression of opposition only to Zionism and to Israel. Though in our day the antisemites’ description of the Jews as “Christ-killers” has been muted, it is being replaced gradually by the charge that they have robbed the “Palestinians” of their homeland.

* * *

Interwoven in this grim embroidery is a double sin committed by the Governments of Israel since its birth, and especially since the Six Day War. In the unique history of our renewed independence, in the face of the tireless offensive against its existence and against its right to exist, the governments of Israel did not realize that there was a need to instil and to strengthen in the hearts of people everywhere the consciousness of the exclusive national affinity of the Jewish people with Palestine. They were

silent about the uniquely deep roots of our presence in this land; they allowed people to forget this link between a people and its land which has set its stamp upon our history unbroken for four thousand years; they ignored the continuity of that historic chain of association; they allowed ignorance and forgetfulness to obscure the miraculous fact that, for 1800 years after Jewish sovereignty in Eretz Yisrael was extinguished, no other people, of all the inhabitants of various national origins who lived in the country at different times, ever tried, or claimed a right, to take possession of the land and to restore its independent life.

Worse still: Israeli Information services refrained from refuting and fighting back at the horrendous Arab lie. Instead, it exhibited a patchwork of apologetics and defensiveness. It failed to raise the alarm at the fact that the great Arab people was engaged in a tremendous effort to oust the Jewish people from its homeland.

* * *

Now we have to contend with the consequences of the gradual victory of the Arab lie, in the minds of many people, over the Jewish truth. It has become common in many quarters to preach at the Government of Israel, at the Jewish people, and at anybody stating the case for Israel's status among the nations, that they must not dare mention the historic right of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel.

Not only enemies of Israel but even good friends, even good veteran Zionists — as a result of the Israeli governments' failure in public education, and confused by the pressures of Arab propaganda — urge that in the international debate on the "dispute" Israel should insist only on its security needs. According to these preachings Israel must voluntarily eliminate the factor of history in our presence in Palestine, erase our national story, deny the roots of our nationhood. Frightening are the implications of this tendency towards a kind of spiritual suicide for the sake of the diplomatic convenience of the present generation.

What is more astonishing, however, is the breakdown of logic in the minds of the protagonists of this tendency, their failure to use their commonsense. Even if a good Israeli Jew becomes convinced that Israel will achieve peace by giving up portions of Eretz Yisrael, what, by any calculation, prevents him from telling the truth as it was told in effect by Chaim Weizmann in 1937 and 1947: "Our exclusive and continuous national relationship with this country is four thousand years old, our

unimpeachable right to it was solemnly recognized by the nations of the world in our own generation — but for the sake of peace I am prepared to agree to its partition”. What is the compulsion, even in the mind of a defeatist, to blot out history, to be silent about a right even as a “pawn” in negotiations?

There is no doubt a psychological explanation for such a moral breakdown among the members of this school of thought. The “self-denying” tendency, however, carries immediate implications far deeper than its impact on the current political situation. Jewish collaboration in blurring or erasing the affinity of the Jewish people to Eretz Yisrael, dovetails into the sum of Arab claims, into the arguments of Israel’s other antagonists, even into the themes of the antisemites. If the vigorous Arab claim to historical-mystical lordship over the Land of Israel is pressed, and Jews refrain from any reference to historic affinity — strong logical assumptions are created in support of Arabs and antisemites alike. These assumptions are simply stated: the Jews themselves do not dare to claim historic rights in Palestine; why then must the Arabs give up their sacred lands in order to ensure the physical security of these rootless, nomadic, parasitic Jews?

Of course there is no such thought in the minds of our non-Jewish friends. They, out of sheer confusion, are merely drawing conclusions from a situation which we ourselves have helped to create. Nor is there any such thought in the minds of the good Jews who cry “Security only”. They should however take note: whoever declares that our historic right to the Land of Israel must not be mentioned, that only the security of the Jewish community in Israel should be insisted on, and who believes that in this way peace will be brought closer and Israel’s security hastened — is grievously mistaken. He is no less mistaken if he believes that he is merely pruning the tree of Zionism. In fact he is undermining its roots.

Ma’ariv 28.7.78

America’s Bad Joke

Last week, President Anwar Sadat remarked casually that Jewish settlements in the “occupied Arab lands” are illegal. He is presumably turning over this modestly worded phrase in preparation for the projected

negotiations with Israel on the autonomy plan for Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

As he has no authority to negotiate on behalf either of the Palestinian Arabs or of Jordan, the proceedings are likely to be somewhat bizarre. Sadat, however, may be depended upon to fill in the gaps by voicing suitable demands on Israel.

One of these will certainly be for a ban on settlements. In this, he will be enthusiastically backed by the Americans. It was, after all, they who invented the fiction that Jewish settlements are “illegal”.

This charge of illegality (with its hint of odiousness, even of criminality) has proved one of the most effective weapons in Washington’s propaganda campaign against Israel.

After all, if the government of the US itself, presumably primed by the best legal opinion, declares Jewish settlement to be illegal under international law, the average citizen will assume that there is good legal ground for the charge.

The fact is that the charge of illegality is little more than a bad joke. Far from the administration’s policy being a reflection of serious legal thinking, it is demonstrably the government’s lawyers who have tailored their opinion to suit the government’s policy. This may be regarded as professionally legitimate. A legal adviser is not a priest of righteousness. He is a professional lawyer who is presumably expected to serve his client’s interests by making the best of his client’s case. Now the State Department’s case in support of its charge has seen the light of day. It was originally prepared by the legal adviser for the enlightenment of two curious congressmen; but as all such documents have to be made available for public inspection it found its way into the “Journal of International Law” (October 1978).

* * *

There is no merit in mincing words about this document. It is a distortion, not always subtle, both of the relevant facts and of the international agreement Israel is alleged to have contravened; the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 “Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War”.

The primary fact about this convention is that it is not relevant to Jewish settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza; nor, indeed, to the Israeli presence there.

The convention's applicability is defined precisely in its second article: The present convention," it says, "shall apply to cases of partial or total occupation of the territory of a High Contracting Party".

* * *

Now Israel did not and does not occupy the territory of a High Contracting Party. True, she wrested the territories from Jordan and Egypt, but these territories did not belong to them.

They acquired them in an act of naked aggression in their invasion of Western Palestine in 1948.

This pact does rather create a dilemma for the legal adviser. It leaves him without a case.

To insist that Article Two is applicable would mean explicitly to condone the 1948 aggression (about whose political and genocidal purpose the invaders made no secret at the time).

What is he to do? The Jewish settlements *have to be* illegal. Otherwise the Arabs will be annoyed, oil prices might go up, who knows — Saudi Arabia might initiate an embargo.

The solution turns out to be simple: Ignore Article Two, do not quote it, do not mention it, erase it.

The legal adviser consequently boldly insists that the "principles" of the convention "appear applicable whether or not Jordan and Egypt possessed legitimate sovereign rights in respect of these territories". He then announces that the paramount purpose of the convention is "protecting the civilian population of *an* occupied territory".

* * *

Having cleared the ground of the unhelpful text of the convention itself, and having amended it to suit his purpose, the legal adviser might now reasonably be expected to follow up with his proofs that Israeli settlements do indeed interfere with, or prevent, or reduce the protection of the Arab population in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

The reader will wait with bated breath for the lurid details. He will wait in vain. After all his labours, the legal adviser obviously discovered that Jewish settlement has not had *any* adverse effect on the protection of civilians in the areas. He could, of course, make some up. That kind of thing has been done before. But this is apparently no job for a legal ad-

viser. He therefore simply leaves the subject, claims nothing, makes no charge, and goes on to the next “proof” of Israeli illegality.

* * *

Now indeed comes his *tour de force*; and here he advances from mere obfuscation to somewhat blatant misrepresentation.

His “exhibit” is Article 49 of the convention — made particularly famous by much debate among international lawyers.

Article 49 had a special history and a specific purpose. It was designed to proscribe actions of a specific nature that had characterized the Nazi occupation in Europe. They had deported people, sometimes whole communities, some to Germany, others to occupied territory, some to labour as slaves, some to be killed.

The first paragraph of Article 49 therefore lays down that: “Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive”.

In some cases, the Nazis transferred Germans into the occupied territories to replace and “inherit” from the expelled local population.

The last paragraph of the Article, therefore, proceeds to prohibit this type of action. Paragraph 6 says : The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.

* * *

It is on this sixth paragraph of Article 49 that the US Government hangs its charge of illegality against Jewish settlement in Judea, Samaria, Gaza, Sinai and the Golan Heights.

The legal adviser obviously realizes that the bare text itself (about deportation or transfer of parts of a civilian population) is hardly a reasonable description of how the groups of young Jewish men and women went up to the Golan Heights, and down to the Jordan Valley and on to the bare hills of Samaria.

Without noticeably blinking an eyelid, he, therefore, seriously suggests that it is enough that the government was involved in the location of settlements, in making land available to them and in financing them in order to qualify as a government that meets the criteria of paragraph 6 —

that is of “deporting or transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies”.

Far more grave is his pretence that he does not know the background and the significance of the form of words used in Article 49, nor what the specific purpose of the whole article was. Indeed, he denies there was such a purpose...

He writes: “Another view of Paragraph 6 is that it is directed against mass population transfers, such as occurred in World War II for political, racial and colonization ends; but there is no apparent support or reasons for limiting its application to such cases”.

* * *

This is simply not true. This is not “another view” (though the thrust of the text makes such a “view” unanswerable). It is the *official explanation* for the drafting of Article 49.

It is hard to believe that the legal adviser to the State Department has not read the official Red Cross commentary on the Geneva convention (even if only for his brief on Israel illegality). It was the Red Cross that organized the diplomatic conference in 1949 in Geneva where the convention was adopted, and the commentary it prepared at that time is the official authoritative source for the background and the meaning and the purpose of its provisions.

On Paragraph 6 of Article 49, the commentary says: “It is intended to prevent a practice adopted during the Second World War by certain Powers, which transferred portions of their own population to occupied territory for political or racial reasons or in order, as they claimed, to colonize those territories. Such transfers worsened the economic situation of the native population and endangered their separate existence as a race”.

* * *

Such are the essentials, such is the weight of the case the State Department’s legal adviser scrambled together in order to provide a fig-leaf of professional justification for the administration’s cynical policy. There is something additional in the legal adviser’s “opinion” which must interest everybody concerned about US policy towards Israel.

The legal adviser’s document inadvertently sheds a strong light on the

inherent hostility which animates the State Department. His statement is embedded in what purports to be a survey of the historical background. That “background” is a hotch-potch of misinformation, implicit and explicit.

As one example: the document twists and turns in order not to have to mention that Israel was compelled by Arab aggression to fight two defensive wars over the territory of Western Palestine.

Here, for instance, is the *total* description of the Six-Day War. “During the June 1967 war, Israeli forces occupied Gaza, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank and the Golan Heights”. That is all. Not a word of who or what started the war, or — again — of its annihilatory purpose.

This is a sample of the style of the document which, as a whole, is an effective reflection of the spirit which inspires so much — though not all — of American policy — a spirit that finds a natural expression in the ridiculous, yet monstrous, charge that Jewish settlement is “illegal”.

6.4.79

Keeping The Faith

“Rural and urban settlement in all parts of Eretz Yisrael were in the past and are today the focus of Zionist action for the redemption of the land, for maintaining vital security areas for the nation and a storehouse of strength and inspiration for the renewal of *halutziut* (the pioneering spirit). A Likud Government will call on the younger generation in the country and in the Diaspora to settle, and will help any group or individual in the task of settling the uninhabited parts of the country, taking care that nobody is deprived of his land”.

The quotation is from the Likud 1977 election platform, on which it was hoisted into power. The settlement plank was not a new feature; it had been a central feature of every Likud policy statement, and of Gahal and Herut beforehand.

Indeed, the Likud was not establishing any new basic national principle. The right to settle in all parts of Eretz Yisrael is grounded firmly in the norms and practice of international law and in the political events of our time. That right is expressed in Israeli law, and has been exercised by successive Israeli governments since 1949.

The modern international legal sanction for Jewish national rights in this country is contained in the Mandate for Palestine — which related to both sides of the Jordan. The Mandate came into being, and Britain given the task of carrying it out, in order to give effect to the purpose of the Balfour Declaration. In the language of the Mandate itself, that purpose was to “reconstitute” the Jewish National Home (and one of the means was to encourage “close settlement” of the land). At that time Britain, in order to solve imperial problems of her own, and taking advantage of Jewish incapacity to resist, lopped off eastern Palestine and gave it as a gift to a Hedjazi princeling, Abdullah. Thus Palestine was partitioned for the first time; and the area for “close” Jewish settlement restricted to Western Palestine.

In 1947, the British were forced to relinquish their hostile and oppressive rule. And the Zionist Movement agreed, for the sake of peace, to a United Nations’ recommendation for partitioning the country once again, and thus to the establishment of an Arab state in Western Palestine. The Arabs did not accept the proposal; instead, they tried by force to prevent the establishment of the Jewish State, and to take over the whole country. The partition scheme, which in any case had no effect unless accepted by both sides, therefore lapsed. It became a meaningless historical curiosity.

One of America’s legal luminaries, former Under-Secretary of State Eugene Rostow — now Sterling Professor of Law at Yale University, understood this when he said: “The status of the West Bank and Gaza is very special. They have to be considered as unallocated parts of the British Mandate... Therefore Israel continues to have the full rights of settlement which it had after 1922”. (*Interview on Israel Radio, November 4, 1978*).

* * *

That internationally recognized right was, over the years, inexorably reinforced by events: The Armistice Lines of 1949 — which reflected the military strength of the sides at the end of the Arab aggression — were not political boundaries. Certainly they did not give the illegal occupants of Judea and Samaria and of Gaza — Transjordan and Egypt — any sovereign rights.

In 1967 the Arabs states, having persuaded themselves once again that it was feasible to destroy the Jewish State, tore the Armistice Agreements to shreds. The Armistice Agreements automatically lost their validity, and Israel, having repelled the aggression and driven the Egyptians and the

Jordanians from the territories they had occupied, properly declared the Armistice agreements null and void. The Knesset reasserted Israel's rights in the whole country, and authorized the Government to apply Israeli law to any part of Eretz Yisrael as it saw fit. The Eshkol Government of National Unity decided to exercise that authority, for the time being, by incorporating only eastern Jerusalem into the State of Israel.

There is no legal ground in the doctrine of the State of Israel for differentiating, on the Jewish right of settlement, between Judea and Samaria on one hand and between Lod and Ramie and Jerusalem on the other; and the criteria that apply to all these apply equally to Tel Aviv, to Haifa and to the Emek.

It is in accordance with the assertion of this right that some 70 settlements were established beyond the "Green Line" before the Likud came to power.

* * *

In opposition the Likud differed from the Alignment Government in that it urged that settlement policy should be both more intensive and more extensive — and should include therefore also Samaria and more of Judea. (There was no essential difference on Sinai and the Golan Heights.) The doctrine underlying the Likud policy, however, was emphasized in a further element: the Government's obligation to help the individual citizen or group to exercise the right of settlement. It so happens that precisely this principle was given graphic expression by Prime Minister Begin on his first visit to the United States in July 1977. He then explained to the President, to the senators and congressmen, to the Jewish leaders, and to the American community at large, that the right of any Jew to settle in Hebron and Shiloh was as inviolable as the right of any American to go and live in the American Hebrons and Shilohs. Just as an American president could not prohibit such a move, so had no Israel government the right to prevent such settlement.

In their determined and sustained effort to settle in Judea and Samaria — quite apart from its obvious significance for the security of Israel — the Gush Emunim and other pioneers are thus upholding the right of the Jewish people, internationally recognized, to settle the land of Israel. They are asserting their right as Jews to settle in one part of the country to be no less than the right of other Jews to settle in the Jordan valley, in Acre, in Ramla, in Jerusalem, in Mishmar Ha'emek and in Nahal Oz — all in

complete harmony with the decisions of Israel's parliament. They are also asserting their civic right to hold the government parties to their election promise to "assist any group or individual in the task of settling the uninhabited parts of the land".

Under our system of parliamentary democracy that promise, having been underwritten by the elevation of the Likud to power, became and remains the will of the people.

Many of these pioneers, moreover, know their history and their Bible and draw inspiration and authority from the historical association — unique in human annals — of the People of Israel with the Land of Israel, beginning with the Bible. They therefore serve as a living reminder to the rest of us and to the world at large that the international recognition of the Jewish right to statehood in the ancient Jewish homeland derives from precisely those sources — as made plain, for example, in the preamble to the Mandate for Palestine in 1922. "Whereas recognition has thereby been given to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine..".

* * *

The Alignment Government, whatever compromises it was prepared to make, to its credit never renounced the principle of Jewish rights in all parts of Palestine. But there evolved the extraordinary notion that, while establishing settlements in the Jordan Valley, Sinai, Gaza, Golan, the government would, by avoiding settlement of Samaria and most of Judea, induce the Arabs to make peace. The notion was, of course, a corollary of the Allon Plan, whereby Yigal Allon succeeded in squaring the circle: Solving the demographic problem ("what will you do with a million Arabs?") by handing over Samaria and almost all of Judea to Jordan; and then eliminating the consequent mortal danger to Israel's existence by denying the Arabs arms or an army, and interposing a Jewish strip defended by the Israeli Army, along the Jordan, in the heart of the thus-expanded Kingdom of Jordan.

Nobody, certainly no Arab, was prepared seriously to discuss such a strange creation. But the Alignment government mapped its settlement policy in accordance with it.

It is perhaps this much-publicized Alignment policy that gave birth to the idea that settlements in Samaria disturb the "peace process" or are preventing peace. This notion is not only comic; it is also dangerous. It implies approval of the Arab theme that the cause of the "dispute," and a

legitimate cause for making war on Israel, is the Jewish presence — anywhere in Palestine.

The Arabs made war on Israel in 1967 when there were no Jews in Judea or Samaria; they made war on an Israel in 1947 which did not include Ramie or Lydda or Acre. A bare few months ago leaders of the Arab communities in Samaria and Judea, in protesting Israeli rule, did not direct their attention at Gush Emunim settlements in Samaria or even “Alignment” settlements in the Jordan Valley. They announced their aspiration to wrest Jaffa, and Acre, and Jerusalem from the State of Israel.

The PLO, recognized officially throughout the Arab world and by at least a substantial section of the Arabs of Judea and Samaria as the “leadership of the Palestinian people,” does not budge from its philosophy of the unacceptability of any Jewish state in the heart of the Arab world nor from its declared intention of eliminating it from the map — and the PLO continues to enjoy the wholehearted support, moral and material, of the Arab states.

Only recently this support — and increased financial subsidy — was reaffirmed by the so-called Rejection States at Baghdad. Last Sunday it was the support of Egypt for the PLO that was again reaffirmed — this time by the Acting Foreign Minister Butros Ghali. Ghali, speaking to the Egyptian Parliamentary Committees, buttressed his announcement by the ominous reminder that the PLO was recognized by the United Nations as a “movement of national liberation”.

Has not the time come for the opponents of Jewish settlements, and the denigrators of the settlers, to desist from their tribal chanting about the danger to the peace process, to address themselves to tell us *which* peace process, *what* peace and peace with *whom* are they talking about?

13.4.79

Settlement, Strategy and Hypocrisy

US President Jimmy Carter recently restated a principle of great importance in democratic government. A striking feature of the current American scene is Carter’s declining popularity in the polls, now down to about 30 per cent. Nevertheless, he said, “If I should ever modify my positions away from what’s best for the country in order to pick up support, then I would not deserve to be president”.

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Democracy, and indeed governmental performance, would become a caricature if every few weeks the course of operations were altered because of a presumed change of wind in the electorate.

This principle applies even more forcefully in parliamentary democracies like Britain or Israel. Here an adverse parliamentary majority may force a government to resign; but as long as the government commands the majority, it is its right and its obligation to carry out the mandate it was accorded by the electors through parliament — until it is faced by the verdict of the people at the next election.

Too many people in Israel appear to have forgotten, or prefer to ignore, this vital principle of its democratic system. The Likud Government came to power on a reasonably clear political programme, including a very specific undertaking to foster Jewish “settlement” in all parts of Eretz Yisrael.

This policy conflicted with the more circumscribed attitude of the Alignment. That party, now in opposition, is in its turn perfectly entitled to voice its concerns over the government’s policy. Equally legitimate is the opposition evinced by some Alignment elements, in cooperation with other more “leftist” groups, under the beguiling born-yesterday banner of “Peace Now”.

What is not legitimate is the notion widely disseminated by these opposition groups that somehow, somewhere, the government’s policy is morally wrong in that it contradicts some imagined code of continuity in national policy (which the Alignment seems still to regard as a kind of property exclusively its own).

This propaganda, moreover, pretends that the government is supported only by a minority. Even if this were somehow proved true, the government would have no right to change policy in mid-term in order, as Carter put it, “to pick up support”.

As it happens, there are no grounds for the suggestion that the government is supported on this issue by a minority. Quite the contrary. Its parliamentary majority on this issue is quite solid. As for public opinion, in spite of the intensive almost daily brainwashing to which it is subjected by and through the media, the majority’s support is quite clear. In a poll conducted for *The Jerusalem Post* by Modi’in Ezrachi a few weeks ago, 57 per cent of those expressing an opinion were in favour of “continuing with new settlements in Judea and Samaria”.

Alignment spokesmen attack the idea of Jewish reconstruction in Judea and Samaria because it does not conform to their doctrine of Israel's security requirements and to their formula for peace. The apparent inspiration of most of their pronouncements is the Allon Plan.

That plan required the setting up of a number of villages in the Jordan Valley and the retention of those in the Etzion-Hebron area. The rest of the territory — Samaria and most of Judea — would be handed over to Jordan, whose state would thus encompass both sides of the river. But at its very centre, along the river, Israel would rule over a swath of land, containing those villages as well as a series of army camps.

Moreover, Jordan would be expected to agree to the demilitarization of its territory in western Eretz Yisrael.

For nearly 10 years, Yigal Allon and his supporters offered this singular contraption to Jordan, to the Arabs in general, to the world at large. Nobody wanted it. Indeed, no Arab ever gave any reason to believe that any Arabs were prepared to accept a territorial compromise of any kind, Allon-planned or otherwise.

The Allon Plan is, in fact, a theoretical concept, unrelated to any political reality. If the Arabs were clever enough to accept it momentarily, in order "meantime" to ensure the departure of Israel from Samaria and from most of Judea, an unprecedented barrage of world opinion would descend on Israel as an openly "colonialist" power, maintaining an army in what she herself had recognized as sovereign Arab territory.

Nor would the demilitarization of the sovereign Arab territory meet with a more friendly reception. Not, of course, that it would last. Who would prevent the inevitable introduction of arms, even heavy arms, and the build-up of a sizeable "Lebanese" situation within Judea and Samaria? Then, not only would Galilean towns and villages serve as targets, but also the major part of Israel.

Retaliatory raids by the IDF, airforce attacks — on territory just recognized by Israel, after years of struggle, as Arab sovereign territory? The orchestrated denunciation of Israel to which we have become accustomed in the wake of Israeli action in Lebanon would pale before the chorus of world-wide obloquy that would be poured down on Israel.

* * *

It is indeed a sad reflection on the quality of political thinking in Israel that the supporters of "territorial compromise" refuse to face the

implications of the glaring realities. The harsh centre of those realities is that Israel's elementary security requires its control of the whole of Western Palestine. The essence of minimal security this side of the Jordan, and indeed the needs of elementary strategic reach in what is, after all, a tiny area — is the control of the central mountains.

The no less obvious reality, which Israel has had to learn twice at heavy cost in the past is that, in the topographical and political circumstances in this country, strategic control is impossible, just will not work, without political control; and political control requires a substantial Jewish presence throughout the area. Not merely a military presence, but a thriving civilian community.

Those media which have been pouring contumely and insults on Gush Emunim carefully avoid publishing a map of the villages already established, and those planned. In fact, the network (still inadequate, but clearly delineated) makes a clear strategic pattern. Those villages would be the first line of defence, adding the bare minimum of depth to the normal security needs of Petah Tikva, Netanya and Tel Aviv.

* * *

It is an unbelievably childish (and hypocritical) pretence that somehow settlements approved and established by the Alignment Government are any more acceptable to the Arabs than Gush Emunim settlements. The Arabs make no bones about it; and they do not let us forget it.

Only last Friday Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Butros Ghali (in an interview in *The Jerusalem Post*) reiterated without equivocation the "self-evident" axiom that all existing Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria will have to be dismantled — as in Sinai — "if Israel wants peace". Ghali makes no distinction between new and old settlements, or between Samaria and the Jordan Valley, or of Judea. Because his purpose, and the purpose of all the Arabs, openly and repeatedly stated, is the expulsion of Israel from "all the territories occupied in the 1967 war".

This is being articulated by the "moderates" like Ghali, who does not refrain from mentioning (in another conversation) his expectation that the "refugees" of 1948 will, in the next phase, be returned to their homes (in Jaffa and Haifa *et al*).

At the same time the less "moderate" elements continue to be explicit about the total Arab purpose. The meeting of notables in Nablus in the

winter expressed its designs on Jaffa and Acre; and only a few days ago, in a poll of Arab citizens of Israel, 50 per cent expressed themselves against her very existence.

* * *

Naturally, the Arabs will oppose each new Jewish village as it arises.

The collaboration, direct and indirect, of woolly-minded Jews of the opposition minority with rational, nationally motivated Arabs in resisting the establishment precisely of Eilon Moreh, will no, doubt provide much amusement to future historians fascinated by the phenomenon of Jewish stupidity.

Unfortunately, it is providing here and now a source of encouragement to Israel's enemies and to those of our friends in the US and elsewhere who (for their own reasons) are ceaselessly pressing Israel to adopt a policy tantamount to national suicide by stages.

15.6.79

Democracy and the Jewish Presence

One of the gross impertinences of Israel's political life is the repeated assertion by the opponents of Jewish settlement in Judea, Samaria and Gaza that the proponents of settlement (and specifically Gush Emunim) represent a minority. A concomitant phenomenon is the anti-settlement groups' pretence that they are the knights of democracy.

Government as a reflection of the results of free elections may be an imperfect system, but it is the best so far evolved by the democratic intelligence. Under this system, it is the right of the government to govern for as long as it commands a parliamentary majority; and it is pledged to fulfil its undertakings to the electors. It is the electors' right to insist on the fulfilment of its pledges.

The 1977 election brought to power a coalition of parties basically identified with the programme of Gush Emunim. The Prime Minister, when he proclaimed that there would be many Eilon Morehs, was giving expression to the election undertaking of the Likud to encourage settlement in all parts of Eretz Yisrael.

His subsequent devious performance, breaking pledges and even specific

promises to the would-be settlers of Gush Emunim, does not lessen the force of his obligation. Nothing, therefore, could be more legitimate than pressure on the Government to carry out the mandate on which it was elected. In fact, Gush Emunim is defending a crucial principle of democratic government.

Some of its opponents are no less capable than the Gush of massing large gatherings, or of buying space in newspapers. It is also true that their demonstrations (designed to encourage the government to betray its pledges and take orders from foreign potentates) consistently gain them much publicity and applause from ill-wishers of Israel abroad. This does not alter their minority status in Israel. To change that, they must win the next election.

* * *

The opposition to a Jewish presence in Judea, Samaria and Gaza has enveloped itself in a monstrous web of woolly thinking and “conventional lies”. It has been orchestrated energetically by the American administration, aided generously by the complete absence of any Israeli information campaign.

The central theme of opposition, and a favourite Washington incantation, is that “settlements are an obstacle to peace”. Sadat recently has taken up this tune, and Jews in Israel mindlessly echo it (and even chant it in demonstrations in the public squares.)

Even those who are prepared to give all of Judea and Samaria and Gaza — should surely in all logic ask themselves why the presence even of 100,000 Jews (so far there are less than 15,000) in the midst of a population of a million Arabs, should be an “obstacle to peace” if the Arabs want peace with Israel and not peace without Israel. To this, of course, there is not even a remotely plausible answer. Nor is there an intelligent answer to the question as to how it is that only when there was no Jewish presence in Judea and Samaria — in 1948 and 1967 — Jordan made war on Israel.

Egypt, we are constantly reminded, actually has signed a peace treaty with Israel. The establishment of settlements in Samaria did not prevent its signature.

To which peace then are Carter and Sadat, and their Israeli echoes, referring? Presumably to peace with Jordan, with the “Palestinian people”.

No Arab on either side of the Jordan has suggested that they are

prepared to make peace with Israel if she stops establishing settlements. Nor, indeed, has Sadat. He insists on non-establishment of settlements as one of a number of conditions which Israel must fulfill before there can be any hope at all — not indeed of peace, but of negotiations. Basic to these conditions is a prior undertaking by Israel of a complete withdrawal from these areas — including eastern Jerusalem. Then — so Sadat hopes — the Palestinians *may* agree to talk to the Israelis about a transitional period of autonomy before the takeover.

Sadat has also made it plain that in no circumstances will any Arab agree to a single Jew's living anywhere on the "West Bank" or Gaza. All existing Jewish communities will have to disappear. They are all, all obstacles to the kind of peace the Arabs are planning for Israel.

The Americans too have made clear that their objective is precisely the same — a complete Israeli withdrawal. Their present campaign against Jewish settlements is simply a corollary of that policy. Fundamentally it has nothing to do with peace (to which one must, of course, pay lip-service); it has much to do with the need to toe the line drawn by the Saudi oil-suppliers.

The truth is very simple; it stares us in the face. If Israel were foolish enough to give up the idea of establishing communities beyond the 1949 "death trap" the immediate consequence would be the orchestration of the demand that she now undertake to remove all the other "obstacles to peace". For has it not been established by all the experts that peace will not be attained except by the "solution of the Palestinian problem?"

* * *

Neither the government nor the opposition appears to be aware of the scope, the significance and the thrust of the campaign now in progress against Israel. The many voices now raised in support, or in recognition, or in calls for recognition, of the PLO inevitably reflect a legitimization not only of its terrorism, but of its objective — the dissolution of Israel. Even the repetition (however parrot-like) of the "axiom" that peace inexorably requires the solution of the "Palestinian problem" — represents (even if often unwittingly) an endorsement of that purpose.

What is the Palestinian problem in fact? It is the failure of the Arab nation to destroy Israel. The so-called "legitimate rights" which "must be restored" flow fundamentally from the "right" to replace Israel by an Arab state. Only a fortnight ago, this essential was elegantly restated by one of

the “moderate” members of the PLO Central Committee, Mahmoud Abbas. “The essence of these rights,” he said, “is the non-acceptance of Israel. There is no alternative to the PLO solution of a secular democratic state”.

The first practical element central to the solution of the Palestinian problem is the specifically and repeatedly stated “right of return”. What is the right of return? It is the right of the “refugees” to go back to what they claim were their homes: in Jaffa, in Lod, Ramla, Haifa, Acre. The perpetuation of the refugee problem was originally designed and indeed proclaimed to be the weapon whereby, through the return of the “refugees”, the Jewish State would be destroyed.

This vision is shared by all the Arabs. By the decisions of the Rabat conference of 1974, all the Arab states are formally pledged to help the PLO achieve the Palestinian objectives. President Sadat, while negotiating “peace” with Israel, took care to proclaim that Egypt would fulfil her obligations under those decisions. With the power of oil behind them, the Arabs are confident that their moment is approaching. President Carter, now apparently subservient to every Arab demand, recently endorsed specifically the “right of return” — adding only that, of course, all the Arabs want is that Israel should recognize the right; they would not take advantage of it...

* * *

The Camp David agreement, in its utter irresponsibility, has given tremendous impetus to these Arab hopes. The shrinking of Israel to the 1949 armistice lines has become a practical possibility; and the next stage envisaged is the “right of return”. Those who now oppose Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria and Gaza should realize that the threat to Israel’s life now lies heavy on the horizon. Quite apart from the question of the Jewish right to Eretz Yisrael, to surrender now to the demands of the enemy and to abandon Judea, Samaria and Gaza means to surrender still more of Israel’s vital defence.

19.10.79

Eilon Moreh Judgment

The US Supreme Court recently rejected, by a 5-4 majority, the appeal of Brian Weber, a white worker, who had been denied training opportunities due to him by seniority because of a racial quota instituted by his firm. The judgment was severely criticized on legal grounds both inside the court (by the minority) and outside.

In “Commentary” magazine, Professor Carl Cohen castigated the judgment in detail, in such terms as “bad,” “shocking,” “muddling,” “ob-tuse”. The article was entitled “Judgment Debased”. The total effect is devastating.

But what can Mr. Weber do? He has to submit. Judges are human, and even when they err obviously, they must be upheld. Otherwise the road is opened to anarchy.

In the Eilon Moreh case it is clear that much of the responsibility for the outcome lies with the government. The slipshod presentation of its case makes it difficult to believe that it was in fact prepared by professionals. Whatever criticism is voiced of the court itself, its judgment must be upheld. The government has no, alternative, and the settlers, whose bit-terness is justified, cannot do otherwise than reconcile themselves to this fact. Any resistance to the execution of the court order will only divert public attention from the urgent central need: to bring about a sane and purposeful settlement policy in Judea and Samaria.

* * *

Its decision on Eilon Moreh will not add lustre to the Israel Supreme Court. Some of its conclusions and their underlying considerations do not reflect the norms of logic or equity, nor of the rules of evidence which one might expect. They also offer a strange lesson in constitutional practice.

Five years ago the Agranat Commission on the Yom Kippur War, absolving Defence Minister Moshe Dayan from responsibility for the decisions of the chief of staff, declared that: “It has never been laid down that the minister of defence is a kind of super-chief of staff... a kind of supreme commander of the army by virtue of his being defence minister”.

The Commission thus gave expression to a most important universal principle, and it drew attention to a potential danger which democratic governments take great care to guard themselves against. The minister responsible for the army *is not a soldier*. He may have been once — though

democratic governments usually avoid giving the defence office to a “retired general”. The control of the army by civilian rule must be unfleeced by any doubt.

Moreover, in time of war a defence minister with a one-time senior army status might decide that he “knows better” and interfere in the army chief’s decisions. No sane nation wants two competing chiefs of staff directing the battlefield.

The Eilon Moreh court has turned this principle on its head. It drew Defence Minister Ezer Weizman into its judgment, and treated him as a counterweight to the submissions of the chief of staff — the one officially responsible security expert in the state.

Mr. Weizman’s opinion was given the status of expertise, it clearly influenced the decision of the court, and one of the judges, Mr. Witkon, stated without contradiction that he had in fact preferred Weizman’s opinion over that of Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan because Weizman had once been head of the air force -and later operations chief in the Israel Defence Forces.

The court thus recognized Weizman as a super-chief above the chief of staff.

It is surprising to recall that the chairman of the court, Justice Landau, was also one of the two Supreme Court judges who were members of the Agranat Commission.

This astonishing preoccupation of the court with Weizman was not the result of any submission he made to the court. He was thus not questioned nor cross-examined, either on his expertise or on his reasoning. The only information actually produced in court and quoted in the judgment on the content of Weizman’s views was one sentence in the chief of staffs submission that Weizman, while agreeing on the strategic importance of the area, believed that security did not require setting up a settlement at this particular place. Period. Does this snippet of hearsay, and the structure built upon it, suggest a serious observance of the “rules of evidence”?

That is not all. A large part of the court’s decision is devoted to an analysis of the mind of the government, leading to the conclusion that the prime reasons for its decision to set up the settlement was political, and that the security aspect was secondary. Only one member of the government was exempted from this detailed scrutiny. Only Weizman’s minority ‘opinion was treated as pure military expertise, free of political colouring. Weizman, it-may be added, has been a professional politician

for 10 years; his opinions on security questions have moreover been demonstrably inconsistent.

* * *

More serious in its political implications is the reflection in the judgment of the status of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. The judgment would be inconceivable were it not for the court's use of The Hague Convention as its guideline.

The impression is thus created that Israel recognizes the validity of the Hague Convention for its rule in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. This is not so. In creating this impression, the court may be seen as being a victim of confused operative policies of the government, and certainly of the muddleheaded presentation to the court of the government's case.

The status of the areas is not governed either by The Hague Convention or by the Fourth Geneva Convention, because they are not occupied territories. This has been the basis of all Israeli policy since 1967.

Judea, Samaria and Gaza could be treated as "occupied territory" only if they had been sovereign Jordanian territory before 1967. They were not. Jordan's 1948 occupation was the result of unprovoked invasion, and her annexation was illegal.

Israel's right to sovereignty was given expression by the Knesset in June 1967, authorizing the government to extend Israeli law to the territories captured by the IDF. The Eshkol Government then exercised this authority only for Jerusalem, but it remains valid.

The confusion arises from the fact that the Israel government, of its free will, decided that while the Hague and Geneva conventions did not apply to these areas, she would nevertheless act in accordance with their humanitarian provisions. Indeed, she went further. Thus the whole process whereby residents of Judea and Samaria appeal to the court was a spontaneous Israeli gesture.

But it is obviously of the first political importance that it should be made utterly clear on each occasion that this does not mean that Israel recognizes Judea, Samaria and Gaza as "occupied territory". This was not done either by the government attorney or by the court.

On the contrary, one of the judges made a damaging pronouncement: Justice Witkon pointed out that the court had not been called upon to deal with the question of the status of the area and that here the court would act according to the decision of the government. He then, quite fortuitously

remarked: "It is a mistake to think (as I recently read in a newspaper) that the Geneva Convention does not apply to Judea and Samaria. It does apply!"

Did Justice Witkon only read it in a newspaper. Is he unaware that this is the established doctrine of the Israeli Government, by which he is bound? Is it permissible for a judge thus to inject a presumed legal opinion into a court decision — without giving any grounds — on an issue which is at the heart of the international campaign against the Jewish State?

* * *

The Supreme Court decision is directed to the specific case of Eilon Moreh. It does not pretend to establish a precedent. It is inconceivable that the government will not draw conclusions from its grave significance.

It is still possible to rescue the Likud's programme of Jewish settlement throughout Eretz Yisrael. A sane and feasible policy, however, must be thought out and calculated. It must be explicable and free of the broken promises which not only destroy the government's credibility but crush the spirit of idealism and self-sacrifice which still exist in this nation. It must also ensure its efficient and convincing presentation — that will stand up in a court of law.

9.11.79

Settlements: Legitimate Policy

Last week, the Egyptians celebrated the surrender by Israel of Santa Katerina in Sinai. The media in Israel reported the ceremony. Only a few newspapers, including The Jerusalem Post revealed that during the ceremony Egyptian soldiers distributed copies of a map of the area, which covers the territory of Israel, but does not carry the name of Israel.

The name of several towns appear — Ramla, Lod, Beersheba — and the total area is covered by the name "Falastin". The map was printed after Egypt had signed the "peace treaty" with Israel.

This is, of course, no more than a further, graphically ominous reminder of the fact that Egypt remains a party to the all-Arab purpose of erasing

the Jewish State. A similar map shown on Egyptian television is equally innocent of any mention of Israel: it is all “Falastin”.

Even a country defeated in war would at least protest against this blatant hint of intent. The government of Israel pretends it does not know. Even the few newspapers that published the news presumably found it inconvenient to trouble the public with any comment on such an uncomfortable fact.

This is only one example of the treatment in Israel of sensitive subjects. The current most concentrated and most persistent direct misinformation of the public by most of the media is being manifested over the issue of the “settlements”. A doctoral thesis could no doubt be written on the single aspect of “Misinformation, by Omission and Commission”.

Whatever criticism can be levelled at procedure and off-the-cuff remarks by judges in the Eilon Moreh case, the court is certainly not to blame for the distortion and misrepresentation to which its judgement — on the expropriation of private property — has been harnessed in the cause of propaganda against the Jewish presence in Judea and Samaria.

* * *

It is an unconscionable distortion of the truth to suggest that Gush Emunim represents a small minority trying to force an unwilling government to surrender to their demands (and that these demands are an obstacle to peace, no less).

Gush Emunim is identified with the electoral majority which put the present major government parties into power in 1977. These parties undertook unequivocally, indeed passionately, to encourage and promote Jewish settlement in all parts of Eretz Yisrael. It is the opposition — in parliament and outside — which is trying to press the government to renounce its undertakings; which is, in fact, trying to force upon the government and people the views of defeated minority.

The Likud’s motivation for the promised policy of settlement is first of all that Eretz Yisrael is the patrimony of the Jewish people (and not of the Arab people which, in any case, has total and sovereign possession of three quarters of its territory — east of the Jordan), and that the essential security of the Jewish State requires control of the whole country down to the Jordan.

Most of the members of Gush Emunim — and other recent settlers in Samaria — are couples with young families who have voluntarily

undertaken the burden in this generation of the principle of “settling Eretz Yisrael”. Most of the settlers are Orthodox, and believe in the biblical promise which is the original spiritual inspiration of the nearly 4,000-year continuous attachment of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel — the attachment which brought all of us, Orthodox and freethinking, to live here. (It is typical of a certain school of “trembling Israelites”, who would not dare dream that there was anything wrong with the Christian orthodox fundamentalism of, for example, Mr. Jimmy Carter, that they mock and jeer at the Jewish religious outlook to be found in Gush Emunim or in the National Religious Party).

The attachment of the people to this land, unique in the history of mankind, was the inspiration and the official source of international recognition at the end of World War I of the right of the Jewish people to “reconstitute” its homeland in Palestine. The mockers and the jeerers thus display also a large ignorance of recent Jewish political history.

* * *

As for the position taken by the leaders of the official Alignment Opposition, this is hypocrisy. They do know their history: and they are perfectly aware that no sane responsible Israel policy can surrender the control of security over any area west of the Jordan.

They, unlike some of their more woolly-headed followers, have not forgotten the onslaughts designed to annihilate Israel in 1948 and 1967, nor presumably the recurrent and unrelenting Arab threats since then. Hence, indeed, their reiterated insistence that the Jordan must be Israel’s security border.

While in power they built in the Jordan Valley, and in southern Judea, precisely what the Likud promised, and what Gush Emunim and other settlers are trying to build, in Samaria and the remainder of Judea.

When the Alignment was voted out of office, its doctrine was democratically — and automatically — replaced by the Likud doctrine. This doctrine, while also laying down that there must be security control of the whole area, insisted that it must be exerted positively by a Jewish presence throughout the area, in Samaria no less than in the Jordan Valley; and reminded that Arab hostility to a Jewish presence is no weaker in the Jordan Valley than on the heights of Samaria.

* * *

The clash between Gush Emunim and the government resulted from the failure of the Likud, once in office, to carry out its undertakings. It began to drag its feet in August, 1977. The settlers, leaving their usually comfortable homes and going to live in the barren rocky territory of the Samarian mountains, fatuously described by tendentious propaganda as “densely populated,” were let down time after time by the prime minister who had legitimately promised “many Eilon Morehs”. It was only on the ruins of one broken promise after another that, inch by inch, the villages were established. To this day — 30 months after the Likud Government took office — not a single stone building has been put up in the Gush *yishuvim*.

The persistence — and the unbelievable hardiness — of these settlers is in the famous tradition of Jewish pioneering in this country.

This writer does not share their Orthodoxy, and would no doubt find himself at odds with them on many of the practical issues of the day ; but it is they who are in the forefront of the struggle for the strengthening of the Jewish presence in Western Palestine.

That is the issue. The many-pronged campaign conducted by the US Administration against the establishment of a Jewish presence in Judea, Samaria and Gaza is not new. The Alignment governments experienced its thrust from previous American administrations. It is a central, sophisticated element in Washington’s strategy of squeezing Israel back into the pre-1967 lines. That compression of Israel is the Arab prescription for facilitating the final thrust — which would make a reality of the map as shown on Egyptian television and distributed last week at the celebration at Santa Katerina.

* * *

That is the issue. The sophisticated American propagandists have naturally disseminated the idea that precisely Jewish settlements are an obstacle to peace. Neither they nor the Israelis who parrot the idea are able to explain why. Why, for example, the only wars that have been fought in Judea and Samaria were forced upon Israel when she was confined within the partition borders — when there was no Jewish presence in Judea and Samaria.

Jordan did not venture to intervene in the War of Attrition of 1969-1970. More spectacularly, in the Yom Kippur War, with Israel in dire straits on both northern and southern fronts, Jordan did not move. Even in

those circumstances, the Jewish presence in Judea and Samaria was sufficient to prevent war in Western Palestine.

This is the Israeli experience. It continues to guide the Arabs' doctrine: the final assault, the next attempt at annihilation, can be launched feasibly only when Israel has been reduced at least to the 1967 lines. Jewish absence from Judea and Samaria means war; and whoever opposes Jewish settlement there is helping undermine one of the essential elements of any hope of peace for Israel.

* * *

The people of Eilon Moreh are naturally bitter at the ineptitude and the deviousness, and the fumbling and bumbling, of the government which has inflicted years'-long suffering on them. But now the government has made them a firm offer — in the hearing of the whole people — to provide them with an alternative, suitable site. They should accept the offer at once, and indeed prod the government to hasten its consummation.

They must realize that it is urgent to deal with the central issue; hastening the adoption by the government of the practical measures necessary to implement a comprehensive settlement scheme in keeping with its historic policy, with its election promises, and with the pronouncements by the Knesset since 1948 on the legitimacy of the Israeli presence throughout Eretz Yisrael.

30.11.79

On Jerusalem

Carter Will Not Forget Thee, O Jerusalem

Losing no time after Camp David, President Carter and other American spokesmen have hastened to make plain that not only do they continue to refuse to recognize East Jerusalem as part of Israel, but that East Jerusalem “must” be surrendered to “the Arabs”. This attitude is not new; Israel’s incorporation of East Jerusalem has never been recognized by Washington.

Nor is it surprising. Washington takes its cue on East Jerusalem, as on all the essential questions relating to Eretz Yisrael, from the Arabs — and specifically from Saudi Arabia.

The official justification for their position, however, is that the eastern part of the city is “occupied Arab territory,” and that “Arab legal and historical rights must be restored”. There could hardly be a more logical-sounding, more moral-sounding, more plausible semantic cloak for a proposal steeped in historic untruth, in injustice, in negation of international morality.

This American attitude is grounded in an unequivocal condonation of unprovoked aggression. What the Arabs claim as legal rights were established in 1948 by the then still young East Palestinian kingdom of Trans-Jordan, which invaded Western Palestine with the avowed object, proclaimed in common with the other six Arab aggressors, of destroying Israel in embryo.

The invasion was illegal, as was the subsequent annexation of Judea and Samaria — including the eastern section of the city of Jerusalem. That annexation was, in all propriety, never recognized by the US, nor indeed by other states, except Britain (which had inspired and equipped the invasion in the first place) and Pakistan. That annexation was cancelled by Israel’s success in 1967 in repelling the Hashemite Kingdom’s second attempt on her life. Now, US subservience to Arab, and specifically Saudi, requirements, has given birth to “Arab legal rights”. This is the “realistic” significance of the American campaign now beginning to prise East Jerusalem out of Israel.

“Historical rights” of the Arabs in Jerusalem is no less hollow a phrase. Jerusalem came under Arab rule in the seventh century like all the territory conquered by the invaders from Arabia. It was part of an imperial regime which lasted for a century, and ended 1,200 years ago with the overthrow of the Ummayyad dynasty in Damascus by the predominantly Persian and Turkish Abbasids, ruling from Baghdad.

Neither then nor afterwards, throughout the many successive imperial regimes, did the Arabs as a nation, or any group of Arabs, relate to Palestine as a country, or to Jerusalem as a city. To the imperial rulers it was no more than a minor town in an unconsidered province. When one of the sultans decided to choose a town in the area as a provincial capital, he chose Ramla. What is true is that modern Arab propaganda has made a tremendous effort to inject the lie of “Arab Jerusalem” into the Western consciousness.

* * *

This is no less true of the Moslem religious “connection”. With the exception of the Crusader period, Jerusalem was under Moslem rule for nearly 1,300 years till 1918, when the Turkish Ottoman Empire collapsed. It never became a religious nor an intellectual centre — in spite of the Moslem holy edifices — the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aksa Mosque erected on the Jewish Temple Mount. It is a nonsense to describe Jerusalem as a city holy to Islam — a nonsense which, however, has achieved wide currency through modern Arab political persistence.

Islam has two holy cities, Mecca and Medina, where Mohammed lived and worked and where he founded the religion. Both are in Saudi Arabia — the most fanatically orthodox of the Moslem countries. The Saudis’ intense orthodoxy also inflames its fanatical inability to accept the existence of an infidel Jewish state, which to all orthodox Moslems is an anathema, and with which no peace (as distinct from a temporary armistice) can ever be made. In pursuit of the struggle against Israel’s existence, Jerusalem has been invested by Arab propaganda with a Moslem sanctity whose defilement by the Jews disturbs the very sleep of the Saudi people, and particularly the sensitive members of the royal house. The Saudi kings have thus built up the myth of their role as the protectors of Jerusalem for Islam.

How deep their awe for Jerusalem, how anguished their longing for its sanctity, are eloquently revealed by the enlightening fact that in the 19

years of Jordanian Arab Moslem rule after 1948 the Saudi king never once visited Jerusalem.

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The American attitude is no less cynical. Washington never recognized Jerusalem (even Western Jerusalem before 1967) as the capital of Israel, on the grounds that the original partition resolution of the UN General Assembly in 1947 provided for its internationalization (a provision frustrated, like the partition scheme as a whole by the Arab aggression). Now, suddenly, not only has the Jordanian rape in 1948 of Jerusalem — as indeed of all Judea and Samaria — been implicitly legitimized, but the eastern section of the city is being released from its international bonds to be baptized as “occupied Arab territory”. To round out the travesty, Mr. Carter’s policy on Jerusalem has patently flouted the platform of the Democratic Party for the 1976 presidential election, which called for the transfer of the US Embassy to Jerusalem, thus recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over the city. Mr. Carter was, of course, elected in order to implement that platform.

* * *

The opening of the American campaign for an Arab Jerusalem follows naturally in the wake of the Camp David triumph. The Camp David agreement achieved for Sadat (and for Carter) a “framework” for Judea and Samaria and Gaza, based on exclusively Arab self-government and on Israeli recognition of the principle that in the ultimate disposal of sovereignty over these areas, the Arab inhabitants would have the final say. This effectively ensures that Israeli sovereignty will not be re-established there.

The one territorial exception to Israel’s renunciation in Western Eretz Yisrael is East Jerusalem — now under Israeli sovereignty. The batteries of Arab propaganda falsehood, and all the force of American persuasion, will now be concentrated on securing Israeli renunciation in Jerusalem as well.

From Washington’s vantage point, it will not be an easy task. The US administration is not unaware that Jerusalem is the heart and soul of the Jewish homeland. Jerusalem has been the capital of the Jewish people for over 3,000 years; it was the focus of the national dream, enshrined in the history of suffering and longing of 1,800 years of exile. There has been a Jewish presence in Jerusalem, except when it was physically impossible,

since the destruction of the Second Temple; it has been continuous since 1267; and Jews have been a majority of the population of the city since the middle of the 19th century.

Washington knows, moreover, that the Jewish passion for Jerusalem is a political power in Israel. The obscenity sensed by Jewish public opinion in the falsification underlying the Arab-American attitude is enhanced by the horror at the idea of renewed division of the city. Jewish public opposition will therefore be fierce; but the keen minds of the State Department and the National Security Council are undoubtedly already busy seeking a formula for guiding the Israeli politicians towards what they wish to see as the inevitable surrender of Jewish sovereignty over East Jerusalem.

There are rational grounds for their optimism. They believe that the Israeli leaders will not be able to resist the inexorable logic flowing from their capitulation at Camp David. The Prime Minister announced unequivocally in the Knesset that despite his strong desire and his long struggle to retain the Yamit settlements (after having given up the Sinai airfields presumably without a struggle) he had no alternative but to give in because (a) Sadat would not agree except to this complete capitulation; (b) he was afraid that otherwise there would be war; (c) Israel would not be able to stand up to public opinion. Whatever the merits of these reasons — they are all based purely on the power or the presumption of power of the other side, and weakness on the Jewish side.

Why then, argue the Americans, should it be different in the case of Jerusalem? All these arguments will apply, certainly with no less force than in the case of the Yamit settlements, even though the struggle will be longer. They have thus already begun to indoctrinate public opinion with the formula of “restoration of Arab rights in East Jerusalem”. And on the Israeli side the only view so far published in the wake of American proclamations has been in Saudi reports — which nobody has bothered to deny — that Foreign Minister Dayan has said that he favours (or, in another version, that he is “believed to favour”) returning East Jerusalem to the Arabs...

* * *

There should be no doubt in the public mind of the gravity and the immediacy of the danger to Jewish Jerusalem.

6.11.78

Whose Jerusalem?

It was not sheer barbarism that moved the Jordanian authorities to order the destruction of synagogues in the Old City of Jerusalem during their 19-years' occupation before 1967; nor was it mere hatred of the Jews. They needed to obliterate palpable evidence of the relationship between Jews and the city. The Western Wall was spared their desecration, no doubt, because Moslem mythology had adopted it as the last station at which Mohammed tethered his wonder-horse Burak in the dream of his ascent to heaven.

The mosques on the Temple Mount were later built in consonance with that tradition. Never did the city of Jerusalem, however, play a part of any positive significance in Islamic or Arab life.

In the hundreds of years of glittering Moslem empire, Jerusalem was an inconsidered backwater. No Arab regime ever chose it even as a provincial capital, nor was it developed as a seat of learning. In our time, when the Old City fell into the hands of Moslem rulers from Transjordan, it did not occur to them to proclaim Jerusalem as their capital or to exalt it in any other way. On the contrary, the central political role of Amman was tightened.

This is not a digression into history. These facts, and, on the other hand, the relationship of the Jewish people to Jerusalem, a relationship which has no parallel in the history of the nations, a passion which has pulsed for 3,000 years through the prose and poetry of Jewish life — together represent the background, the framework and the essence of the “dispute” over Jerusalem. They are the continuing conflict between a profound truth and a political myth.

* * *

The idea that there is objectively a “Jerusalem problem,” that there is a genuine dispute over rights, is an invention. It is a part of the monstrous Arab hoax designed to deny the Jewish people its homeland altogether.

Not insignificantly, the motive that prompted Abdullah and Hussein to erase the evidences of Jewish life in the Old City also moves the Arab's propaganda in its insistence not only on a claim to Jerusalem but in denying absolutely the Jewish relationship to the city — just as they sedulously and systematically deny the Jewish right to any part of Palestine.

The absolute nature of this erasure of the Jewish national relationship with Eretz Yisrael — which finds its most explicit expression in the Palestine Covenant but which is no less emphatic in the attitude of all the other Arabs — is so absurd that it may appear to be counter-productive. But the tremendous potential of the big lie should not be forgotten. More ominously, the lie is entwined in the larger theme which seems to be taking shape in various quarters, with grave implications for the Jewish people.

* * *

There is in progress an effort, not perhaps always conscious, to separate the Jewish people from its past, from its history, from its roots. This is not a new idea. It is an essential ingredient of one form of classical anti-semitism in the days of our statelessness: the Jew without roots as the villain. It is now appearing in a new guise — it threatens the foundations of our national renaissance in Eretz Yisrael.

Significantly enough, while the Arabs have been busy for years building up a completely mythical history of a national relationship that never was, even to the extent of identification with the original Canaanites, to establish their original and overriding right to the country — the Jews are admonished against every reference to history, to historic connection, to historic claim.

It is indeed a subject for Kafkaesque fantasy; but it is there, staring us in the face. It has become a fashion to insist that the Jews have no right to call on history, that their history is irrelevant, of no consequence. In short, it might as well not exist; at this point it merges in the Arab refrain that *in fact* it does not exist. Thus, settling Jews in their homeland can be “justified” only if it can be proved that a particular village is of strategic or tactical importance.

Unfortunately, weak-minded Jews, shutting their eyes and closing their minds to the admittedly unpleasant Arab purpose of undermining the moral as well as destroying the physical foundations of Jewish statehood, have also taken up the cry.

Hence the feckless campaign against Jews going to live in Judea and Samaria. Hence the incredible thesis that Jews may live in the Jordan Valley not because the Jordan Valley is part of their homeland, but because some generals and politicians have decided that this is “justifiable” on the grounds of security.

It so happens that the security of the Jewish state can only be rationally

assured if it controls the whole of Western Palestine, embracing the historic defence belt provided by the Judean and the Samarian mountains. They are the strategic backbone of the country.

In the same way, the British people, masters of a much larger and more easily defensible country, regard the Channel as their security belt against attack from the continent.

If the people of Israel are to pursue a sane and rational dialogue among themselves and with the world outside, it is essential that it be made plain that their national security is an internal function flowing from the fact of Eretz Yisrael being the Jewish Homeland — and not that of survivors from the Holocaust who took refuge in a country that does not belong to them — the way the Arabs depict us.

* * *

The government in 1967, exercising the authority accorded by the Knesset, was too timid to incorporate Judea and Samaria within the State of Israel — an entirely comprehensible act of justice, equity and natural security. But it did take the step in eastern Jerusalem. Reunited Jerusalem thus amusingly acquired a municipal status equivalent to that of Tel Aviv or Haifa.

Precisely because of the Jewish people's unequivocal sense of Jerusalem as the heart of its patrimony and the historic centre in its life as a people, it can respect with equanimity the special relationship of Christianity with the holy city of its birth, as well as the holy places of Islam within its walls. Israel has consequently, without any complexes, assured universal freedom of access to the holy places.

Israel could ignore the quite different treatment of Jews in Jerusalem in the past by Moslems and Christians alike.

There is consequently no reason or justification, in sanity and logic and justice, for Israel to fall into the trap of opening the "future of Jerusalem" to discussion. It is true that the Moslem kings of Saudi Arabia have protested a religious interest in Jerusalem so deep and a yearning for its holy places so intense that nothing but Moslem rule there will appease them; and the American official response has been to peddle this impudent pretence as conferring some special right on the Saudis to dictate the future of Jerusalem.

Washington's respectful response to Riyadh's nonsense derives, of course, from a common religious source called oil; and neither in

Washington nor in Riyadh has anybody ventured to explain the relevant circumstance that during the whole 19 years of Moslem rule in Jerusalem, none of the Saudi rulers, who did spend much time living high in Europe and the US, ever set foot in this city of their dreams.

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There are signs that the Americans are not taking seriously Israel's proclaimed steadfastness on Jerusalem. They have no doubt been influenced by the fact that Israeli governments, past and present, have buckled under pressure on issues vital to Israel's security. What government in its senses, they might well ask for example, would have given up the oil of Sinai — whatever the pressures? A squeeze here, a veiled threat there, and they will buckle on Jerusalem as well.

Hence, the unprecedented reaction of State Department spokesman Reston, who, knowing perfectly well that the bill introduced in the Knesset is purely a constitutional reaffirmation of an existing fact, "reassured" the Egyptians that they need not take the matter seriously, that it was no more than an opposition ploy.

It is clear that the US-Egyptian partnership will soon be exerting new pressure for "opening a debate" on Jerusalem.

It is consequently all the more important that the Knesset speed up the process of codifying the Law of Jerusalem the Capital.

23.5.80

Again — Whose Jerusalem?

The remarks of British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington on the subject of Jerusalem should not be judged in anger, despite their presumptuousness (he advised Prime Minister Begin not to move his office to the eastern part of the capital). The remarks should be read coolly in their proper context. Lord Carrington is no friendly, nor even objective observer. Himself no mean supporter of Arab pretensions and demands, he represents the anti-Jewish tradition on Jerusalem established by the British government in the Mandate period, and maintained thereafter.

During the Mandate, the British thought nothing, for example, of desecrating the sanctity of Jewish prayer. They forbade the blowing of the

shofar at the Western Wall at the end of the Yom Kippur fast. Year after year, towards the end of the Yom Kippur fast, the picture was repeated: a squad of British police, wielding batons, rushing into the crowd of Worshipers in the narrow courtyard at the Wall to catch the person who had defied their ban by blowing the *shofar*. The practice came to an end in 1944, when the British government finally took heed of warnings of reprisals by the Irgun Zvai Leumi.

After the Transjordanians, with British advice and help, invaded Western Palestine and occupied the Old City in 1948, they not only changed the status of the city, they wilfully desecrated and destroyed nearly all the synagogues and tore up the graves in the Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives.

For them, this was no doubt necessary as a childish means of obliterating the evidence of the Jewish presence. Not a word, not a peep, came from the Lord Carringtons of the day at this barbarity.

The Transjordanians, moreover, failed to honour the Armistice agreement; throughout the 19 years of their occupation, no Jew was allowed to come and pray at the Western Wall. No protest, no reproach was heard from London. On the contrary, the British government was one of the two nations that recognized the Transjordanians' rape of Palestine, and presumably approved of what they were doing in Jerusalem.

This, sad to say, is the relevant context to any remarks made by a British foreign minister on Jerusalem (or on Palestine in general). It is not a context of clean hands in the past; nor of present friendly intentions towards Israel.

* * *

More significant is the "decision" taken last week by the Egyptian Parliament that Jerusalem is the "capital of the Palestinians". If Israel had an information service worthy of the name it would itself take the initiative in disseminating this decision throughout the world — as an excellent sample of Arab fabrication.

This brand-new idea on Jerusalem differs from already entrenched Arab falsehoods only in that its falsity is so much more obvious. Its absurdity could serve as a sharp reminder of the fact that, after all, Jerusalem was never the national capital of any people but the Jews, just as Eretz Yisrael was never the national territory of any other people.

The British Mandatory regime re-established the concept of Palestine as

a political entity and naturally made Jerusalem its seat of government, because Britain's very presence in the country and the source of her authority was the stated purpose of the Mandate: the "reconstitution of the *Jewish National Home*".

One of the monstrous obscenities of our time has been the propaganda equating the attachment of the Jewish people to Jerusalem, unique in the history of nations, with the utterly spurious Arab claim that Jerusalem is an "Arab city".

Throughout the hundreds of years of Moslem imperial rule (including the short imperial Arab period) Jerusalem was a neglected and unconsidered backwater. Nor is the Moslem religious claim more valid. It is quite untrue that Jerusalem as a city was holy to the Moslems in any sense.

Islam has two holy cities, Mecca and Medina, which played a part in the birth of the religion and the life of its founder Mohammed. The city of Jerusalem played no part in them whatever. Mohammed's early effort to attract Jewish and Christian converts by setting Jerusalem as the physical direction of prayer failed in its purpose, and he gave up the attempt. The two mosques, correctly recognized as holy places, were built on the Jewish Temple Mount, precisely because of Mohammed's recognition of the sanctity of the site in the Jewish religion. Now the Arab claim has been brought to its extreme absurdity by the Egyptian Parliament's "decision" that Jerusalem is the capital even of "the Palestinians".

* * *

The Egyptian decision should serve as a helpful demonstration of the tremendous part played by sheer mendacity in the Arab struggle against the Jewish state. Since the all-embracing Nazi propaganda machine, and except for the Soviet system, there has not in our time been so comprehensive and so unrestrained a lie-factory as the Arab campaign against Israel.

No historic untruth has been too outrageous, no political distortion has been too sordid, and no charge too absurd, to be used in that campaign.

This characteristic, much noted by historians and other scholars, conforms to Moslem doctrine — which permits prevarication provided the objective is desirable.

"If a lie is the only way of obtaining a good result, it is permissible,"

wrote the great 11th-century Moslem theologian Al-Ghazzali. “We must lie when truth leads to unpleasant results”.

Falsifying history is thus not a new Arab art; but the worldwide alliance united in kow-towing to Arab oil and financial power has in recent years given tremendous impetus to the acceptance and dissemination of the Arab mythology on Palestine. And the plan to wrest Jerusalem from Israel must not be viewed in isolation : it is only one of the fronts in the campaign to dismantle the Jewish state.

* * *

This truth underlines the myopia of those easily-intimidated people in Israel who complain that the bill now before the Knesset reasserting Israel sovereignty in Jerusalem, is not “timely”.

It is most certainly not timely for Lord Carrington, nor for the Egyptians, nor for President Carter. Their campaign against Jewish control of Jerusalem has been going on (in their various spheres) mercilessly and unabated. In the US it has sometimes recently been muted probably for electoral reasons, but it is no less determined.

Four months ago, the US supported a fierce resolution in the Security Council against, *inter alia*, Israel’s status and actions in Jerusalem: and Mr. Carter afterwards claimed he did not know what his representative was voting for. The fact is, and none of them makes any secret of it, that they are all determined to prise Israel out of east Jerusalem, just as they expect to prise her out of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

But they want to control the “timing” — and to wheedle or browbeat Israel into complying with their timetable. Carter some time ago stated publicly that the Jerusalem problem should be left to the last. His calculation was transparently simple. He assumed that the people of Israel would be glad to leave Jerusalem on the back-burner.

He and Sadat and their various collaborators would meantime continue their campaign of propaganda and pressure to weaken Israel’s resolve. Then, finally, when Israel will have agreed to relinquish Judea, Samaria and Gaza, and Jerusalem is “isolated,” they expect to find enough Jewish allies with loud voices in Israel and outside who, with all else lost, will raise the cry that it would be foolish to risk war for a few streets in Jerusalem.

This strategy, this timetable, has been punctured by the sudden prospect of the passage in the Knesset of the bill underlining the Jewish patrimony in Jerusalem. That is why Carter and Sadat and Carrington *et al* are so

disturbed, so annoyed, so angry. They know that the new law will not change in the slightest the situation in Jerusalem as established by the Knesset in 1967. But a reassertion by the Knesset of the indissoluble sovereign right of the Jewish people over an undivided Jerusalem will demonstrate that the people of Israel are not, as they hoped, asleep; that they are alive to the danger, and will fight back.

18.7.80

Information Policy

The Information Blunder Goes On — And On

According to reports from the correspondent of Israel radio in the United States the American media went out last Sunday on quite a spree of attacks on Israel's government for being intransigent and not making any concessions, and at the same time they were loud in their praise for Sadat as a moderate and yielding statesman.

By all the signs the response of the American public to these attacks is more positive than it has been in the past. Ever since Sadat spread the story that it was he who had taken the "initiative for peace", and a wave of propaganda in this spirit washed over the United States — and the rest of the world — aided, be it said, by the Israeli government's own information services, a change to Israel's disadvantage has taken place in American public opinion. In addition Israel's "image" has been damaged since last autumn by the Government's failure to explain the issue of settlements.

It is reasonable to suppose that one of the factors that helped Carter achieve a majority in the Senate for the planes deal with Saudi Arabia, was the weakening of support for Israel among the Senate members' constituents. Perhaps the most serious development of all is the perplexity and the uncertainties that have begun to pervade the Jewish community and particularly its leadership. The friends of Israel in the United States and especially those public workers who, out of love, devote their time and energy to "explaining" Israel, bemoan the lack of clarity, even the confusion in Information policy, the absence of reactions or the weakness of their contents, the irrelevancy of much of the ongoing information to the unrelenting daily offensive being waged against the government and the State of Israel, and whose implications are damaging to the Jewish people as a whole.

The incapacity of our Information arms to inject into the American public consciousness an awareness of the scope of the Israeli government's concessions and the risks to her security contained in her peace plan, points to a horrendous blunder. To make the concessions the government has made and is making, and at the same time to be accused of being

unyielding and intransigent, requires a very high degree of incompetence.

* * *

The seeds of this situation were sown over a period of years. The apologetic content of Information in the days of Alignment government and the petty obstinacy of the Foreign Office which blocked a rational solution to the problems of scope and organization of Information, and which sabotaged the attempt to set up a separate office (by the appointment of Mr. Aharon Yariv) — fostered serious vulnerabilities and vacuums. These were frighteningly exposed in May 1977 in the flood of imprecation and invective that flooded the media in the United States (as elsewhere), in the signs of fear in the public generally and of panic in the Jewish community when it was learned that the Likud had won the election. This phenomenon demonstrated that in spite of the tremendous public sympathy for Israel there were limits to its depth and fragility in its texture.

Indeed that outburst should have served as an alarm signal and triggered a revolution in the information machine and its methods. Then the new Prime Minister did in fact pledge himself to effect such a change. He was helped to renege on his undertaking by the wrecking tactics of the senior echelons of the Foreign Office and the insistence of Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan. The existing machinery continued to operate; and the only change that was effected was a cut in the budget of the Information department (as in that of the other departments) of the Foreign Office. In the vicious war being waged against us it was as though we continued to fight our battle with one small, old destroyer commanded by a junior officer instead of with a squadron of battleships under an admiral.

Since then our condition has grown incessantly worse.

* * *

In the context of this situation the Foreign Minister (who is also in charge of Information) has conceded that the criticism of Information policy and management is justified. This criticism may be summarized as follows:

While the problem faced by the Information services of the State of Israel is of tremendous proportions, proper in its scope and variety to a world Power, the Foreign Office is not built or equipped to deal with it. It

is not appropriately manned, and it is incapable of investing the task of Information with the power, the authority and the speed of action vital to its effectiveness. Moreover, not only does there not exist in the Foreign Office a concept relevant to the dimensions of the task, but it is incapable of developing and applying such a concept. To entrust the handling of the Information of a state in Israel's condition to the hands of a department in the Foreign Office is as wise as entrusting the tasks of the Ministry of Defence to a department in the Foreign Office.

Now, speaking a fortnight ago to the Zionist Actions Committee, the Foreign Minister remarked laconically that the "Information performance of the Foreign Office is "poor" and, what is more "that is the maximum of which the Foreign Office is capable". In fact this is an exaggeration and does not do justice to the number of capable officials in that office who could do much more were it not for the palsied hand at the top — but in essence Dayan was telling the truth. The maximum of which the Foreign Office is capable is far, far from adequate for the minimum required.

The only way even to make a start on correcting the situation is to build a completely new structure for Information, of the order of a Ministry and clothed with ministerial authority, headed by capable people with the capacity, the knowledge, the dedication and the exclusive commitment to the task in hand which is demanded of a General Staff in time of war.

* * *

The lessons of the past are unequivocally grim. The blunders of the Yom Kippur war were more complex than is generally thought. Behind the blunders of the war itself (and in the preparations for war) was the failure over many years of the Information policy. Why did the Government refrain from pre-emptive action even after it became clear to the whole world that the Arabs were posed for attack? Its reason was the fear that "world public opinion," and especially in the United States would regard such action as aggression. For the same reason, in order to ensure beyond any possible doubt that the Arabs opened the offensive and thus demonstrate that Israel was innocent, even the Reserves were not called up in the numbers required and the speed feasible to meet the attack; and the comparatively thinly-manned front line was left exposed to the onslaught.

How did this come about? The external information service of the Foreign Office, as well as its foreign policy, did not succeed (indeed they did not try very hard) to inject into the public consciousness throughout

the world the truth about a whole generation of Arab aggression and about the roots of aggression in the Arabs' declared aim of erasing Israel from the map. The sense of this protracted historic failure, embedded itself — maybe too deeply — in the hearts of the members of the Israeli Government, and especially of Prime Minister Golda Meir. She pressed her colleagues into deciding to allow the Arabs to launch their attack unmolested. Even today it is difficult to assess the historic dimensions of the tragedy that flowed from the success of the Egyptians (and the Syrians) in the opening move of the war, but what is unquestionable is the part played by the Information failure in creating that chain of tragedy.

We all hope and pray that there will be no more war. The intransigence of the Arab States and the great, even enhanced warlike preparations in all of them, nevertheless remind us incessantly that the possibility exists. Meantime our struggle goes on only in the fields of diplomacy and Information. In the circumstances of this struggle, and in the light of our bitter experience, the perpetuation of the Information blunder now, in these more tranquil days, by leaving its direction in the hands of the Foreign Office even after the Foreign Minister's admission of failure, would be an unforgiveable sin, not only of the Foreign Minister but of the Government as a whole.

Ma'ariv 25.7.78

One Glimmer of Light

The participation of the released Soviet prisoners of Zion in the torchlighting on independence eve provides a dramatic counterpoint to the central theme of this year's ceremony.

Twelve of the 13 citizens chosen to light the torches are the scions of families whose histories are interlaced in the fascinating panorama of the continuity of the Jewish presence in Palestine. The youngest of these families arrived in the country 150 years ago — 50 years before the "First Aliya". The oldest (Zinati, of the village of Peki'in in Galilee) is believed to trace his ancestry back to the destruction of the Second Temple.

Most of them belong to the immigrations of nearly 500 years ago when, in the wake of the Inquisition and subsequently of the advent of the at-first-friendly Ottoman Turks, a substantial and indeed brilliant chapter was

written in the history of the Yishuv. From the Lurias to the Rivlins, from the Eliachars to the Salomons, from the Burlas to the Becks, a wide range of vibrant Jewish life persisted and, in the face of indescribable pressures, prohibitions and persecutions, was renewed again and again over the centuries.

The lighters of the torches are also a testimony to the unhappy fact of the neglect of that continuity both in Zionist literature and in the education system in Israel. Recalling that continuity recalls also the fabric of mendacity spun by the Arabs in claiming an overlordship in the Land of Israel — an overlordship which never existed. It reminds us how closely we are enveloped in a cloud of pretence and untruth about the affinity, and the rights, of the Jewish people to the country — and how pretence and untruth influence even the attitudes of responsible statesmen. For example in the United States.

* * *

On his recent visit to Jerusalem, the American President, taken aback by Mr. Ariel Sharon's remark that there would be a million Jews in Judea and Samaria, was even more surprised by the Agriculture Minister's further remarks (reported by Sidney Zion and Uri Dan in "The New York Times Magazine," April 8).

"You have a clear plan," Sharon told him, "to create a Palestinian state. But you cannot force us or convince us to allow it. There *is* now a Palestinian state. It consists of three-fourths of the land mass of Palestine, as determined by the League of Nations. Palestine was partitioned by a British trick in 1922... Of the two million people living in Jordan, nearly all are Palestinians. If you count the Beduins as Palestinians — and why not, they were born there — then everyone in Jordan is a Palestinian, except maybe the Hashemite King Hussein, because his dynasty was imported by the British from Arabia. So a Palestinian state on the 'West Bank' would be a second Palestinian state".

Carter (the narrative goes on) turned to his national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski: "Is what he says correct?" Brzezinski agreed that the area now known as Jordan had originally been part of the Palestinian Mandate.

What else, then, does the President of the United States not know about the subject on which he adopts attitudes which could be fateful for the future of Israel and the Jewish People — and at least of great consequence

to his own country? It is inconceivable that he had never, never heard that Palestine encompassed both sides of the Jordan, and that when the new era began for the Middle East with the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire, the promises and pledges made to the Jewish people related to Palestine in its entirety.

Is it possible that he does not know that both eastern Palestine and (in spite of the pleadings of his own predecessor President Wilson) the southernmost strip of Lebanon to the Litani River, were excised by the British from the territory of Palestine as a function of their then ongoing feud with France?

When the French drove King Feisal out of Damascus and thus upset the British plan for the distribution of territories and kingly crowns to the sons of the Hashemite family, the British decided to compensate him with the crown of Iraq which they had previously promised to his brother Abdallah. Abdallah, thus bereft, had to be given compensation later. The British installed him in eastern Palestine, and helped him by gradual stages build up what subsequently became the independent Kingdom of Transjordan (later, after the rape of Judea and Samaria, rechristened Jordan).

It is true that Abdallah's grandson, King Hussein, one of the foremost fairy-tale spinners in the Middle East, does not blink an eyelid when referring to his kingdom as though it has existed as an independent Arab state for at least hundreds of years. Does Carter not know that this is a fairy tale?

Is it indeed conceivable that the president does not know that neither eastern nor western Palestine have ever in the past been the sovereign national territory of Arabs; and that even in the short and single period of Arab rule — by the Ommayads in the 7th and 8th centuries — it was, like many of the other Arab conquests — an unconsidered part of a sprawling empire? Is it conceivable that Jimmy Carter, a man of religious sensitivity, is not alive to the historic phenomenon that throughout the 19 centuries in which the Jewish people was unable to assert and realize its rights to the land, nor to prevent any other people from establishing itself there — no other people did, in fact, assert or establish such a claim or, in the end, lift a finger to restore the ruins, drain the swamps and fructify the deserts, to which it had been reduced by centuries of alien rule and life?

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Carter's appeal to Brzezinski for confirmation of Sharon's remarks

makes all these questions (and many more) valid. Are they important? Are the answers important? Of what importance is history? What is important, many of our self-proclaimed realists insist, is reality.

The fact is that not only is history “important”. It is the very warp and woof of Arab propaganda and claims; and it has become central to the fabric of American policy. Is it unimportant when an American president talks freely of “the Palestinian problem” and of a Palestinian state as its solution that he is not — nor pretends not to be — aware that there is already in existence a Palestinian state (itself carved out of what had been internationally intended as the reconstituted Jewish state).

When Sadat writes to Carter (as he did in the wake of the Camp David agreements) that “Arab Jerusalem is an integral part of the West Bank” and that “legal and historical rights in the city must be respected and restored” he is giving him a lesson in *history* which he insists must bring about a change in the *reality*.

Rights that should be “restored” are by definition rights that existed some time in the past. Does it make no difference that the “historical” substance of Sadat’s letter is a complete fabrication, a part of the Arab mythology which could not stand up to five minutes of questioning? Does it make no difference that American policy itself actually flaunts Arab mendacity as though it were historic truth?

According to the American president and his spokesman, Jerusalem is “occupied Arab territory”. This is untrue, it is a primitive distortion of history. It is, as it happens, a mindless echoing of the Arab falsehood, and it contradicts the American position on Jerusalem as maintained since 1948. The US to this day refuses to recognize West Jerusalem as part of Israel and as Israel’s capital, and refuses to move its embassy to Jerusalem, because it clings to the recommendation in the long-dead partition scheme that the city of Jerusalem (all of it) should be international. If Jerusalem is “international,” how does its eastern part come to be “occupied Arab territory?”

It is superfluous to labour the point. It is by misrepresenting history that the American administration provides itself with the moral fig-leaf for the real reason for its adoption of the Arab myths — and indeed for the brazenness of some of its propaganda against Israel.

* * *

But the Arab myths have taken root, the policy of falsifying history has

paid dividends because successive Israeli governments have failed to resist it. Neither Israel's diplomatic policy nor what goes for her information policy has ever dealt seriously, intelligently and with dignity, with the task of establishing the historic truths, and the demolition of the monstrous lies on which in the end international policy towards Israel rests its case.

Israeli governments have failed to grasp that whatever the immediate pragmatic considerations that govern policy, its justification is conceived in history. The Arabs have understood this. The Arabs have *not* contented themselves with flourishing the oil threat. They have *not* confined themselves to petrodollar blackmail. They have fabricated a complete historic lie and invested astronomic sums of money to finance its dissemination. They have injected their myths without hesitation or embarrassment into their diplomatic activity as though they were self-evident truths. Israeli diplomacy and Israeli information have given the Arabs an almost completely clear field to build up an altogether fictitious and monstrous version of the dispute.

There is no rational reason for this Israeli failure. There is no rational reason why in many years of diplomatic conversations and exchanges, Israel should not long ago have insisted on the elimination of patent historical falsehoods from which American policy draws sustenance. There is no reason why an American president should even be able to pretend surprise or ignorance at the remark made by Sharon. There is no rational reason for the Israeli government's failure to give a crushing, yet sophisticated, reply even to the fiction assiduously disseminated from Washington that Jewish settlement in Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan is "illegal".

The failure of information policy abroad has been accompanied (though in lesser degree) by failure in education at home. The ignorance of a substantial portion of the population, including many of those educated in Israel, is not merely heartbreaking, it is dangerous to the future of our people. The lack of awareness not only of our historic roots, but of our modern political history and the history of Jewish international relations since we came upon the world stage as a modern nation; and the ignorance of Arab history, and of the truth of the Arab relationship with Eretz Yisrael — are widespread.

A common consequence of such ignorance is the mindless parroting of the relentlessly asserted Arab fabrications.

* * *

The present minister of education is no doubt aware of the problem. The degree to which education programmes are amended to give the student a balanced store of knowledge on the crucial issues of our presence in Eretz Yisrael will be a measure of his success.

The decision to reflect at the torch lighting ceremony one vivid aspect of that presence is a step in the right direction.

4.5.79

Jumping to Delusions

The editors of the widely-read American news-magazine *Newsweek* recently wrote a revealing letter to a Jerusalem reader who had “objected strongly” to their “June 16 article on the West Bank bombings”. They point out that “what made that week’s violence singular was that apparently for the first time Israeli extremists had turned to all-out terrorism..”.

On what grounds did *Newsweek* make this charge — with which indeed (as the editors admit) a number of readers took issue? They have a reply. They admit that “Israeli investigators were unable to say whether the West Bank bombs had been rigged by Jews or Arabs”. But, they say, it had to be “recognized that the explosives were of Israeli make”. Further “most observers inside the country — whether Prime Minister Begin, who denounced the ‘crimes,’ or leaders of Israel’s peace movement... saw these acts as the work of a tiny, if deadly segment of their own population”. Finally, the attacks “echoed the philosophy of Gush Emunim and the more militant Kach..”.

It must suffice to deal briefly with this fatuous concoction. If (as *Newsweek* lays down) the origin of the explosives indicates the origin of the attackers, it is strange that the editors were unaware that eight days before they wrote their letter, it was reported on July 7 that the explosives were of US manufacture. Does this mean that Americans were responsible for the attacks?

Actually, why not? With organizations like the American Friends Service Organization and the American Near East Relief Agency actively operating in Judea and Samaria, undermining Israeli authority and bolstering anti-Israeli hostility, with openly anti-Israel American consular officials in East Jerusalem co-ordinating the efforts of these organizations, may it not have occurred to somebody that the policy of getting Israel out

of the “West Bank” might be helped along by an act of provocation? Moreover, we have all heard of the ubiquitous CIA.

* * *

The editors of *Newsweek* next include Prime Minister Begin among the “observers” who “saw these acts as the work of... a segment of their own population”. Begin, of course, never made any such statement.

Even on “philosophy” the *Newsweek* editors are in the dark. Rabbi Kahane, whatever he does advocate, has not “openly advocated violence” as a means of driving the Arabs out of the West Bank. It is his organization’s ugly — and childish — harassment of Arab householders (explaining to them why they should leave!) and reports of intended counter-terror to the PLO that no doubt provide reason for its being investigated.

As for the *Newsweek* editors’ reference to Gush Emunim, it is without even a semblance of foundation. They are challenged here and now to provide chapter and verse for their statement that the attacks “echoed the philosophy of Gush Emunim”.

Finally, the fact that the explosives used in the attack were of American manufacture was mentioned in the *Ma’ariv* report in connection with the discovery of the same brand of explosive in a charge intended for detonation in the Jewish quarter of Neve Ya’acov in Jerusalem. “This explosive, R.D.X.,” the report added, “is used by several of the Arab terrorist organizations. Explosives of this type were also found in the possession of the Nigerian UN officer Alfred Gom, who was found guilty of smuggling arms and ammunition from Lebanon to the terrorists in Judea and Samaria”.

As it happens, this is only one of a number of indications that the attacks on the mayors were carried out by Arab terrorists — who have a long history of murder and assassination of their own people. Israel’s Security Service is no doubt pursuing this line of investigation. The head of the Service, interviewed last Friday, said he still did not know who had carried out the attacks on the Arab mayors. Do *Newsweek* and its “observers” still know better?

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Like others in the American media, *Newsweek* has a record of anti-
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Israel bias. It has generally not been as vicious as *Time*, and it is, of course, not as powerful as *The New York Times*, which is notorious as a manipulator of news and as sponsor of any Jewish group, however minuscule, which works at weakening Israel or besmirching her. All of them depend to some extent on sources in Israel for their Israeli coverage. They cannot be blamed for the reckless and irresponsible Israeli sources who, because of their partisan zeal, feed the flames of anti-Israel propaganda. Reactions in Israel to the attack on the mayors reflected an extreme example of that recklessness.

The “view” of “observers” (a term used by *Newsweek* to suggest a certain detached objectivity) that it was Jews who attacked the Arab mayors is based on nothing **more** than the unbridled hatred of those “observers” for the people they describe as Jewish extremists.

When *Newsweek* editors write of violence as echoing the “philosophy of Gush Emunim” they are simply echoing the kind of virulent propaganda used by the opponents of Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria (who are a minority of the population) against its idealistic practitioners. Among these opponents are unscrupulous people — in politics and in the media — who use any stick at hand with which to beat Gush Emunim. That is how well-placed journalists, and political scientists, all noted for their extreme passions on the subject of Gush Emunim, rushed to their typewriters and to the microphone to pronounce judgment within hours of the attacks on the mayors.

It is they who thus immediately sowed the idea in the many minds throughout the world who were only too glad of the opportunity to equate Jews with the Arab murderers of Ma'alot and Munich and Lod. That is how *Newsweek* and many others accepted as a fact that Jews carried out the attack on the Arab mayors; and Arthur Schlesinger, for example, has already written in the *Wall Street Journal* of Israeli “atrocities”.

* * *

It is against this background that the latest phase of the build-up must be seen. Somebody — whether David Halevy himself or somebody who “used” him — decided that the campaign could now be taken a step further. The impending retirement of the Head of the Security Service provided a fine “angle”.

Thus **was** born the story that the investigation had in fact reached the door of **six** specific Jews, members of course of a Gush Emunim village;

that the reason no progress had been made was that the Prime Minister had stopped the investigation – and this was why the Service chief resigned. A date — June 4 — was added for the meeting between the Service chief and the Prime Minister, complete with a protocol. So convincing, so full of detail.

Every detail untrue (except the name of the Head of the Security Service). But before the story could be scotched by the Prime Minister and the Service chief, it had been headlined throughout the world; and the obviously deliberate damage had been done.

* * *

The state will no doubt charge Halevy with the criminal offence of revealing the identity of the Head of the Security Service. Halevy's personal problem, however is of minor import compared to the further damage done to Israel.

A serious responsibility rests on the leaders of the Alignment opposition. They have hitherto lent a quiet hand, or at least watched complacently as extreme fringe elements and sensation-mongers disseminated falsehood and denigration of the government and of the body of citizens who raised the Likud to power. These elements have thus, wittingly or unwittingly, aided the motley coalition of forces working against Israel throughout the world. The Alignment leaders apparently believe that it is the Likud that is being harmed. It is surely time that they realize their grievous error. The same forces were at work when the Alignment was in power — against Israel. Only they were given no encouragement and no help by the then-Likud opposition. The damage being done now is damage to the Israel of all of us. The Halevy affair should surely give Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin, and even some of their less responsible followers, food for thought.

15.8.80

The Sin of Silence

Dr. James Parkes, who died this week in England, deserves his niche in Jewish history. He laboured most of his life to improve relations between Christians and Jews, and was naturally found in the forefront of the battles against anti-Semitism. In his works, which included a comprehensive

history of Palestine, he wrote extensively on the Land, and his attachment to it flowed both from his Christian faith and from his empathy with the Jewish people.

Out of that concern, and in his pursuit of truth, he did not hesitate to criticize his friends. Thus, he wrote in his book *Whose Land*:

“The Zionists’ real title-deeds were written by the... heroic endurance of those who had maintained a Jewish presence in the land all through the centuries, and in spite of every discouragement. This page of history found no place in the constant flow of Zionist propaganda... the omission allowed the anti-Zionist... to paint an entirely false picture of the wickedness of Jewry trying to establish a 2,000 year-old claim to the country”.

He was being kind, or maybe he did not realize how far latter-day Zionists — and, more particularly, the information services of the Jewish state — by withholding Zionist truths, helped the Arabs build their monstrous mythology of an historic national relationship to the Land of Israel. He himself emphasized the mendacity of one central element in Arab propaganda: he called his readers’ attention to the fact that Palestine is not a land “holy to three faiths”. It is holy only to two, to Judaism and to Christianity. This applies most clearly to Jerusalem, which played no part in Moslem theology and remained an unconsidered political backwater through centuries of Moslem imperial rule.

If, however, Israeli official spokesmen — whether out of ignorance or diplomatic cosiness — did nothing to expose the hollowness of Arab claims one cannot expect the average Western statesman, unversed in history and incessantly importuned by Saudi princes about their agonizing passion for Jerusalem (in which they did not set foot while it was under Moslem rule) not to voice the same absurdities.

Thus Alexander Haig, in one of his early speeches as secretary of state, even placed Islam first in the trio of faiths to which Jerusalem is holy.

* * *

The future historian will ponder the strange sin of Israeli governments who failed to mobilize friends, non-Jewish as well as Jewish, and to establish adequate machinery to counter the flood of Arab mendacities, propagated by a powerful and ubiquitous propaganda machine. He will

discover that the Arabs, determined to put an end to the restoration of the Jewish people to its homeland, achieved considerable respectability in the world for their inversion of the truth — for the claim that it was the Arabs who were being deprived of a homeland.

He will be astounded to learn that in the next phase of the conflict Israeli leaders, having mumbled and fumbled over Arab untruths, were now failing to expose the Arabs' truth: that their dispute with the Jews arises from their utter refusal to permit the existence of Jewish statehood in the heart of the Arab world, and their vision of Israel — at best — as a religious minority under Arab sovereignty.

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Sixteen years ago Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba publicly mooted the idea of eliminating the Jewish state by stages. Believing even then (when Israel was confined within 1949 Armistice lines) that she could not be beaten on the battlefield, he proposed diplomatic negotiations and the offer of a peace treaty in order to get her to withdraw to the narrower lines of the UN's 1947 partition plan. With that achieved, asked Bourguiba, what could be simpler than the crushing of such a minuscule state?

His idea was angrily rejected then, but after the Six Day War it took root here and there, specifically in Egypt. It is the articulation of this kind of alternative blueprint for Israel's destruction that established the new myth in the West of a distinction between "extremist" and "moderate" Arabs.

In the present mood of most Western statesmen, falling over themselves to woo and even to flatter and fawn on Arab oil-suppliers and on eager Arab spenders of petrodollars, this distinction is a godsend. The notion that supporting the Arab cause means unequivocally promoting an attempt on the life of the Jewish state is distasteful. To be able to say — and maybe to believe — that the "problem" can be solved simply by an Israeli withdrawal to the 1949 Armistice lines provides them with a welcome sense of absolution. That is why many of them are continually trying to wheedle the PLO murderers into uttering a statement that can be interpreted as recognizing Israel's "right to exist".

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The "moderate" Arab policy is thus more insidiously dangerous to
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Israel than the “extremists”‘ call for instant destruction. This unpleasant truth was lit up by last week’s news. Saudi Prince Fahd, in an interview, proposed a “peace” plan. Israel would withdraw to the 1949 lines, a “Palestinian state” (with its capital in Jerusalem from which all Jews would be removed) would be established in Judea, Samaria and Gaza; the refugees would return home (to Jaffa, Haifa, etc.) or be paid compensation.

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The object of this sudden burst of generosity — to give Israel the option of a respite within the pre-1967 lines — is transparent. Saudi Arabia seeks more goodwill in the US for the Congress vote on the supply of sophisticated equipment for her F-15 planes and of AWACS, all intended for use against Israel. No doubt Prince Fahd was advised to say something that would suggest that Saudia is not really the bloodthirsty preacher of Holy War but a statesmanlike proponent of Peace.

The Israeli response was, happily, almost unanimous. Neither government nor opposition, certainly not the general public, was fooled by the word “peace”. Too recent and too harsh have been the accumulating reports of Saudi’s determined build-up, at tremendous cost, of a significant threat to Israel. Foreign Minister Shamir pointed out that the Saudi “plan” was in fact a proposal for the dismantling of Israel by stages. This definition is precise and accurate.

Yet from Shamir’s statement and from similar reactions from Alignment opposition leaders, it would be impossible to deduce that the Israeli government is engaged (with Alignment approval) in a process of cooperation with another Arab leader whose intentions towards Israel are essentially the same as those of Prince Fahd.

* * *

Nobody in government or the opposition has gone to the trouble of explaining what difference he sees between Fahd’s plan and Sadat’s vision of Israel’s future. The only difference is that Sadat has already completed the first phase of the Bourguiba doctrine: he has signed a “peace treaty” for which he is receiving all of Sinai. Now he continues to insist that Israel must withdraw from “all the occupied territory, including Jerusalem,” and that the Palestinians must be free to establish a state in the territory evacuated.

Sadat has from time to time reiterated that Egypt will honour her obligation — undertaken at Rabat in October 1974 together with all the other Arab states — to give the PLO all possible assistance in the furtherance of its aims, the first and foremost of which is the destruction of the State of Israel and the dispersal of most of its people.

He has from time to time voiced an earnest reiteration of that intention. Very recently, he conducted a campaign in the US for recognition of the PLO and negotiation with its leaders. Moreover, Sadat has made it clear repeatedly that when Egypt is called on by other Arab states to join in a war against Israel, she will fulfill that obligation. The peace treaty with Israel will not be an obstacle. His lieutenant, Dr. Butros Ghali, has even specified the kind of circumstances he envisages for that eventuality: “Egypt’s entry into the war of 1948” — that is, the war against the very birth of Jewish statehood.

The future historian will indeed stand aghast at the passivity of this generation of Jewish leaders who, while the enemy pursues his unchanging doctrine of annihilation with patience and determination, and even with a smile, ignore the truths which he is flaunting in their face.

14.8.81

U.S. Jewish Community

Answering Back

Last week, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations published a resolution declaring that Jewish settlement in Judea, Samaria and Gaza is legal. They should be congratulated on the speed of their reaction to events. It is, after all, only some two years since the Carter Administration launched its campaign against Jewish settlement, wielding the spurious argument that it contravenes international law.

Washington has disseminated this charge purposefully and systematically, by every possible medium and on every possible occasion. It is fair to say that the American public has been subjected to a comprehensive course of brainwashing. The leaders of the Jewish organizations, alert to the welfare of Israel, could surely not have failed to grasp the damage done to her image by the almost daily assertion by the Administration (and by the majority of the media) that the Israeli government was engaged in activity which is illegal. And how far is “illegal” from “criminal”?

During these two years, the voices of some distinguished Americans, non-Jewish and Jewish — including authorities on international law — were raised to explain how and why there is no legal ground for restricting the right of Jews to live anywhere in Western Palestine.

Israel’s UN Ambassadors — Herzog and his successor, Blum — gave dignified and detailed statements of Israel’s case. But the Jewish organizations alone, with their nationwide network of branches and their information departments and their sophisticated public relations experts, had the strength to launch the massive response, the concentrated counter-attack, that could reach the public at large and provide the friends of Israel, Jewish and non-Jewish, with the reasoned reply to the Administration’s onslaught, exposing its abysmal absurdity. That response never came, and the denigration of Israel continues to hang like a dark cloud in the public American air.

Now, after two years, the titular leadership of the Jewish community echoes the bald announcement that Jewish settlement is legal. Why? Why

now? Why only now? Did Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael become “legal” only with the summer of 1979?

* * *

It would be wrong to lay the blame exclusively on the shoulders of the American Jewish leaders. They must indeed bear their share. But their failure on this subject is the symptom of an illness which has deeper roots. It is the consequence of the failure, since 1948 and more emphatically since 1967, of Israel — and of most of the American Jewish leaders of the period — to formulate and maintain an adequate, coherent policy of information on the very elementary subject of the relationship of the Jewish people to Palestine, and its inalienable rights there. The present blatant case only presents a powerful and particularly painful manifestation of that sickness.

It is not difficult to imagine the effect on the “average” American (not ill-disposed to Israel) who is told by his leaders, his newspaper and his television, that Israel is committing a terrible act by intruding Jewish settlements in “Arab lands” — an act which is “illegal” (as well as impeding “the peace process”). He hears it so frequently stated as a fact that it has by now no doubt become superfluous to add the word “illegal” to the words “Jewish settlement”.

It is not difficult to imagine the effect of this incessant propaganda even on some American *Jews*. It is understandable. But it is equally logical and understandable that friendly or neutral American can be persuaded of the *untruth* and the tendentiousness of the charge — provided it is explained to him reasonably.

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The task today is not so simple. Here the historic failure of Israel’s information service indeed is apparent. Years of indoctrination have softened the “average” American, made him receptive to the idea of this “illegality,” to the idea that Palestine is an Arab country belonging to a branch of the Arab nation known as Palestinians, who have lived (and, it is sometimes hinted, depending on the degree of assumed ignorance of the listener, somehow even ruled) in the country for 1,300 or 2,000 years, or even more.

Imagine, for example, the “average” American university student

subjected to a sustained, systematic campaign of such indoctrination by Arab fellow “students”. Imagine — and this is the horror of it — that against these myths, against this historic hoax, the Jewish students present no rational reply.

While Arab states and their agents were spending tens of millions of dollars every year disseminating their hoax (including, for example, the maintenance of students at universities round the country) the Israeli reply, where there was one (and much of the information provided by the Jewish communal organizations) did not counter the Arab lie.

The thrust of Arab propaganda has been “The Jews have robbed us of our homeland”. The dominant theme of Israeli *hasbara* was, “We want peace”. As a desire for peace does not nullify the charge that the Jews robbed the Arabs of their land, it is eminently conceivable that the combined effect on many unbiased Americans was that both might be right: that the Jews, having robbed the Arabs of their country, now want peace.

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Israeli governments manifestly did not recognize that what they were up against was not an Arab campaign for the rectification of borders, nor a bid for peace terms, but an all-out attack on the validity of the Jewish relationship to Palestine, and the legitimacy of the Jewish national presence there. The Arabs have studiously fabricated a mythology that turns the truth on its head. Disseminating their simple slogan, they even appropriated for their purpose the name Palestinian, which in the world’s consciousness related exclusively to the country of the Jews. (Even the primitive anti-Semites used to tell Jews to “go back to Palestine”).

The challenge which they succeeded in presenting to Israel and to the Jewish people was not “who wants peace?” but “To whom does Palestine belong?” The hair-raising fact is that, again with some exceptions, Israeli *hasbara* failed to meet the challenge.

The chagrin and despair engendered by this failure were the common experience of every intelligent well-wisher of Israel, and grew deeper and sharper in the years before 1977.

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The sin of the Likud has been greater than that of its predecessors. Its

leaders' perception of the dangers of the failure of *hasbara* were sharper; and Menahem Begin in opposition proclaimed the urgent need not only for a powerful organization for public education abroad but for a change in the content and thrust in the statement of the Israeli "case" — from apologetics to a bold exposure of the Arab hoax.

Begin, in his pre-election speeches, undertook to establish a separate ministry which would establish the necessary machinery and would enjoy the necessary authority to mount the "information offensive".

The Prime Minister reneged on this undertaking. The Foreign Ministry, in whose hands the information services remained, has neither the machinery nor the capacity to deal with this major task. And in all fairness, it has not really pretended that it is trying. What is worse, its ideological inspiration has not changed. On the contrary. The pale spirit of the Foreign Office which made possible the achievements of Arab propaganda before 1977 seems, after 1977, to have become paler still.

It was thus not unreasonable that the Foreign Office which failed to counter the mendacities of the Arabs on their rights to Palestine, failed equally to give a lead to the American Jewish leadership on countering the related charge that Jewish settlement is illegal.

Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan was last year given a golden opportunity by Barbara Walters to tell her nationwide television audience why Israel rejected the charge of illegality. Walters would hardly have prevented him from taking advantage of the occasion to supplement his answer with a statement of the security need, and the political truth, and the historic justice, in the restoration of Jewish life to Judea and Samaria. Instead Dayan did not answer her question at all. "We are not in a court of law," he said. "This is a political problem". Period.

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The American Jewish leaders can thus not take all the blame for their own failure. Yet too often, knowing the facts or being able to ascertain them, they seem to have sought the line of least resistance.

It is no doubt easier to criticize the Israel prime minister than to engage in a propaganda contest with the powerful American Establishment. The practical difficulties are truly formidable.

It is perhaps not always adequately realized in Israel to what extent respected and ostensibly independent media in the US present their public,

under the guise of objective comment, with no more than a slavish echo of State Department or White House briefings.

In a recent article in the “Washington Quarterly,” Professor William Lewis (formerly a State Department official) says bluntly that the US press has become an instrument in the hands of the government.

He describes the process whereby the political correspondent in Washington becomes a hostage in the hands of the Administration, and a mere channel for the legitimation of foreign policy. Prof. Lewis no more than confirms our experience. The orchestration of a large part of the media has been a glaring feature in the virulent campaign against Israel by the Administration.

The difficulties, however, far from justifying evasion of their duty by the American Jewish leadership, dictate a more determined effort to fulfill it, a more serious study of the problem, both of the structure of their information services and of their content.

To this end, it must realize firstly that what is at stake is not a “settlements policy”. The American strategy is simple. Preventing the erection of new settlements today would facilitate pressure for the removal of old settlements tomorrow — as a step to clearing Judea and Samaria of Jews, and towards the restriction of Israel to the pre-1967 lines.

Up to this point it is identical with the Arab purpose. Only the Arab strategy goes further. Eilon Moreh is “illegal” today, and the villages in the Jordan Valley have been “illegal” since yesterday. But Jewish life in Lod and Ramle and Acre has been illegal since the day before yesterday — and then we are back to the original “Zionist aggression” in Palestine.

There should, therefore, be no mistake. The present clash is but a link in a chain. It is not a clash over this or the other settlement. What is at stake is the future of Israel.

6.7.79

Of Foes and Friends

Ze'ev Jabotinsky's sense of irony would have been tickled at the list of recipients of the medal distributed in New York at the celebration of his centenary. Not all of them could be fairly described as sympathetic to his political philosophy. On the contrary, some of them could be more readily imagined as being most upset at the very idea of such identification.

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This apparent anomaly evoked no expressions of protest from those medallists who could themselves justifiably point to years of devotion to and labour for Jabotinsky's ideas. They were not affronted by the gift of the medal to people of other persuasions: after all, it was not presented for devotion to Jabotinsky. The only declared criteria were devotion and service to the Jewish State. Thus hard-nosed Labour Zionists and unreconstructed Revisionists basked together with devout Christians and Orthodox rabbis in a moment of shared *nachess*.

Most people in Israel would presumably be happy if every public figure in the US were adjudged deserving of such a medal. How good it would be if, for example, every candidate for the Senate were classified as pro-Israel. Yet what discomfiture would be caused by the results of the contest. In each of them a friend of Israel would be defeated. Such situations have of course arisen. In the recent election in New York not one but two friends of Israel were defeated, Jacob Javits and Elizabeth Holtzman; and the third candidate, Alphonse D'Amato is said to be equally alert to American interest in a strong Israel.

What can we in Israel do about such tragedies? Deny a medal to the winner for defeating the loser? In fact, we can do nothing. We wish all our friends well. We would like them all to win; and when medals of appreciation are distributed, they will be presented, we hope, without reference to the recipients' Zionist school — or to their special passions on taxation or abortion in the US.

It was consequently perhaps unfortunate that the Jabotinsky centennial celebration came hard on the heels of the elections in the US. Only the passions aroused in the campaign can explain, if not excuse, the distorted vision of those partisans who protested against the presentation of the Jabotinsky medal for service to Israel to people who worked in the election for the wrong side.

It would be salutary to ignore and quickly forget these outbursts if it were not that one of the vociferous protestors has introduced considerations of more permanent and deeper significance for Israel and, indeed, the Jewish people. He is Rabbi Alexander Schindler, and his special target has been Dr. Jerry Falwell, the Christian Evangelical leader, who entered the political arena on Ronald Reagan's behalf as leader of the "Moral Majority" movement.

Dr. Falwell has been active for years fostering friendly and cooperative relations between Christians and Jews; and he has been consistently doing battle in Israel's cause in a variety of channels well beyond the walls of his

church. He is one of those many Christians who believe that the Land of Israel is in fact the land of Israel. Their fervent Zionism is an evocation of their Christian belief.

In recent years many such Christians, growing more conscious of the dire implications of the worldwide campaign against Israel and Zionism, have sought practical means of coming to Israel's aid. It was Christian Zionists who rushed to demonstrate identification with Israel's sovereignty in her historic capital and set up the "Christian Embassy" in Jerusalem. It was Jerry Falwell who (with Edward McAteer, president of the Religious Roundtable and Paul Weyrich, president of the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress) hastened to call on President-elect Reagan to make good his undertakings to Israel by making appropriate appointments in the foreign affairs and defence fields.

But Falwell fell foul of Rabbi Schindler on issues which are demonstrably closer than Israel to Mr. Schindler's heart.

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The Moral Majority, who evidently mustered tremendous grass roots support throughout the US and played a serious role in Reagan's victory, represent an upsurge of resistance to many of the recent tendencies in American life which, they claim, were encouraged by the Carter regime. Among them are permissive attitudes on abortion and pornography, abandonment of allies abroad, inaction against international terrorism and Communism. Dr. Schindler and many other people, however, have opposed the Moral Majority.

The quarrel need be of no more than academic interest to Israel. We have no lack of passionate disagreements on moral and religious issues. It would be the height of impertinence for Israelis to interfere in American controversies, as it would be for Americans to drag us into them. This, however, is precisely what Dr. Schindler has been trying to achieve. He would like Israel — and the Jews of the US — to disavow or to boycott Dr. Falwell in order to help him fight Falwell's views on American society. To this end, he has tried to introduce a Jewish and Israeli element into his quarrel.

It was no coincidence, he said (to a board meeting of the Reform congregations in San Francisco in November) that "the rise of right-wing Christian fundamentalism has been accompanied by the most serious outbreak of anti-Semitism in America since World War II... I do not

accuse Jerry Falwell and Bailey Smith of deliberately inciting anti-Semitism. But I do say that their preachments have an inevitable effect”.

The diatribe was greeted by outraged protest not only from Falwell but from a broad spectrum of Jewish public figures, secular and religious. Schindler was sharply rebuked, among others, by the director of the Anti-Defamation League, Nathan Perlmutter; and Rabbi Abraham Hecht, president of the Rabbinical Alliance of America, dubbed Schindler’s charge “scurrilous and inane”. He described the Christian leaders as “men of integrity, sharing many traditional beliefs of the Jewish people... values which have long ago been rejected out of hand by Schindler and his ilk...”

* * *

Rabbi Schindler did not stop there. He attacked the foundations of Christian Zionism. In San Francisco and again in a harangue over Kol Yisrael, he asserted that the fundamentalists’ support for Israel was not based on respect for Jews. “Dr. Falwell,” he cried, “wants all the Jews to be regathered in the biblical homeland and to turn us all into Christians. He wants to frighten us”. This somewhat hysterical outpouring evoked the facetious comments it deserved. One unkind Reform Rabbi suggested that what frightened Schindler was that the ingathering of all the Jews would require his, Schindler’s, “making aliya”.

Even the inanities of public men, however, have limited permissibility. Rabbi Schindler in San Francisco revealed the motive for his effort to mobilize Jewish support against the fundamentalists. He went on to make a proposal which demonstrated a chilling indifference to Israel’s future.

In denouncing Jewish “flirtation” with the school of Christian thought passionately manning the ramparts of defence of Israel, he urged a coalition with the Christian movement manning the ramparts of hostility to Israel — the National Council of Churches, which has long been an active partner in the anti-Israel campaign in the US. To Dr. Schindler, the ominous gulf between the NCC and the welfare of Israel are merely “ideological differences” which should be ignored. The really important issues lay elsewhere. “We must work with them,” he said “on free choice of abortion, on gun control, on strategic arms limitation”.

Early in November the NCC had capped its traditional anti-Israel and pro-Arab stance by a statement that echoed, no less, the resolutions of the European Economic Community in Venice last June — negotiations with the PLO, a Palestinian state, “guarantees,” the now familiar incantation of

formulations whose realization would expose Israel to the Arab plan for this country's destruction. The statement was sharpened moreover by a sarcastic and malicious parallel drawn between the State of Israel and the Arab terrorists. A fortnight later Alexander Schindler issued his call for a "coalition of decency" with the authors of that statement.

It is indubitably Dr. Schindler's democratic right to propose boycotting Israel's embattled friends and strengthening her enemies. It is to be hoped that his colleagues in the Reform Movement will exercise their equally democratic right and accord his perverse proposals the contumely they deserve.

9.1.81

A Shameful Episode

Having imbibed democracy with their mother's milk and being surrounded all their lives by so many phenomena related to the democratic election process, it is noteworthy that US Jews have so far not produced a popularly elected communal leadership.

It could be argued that, not being a political entity, it has no need for a national leadership. The fact is, however, that for good and obvious reasons, problems have developed which require a representative body to act at times for the community as a whole. Indeed, there is a body which performs this function: the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

The present chairman of this body, who thus wears the mantle of spokesman of the Jewish community, is Mr. Howard Squadron. How many Jews in the US know how he looks and how much he sweats when on television; how confident, how cool he is? How many Jews in the US were involved in his election, even indirectly? How many people know what he thinks on any particular Jewish issue? Which ordinary citizen ever had a chance to ask him?

Mr. Squadron may be a most excellent person, imbued with all the virtues of leadership and love of the Jewish people. Indeed, I have friends in the US who tell me they have heard that Mr. Squadron — and they assume we are talking about the same Mr. Squadron — is a very intelligent man with courage and a "Jewish heart".

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This may well be so, and in the past there have certainly been such leaders in the community; there have been others who lacked these virtues. From the viewpoint of what has become their most active and most important function — the sophisticated projection of concern for an embattled Jewish State and the protection of the common interest of Israel and the US — their record has been patchy.

It could hardly be otherwise. The chairman is elected by the presidents of the 36 organizations represented in the “conference”. Except for perhaps half-a-dozen of them, they were elected by their organizations not because of their special knowledge of national Jewish questions or of the problems of Israel or because of their views on American-Israeli relations.

Yet this body could, at any given moment, speak for the Jewish community and influence US policy on crucial issues affecting, for example, Israel’s basic security; on, for example, the question of whether the US should place highly dangerous weapons in the hands of a nation like Saudi Arabia, whose only evident use for them is for attacking Israel with a view to her destruction.

From the point of view of sheer democracy, this is not at all satisfactory. Many dedicated Jews in the US, especially of the younger generation, are unhappy about it. Yet, as long as there are not enough of them who will go out and campaign for reform (no easy matter), one must be content with the measure of representation afforded by the Presidents’ Conference.

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It is certainly understandable in the circumstances that the US president should turn to the Presidents’ Conference when he wishes formally to consult with the Jewish community, or to be given an idea of the views prevailing in the community.

What is completely unacceptable is that the president — or his advisers or anybody else — should decide who represents the Jewish community. It is most disturbing that a group of Jewish citizens, in effect handpicked for their personal support for him, should have their views quoted by the administration as representing the attitude of the Jewish community, or even of a significant part of it.

This was evidently the purpose of the meeting last week between President Ronald Reagan and a group of Jews active in the Republican Party. The report of the meeting by Wolf Blitzer in *The Jerusalem Post* (March 13) reflects little credit on the president or his advisers, and even less on the Jewish participants.

They did, indeed, prepare a statement expressing opposition to the administration's intention to supply Saudi Arabia with advanced equipment of lethal import to Israel; but at the end of the meeting it was made to appear that they were not, after all, seriously disturbed.

Their statement was drafted after long discussion over the opposition of Mr. Max Fisher, an established conduit between the Jewish Community and Republican administrations. Yet it was him they asked to read out to the president the carefully and cautiously weighed document. Whereupon, as he read it, he made "corrections" in the text to water it down so that the president was told just about what he wanted to hear.

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The group could be in no doubt about the significance of their behaviour. They had been warned in advance by Senator Rudy Boschwitz, himself a Republican and, moreover, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations sub-committee on the Middle East, that if they did not protest to the president against the sale "the administration would exploit the Jewish silence during its congressional lobbying efforts".

After his performance in the White House, Mr. Fisher went on to mislead newsmen. He "refused," reports Blitzer, "to say that the delegation had opposed the F- 15 sale". Nor was this all. A leading member of the delegation, Mr. Gordon Zacks, evidently distressed by the Saudi deal but obviously more distressed at the prospect of becoming unpopular with the White House, joined Fisher to tell the newsmen that now "we were reassured and are comfortable that the strategic balance will be maintained and that Israel... will emerge stronger than she is going in".

In short, the administration, intent on pushing the deal through Congress, is now probably flourishing Mr. Fisher's text and Mr. Zacks' "comfortable" submissiveness as evidence of "Jewish support" of the sale.

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This shameful episode imposes a special responsibility on the Presidents' Conference — which was ignored by Mr. Reagan.

Mr. Squadron is reported to have sent a letter to the White House protesting the sale. But the gravity of its implications and of Mr. Reagan's treatment of them demands much more effective action. Jewish leaders in America must note the haste with which this new administration rushed to

accede to the Saudis' outrageous wishes, going beyond even the policy of the Carter regime.

They must note that, in spite of a much heightened perception of the realities of the Soviet threat, the administration remains myopic on the realities of Middle Eastern defence (with the pretence that Saudi Arabia can or will deter the Soviets). They must take note of the attempt to neutralize the Jewish community. Unexpectedly, they are faced by a severe challenge.

But they have on their side in this case a powerful counterforce. There can be little doubt that their constituency, the Jewish community, is overwhelmingly opposed to the Saudi deal, and it is obvious that the opposition is shared by a very large segment, perhaps a majority, in the Senate and the population at large — for good overall American reasons.

The Presidents' Conference should, therefore, at once involve the Jewish community in a campaign against the Saudi deal. Letters to the president are not enough. The claim of Mr. Squadron and his colleagues to speak for the Jewish community can be made good in this case only by the voice of the community itself being heard loud and clear, from all corners of the country.

At stake, in the final analysis, are very grave issues — for Israel's future, for the Jews of America and, indeed, for the credibility of the American posture in the global confrontation.

20.3.81

Conflicts Within

“Peace Now” — and After Us the Deluge?

Whoever promises “peace now” is laying down very specific conditions. He demands acceptance, in fact, of the conditions proposed by the Arabs — Israel’s withdrawal to the Armistice Lines of 1949, perhaps with insignificant adjustments.

Whoever promises “peace now” must understand that now he will “receive” peace in territorial conditions impossible from the point of view of Israel’s minimal security. He will certainly understand that if a war breaks out in the circumstances of 4 June 1967, defeat in one battle will be sufficient to cut the country clean through at its waist; and as there will not be adequate air space for the air force to gain essential height within the boundaries or even for rational manoeuvre by the armoured force, the Israeli government will be compelled, the moment the threat of Arab aggression appears on the horizon, to apply the inevitable military doctrine of pre-emptive action. At that moment Israel will be in the position of “Yom Kippur Eve” not along the Suez Canal, but in the Netanya—Bat Yam area.

As long as no war breaks out the Israeli citizen will be called upon to ensure the security of his family by fulfilling his Reserve duty in the Army — just as he does now. He will be able to comfort himself only with the fact that the front will now be much closer to his home. Moreover, establishing Israel’s border according to the prescription of “peace now” will expose the nation to a perpetual war of attrition. The enemy will not have to invade across one front or another, but will achieve his object by artillery fire or by having missiles launched at will. (This will be done by his “irregular” forces, for which no Arab government accepts responsibility.)

Do we remember the living conditions of the villages on the Syrian border before the Six-Day War? Doing service today in the army or even in the Reserves are many of the youngsters who spent most of their childhood in underground shelters because of the threat of Syrian shelling. “Peace now” will ensure Israel’s exposure to the danger that those children’s children will have to adapt themselves to similar conditions. There is small comfort in the fact that now their ordeal would be shared by the children in the centre of the country.

Among those who are calling for “peace now” are some who have not even tried to weigh the implications of their slogan. There are others who pretend, or have persuaded themselves, that they are proposing something other than a withdrawal to the lines of 4 June 1967, that they are also aiming at “security borders”. They should wake up to the simple fact that if they are not prepared to talk about withdrawing to the Armistice Lines, nobody will “give” them peace now. Are they deaf to the voices, do they really not read what is being written day after day, both in Washington and Cairo (not to mention the capitals of the “extreme” Arab States): total Israeli withdrawal to the lines of 4 June 1967?

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We are not concerned with theories, but with realities, however unpleasant they may be. Here before our eyes is our experience of these past four months. The Israeli government volunteered a proposal to return to Egyptian control the whole of the Sinai peninsula, and to recognize Egyptian sovereignty over it, and wished to retain only two areas of comparatively tiny dimensions but of first-rate strategic importance to Israel’s security. One of them ensures control of the southern approaches of the country (whose closure played a large part in two wars against her in the past). Without them the country is deprived of a rational air defence. This problem becomes most critical in view of the gathering danger in the south with the development of Saudi Arabian military potential, including the building of a sophisticated air-base at Tobuk — equipped, *inter alia*, with Hawk missiles — in the approaches to Eilat.

The second area ensures minimal security at the Rafiah border. Altogether these zones comprise some two percent of the total area of Sinai. They are of no security importance to Egypt, unless she is interested in ensuring a measure of impotence for the Israeli defence. These areas were indeed earmarked by the Alignment government as the very minimum to be retained by Israel if in a peace treaty the control of Sinai were returned to Egypt. That is why the Alignment government built two airfields in these areas, and that is why it decided to introduce settlers into the Rafiah salient and to found the town of Yamit.

How very minimal this security assessment is may be judged from the opinion expressed by the American strategist and former chief of the US Navy, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt Jr. He reveals that half of Israel’s air-bases and a considerable part of her military equipment are located in Sinai. A

complete withdrawal from Sinai, says Zumwalt, will expose her to grave military risks. The defence of Israel as a whole is very dependent on these open spaces of Sinai. These give her pilots and her land forces considerable room for manoeuvre. If she is compelled to withdraw her forces she will be faced with the problem of concentrating a large military force in a small area.

“The more this force is confined” writes Zumwalt “the greater the likelihood that Israel will be the target for a surprise attack by the extreme Arab States”. (Ha’aretz 7.4.78).

* * *

Sadat knows, after all, that as long as the Sinai .desert was under the Egyptians’ control they made no use of it except as a jumping-off ground for war on Israel and indeed — as they declared — for her destruction. Sadat knows that there has never been an agreement between Egypt and Israel which the Egyptians did not break — whenever it became desirable and convenient for them to do so, beginning with the days of King Farouk, through the rule of Nasser and then, in most dramatic fashion in 1970, when he himself moved his SAM-6 missiles down to the Suez Canal within twelve hours of signing the cease-fire and standstill agreement.

Sadat knows that Egypt never proclaimed sovereignty over Sinai. He knows that Israel has an absolute right, in any peace negotiations, to demand territorial changes essential to her security. He knows therefore how great is the concession offered by Israel (which holds the territory as a result of repulsing the Egyptian aggressor) when its government proposes (and who knows better than he that the initiative was entirely Israel’s) to recognize Egyptian sovereignty over all of Sinai and to retain within that sovereignty only the tiny area required by her minimal security. He knows what the significance is of Israel’s having given him 98% of his demands.

Sadat’s passion for peace with Israel is so strong, however, the change that has taken place in his soul is so real, his desire for a solution so powerful, that he finds he must repeat precisely the demands that he has been making all these years: “Israel must withdraw from all the territories she captured in 1967”. It is all holy territory and he will not give up one square centimetre of it. As for Israel’s security — Anwar Sadat will guarantee it, “believe me”.

On condition that Israel gives in to all his demands in full Sadat may possibly be prepared to grant “peace now” (and we have not yet come to

Assad, nor to Hussein, nor to Iraq, and to Lybia and to the agents of all of them, the PLO). This is not theory. This is the reality reflected by our experience during the four months since Begin's initiative (generally called the Sadat initiative).

As for the Americans, they identify almost entirely with the Arabs' demands. They do speak — and have always spoken — of minor “insubstantial” territorial adjustments. How insubstantial may be gauged from the idea propounded a few days ago by the President of the US that the adjustment should be made by expanding Israel “between Netanya and Kalkilieh”. The total distance between Netanya and Kalkilieh is 15 kilometres, and of this 13 kilometres is in any case part of Israel. The facetious spirit behind this “idea” may be judged from the agonized remark made by Mark Siegel, the man who recently resigned from his post at the White House in protest at the Administration's policy towards Israel. “They are not talking of kilometres” he said “but of metres”. (Jerusalem Post, 31 March).

* * *

The citizens of Israel and among them those who are calling for “peace now” must understand that in regard to Israel the United States' toeing of the Arab line has become much more pronounced in the Carter administration. Carter has laid down as a primary element the need to “coordinate policies” with Saudi Arabia in order to avoid difficulties over oil supplies. Friendship with Saudi Arabia has become the cornerstone of American policy not only in the Middle East but in the stormy waters of the African continent. We dare not delude ourselves that in its attitude to the Middle East Washington concerns itself particularly with the details of Israel's security requirements.

Mark Siegel employed understatement in defining that policy: “They are not so sensitive to the fact that the “Green Line” doesn't really afford security”. They do indeed hope that Israel will “somehow get by” — but in the final analysis Washington dances most of the time to the tune of Riad; and Riad wants — and demands forcefully and with complete assurance that she will get what she wants — total withdrawal of Israel “from all the territories” including Jerusalem — at this stage.

* * *

The “Peace Now” demonstration can be regarded as a demonstration of solidarity with the demands of the Arabs and with the American pressure to give in to them. That in fact is how it is being interpreted. Sadat has welcomed it. The hostile media in the US are rejoicing. The BBC has been doing its best to ascribe a “representative” character to the demonstration. Its only certain effect can therefore be to encourage the Arabs in their belief that they have an ally within Israel, and the Americans to intensify their pressure on Israel — diplomatically and by many-pronged propaganda, to supplement with more concessions the far-reaching concessions she has already offered.

Was this the intention of the organizers of the demonstration?

Ma’ariv 7.4.78

Not Always Are the Fools Protected

One of the most famous debating societies in Britain in the thirties was the Oxford Union. The students at the prestigious Oxford and Cambridge Universities represented the elite and even the nobility in British Society. Oxford and Cambridge served as political hothouses particularly for the bourgeois parties — the Conservative and the Liberal — and they provided the cream of the British officer class. In those years however British political thought was going through a phase of flabbiness, which was paralleled by a wave of “salon radical leftism” which swept precisely through these universities. It thus happened that in a debate in 1933 the Oxford Union students adopted, by majority vote, a brief and pointed resolution: “That this House refuses to fight for King and country”.

This resolution was accorded world-wide publicity and was received with a sense of shock both at home and abroad. At that time nobody threatened Britain’s security and peace. Only a few already grasped the ominous significance of the rise of the Nazis to power in Germany at the beginning of that year 1933. The Oxford debate was consequently of purely theoretical import.

Precisely the special social status of these students, however, invested the resolution with tremendous importance in the minds of the predators lurking for prey on the continent of Europe. It contributed to the shaping

and the strengthening of the view of Mussolini and Hitler that Britain was a “decadent democracy”. It played a part two years later in Mussolini’s calculations when he came to the conclusion that Britain would not interfere with his aggression against Abyssinia; and it reinforced Hitler’s belief that Britain would take no action against his moves towards the domination of Europe.

As Winston Churchill wrote in his memoirs of the Second World War: “Little did the foolish boys who passed the resolution dream that they were destined quite soon to conquer or fall gloriously in the coming war, and prove themselves the finest generation ever bred in Britain”.

* * *

It is not surprising that the organizers of the propaganda campaign against Israel in the United States (and elsewhere) pounced on the signature of “three hundred Reserve officers” as a great prize. To judge by the descriptions abroad, and the tendentious commentaries accompanying them, one might have thought that a veritable mutiny was developing in the Israel Army. Those responsible for the campaign, and especially the Administration in Washington, have no illusions about the real strength of the “Peace Now” movement. They know that for all the noise it makes the movement represents a marginal minority. They know that if elections were held in Israel today declared representatives of the movement would obtain about as many votes as candidates with their views received in previous elections. They know that, apart from professionals, a considerable part of those backing the movement, and who sign declarations of identification and advertisements of support, are the regular reserve army of all the “peace now” movements we have had from Brit Shalom onwards. Their legs have gone weak from organizing such petitions, they have gone grey in the process of signing them, and only the periodic change in the name of the organization serves them as a cosmetic reminder of the days of their youth.

But from the point of view of the American administration, and those who consciously or otherwise serve its purposes, there is one central consideration: if this movement can be presented as possessing public and political significance in the State of Israel, it can be used to legitimize the offensive against Israel conducted by the administration itself and by the media. If reserve officers in Israel, with an excellent record of army service (and nobody doubts their loyalty and their speedy response should the

need once more arise), and if respected professors and other respected citizens, have suddenly as though for the first time — raised their voices to scream the lie that it is the Government of Israel which is holding up the coming of peace (and thus acquit the Arabs of guilt), it will be impossible to describe as illegitimate the same attitude when expressed by Washington and by the media throughout the length and breadth of the United States — even if expressed in abusive, impertinent and humiliating terms. Then every public figure and every hesitant legislator who has hitherto restrained himself for fear of offending his constituents, will find his voice.

Thus a certificate of legitimacy is given to all the fawning Jews, the leftists, the anti-Zionists, the haters of Israel, to all the fence-sitters and the toadies, to claim that their support for the administration in its pressures on Israel does not mean that they are denying Israel, nor forsaking her, nor weakening in their sympathy for her. On the contrary: they are helping to save Israel from herself (or from her intransigent, uncompromising leaders, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera).

* * *

A number of questions arise inevitably as to the motives of “Peace Now”. Among its supporters there are undoubtedly some, maybe many, innocent of heart, who have no political motives apart from their longing for peace and whose political grasp is limited — like the demonstrator that explained to a reporter that he was prepared to give up “everything” — except “of course” Jerusalem — and he thinks he is talking of peace. Have these people asked themselves why the initiators of the movement insisted that the signers of the first letter must be army officers and to emphasize their relationship and their importance to the army? Is it not obvious that the original purpose was in fact to create the desired impression abroad, to demonstrate identification “with them” out there, with those who are pressing out there — whatever their motives may be?

Have these innocents considered the question of the sources of the funds for an operation so comprehensive, and so orchestrated, as was mounted after that first letter. The daily “Davar” published information on this matter: that people from the “New Outlook”, which is financed by an American named Sam Rubin, were involved in organizing the Movement. Sam Rubin, a millionaire dedicated to leftist causes, recently came into the news as working behind the scenes for various groups in the United States operating — in various guises — against Zionism, against Israel and

propagating the establishment of a Palestinian State (democratic no doubt, and of course secular).

* * *

The “Peace Now” movement must not be taken lightly. At the moment it is being well used to promote the vigorous campaign of anti-Israel propaganda in progress abroad. There is no comfort in the knowledge that if the movement’s desires were fulfilled and then, as a result of the withdrawals for which its members are longing, Israel were forced to defend herself in circumstances far grimmer than any we have known hitherto, the signers of the petitions would be forced to endure the experience of the Oxford innocents of 1933 who, in 1939, became heroes in spite of themselves.

Ma’ariv 4.5.78

Peace Now Ideology

The Samuel Rubin Foundation was once a major contributor to the UJA in the US. Subsequently, Mr. Rubin transferred his support — in millions of dollars — to radical left, anti-democratic, anti-West, anti-Israel organizations. One of these was the Institute for Policy Studies, among whose leading lights were Paul Jacobs and Arthur Waskow. When *Breira* was formed, the Samuel Rubin Foundation became its chief source of funds.

Israeli journalist Nahum Barnea, of “Davar,” reported in April 1978 that this amiable donor was now supplying funds to the Peace Now movement.

When *Breira*, its duplicity exposed, collapsed as a viable organization, its activists’ zeal for Israel’s downfall did not abate. They continued to seek means of weakening her, especially by breaking down American support.

Peace Now then came on the scene. Its style could well have been modelled on *Breira*. It began with a letter by a group which described itself as 300 Army Reservists, who hinted at future refusal to do their duty unless the government satisfied them with its policy on Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

In Israel, where practically every male is an army reservist and the officers number many, many thousands, this meant simply that 300 citizens thought Israel should withdraw from these areas. But eagerly anti-Israel-oriented media abroad (for whose benefit obviously the 300 had paraded their military titles) pounced on this manna from Heaven. The story was so presented that many people in the US (and elsewhere) began to believe that the Israeli Army was crumbling.

After one of its first demonstrations, a leader of Peace Now, Tsali Reshef, declared that if the government did not respond positively within a few weeks to the “guiding questions” of the US, “...we shall not remain silent, but shall force the government to change its policy... If the government does not show readiness for a territorial compromise... and agree to enable Palestinian participation in determining their future, we shall cease being good-boys-in-white-shirts. We shall sharpen the struggle in more extreme demonstrations”. (May 21, 1978).

Beyond its bombast, the message was clear: unless the government, elected by a democratic majority in the elections of 1977, adopted the policy of the defeated minority favoured by Mr. Reshef, this self-appointed group, amply financed from sources it would not disclose, intended to force its will upon the government.

The keen sense of the Breira experts in the US undoubtedly caught at once the heady antidemocratic flavour. They also undoubtedly noted the Peace Now spokesmen’s deviousness in evading questions as to what exactly they proposed — apart from a mindless incantation of the magic word “peace” and the accompanying refrain of arrogant damning of the government for not bringing peace fast enough.

Mr. Dedi Zucker indeed told *Jerusalem Post* reporter Benny Morris that Peace Now was maintaining a “politic vagueness” about what it would like to see done with “the West Bank and the Gaza Strip”. This, he said, “assures us of as wide as possible a base of support”.

Other spokesmen were evidently embarrassed by the implication that they were merely performing an exercise in demagoguery with the word “peace”. From the formulations they ventured to offer Mr. Morris, it is clear that what they had in mind was a total withdrawal by Israel to the pre-1967 lines (*The Jerusalem Post*, July 27, 1979).

* * *

There is no mystery behind the sympathy shown for Peace Now by

some well-known Alignment figures. A fascinating, if disturbing phenomenon in Israeli politics since 1977 has been the incapacity of some of the Alignment leaders to accept with dignity the status, not dishonourable in democratic society, of a parliamentary opposition. Time and again they have forgotten themselves so far as to suggest the government had no right not to implement Alignment policy. Now a popular movement appears, without electoral pretensions, but fighting the government with verve, indeed with arrogance, even intimidation: Obviously an invaluable auxiliary for an Alignment Restoration. In their joy, they did not trouble to examine its motivations, or its dubious sponsors. Alone among them, Yigal Allon voiced his fears of its dangerous potential.

In May 1978, Peace Now dissociated itself from an anti-Begin “Peace Now” demonstration in Los Angeles. It asserted that Israelis should conduct their political struggle only in Israel. It was presumably then too soon to open the campaign for the Peace Now’s central objective in the US. This moment evidently arrived a year later. A fund-raising emissary — Shulamit Koenig — was sent in spring 1979, and now, in the fall, a four man propaganda team.

To flavour the full range of Peace Now “ideology” (not disclosed in Israel) it is enough to summarize the statements made in the US by Mrs. Koenig and her colleagues.

In a letter to *The Jerusalem Post*, a Mr. Murray Peshkin, of Elmhurst, Illinois, who observed them in the Chicago area, writes that “they are urging American Jews to stop our economic and political support of Israel as a way of pressing the Begin Government to change some of its policies... They are asking the American Jews to enforce the policies of their political minority in Israel for them... When they come to the American Jews for support and understanding why do they invite a bunch of PLO propagandists into that particular conversation? They have now given the PLO a forum which it was never able to acquire on its own...”

As for what those policies are, the most recent report of Shulamit Koenig’s activity (in a letter to “Ma’ariv” from two Israelis temporarily in America, Steve Plaut and Dalia Buzin) shows that there is no difference in essence between the Peace Now themes and those of the American anti-Israel crusaders.

In an address at Oberlin University on December 5, Mrs. Koenig declared Israel could be compared to South Africa. It was, she said, as ridiculous to demand that the PLO abandon the Palestinian Covenant (for the destruction of Israel) as it would be to demand that Prime Minister

Begin abandon the Bible. After coming to the negotiating table, the PLO (which has been getting more and more moderate while Israel persists in her intransigence) would recognize Israel's existence. True, the PLO are murderers, but they are also freedom fighters. Israel's attacks on Lebanon are no less acts of terror than PLO attacks on Israeli civilians. Israel is not a democratic state, but is ruled by a rightist regime which came to power only through the support of rightist groups in the United States.

Finally, Mrs. Koenig asserted, Israel is so strong that she needs no aid from the United States; hence, also she has nothing to fear from a PLO state. ("Ma'ariv," December 19).

Thus the authentic voice of Peace Now in the United States. Nobody, however, need have been surprised. Already six months ago, fundraising Mrs. Koenig, presumably to prove her credentials to the supporters and prospective supporters, showed that Peace Now is prepared to sow doubts even about Israel's very legitimacy.

In a television discussion on the Public Broadcasting Service on June 8, 1979, she appeared together with Hassan Abdul Rahman, PLO director of information in the US, and Mr. David Bar Illan, the concert pianist, a brilliant exponent of Zionism. Throughout the discussion, she was ranged consistently on the side of Rahman. There she said (according to the official transcript):

"It's very easy for Mr. Bar Ilan to sit in New York now for 20 years and send my three sons to fight unjust wars".

The autobiographical claim is about as true as Mrs. Koenig's political facts; she has indeed three sons, but two of them are too young to have fought any wars at all (and, we hope, will not have to).

* * *

In the face of the worldwide coalition of forces engaged in trying to achieve the reduction of Israel, it is clear on which side Peace Now is to be found.

21.12.79

Heir to Breira?

Arieh Rubinstein performed a service to public hygiene in analyzing (*Jerusalem Post*, January 4) the outrageous rejoinder by a Quaker official to the documented information in my article “Quaker Enemy”. If Mr. Rubinstein, or anybody else, would take the trouble similarly to analyze the articles by Janet Aviad and Leon Sheleff published in *The Jerusalem Post* of December 28 (and by Omri Padan in “Ma’ariv” December 25) he will discover distressingly similar characteristics in the method of reply of these apologists for Peace Now.

None of them deals with the central and grave issues I raised. Instead, just like Mr. Sullivan, they abuse me. Consequently, their articles can only deepen the concern aroused by the activities of Peace Now.

Ms. Aviad evidently does not know what “guilt by association” means. She charges me with having made a “false identification of Peace Now with Breira”. I did nothing of the sort. Some very live people who were in Breira (before it collapsed through exposure as a two-faced anti-Israel organization) *identified themselves* with Peace Now in an advertisement in Israeli newspapers. Among those who signed that ad, were known ill-wishers of Israel, from whose pronouncements I quoted.

Peace Now did not repudiate them, *and thus accepted their identification*, even though their inclusion in the list of signers as American Jews who had always been concerned for Israel’s security represented a fraud on the Israeli public.

More serious: none of the authors of the articles (in the *Jerusalem Post* and “Ma’ariv”) have a word to say about the information (first published in “Davar” many months ago by Nahum Barnea) that Peace Now had received Sam Rubin money.

Political organizations have to be very careful about the sources from which they accept money. If Peace Now accepts funds from pronounced enemies of Israel (and does not even try to offer an explanation) this is not “guilt by association;” this is “guilt”. Period. The very relevant, inevitable question that arises consequently hangs even more obtrusively over Peace Now *after* the articles of its defenders. What is there in Peace Now, or what arguments were used, to induce highly motivated anti-Israel activists, to give it their support, moral or financial?

* * *

From the article of Ms. Aviad (and that of Omri Padan in “Ma’ariv”) and the documented statements of Peace Now representatives, a composite picture emerges which suggests an obvious reply to that question. The key to it is in the astonishing announcement now made by both Ms. Aviad and Mr. Padan that Peace Now “has no connections with Shulamit Koenig and bears no responsibility for her words or action”.

This is impertinent obfuscation. Mrs. Koenig appeared last June 8 on a national television programme in the US — the prestigious McNeil-Lehrer Report. Only people with authentic credentials are invited to take part in such programmes. I quoted from the official transcript of that programme. Mrs. Koenig was introduced by Mr. Lehrer — to probably tens of millions of American viewers — as an “official of the Peace Now group in the United States now on a fund-raising trip”. Mrs. Koenig then made a vicious attack on the State of Israel which, *inter alia*, had “done terrible things to the Arabs” and in whose “unjust wars” her own three sons had had to fight.

Peace Now did not repudiate her. Six months later, two people, much disturbed by a lecture by Mrs. Koenig at Oberlin University, wrote a detailed report of her speech in letters to “Ma’ariv” and *The Jerusalem Post*. It was a horrendous onslaught on our people, worthy of our enemies, and delivered, again, in the name of Peace Now. For six months then, Mrs. Koenig was evidently disseminating historic lies about Israel and explaining to the American public that these were the views of Peace Now, the views then of all those crowds of Israelis whom they had seen on their television screens at Peace Now demonstrations. The Waskows, the Stones, the Smucks and the Rubins could, after such speeches and such publicity, honestly congratulate themselves on having made a good investment for their cause in supporting Peace Now.

* * *

Now, after more than six months of a virulently anti-Israel campaign in their name, failing to repudiate her, failing to warn the US media and organizations against her, and failing to warn people that, as they now ask us to believe, it was under false pretences that she was asking for money, only now, after Mrs. Koenig’s activities have been reported in the press in Israel — now the Peace Now leaders suddenly discover that she does not represent them.

Mr. Padan, in his “Ma’ariv” article, even waxes childishly sarcastic over

the fact that Peace Now has had no money from her. Is it mere moral obtuseness that shields Aviad and Padan from grasping the elementary fact that Peace Now is responsible for all these months of Mrs. Koenig's undermining of Israel in its name?

Moreover, even now we have yet to hear of any disavowal by Peace Now in the United States — the scene of the misdemeanours with which they charge her and of the people who fell victim to them in consequence.

These are facts damning enough for any organization — and that is if we believe their belated disavowal. Their evasions deepen the doubts of their credibility. Indeed, the indisputable evidence suggests a much more likely set of circumstances. After all, Peace Now did not disavow Mrs. Koenig until after it became clear to them that, as Mr. Padan has revealed, they were not getting any money from her, and indeed, after she and they had come under public attack. Only then did they wash their hands of her; and even then not in a clear public statement — but covered up in an infantile attack on me for having brought her activities on their behalf to public notice in Israel.

* * *

The chain of testimony on the role of Peace Now in the United States does not end there. Mr. Padan, as the official spokesman of Peace Now, confirms in his article the credentials of the four propagandists who have been appearing in various American centres. Newspaper reports have indicated the kind of “ideological” fare they have provided for their audiences. There is no space here to deal with that entertaining subject. It is enough here to mention one example, reported in the “New York Times” (November 18) from Montreal: “The only precondition to talks with the PLO is an end to terror,” said Mr. Gary Brenner, identified by the “Times” as one of the four Peace Now representatives. “Recognition of Israel will come as part of the peace process”. Nothing more has been asked for by the best friends of the PLO.

What is more relevant to the issue is the anguished communication of Mr. Murray Peshkin in *The Jerusalem Post* of December 13, about the proclamations of the accredited four spokesmen, “touring the US, ostensibly... to explain the Peace Now position”.

“Actually,” wrote Mr. Peshkin, “they are travelling round this country urging American Jews to stop our political and economic support of Israel as a way of pressuring the Begin government to change some of its

policies. They justify that request by telling us that they represent a small minority in Israel and cannot change their government's policies in any other way”.

Mr. Peshkin went on to say that these Peace Now spokesmen had organized public meetings in which they appeared as a panel, along with some Palestinians who are well-known locally as apologists for the PLO.

About this most disturbing letter, too, there comes not a peep from the so voluble defenders of Peace Now. How much more evidence — and Peace Now red herrings and prevarications and silences — does the public in Israel need in order to see that Peace Now has begun oddly to resemble the defunct Breira, in pursuing a central objective of that organization: of undermining support for Israel in America?

11.1.80

Football and the Fence Around the Torah

Many years ago there was current in Jerusalem an account of the conversation that took place in 1920 between Chief Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook and a delegation seeking his sanction for Shabbat football. The Rabbi asked for a description of the game and its rules. Having heard what it was all about, he puckered his brows and said: “There’s something I don’t grasp. You tell me that each of the teams has a goal. Why then do they have to struggle so hard to push the ball into the other side’s goal? Wouldn’t it be simpler to put the ball into their own goal?”

Chief Rabbi Kook did not succeed in bringing about a revolution in the rules of soccer, but, as was pointed out recently in *The Post* by Rabbis Morton Berman and Louis Rabinowitz, he did rule that football might be played on the Sabbath, provided there were no sale of tickets on that day.

There is no evidence that his ruling was welcomed with enthusiasm by other rabbis. Most of them probably reacted with horror, in the spirit of the rabbi of the Polish village in Agnon’s story, who went on so about the godless *halutzim* and their football that “you could be misled by his words into believing that nobody did anything in Eretz Yisrael except go round playing football, and especially on Shabbat”.

Rabbi Rabinowitz explained that Rabbi Kook’s ruling was undoubtedly

based on *the* ruling by the great 16th century authority, Rabbi Moshe Isserlis, whose amendments to the *Shulhan Arukh* are binding on Ashkenazim, and who laid it down that ball games are permissible on the Sabbath. Had Kook's ruling been adopted in the spirit as well as the letter, not only would we be able to read in Sunday morning's newspaper of the exploits of Yeshiva students on the amateur football field, but many other frictions in our communal life would surely have been alleviated.

This no doubt sounds bizarre today — but only because we have been conditioned by years of rabbinical failure to seek out new and more lenient interpretations of Halacha. As we see from our rabbis' flouting of the 400-year-old ruling of Isserlis they have even avoided applying lenient rulings already in existence. There have been exceptions, but even these have, by and large, been reactions to specific situations. There has not been a positive and comprehensive response by Orthodox authority to the miraculous resumption of Jewish statehood after 1,900 years.

* * *

Chief Rabbi Kook, one of the great personalities of the first half of the Mandatory period, did not live to see the rise of the state. It is safe to say that its advent would certainly have led his far-ranging, imaginative mind to examine systematically the validity of the criteria and proportions of Halachic interpretation in order to meet the revolutionary change in the life of our people.

This was indeed the thrust of the vision of a great layman, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, for the state he did not live to see. He expressed it in one memorable sentence. He himself, both in his life-style and in his philosophy, was utterly secular; but he evinced respect and, indeed, affection for the truly Orthodox.

This was not only because of his abiding weakness for people who stuck to the principles they professed. He was ever conscious of the fact that the miracle of Jewish survival emanated from the undying devotion of the people to its religion, and that the sense of nationhood itself, separated generation after generation from its habitat, owed its perpetuation to its being inextricably woven into the daily exercise of religious observance.

In an essay written in the '30s, he appealed to the Orthodox Zionists to bear in mind that the Jewish state, when it arose, would itself be the traditional "fence around the Torah". As a result, it would be possible to

ease many bonds and restrictions that had persisted, and even been tightened, in the alien Diaspora.

That this idea was not taboo or alien to Orthodox thought became clear after the establishment of the state. Rabbi Yehuda Leib Maimon was the leader of the Mizrahi Party and a member of the early governments of Israel. He was above all a devoted and outspoken exponent of the creed that there could be no true Zionism without religion, and no complete Jewishness without Zionism.

To him it was logical that with the return to Zion and the resumption of Jewish statehood, the norms of Jewish life as they had crystallized in the Diaspora, could not — and would not — be perpetuated automatically. Moreover, he foresaw the danger that a frozen adherence to non-viable regulations in daily life would lead to an increasing estrangement between Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

He therefore suggested the setting up of a Sanhedrin, which would survey the complete range of religious ordinances in the light of the establishment of a Jewish state in modern times, and make practical recommendations accordingly.

Perhaps if he had been 20 years younger he would have fought harder and longer for the idea. Unfortunately, he met with opposition on all sides. The reasons were not necessarily ideological: who, for example, would be eligible for membership of the Sanhedrin? No other religious leader took up the banner; the secular leaders all but ignored it; and the proposal lapsed.

* * *

Can there be any doubt but that if Rabbi Maimon's purpose had been fulfilled, the quality of life in Israel would have been much enhanced — especially because it signalled what would have been perceived as the pulsating, searching character of Judaism.

Inevitably, of course, in the first generation of reborn statehood, we have experienced a variety of Orthodox accommodations with the demands and the facilities of modern life — concessions which only the most unbending of the Orthodox have refused to accept. But these accommodations, instead of increasing secular respect, have often induced a certain contempt, because they did not result from the free intellectual initiative of religious leaders but were prompted by some immediate pragmatic consideration or compulsion.

For example, there is the odd case of permitted public transport on the Sabbath in Haifa: a holdover from Mandatory days sanctioned and supervised by a Municipal Council that has always included a religious member; but sanctioned in no other city.

Or take the anomalies and inequalities maintained because of competition among the religious political parties. A painful — and shameful — case in point is the recent debate on national service for women. The decision not to apply the law is the will of a small minority of the population and of the Knesset.

The law was originally passed when the government included religious members. Today's National Religious Party does not object to its own women members' serving in the army, let alone in the other branches of national service envisaged in the law. Very many Orthodox girls serve in the army. Yet not only did the NRP give their full support to the Aguda in their opposition to the implementation of the law, but flaunted what can only be described as a spurious enthusiasm for that opposition.

True, both the Alignment (which refrained deliberately for 25 years from implementing the law) and the main parties in the Likud (which for 25 years adopted the contrary view) have been no less culpable; but they at least have not clothed their motive of naked expediency with a show of religious fervour.

The refusal of the Knesset to apply the law, in spite of its certain support by the vast majority of the people, legitimizes a system of discrimination between one citizen and another, makes a farce of ethical values, delivers a blow at public morale, and may endanger the security of the state. It also builds an additional barrier to rapprochement and understanding between Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

* * *

One should not, however, give up in despair. Maybe thoughtful people on both sides will try to find ways, even now, of a gradual approach towards cooperation.

As a beginning — at once symbolic and substantial — the Orthodox people in Jerusalem who are trying to prevent the building of the great sports stadium planned by Mayor Teddy Kollek at Shua'afat, might offer him a compromise. Backed by the explicit authorization of the *Shulhan Arukh*, and by the modern ruling of Chief Rabbi Kook, they could withdraw their opposition, and indeed openly promote the building of the

stadium on three conditions: first, that — as required by Rabbi Kook tickets are not sold on Shabbat; second, that games should not take place during the normal hours of prayer; and third, that adjacent to the stadium a synagogue should be built to which spectators (Sephardi and Ashkenazi alike) could repair after a match — on Shabbat or any other day — to take part in the *minha* service and perhaps hear a talk on some aspect of Judaism in daily life. Why not?

29.12.78

No Pope in Israel

We have been witnesses these last weeks of a disturbing phenomenon in Israel. Public figures have been identifying themselves, in automatic reflex, with the utterances of a flesh-and-blood human being, the chief rabbi, on a matter outside his province and certainly outside his expertise, simply because he is chief rabbi.

Rabbi Goren is widely respected as a spiritual leader, but he is, after all, not a pope (even among the Catholics the concept of papal infallibility is no longer supreme).

The institution of chief rabbi itself is not grounded in Jewish tradition — which accorded every rabbi authority in his own community. Conflicting opinions and rulings abounded — and added an effervescence to Jewish life in the Diaspora.

The Chief Rabbinate of Eretz Yisrael was instituted by the British Mandatory authorities out of administrative convenience, and it has its advantages in the Jewish State as well.

The chief Rabbi's authority, however, is circumscribed. As a judge subject to laws of evidence and procedure, his decisions on matters within his jurisdiction are enforceable. His declarations on *Halacha* may be challenged by any other rabbi.

If the religious personalities who instantaneously fell in behind the chief rabbi on the subject of the excavations at the City of David had given a few moments reflection to the subject, they would have seen that Rabbi Goren's ruling was invalid from the outset. He was not pronouncing a *halachic* ban on digging up what was once a Jewish cemetery. He was

pronouncing on a subject of ancient town planning, on whether there had been a cemetery there at all. This is not a subject on which he has the authority to issue edicts.

Yehuda Ben-Meir MK, who rushed with alacrity to identify himself, and his whole party, with the rabbi's pronouncement would have hesitated if he had foreseen the speedy revelation that the rabbi did not know what he was talking about. This, regrettably, is the only appropriate description of Rabbi Goren's archeological pronouncements during the dispute.

He pre-empted his study-conference with Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, by announcing that he was "98 per cent certain" that there had been a Jewish burial ground at the "G" site up to 400 years ago. For this, he said, he had evidence, documents, witnesses. It was then pointed out, however, that the level of 400 years ago had long disappeared (in earlier excavations) and that the present dig went back to 3,000 years.

* * *

In the twinkling of an eye, the chief rabbi leaped back 2,600 years and became instantaneously certain that this was the site of the graves of the House of David, and the archeologists would be desecrating them.

At this there was a unanimous outcry by all the archeologists and Israel's experts on the history of Jerusalem. They state unequivocally that there is no evidence whatsoever for this claim. By all the rules of logic and of civil and ordered debate in the state, this should have put an end to the dispute.

By this time, moreover, it should have been clear to the rabbi's supporters that he had led them and himself — and was leading the whole nation — into a dangerous bog. No doubt Education Minister Zevulun Hammer, who returned from a vacation abroad in the middle of the tumult, urged Rabbi Goren to find a way of extricating himself from the ridiculous position into which he had maneuvered himself.

He, however, was not tired of the fray and, instead of withdrawing gracefully, proposed a "compromise". In the first place he had, he said, discovered a ruling, based on the Jerusalem Talmud, which might be used to enable the excavations to continue.

He thus further undermined his credibility. Is Shlomo Goren a fledgling student of the Talmud who, after wrestling with a problem for weeks, suddenly discovers a new and relevant gem in the treasure house of the Talmud? This is absurd. Goren is one of the greatest authorities on the

Talmud, and ever since his outstanding career as a student has been famous for his knowledge of all its highways and byways. What he knows today he knew a fortnight ago. He certainly knew where to look.

* * *

Very regrettably, Rabbi Goren seems to be playing politics. Archeological facts (on which he contradicts himself between sunset and sunrise) and *halachic* rulings (which change colour in his hands) are only incidental to what seems to be his real motive. The motive is reflected in the demand that the whole of the southern slope of the Temple Mount be declared an ancient Jewish cemetery. The slope would thus be added to the area under the control of the rabbinate. That is, apparently, the object of the whole exercise.

The bait Goren offers in return is his sudden “permission” to the archeologists to dig at the City of David site.

It follows then that if the rabbinate is given control of the whole slope of the mount, the chief rabbi is prepared to risk the desecration of the graves of the House of David about which but yesterday he was pontificating so vehemently and with such emotional foreboding.

Such a deal — removing yet another area from the jurisdiction of the elected institutions of Israel — would represent a great victory over the secular state. As Professor Yadin and Dr. Shiloh have pointed out it would be a victory also for all the enemies of Israel, who have been moving heaven and earth to put a stop to all excavations in Jerusalem, which is providing more and more thrilling evidence of the Jewishness of Eretz Yisrael — and exposing the monumental mendacity of Arab claims.

* * *

Rabbi Goren has voluntarily provided more evidence of the political essence of his behaviour in a statement to *Jerusalem Post* (August 26). He had “discovered a second ruling which might also provide a way for the rabbinate to allow excavations in an area which once served as a cemetery”. But he would not reveal any details. “That will remain secret for the time being,” he said.

Is withholding such information, at such a time and on such an issue, in accordance with the *Halacha*, and with Jewish ethics?

Again regrettably, this tendency to keep secrets is not new in the chief

rabbi. There is a rabbinical ban in force on going up to the Temple Mount (because of the supreme sanctity of the Temple area). There are some rabbis who oppose this total ban, and apparently Rabbi Goren is one of them. In any case, the ban cannot possibly encompass the whole area of the Mount, which is much larger than the known proportions of the sacred centre. Years ago, it was learned that Rabbi Goren had made a deep study of the question and with the aid of other scholars (including archeologists) had determined which part of the Mount could not be included in the ban.

Rabbi Goren himself is known to go up to the Temple Mount from time to time. There are, however, other Jews who go up to the Mount and try to pray or at least to say psalms there. They are usually driven away by police. On Tisha B'av three weeks ago, this group headed by Rabbi Louis Rabinowitz, was greeted with a hail of stones by young Arabs and were then physically removed by the police. Rabbi Rabinowitz fell (or was thrown) and was then dragged along the ground. Rabbi Goren made no protest at this treatment of a highly respected rabbi carrying out a legitimate act of Jewish devotion — and he continues to keep secret his findings on the legitimacy of prayer on part of the Temple Mount.

On that subject, which he did study in depth from every angle — on that subject he issued no *halachic* edict.

Why? Is he afraid of the predictable anger of the Neturei Karta? Or that the authority of his rabbinate would be reduced? Must the contest between truth and rabbinical politics always end in the victory of rabbinical politics?

* * *

The archeological community must stand firm against the temptations of so-called “compromise” on excavations. The people as a whole follow their work in admiration and love.

In these grey days of eroding Zionist values, their persistent and devoted labours are a heartwarming antidote. They are not only defending the freedom of scientific inquiry. They are asserting the Jewish people's right to its history.

28.8.81

Who are the Mystics ?

Shortly after the Six Day War, Sir Basil Liddell Hart, Britain's eminent military expert, urged Israel on no account to give up any of the territory she had occupied — neither the Golan Heights nor Judea and Samaria, nor Gaza and Sinai.

There was very weighty pragmatic justification for his view. Here was no "regular" border dispute. It was the second time a coalition of states had announced and tried to implement the annihilation of another state. In 1948, with overwhelming odds in their favour against a minuscule Israel, the Arab states had come perilously close to achieving their objective. In 1967, with a more efficient plan of attack and execution on Israel's eastern front they could, by Liddell Hart's estimate, have cut the state in two at its narrow waist, within an hour. Sinai's only employment by the Egyptians since 1948 had been as a staging ground for attacks on Israel, and the Golan Heights had been converted into one great offensive base, from which Israel's north-eastern villages were subjected to constant shelling over 19 years.

Israel had twice been saved by the bravery and resources of her sons. Now that, in repelling the aggressors, she had achieved rational defence boundaries, it was her duty and her right by any international canon, to stay where she was, and not provide the Arab aggressors with the opportunity to have another try. To Liddell Hart, applying universal criteria, this was no doubt simple logic.

A fascinating aspect of the tremendous debate that has raged in Israel since 1967 is that every articulate public figure, barring a handful on the far so-called "left," was fundamentally in agreement with Liddell Hart's proposition, except for south-western Sinai. Those who urged giving up parts of Judea and Samaria did so on "demographic" grounds, always subject to the area's demilitarization and to the perpetuation of a sovereign Israeli "strip" along the Jordan (as for example, in the Allon Plan). All were agreed that not only must Israel not return to the 1949 lines, but that it must not withdraw (except in Sinai) from the 1967 cease-fire lines.

* * *

If Liddell Hart was alive today and re-assessing Israel's security imperatives, he would no doubt be subjected to heated denunciation from some quarters abroad as an "Israeli expansionist," and to sneering

denigration from some quarters here as a biblical mystic. Amusingly enough, his most vehement detractors would be those who insist that Israel must base her “case” only on “security considerations” and not on any account, on historic or political rights. (These advocates usually do, in fact, respect historic, even religious, claims, however ridiculous — provided, of course, that they are Arab claims).

As year after year, the waves of Arab propaganda and of American and other pressures — activated by oil interests or, as now, petrodollar greed, and seasoned by some old-fashioned anti-Semitism — have washed over and into tired Israeli spirits or naive Israeli souls, their power of attrition has made its impact. The basic elements of that propaganda and those pressures are now clothed in a seemingly rational formula: all that is required in order to achieve peace is concession of territory by Israel. In other words, it is Israel’s occupation of territory that is the reason for the absence of peace — and that threatens war. Unable to sustain this bizarre thesis with rational arguments, its proponents often buttress it by abusing their opponents (as mystics, expansionists, etc).

Theirs is of the same order of logic, of reason and of common sense as the proposition so widely held in Britain in the late 30s — indeed until 1939 — that Chamberlain was saving the peace of Europe and that Churchill’s policy against appeasement would lead to war. This theme, it is relevant to mention, was promoted not only by such advocates as “The Times,” but also by Hitler and Goebbels.

In our case, there is far less excuse for the idea that surrender of territory will bring peace. After all, unlike Chamberlain in 1938, we have had it all before. And our experience is unequivocal: surrender of territory brought war. In 1947, Chaim Weizmann proclaimed that this was our country (for all the “mystical” Zionist reasons) but that the Jewish Agency was prepared to give up yet a further part of it (in addition to Eastern Palestine — Transjordan) because we were hungry for statehood and because we believed that this concession would solve our problem with the Arabs. Six thousand dead in the Arab onslaught that followed proved how mistaken he was.

After 1949, Israel having again made what was in fact a unilateral territorial compromise, she offered the Arabs peace on the Armistice lines — but they were not interested in those or any other “lines”. In addition to employing every means of war except the open battlefield, they went on planning the next try at annihilation — which came in 1967 from Sinai and Gaza, from the Golan and from Judea and Samaria.

The Arabs constantly have proclaimed their purpose — Israel's elimination. An incessant campaign of indoctrination throughout the Arab world, stressing the rational, religious and moral imperatives of the lethal purpose — that has been our experience. There is nothing mystical in it. It is all too bitterly factual.

* * *

What then, do the proponents of surrender of territory present in order to bolster their usually supercilious insistence that the way to peace lies in Israel's doing again precisely what she did before — with such dire consequences?

Amazingly, all they offer is a mystical belief — bolstered by little more than their own wishful thinking. They are “sure”, it seems, that the Arab states, once they are again faced by an emaciated, painfully vulnerable and, by then, probably dispirited Israel, will burn the hundreds of books calling for the destruction of the Jewish state, and the maps that have long anticipated that event; erase the teachings in their schools and colleges and theological seminaries, and indeed the whole vast area of Arab and Moslem culture devoted to the theme of Israel's destruction, and proclaim that precisely now, when its realization has become feasible — they are giving up their dreams of “uniting the Arab world” (hitherto divided at its heart, even defiled, by Israel).

In all reason, it is the Arabs who must produce evidence that they have abandoned this veritable culture of annihilation before there can be any hope of real peace. Many people were indeed prepared to believe that Sadat's visit to Jerusalem might be the first sign of such a process, at least on his part. They were strengthened by the knowledge of the dire state of Egypt's economy, and the monstrous burden of Cairo's incredible urban chaos, which might reasonably be driving him to seek Israel's cooperation.

But the much vaunted spontaneity of Sadat's “initiative” turned out to be a fiction: he came only after he had been promised 98 per cent of Sinai and Israel's acknowledgement of Egyptian sovereignty over all of it. Since then, he has in fact simply reiterated the standard Arab demands — that Israel reduce herself to her pre-1967 vulnerability. (Mr. Sadat's solution for the eventuality is not without significance. He said to Mr. Peres: “Why not make a defence pact with the United States? If you're attacked, they will come to your aid”).

* * *

There is no certain way of preventing war. The Arabs' propaganda success in providing their imperialist dream with the disguise of a struggle for "homeless Palestinians," their great economic leverage in the West and, not least, the susceptibility to their propaganda of Israelis with short memories and short sight, has encouraged them to believe that Israel can be overcome, though of necessity in stages.

Only the last of these need be war. The first stage is that of diplomatic pressure. If we hope to prevent war or delay it, even to lay the foundation for peace (however remote this may seem), we must avoid defeat in this present, diplomatic round. Our first imperative is not to give up any part of our strategic strength.

8.9.78

The Likud Debacle

In the years before 1977 the fear was often expressed that the Herut movement would never succeed in governing Israel because the Histadrut would paralyse the country with strikes. This was not very logical. Herut — or any other party — could not come to power without considerable support from the workers, who would certainly not undo the government they had put into power. Even among those opposed to Herut there was certain to be a sufficient sense of responsibility to refrain from wantonly undermining the democratic process. In the result, it is hard to recall so great a measure of goodwill and encouragement as greeted the ascent of the Likud government in May, 1977. The general public sentiment was that the government, which by definition had all the qualities of a new broom, could hardly fail to improve the nation's parlous economic condition, and its sullied moral air.

The workers' strike last Monday may be said to announce the evaporation of that public sentiment. True, it was an expression of the frustration of one section of the population about one specific, if crucial, aspect of economic policy; but it reflected the growingly harsh disillusionment of a much wider spectrum in the public with almost every aspect of the government's performance.

Even diehard opponents of the Likud will no doubt concede that there has been no failure of the policies the Likud offered the electorate in 1977. The bitter taste in people's mouths derives from the fact that the Likud's

platform has simply not been tried. Among the volunteer propagandists for the Likud in that election campaign one may hear it said that when they chance to see in the distance a citizen who attended one of their parlour meetings, they hastily cross to the other side of the street.

* * *

The Likud promised in effect a new concept of government, involving drastic change over a wide range of policy, to lift the country out of the morass — economic, social, moral and political — into which it had been sinking steadily, in an atmosphere of depression and with a sense of defeat, since the Yom Kippur War.

The central bane of Israel's economic life that the Likud pledged itself to combat was the simple fact that this people does not earn its keep, that it eats more than it produces by its labours. In a country so poor in natural resources and burdened by a heavy defence bill, this people should be working harder than most. In fact Israeli productivity lags behind even the least productive countries in Europe — not to mention the US. Yet Israelis do, on the whole, have enough to eat, there is no widespread malnutrition, most of them are reasonably well-clothed, restaurants do good business, the entertainment industry flourishes, the number of car owners increases every year, and the percentage of Israelis who travel abroad each year rivals that of the very wealthiest countries in the world. The standard of living (except among the poorest segments of the population) is visibly rising. The average citizen, producing no more than he used to, is consuming more and more.

This phenomenon is not a "class" characteristic. It pervades all but the poorest layers of society. It is conditioned by a system, by an environment, by an absence of positive motivation; it is an evil spirit fed, moreover, from the "higher echelons" of management, of the bureaucracy and, indeed, of the leadership of the nation.

In the special circumstances of Israel's existence, this is a situation so clearly fraught with danger that only a high degree of degeneration in the texture of government could countenance its continuation. This is what happened to the Alignment. That, after all, was one of the reasons why the Likud attained power. The remedy involved a comprehensive, dramatic "new deal" over the whole society. It would inevitably encounter difficulties, even opposition, and maybe obstruction; but with the demonstration of a rational alternative to the floundering of the Alignment

management of affairs, there was good reason to believe that a bold, courageous policy, intelligently and intelligibly disseminated, would carry the bulk of the public with it.

In fact, when the test came, not only did the Likud achieve a substantial accretion of support, but the ill-assorted DMC arose out of the very ashes of the Alignment's political and moral collapse. The Likud's stunning electoral success reflected a widespread sense of civic concern and responsibility, which could surely be called on for collaboration in a drastic policy of reform.

Now, 21 months after the Likud government took office, it would seem that Mr. Begin and Mr. Ehrlich and their colleagues have forgotten not only the foreign policy on which they were elected, but indeed almost everything else they wrote into their platform. It is now evident that not even an attempt has been made to start effecting the great shake-up. Relaxing currency restrictions and floating the lira, in themselves potentially healthy measures, are a very meagre substitute for the great reform the nation had a right to expect. The remoteness of the government's thinking from the urgent realities and from the most fundamental of its promises is indicated (among many other things) by the finance minister's *optimistic* forecast recently of a *rise* in the standard of living.

The result, in sum, of the Likud's policies is that Israel is depending more on foreign aid than ever before (without yet taking into account the economic burden of the irresponsible withdrawal from Sinai, which will amount to far larger sums than the three or four billion dollars that the government has dared so far to mention). The gap between production and consumption continues merrily to grow. The goodwill of the public has evaporated; and the moral ills that developed under the Alignment have apparently even prospered under the Likud. It is only the "excitements" and the concerns over the "peace" initiative that tend to blur the impact of the Likud debacle on the home front.

* * *

Over that front hangs the heavy shadow of the government's paralysis in face of the most acute of Israel's domestic problems: housing. It was correctly given a high priority in the Likud's election promises. For years, indeed, the Likud and especially Herut had urged upon the government the vital necessity of initiating a comprehensive plan for rental housing.

Failure to solve the housing problem has the deepest implications in

Israeli society and far-reaching reverberations even in Jewish communities abroad. It postpones marriage, it restricts families, it deters *olim*, it drives people to the thought, and even to the performance, of *yerida*. Inevitably, of course, it poisons the social climate in the country.

Almost two years after the Likud took power (and the public was led to believe that it had over the years worked out a detailed plan), there is no sign that the admittedly great effort has even been planned, let alone launched.

Nor, in the 30 years of Israel's history, have we seen anything as grotesque as the comedy being played out over the Absorption Ministry, and indeed over the responsibility for absorption. The government, and in particular the prime minister, is patently far more concerned with meeting the personal demands of Mr. David Levi — who insists on being given the overall responsibility for absorption even after the abolition of the ministry and his appointment to another office (a kind of moonlighting arrangement presumably to be attended to in his spare time). All sense of proportion, and of sensitivity to the gravity of what is growing into a national tragedy, has been lost.

* * *

The necessity for radical domestic overhaul was sharpened by the fact that economic dependence distorted Israel's foreign policy. It increasingly clouded the judgment of our previous government. It was an unjustified distortion, because the totality of the relationship between Israel and the US has been fundamentally one of *interdependence*. On this subject — as on the subject of Jewish rights in Eretz Yisrael — Israel's information policy, in itself and as an arm of foreign policy, has been no less than disastrous.

Israeli governments have behaved as though Israel were simply a recipient of American charity. Consequently, so the theme ran, Israel must accede to American demands. As these are in fact identical with Arab demands, this belief is dangerous in the highest degree. The complex of foreign relations therefore required, as a matter of urgency, a complete change in Israel's stance, backed by a new, comprehensive, sophisticated, dynamic information service. The creation of such a service under a separate ministry was one of the most cogent election promises of the then leader of the Opposition.

A new information policy, dovetailed into a new stance in relations with

Washington, was to be accompanied by a vigorous economic policy at home, not only in order to reduce Israel's material dependence (undesirable in any circumstances) but to serve notice on Washington that this was indeed the purpose. It would be difficult, it would require ingenuity, skill, and determination. But these were precisely qualities that people expected from the Likud leadership, and what was at stake was Israel's political independence, and the independence of spirit of its people.

* * *

Today the total, coherent national policy at home and abroad promulgated by the Likud (of which the essential elements in bare outline have been recalled here) lies in shambles. A deliberate major deception could not have been more effective.

Israel is entering upon the most dangerous period of her existence, while a spirit of retreat and defeat and misdirection is being projected by the nation's leaders into the consciousness of the people.

One dares hope, however, that those in Israel who are sober and sane will awaken to the realization that they cannot remain passive any longer, that they must combine in thought and action in order to work against further deterioration of Israel's stance externally and of her condition internally.

That is the prime condition for the belief that there will still be a way out from the bog into which our people has been led.

23.3.79

Double Burden

A number of distinguished civilians are taking the lead in the campaign against ratification of the Salt II Agreement in the US. Men like Paul Nitze, former secretary of the Navy, Eugene Rostow, former assistant secretary of State, and Richard Perle, administrative assistant to Senator Henry Jackson, add dignity and considerable detailed knowledge to the great debate.

Israel's security problems are different in nature from those of the United States. So is our political structure. Nevertheless, it would do no harm to follow the American example of intelligent civilian study of the

issues, and achieve a greater degree of civilian, common-sense impact on our security debates.

This need is pointed up by the disconcerting overnight changes in the strongly-held opinions of military experts, as they “adjusted” their expertise to the needs of political conformism. Who does not remember how vital the Mitla and Gidi passes were to Israel’s security? Who can forget the personalities that asserted that Israel dare not in any circumstances give up the “territorial continuity” to Sharm-e-Sheikh — or Yamit and its linked cluster of villages? Our tragedy, of course, is that they were right in the first place. But what kind of experts are they, and who can take them seriously?

In an ordered state, the army is run by generals in peace as well as in war. At any given time, you do not take a poll on specific issues requiring an expert military opinion. It is the ruling of the state’s leading soldier, the chief-of-staff, that prevails.

It remains the right of every citizen to express his opinion on the security aspect of the Jewish presence in any part of Eretz Yisrael. Chaim Bar-Lev is no exception; but (unlike Mr. Nitze or Mr. Rostow in the US) he sought, in his communication to the High Court in the Eilon Moreh case, to impress the judges with the fact that his opinion was “professional”.

* * *

He was obviously referring to the military profession. His obvious object was that the court prefer his opinion over the different view of Chief-of-Staff, Rav-Aluf Eitan.

What, in fact, is Mr. Bar-Lev’s profession. For the last 7¹/₂ years, he has been a civilian and a politician. Not an amateur dabbler in politics, but a professional party politico. He served as minister in the Alignment government and then, with its fall, supplemented his activity as a member of the Knesset with the very special Labour party function of secretary general.

He has been a very active parliamentarian, conspicuously critical of the Likud government. He has very definite opinions, as a Labour politician, on the future of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

Is it acceptable for a dyed-in-the-wool politician to metaphorically don his uniform and, in that guise, fire off an opinion which (by mere chance, of course) promotes his party’s political policy? It was amusing to hear

that Mr. Bar-Lev justified his intervention (perhaps in all seriousness) as an example of intellectual integrity. Really!

* * *

Bar-Lev's intervention may be a matter of taste. But it should be scrutinized for its political implications.

When he denies the security importance of Eilon Moreh, it may be thought that he opposes only settlement at this particular spot. This is not so. As a leader of the Labour Party, he is opposed to all Jewish settlement in Samaria and, indeed, in most of Judea. With equal logic then, Mr. Bar-Lev would oppose settlement at any spot in Samaria on the grounds that it is irrelevant or unnecessary to Israel's security. The security-minded Labour Party could otherwise not possibly oppose it.

The fact is that the Labour Party not only wants to keep Samaria and most of Judea *judenrein*, but its dominant political doctrine — the Allon plan — envisages handing them over to the Arabs. But their condition for the surrender of Judea and Samaria is that the Arabs have no arms or army there. Demilitarization.

But why demilitarization, if Samaria is of no security consequence to Israel?

But, says the Labour Party, it is! The very thought of Israel's narrow coastal strip being exposed once again to the mercies of the overhanging heights sends shivers down the spines of the Labour Party leaders. The doyen of their moderate spokesmen, Abba Eban has in the past painted the most vivid description of the shrunken Israel facing those heights as "a death-trap". Recalling the Yom Kippur War, Mr. Eban pointed out that had such an attack been launched upon an Israel that had retreated into the pre-1967 lines, she would have ceased to exist. No. The Labour leaders, at least by their past declarations are fully aware of the vital importance of the control of the Samarian and Judean hills.

* * *

The two major schools of thought in Israel agree that without Israeli control of the rest of Western Eretz Yisrael, Israel would be in danger. But while one school (which we shall call the Likud) holds that the only way to deter aggression and to prevent war is by a Jewish presence, the Labour school believes that it will be enough for the Arabs to agree to Israel's

holding a strip along the Jordan, and that the whole of their sovereign area west of Jordan be demilitarized.

The Labour Party's opposition to settlements derives not from a failure to appreciate the vital security importance of Samaria and **Judea**, but from their strange Utopian belief that one day (after they come to power again) the Arabs, by some new magic formula, will accept the Allon Plan, will help to apply it, and everybody will live happily ever after. The rationale for this flagrant gamble with Israel's security is the Labour Party's fear of Israel's incorporating a large Arab minority in the state.

It is true, however, that the proponents of the Allon Plan have repeatedly made it clear that they would be prepared to make the territorial sacrifice involved only if their conditions were fulfilled — the sovereign Israeli strip on the Jordan, and demilitarization of the rest.

The difference in outlook is thus entirely political. It is wrong to assume, and dishonest to pretend, that there is any substantive difference between Labour's evaluation of Samaria's importance for Israel's security — and that of the Likud.

* * *

Why then does the Labour Party, even if its sense of Zionist restoration has been blunted, add fuel to the flames of opposition to Jewish settlement by creating the impression that it confirms that Israel has no security interest in Samaria? Has it not occurred to the leaders that nobody is discussing the chimerical Allon plan, that the battle now proceeding is for the exclusion of Israel from all the territory beyond the 1949 armistice lines? Do they not understand even now that it is because Jewish villages seem to make that eliminatory objective more difficult to attain, that Jewish settlement was pronounced “illegal” and an “obstacle to peace”? Have they not yet learned that the “peace” that cannot be achieved except by eliminating the Jewish presence beyond the pre-1967 lines is precisely the peace of the “death trap”?

Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski was widely reported to have expressed his great satisfaction when he heard of the opposition to the Eilon Moreh settlement. This is completely understandable. He did so because every weakening of Israel's hold on Judea and Samaria promotes his idea of Israel's destiny — which he has explained at length in the past.

It is very simple: Israel must withdraw into the armistice lines of 1949 and, as they are indefensible, the United States and the Soviet Union

will guarantee her security. He believes presumably that this is in the American interest. (He is as wrong about this as Chamberlain was in believing that dismembering Czechoslovakia was a British interest. Sudetenland, as we all remember, was also an “obstacle to peace”.) That is why he and all the other would-be shrinkers of Israel are heartened and strengthened by the information that the Israel Labour party itself sees Samaria as unimportant to Israel’s security and even parrots the cry that Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria is an “obstacle to peace”.

* * *

That is not all. The Labour Party leaders are fully aware of the dangerous bog into which the Likud Government is leading Israel. They know full well that if implemented the Camp David agreement on autonomy will bring about what Sadat once described as the reduction of this “wretched people” to its “proper size” — and Arab rule throughout the rest of Eretz Yisrael, including the Jordan Valley, settlements and all. Through a remnant of fidelity to its principles and its election promises, the government with much foot-dragging and fumbling and bumbling — has kept alive the concept of restoring Jewish life in Judea and Samaria. It has been helped in this both by the spirit of *halutzit* of the settlers and by public opinion.

A majority of the people support settlement in Samaria, and in spite of the unprecedented campaign of vilification, including shocking misdirection by television — specifically supports Eilon Moreh — as reflected in the latest *Jerusalem Post* poll, published three days ago.

In the dark prospect held out by the autonomy plan, the furtherance of Jewish settlement in Samaria promises a measure of security for Israel. From every point of view such settlement should be supported by a responsible opposition — even if it continues to dream of the Allon Plan.

* * *

Unfortunately, the Alignment shows no sign of having overcome its chagrin and frustration at having lost power. Its leaders appear to be dominated by one consuming, even desperate passion: to lash out at the Likud at any cost — even by dissimulating about their own Labour principles; to weaken the government’s negotiating stance (as though it were not already weak enough); to stretch out a helping hand to any

element, even if hostile to Israel's interests, provided the Likud Government can thus be weakened. Embattled Israel, suffering a government riddled with irresponsibility, deviousness and inefficiency, carries on its back also a no less irresponsible and devious opposition.

29.6.79

A Tragi-Comic Performance

During World War I a correspondence developed in the London "Times" as to whether Christianity had failed. Israel Zangwill — intervening, as a Jew, with some diffidence in the discussion of such a topic — suggested that Christianity had not failed; it had just not been tried. In Israel today it may be said with absolute certainty: the Likud policy has not failed; no serious attempt has been made to implement it.

The tragicomic events before and during the cabinet meeting on July 17 illuminated, as in caricature, two of the reasons why it had not been tried. One is the failure of the civic courage needed to implement painful decisions. The other is the failure of the prime minister to give more than cursory attention to the problems facing the government (and the people) or to study the implications and probable consequences of decisions taken. This failure has affected much of the work of the government as a whole.

The implementation of the policy propounded by the Likud before the 1977 elections required primarily the quality of courage and careful, skilful planning. The Likud took office when the accumulated blunders of years and the perpetuation of ingrown evils had reduced the country to a state of economic incoherence, with overtones of social and moral degeneration. The overriding influence, for example, of successful strikes by specialized pressure groups, aided by government spinelessness and Histadrut opportunism, was making a mockery of any rational labour-relations policy. The system of "linkage" (between one group of workers and another) turned every tremor in the labour market into a major earthquake.

The standard of living was rising, but productivity was lagging. The people were not working hard enough, and were living beyond their means. Economic independence was receding, and the degree of dependence on

the US was constantly growing. Immigration was diminishing, emigration rising.

The Likud (and the Democratic Movement for Change) promised to remedy these ills. Obviously there were areas in which the remedies could not but be painful. Their application required throughout intelligent planning and skilful execution. All the measures offered by the Likud required readjustment — not always to the immediate taste of the people or the groups involved. Workers usually do not like to be told they are not working hard enough; managers resent the suggestion that their inefficiency is largely responsible for the poor productivity of their work-force; industrialists making a comfortable profit do not always rush to invest in expensive up-to-date machinery.

In order to achieve the high productivity essential to economic independence, they would all have to adjust. Similarly, workers in the services and young people starting their careers would have to be coaxed into industry.

Perhaps the most difficult plank in the Likud platform was the institution of national arbitration in essential services — aimed at eliminating the disruption of one sector of the economy after another, and indeed the disruption of the life of the state (in schools, in hospitals, in the post-office). Here undoubtedly a battle royal could be expected with the leaders of the Histadrut who, having no alternative cure to offer, justify their vehement opposition to arbitration by allegedly Socialist doctrine.

* * *

The task was undoubtedly formidable. It was clear therefore that the day after taking office the prime minister would establish within the government the planning machinery needed for the wide-ranging changes he had promised. Equally obvious was the immediate need for an information authority which would infuse the public with a sense of emergency, and a sense of the contribution it could make in the healing of the national malaise. An honest, sophisticated programme would have begun to restore the sense of idealism which had been so eroded in the years of Alignment rule. Of critical importance was the need for public understanding that the Likud programme, and the changes and readjustments it involved, would bring about a lessening of the dependence on the US, a dependence which threatened not only Israel's security but also the moral fibre of its society.

It is beyond doubt that the people of Israel were ready to cooperate in consummating the far-reaching policies of the Likud. By their vote they had shown they realized that the national health required that, for a while at least, life for most of them would be not easier but more difficult. The new government was not thereby assured of an easy passage for its more painful measures, but it enjoyed a tremendous store of public goodwill.

* * *

But the measures never materialized. Not the least effort was made to establish the obviously essential emergency planning machinery. No “staff meetings” were ever held to measure the problems and allocate the functions and the means for their solution. There has never been a call to the public to tell them how they could tighten their belts and roll up their sleeves, to cooperate in the nation’s great effort to live by its own labour and not on foreign handouts. Indeed, the finance minister once even boasted that he had *raised* the standard of living.

From time to time one hears that the measure to introduce National Arbitration is on the way — but there is no sign of the indispensable campaign of public education required for its passage. From time to time the media report the dangerous shrinking percentage of workers in industry — but there is no public sign that the government is even aware of the problem. Rental housing, one of the central features of the Likud programme, and the obvious answer to the horrendous housing problem, is now seldom mentioned. Entrepreneurs from abroad, willing and eager to invest in large-scale projects for speedy production, are left hanging in the air. Just as in the days of the Alignment.

This is the backdrop to the astounding demonstration of ineptitude and civic cowardice over the issue of subsidies. The particular debacle of that Tuesday did not have to happen. It did, however, illustrate vividly, as in caricature, how this government functions.

* * *

The bitter truth is that it is not only in the economic field, in “internal policy,” that the government has turned its back on its election promises and then compounded its betrayal by a high degree of shallow improvisation and sheer incompetence. The list is long. It is enough to say here that the prime minister and the foreign minister decided secretly to of-

fer Sinai to the Egyptians without any prior consultation with other members of the cabinet, or with any experts on the implications and consequences — military, security, economic, political and social. Indeed, as it subsequently became apparent, they made no study themselves of any of these implications and consequences. Fecklessness and irresponsibility lead in a straight line from Sinai and the autonomy plan down to the setting of the price of bread.

In any ordered society such a government would resign. But what does the alternative look like? The Alignment's two years in opposition have served only to justify the public's verdict against them in 1977. They seem incapable of learning the lessons of their downfall. They are moved only by a negative spirit — to undermine the government, even if Israel's interests are thereby damaged.

No, the only hope, at present still theoretical, is in the rise of a new political power in the country which by its integrity, its strength of purpose, its Zionist zeal and sense of national pride, as well as its political skill, will win the confidence of the public and consign both the Likud and the Alignment to the shades of history.

27.7.79

Scapegoat Ehrlich

From the depths of Israel's agonizing crisis — political, economic, social and moral — there emerges the familiar time-old solution of the politicians: the production of a scapegoat. Of course it is true that Simha Ehrlich has proved to be an unbelievably inappropriate finance minister. It now appears that he does not understand even the causal relationships between elementary economic facts. (He recently expressed surprise at people in Israel's complaining about the economic situation. People living so well, he said, with big cars, luxury homes, rich foods — what are they complaining about? "Inflation? Unfavourable balance of payments? These are not their problems. They are problems of the government, and the government will deal with them".)

Yet Ehrlich's failure is only a small part of the government's sickness. He himself has complained that he has not enjoyed the cooperation of his cabinet colleagues. The zeal of ministers in defending departmental

budgets is a universal phenomenon of government. It is the very badge of coalitions, where inter-party rivalries compound personal ambitions.

Unpopularity is thus the occupational hazard even of skilful finance ministers, if they are intent on effecting economies. In Israel it has been the common understanding for many years that the primary imperative for stopping the economic rot is a substantial reduction in government expenditure. It is no secret that when Ehrlich tried, gropingly, to plan economies, his colleagues did indeed collectively applaud them — and separately frustrated their implementation.

Such a situation is not unique in government. That is precisely where the function of prime minister comes in.

* * *

Enforcement of agreed policy in all branches of government is not only the prerogative of the prime minister; it is his primary duty. He is captain of the ship; he is headmaster of the school; he is the conductor of the orchestra. His first obligation is to master the workings of his charge, and speedily to exert his binding authority when difficulties arise. The central cause of the functional failure of the Likud Government has been the almost complete absence of any effort to master the problems, and of any sign of the exertion of that authority. The Prime Minister has in fact failed to function as prime minister.

He himself recalled recently the idyllic atmosphere of the first six months of his government. In those days ministers complied not only with his request not to smoke at Cabinet meetings (they still refrain) but also with his exhortations not to leak information on their proceedings (nowadays detailed reports are published in the media within hours of each meeting).

But almost everybody then, in government and outside, still believed that the Prime Minister was loyal to his principles and decisive in his judgments. His wide-ranging apathy had then not yet become apparent, and still unguessed-at was his lack of concern about any area of government outside the foreign field. All his thoughts and energies were concentrated on achieving the signature of a peace treaty-no-matter-the-cost, which would confound the opponents who had for years besmirched him, unscrupulously and recklessly, as a man of violence. Beyond that objective all else, it seems, was a secondary, foggy expanse. The light-hearted and sometimes irrelevant replies, in his Rosh Hashana broadcast

interview, on some of the painful issues of the day, only reaffirmed this unhappy truth. One erstwhile supporter thus summed up the interview: "If a swimmer were calling for help, the Prime Minister would use a megaphone to assure him that salt water was good for the health".

* * *

The specific issue of reducing government expenditure is not only a function of economic management. It is a reflection of the total moral and social problem which brought about the fall of the Alignment and the rise of the Likud.

By reducing its own expenditure, the government was to set an example to the people. It was to initiate a chain reaction in which the people would be brought to live within their means. It was to be the first of a series of measures to wean workers from the services to industry. It was to be the prelude to a call to all sections of society to work harder, the opening of a campaign, with a detailed programme, for increased productivity; and to bring to an end the nightmare in the field of labour relations.

Under the Alignment, labour relations had reached the limits of the grotesque. Pressure groups in key industries and undertakings, able and willing to choke whole segments of the national economy and to engender untold loss for the state and considerable, sometimes irreversible, suffering on the people, exacted their demands from the government; and the government, sometimes deaf to just requirements of workers, often failed to honour its undertakings, and always flabbily surrendered, openly or surreptitiously, to the sheer power of the strikers.

Then the "linkage" system came into play — whereby a specific group of workers become entitled automatically to a wage increase only because another group has won such an increase through a strike. In these circumstances no rational wage policy was possible, nor could peace in labour relations ever be achieved. Israel staggered from one surrender to another in the labour field, heaping, moreover, humiliation after humiliation on the government, amid growing despair in the hearts of the mass of the people.

This was to come to an end under the Likud Government. The "linkage" was to be done away with. A system of obligatory national arbitration, for the settlement of disputes in essential services and undertakings, would be introduced. Such a system operated in Britain throughout World War II

under Labour Minister Ernest Bevin, and was continued for some seven years of economic strain after the war.

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In short, the Likud promised an economic revolution by these and the other measures. Such a revolution required the cooperation of the public. The spirit of the people after May 1977 — battered by the transparent degeneration in government and the sagging popular morale was one of hopeful expectation. The vast majority, including many who had voted against the Likud, were waiting for a call from the government, for the voice of an authentic moral authority, to back the details of policy which would reawaken the sense of social and national solidarity, which would testify to the workings of a team of good, attentive, considerate brains, and a firm hand at the head of affairs. The people expected hard decisions by the Government, decrees about which they would no doubt grumble but which they would know were for the ultimate restoration of national health. That, after all, was what they had been offered by the Likud before the election.

The call of moral authority was not expected from Ehrlich. That was the Prime Minister's duty, that was presumed to be the pledge of his personality, the content of his leadership. No government had enjoyed greater goodwill on its entry into office.

But that call never came. Neither in the first six euphoric months nor afterwards. Once in power, the Likud leaders seemed to have forgotten why they had come to power. In practically no field has a serious, intelligent effort been made to solve the grave internal problems inherited from the Alignment; deterioration has been inevitable. Housing, immigrant absorption — where irresponsible neglect has reached proportions which patently discourage aliya — and labour relations, are typical examples. The people, hopeful and tense with expectation in 1977, have by now relapsed into an orgy — or an agony — of all the ills of the Alignment period.

The replacement of Ehrlich by a more competent minister will in itself no doubt be salutary. But the concentrated offensive against Ehrlich suggests that his colleagues are using his failings to cover the over-all incompetence and irresponsibilities of the Government, which will not be solved merely by his replacement, and the Likud's betrayal of the trust of the people.

5.10.79

Call It Courage

Last Monday evening at a press conference the new finance minister announced the first instalment of new economic measures, and briefly explained their grim motivation. At last the public heard a plain-speaking minister, who at the risk of jeopardizing his political future, accepted the tremendous, indeed intimidating, task of navigating Israel's economy out of its desperate straits.

Manifestly conscious of the scope of his task and the crucial necessity of a most bitter medicine, Yegael Hurvitz, a level-headed businessman, called with noticeable emotion upon the employers and workers to co-operate in the painful remedy demanded.

Some 15 minutes *before* Hurvitz spoke to the press, Kol Israel by telephone invited Israel Kessar, acting secretary-general of the Histadrut, to comment on the new measures. Both the radio and Kessar were equally ignorant of what Hurvitz was about to say, but Kessar attacked the plan. This is what has come to be known in Israel as the people's "right to know".

Kessar's factious reaction, if endorsed by the Alignment and followed by successful efforts to organize the workers against the plan, could frustrate the minister's good intentions and accelerate the economy's slide on its downhill course.

In view of this possibility and in the light of the bitter experience of his predecessors (including the Alignment) Hurvitz should lose no time in organizing a vigorous information campaign that every layman can understand. Every citizen — whether worker, employer or self-employer — should be able intelligently to trace the imposition of equal sacrifice on all sectors of the population. All should, moreover, be given unambiguous evidence that the weakest strata are not hurt.

It is essential not to mince words: it is two years of Likud failure that has reduced a sick economy to its present plight. It is highly relevant, however, to recall that it was not the Likud that initiated the economic norms and policies that engendered the illness. Indeed, to replace those norms and policy the Likud was hoisted to power and in protest against their consequences the Democratic Movement for Change mushroomed into existence in 1976. The kind of call that Hurvitz has now made to the people, and the drastic measures he is applying, were expected by the nation two years ago.

* * *

Israel's economic constitution is not so complicated as to require expert knowledge to recognize its ills. They can be stated in simple terms. If you spend more than you earn, you get into debt. If wages go up, but production goes down, you are receiving money at somebody else's expense. If a country does not produce enough for export to earn the foreign currency to pay for imports it is only logical that a point will be reached when foreign exporters will refuse to sell its goods (as has been happening in Turkey). This downhill process is naturally hastened if the country's foreign currency reserves are used for the purchase of luxury goods.

This, in general terms, is precisely the situation that developed under the Alignment. To stop the rot it was essential to implement drastic, and inevitably unpopular steps. It was essential to stop the waste — in the government and other public bodies, where “concealed unemployment” on a large scale had become endemic. Many thousands of workers should have been eased out of the establishment. Meanwhile, this labour surplus was matched by a permanent Shortage of workers in industry, to which redundant public workers should be encouraged to move. The consequent beneficial impact of such a move on production, and hence also on the volume of export, needs no explanation. It was essential to increase production *per capita* — Israel's is among the lowest in the Western world — both by a drive to improve management methods and to accelerate modernization of machinery, and by establishing a rational system for tying workers' remuneration to performance.

It is unfair to assume that the Alignment leaders did not understand the problems or that they denied the urgent need for drastic remedies. Indeed they constantly promised a cure. An examination of its essentials would reveal their similarity to the measures Hurvitz is taking. The Alignment leaders did not lack the know-how. They lacked the courage.

* * *

They failed first of all to secure the cooperation of the leaders of the Histadrut, and had not the grit to stand up to them. Both they and the leaders of the Histadrut (predominantly Labour men) were afraid of enhancing the influence of Mapam. They were only too well aware of the readiness of their Mapam colleagues to exploit, for their own electoral advantage, the difficulties that would arise, or that might be provoked, with a drastic change in wage policy.

After all, if you dismiss government workers, they become unemployed, even if temporarily so until they are absorbed into the generally short-handed workforce. But “unemployment” is grist for the “radical” party mill, and the courage to fight through such an issue was lacking; so the problem was left to fester. And linking wage increases to performance, or productivity, or professional norms, would involve the abolition of the present grotesque system of “equity,” whereby, for example, the wages of teachers have to be linked to the performance of engineers (or vice versa). Such a change, however fair and beneficial to all in the long run, and however important to a rational wage policy, invited opposition from all the vested interests involved. After all, teachers and engineers and others all have votes — and so ad infinitum.

These brief references should be sufficient to point up the part lack of courage played in the ultimate breakdown of the Alignment’s credibility. It says much for the intelligence of the public that in spite of the hard solutions offered by the Likud (and by the Democratic Movement for Change) in 1977, the people gave them a clear majority of their votes, only to find that the *new* government was perpetuating the major failings and back slidings of the Alignment.

* * *

The Alignment governments and the Histadrut leadership (all dominated by self-declared Socialists), having failed to apply the obvious measures required to heal the economy, also failed to produce any alternative comprehensive plan. Thus the Israel economy staggered from crisis to crisis, with all the internal social consequences and the dire political implications of growing dependence on external aid.

When, therefore, a new finance minister, with obvious frankness and courage, announces his willingness to brave inevitable unpopularity and unavoidable opposition in emergency economic reforms, which cannot but be harsh, and his plan is what the Alignment itself should have launched years ago in easier circumstances, they should be the last to sneer and carp. They should, certainly refrain from factious opposition. On the contrary, they should be the first to offer their cooperation. They should hasten to convert Hurvitz’s initiative into a bi-partisan project.

Paradoxically, perhaps, generous cooperation from the Alignment in the national plan of economic rescue would ultimately also improve their image in the eyes of the electorate.

23.11.79

Dangerous Duplicity

On July 19, 1978 *Ha'aretz* published a letter from Mr. Raphael Kotcher, of Jerusalem, in which he warned the Peace Now movement against people in the US who had expressed support for them. He referred to a full-page advertisement in *Ha'aretz* (also published in *The Jerusalem Post*), signed by some 560 people who described themselves as “American Jews who have constantly supported Israel’s struggle for security in her homeland”.

Mr. Kotcher wrote that six of the signatories were known to him as members of the Breira organization — a body which propagated the doctrines of the PLO, made virulent propaganda against Israel and operated in Washington to dissuade legislators from supporting Israel.

Mr. Kotcher’s information was necessarily fragmentary. Of the signatories to the advertisement, at least 130 were identifiable as members of Breira, including one of the two organizers of the advertisement, David P. Tulin. Mr. Tulin, alerted by this letter and realizing that revelation of support by members of Breira could be very embarrassing to the Peace Now movement, sent an explanation to *Ha'aretz* (August 4, 1978). There he announced that Breira had gone out of existence six months earlier. He grasped at the straw innocently proffered him by Mr. Kotcher and prevaricated that there were only six former Breira members among the signatories. He revealed that the reason for Breira’s disbandment was the internal dispute between Zionists and non-Zionists on policy towards Zionism, and added that the advertisement in “Ha’aretz” was the product of a kosher Zionist body called Americans for a Progressive Israel.

One of these “Zionists” of Mr. Tulin’s participated in the Quaker Conference in Washington in April 1979 (described by Prof. Marvin Maurer in “Midstream,” November). He there delivered a vicious attack on Israel. This was I.F. Stone, well-known as a self-hating Jew, who for years has been lambasting and besmirching Israel.

Among the many gems in his speech reported by Prof. Maurer was the assertion (made with the proclaimed expertise of “a Jew myself”) that the Zionists are political degenerates who use the Torah to justify taking all of the Arab lands and for exterminating the “Canaanites” — every man, woman and child. (This speech was made while Israel was mourning the death at Nahariya of a father and his four-year-old child, both murdered by PLO emissaries.) Mr. Stone signed the advertisement in support of Peace Now.

By 1978, Breira was indeed effectively destroyed as a credible organization in the Jewish community in the US — but not because of differences between Zionists and non-Zionists. Breira was destroyed politically when it was exposed as a fraud upon the Jewish people — pretending to be pro-Israel when, in fact, the thrust of all its activity was for the promotion of the PLO. When the fraud was irrefutably demonstrated — through a devastating investigative report in the New York *Jewish Week* as well as a fascinating study in depth by Prof. Rael Jean Isaac — many of the dupes, including some well-known Reform rabbis, abruptly left the group. (It turned out then that it had only 1,200 members, but through adequate funding and much free publicity in the only-too-eager media hostile to Israel, it was enabled to make enough noise for a mass movement.)

The Breira phenomenon, however, in aim and content, and especially in its duplicity, represents a dangerous phenomenon in Jewish society.

It was an outgrowth of a number of small interlocking radical left-wing groups. One of its direct parents was CONAME — Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East. Arnold Forster and Benjamin Epstein, pointed out in their book “The New Antisemitism” that CONAME originated as a front group for the Trotskyite Communists. It was itself sponsored by, among others, the Quakers’ Friends Service Committee. It was led by uninhibited enemies of Israel like Paul Jacobs, Noam Chomsky and Don Peretz. Among its many activities, it promoted the propaganda of such Jewish protagonists of the dissolution of Israel as Dr. Israel Shahak and the Matzpen group.

Its activities included also a demand on the US government during the Yom Kippur War not to send arms to Israel. Breira was born a few months later, and two of CONAME’s leaders, Bob Loeb and John Rushkay, went to work for it full time. Don Peretz became a member of the Breira executive board.

Another group from which some of Breira’s leaders emerged was MERIP — Middle East Research and Information Project — which identified unabashedly with Fatah.

Illustrative of the outlook of these people was a MERIP flyer disseminated after the murder of the Jewish athletes at the Munich Olympics. It said:

“Munich and similar actions cannot create a substitute for a mass revolutionary movement, but we should comprehend the achievement of

the Munich action... It has provided an important boost in morale among Palestinians in the camps... It is regrettable when people are killed, Israeli or Palestinian or Lebanese or Syrian, but at the very least we should know where to put the blame”.

* * *

Organizing genius of these and half a dozen other groups with a radical, anti-Israel, anti-American ideology was Arthur Waskow. Already in 1971 he had suggested the need for such a body as Breira. Two quotations from Mr. Waskow’s publicistic efforts will illustrate his thinking.

In a symposium in 1971, he said: “We know what we are supposed to do about empires. We, the whole Jewish people, have been commanded by our tradition to preach the destruction of America”.

In an advertisement he published later that year, it is stated that “a small group in Washington are interested in forming a Jewish Consciousness Raising Group. We think Jews... have had their sense of Jewish identify f... over by the melting pot, by Jewish collaborationist leadership, and by their parents’ definition of what it means to be Jewish in Amerika. As Leftists, Movement people and non-Zionists seeking to struggle collectively with like-minded people, we’re interested in having others join us”.

Together with New Leftists and other enemies of Israel, Waskow published advertisements already in the early seventies attacking the US and urging Israel to help the PLO overthrow King Hussein of Jordan and set up a PLO state on both sides of the Jordan. Many of the signatories subsequently were prominent in Breira. During the Yom Kippur War, Waskow added his personal message to those urging the US government not to send arms to Israel.

Waskow’s name is cosily tucked into the list of signatories who, “as American Jews who have constantly supported Israel’s struggle for security in her homeland,” call for support for Peace Now.

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There are also identified Quakers on the list. One is Rosalie Richman, who figures among the activists in several of the Waskow-inspired groups, including Breira, and who is a high Quaker official: no less than the AFSC’s Middle East Peace Coordinator. An even more interesting figure

is Harold V. Smuck, not known as a Jew but as a high functionary in the Quaker movement, who gained notoriety for a most vicious anti-Israel diatribe. In September 1976, he wrote a long article in "Quaker Life". There he added to some disparaging remarks about the Jewish people a comprehensive reasoned denial of the Jewish right to Palestine *on any ground at all — historical, moral, or even theological.*

The American Jewish Committee then denounced the article as "anti-Israel, even anti-Semitic".

Harold V. Smuck appears in the fine print of the advertisement headed AMERICAN JEWS — in support of PEACE NOW.

All these people find that their ends and their ideas on Israel can best be served by promoting the Peace Now movement. Why?

* * *

The Minister of Justice, Shmuel Tamir, recently echoed the question asked by many other bewildered people as to what it is exactly that the Peace Now leaders propose. If he were to apply his undoubtedly able mind to an analysis of what they are doing, he will find that there is an answer to the question. To examine this, a separate article is necessary.

14.12.79

Coming Home to Roost

The negotiations on autonomy have manifestly entered a critical phase. The period of tinkering with peripheral issues and skating around the crucial questions has come to an end.

The Egyptians are now demanding what they claim was promised by the Camp David Agreement. They are inflating their claims with obvious deliberation; and it is altogether likely that in the end, responding no doubt to an American "compromise proposal," they will make a great show of goodwill and moderation and understanding by reducing their immediate demands to what is actually written in the Camp David Agreement. (Except on Jerusalem, which was not mentioned in that Agreement; here they will no doubt simply continue pressing for its inclusion in the autonomy framework, even if by stages, starting with the Arabs of the city voting for the autonomy council.)

* * *

The immediate clash between the Israeli and the Egyptian delegations is over the control of internal security in Judea, Samaria and Gaza in the five years of the autonomy regime. That is: when the only overall authority in the areas is the Arab “self-governing authority,” to what extent Israel will be able to prevent them from becoming a safe base for hostile activity by the PLO or whatever other organization is set up to harrass Israel.

When the prime minister formulated his original autonomy plan, he certainly realized the central and vital importance of Israel controlling the security — internal and external — of the whole of Western Palestine.

He “solved” the problem in simple terms. He wrote there that security and public order would be the responsibility of the Israel authorities. But by the time that plan had been unpicked by the American experts, and pared and pruned by Begin’s successive concessions and surrenders, the picture of internal security, as projected in the Camp David Agreement, had been turned upside down.

That document lays down that the future agreement on autonomy to be negotiated between Egypt, Israel and Jordan, “will also include arrangements for assuring internal and external security and public order. A strong local police force will be established, which may include Jordanian citizens. *In addition*, Israeli and Jordanian forces will participate in joint patrols and in the manning of control posts to assure the security of *the borders*”.

To make assurance doubly sure, the agreement repeats itself in a later clause: “All necessary measures will be taken and provision made to assure the security of Israel and its neighbours during the transitional period and beyond. To assist in providing such security, a strong local police force will be constituted by the self-governing authority. It will be composed of inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. The police will maintain liaison on internal security matters with the designated Israeli, Jordanian and Egyptian officers”.

Whichever way one turns this text, whatever interpretations one may extort from it, what is quite clear is that, if the Camp David Agreement is implemented it is not Israel that will control the internal security of the West Bank and Gaza. And Mr. Begin insists that the Camp David Agreement will be implemented to the letter.

* * *

True, the prime minister in some public statements, as well as in private

conversations whose contents have filtered through to the media, has adopted a tone from which one might conclude that he never agreed to anything of the sort. He has continued to pretend that “security and public order would be the responsibility of the Israeli authorities,” as phrased in his original autonomy plan — and as though the Camp David Agreement did not exist.

In the original plan, he had indeed also left the military administration intact (withdrawing only its civilian administration).

But by the time the Camp David Agreement was drafted, he and his colleagues had succumbed to American persuasion, turned the original proposal on its head, and agreed (as stated in the text) that “the Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing authority has been freely elected by the inhabitants of these areas to replace the existing military government”.

The prime minister and some of his spokesmen have pretended that by some miracle the military government, though replaced, will continue to function and exert authority. (It is surely fortunate that this novel interpretation of the word “replace” has not been universally adopted. The previous Alignment Government might then have decided to continue functioning after the voters had replaced it by the Likud.)

This kind of obfuscation was presumably necessary for impressing a presumably gullible public. Why, however, should anybody be surprised when the Egyptians insist on their pound of flesh — every ounce of which they (with American help) succeeded in extorting from the irresponsible Israeli participants in the negotiations of September 1978.

The Camp David chickens are coming home to roost.

* * *

Meanwhile, the official opposition has abdicated its function. No less than the government, it has refrained from educating public opinion on the implications and consequences for Israel of the Camp David accord.

The reason, perhaps, is that the opposition supported the agreement in the Knesset and is thus a partner in responsibility for those implications and consequences. Now, Mr. Peres, issuing a flow of pontifical pronouncements seems to presume that he is on the eve of an election victory, and that he — as prime minister — will take a swift and sure grip of affairs.

He has already chosen King Hussein as “the only valid partner with

whom to negotiate the future of the Palestine issue and the future of the West Bank”. With Hussein, he will reach a “territorial compromise,” and the problem of Israeli-Arab relations is solved.

The fact that a Framework Agreement has already been signed by the government of Israel on the future of “the Palestine issue and the West Bank” bothers him not at all. If he believes that he can spirit away that agreement — it has also evidently slipped his memory that for 10 years his party’s government pursued Hussein with offers of a territorial compromise, which he consistently refused; and he airily dismisses Hussein’s insistent assertion that he is not prepared to negotiate with Peres or anybody else. Needless to say, he ignores Hussein’s tireless repetition of the all-Arab formula for the elimination of Israel.

Whether or not Mr. Peres’s voluble patter will bring him votes, what he is achieving now is the deepening bewilderment of the public.

* * *

Every step the Egyptians have taken (and with them the Americans) since Mr. Begin broached his “peace plan” in 1977, has been calculated for its contribution to achieving the expulsion of Israel from the “West Bank” and Gaza. What Begin fondly laid down as a peace plan they transmuted (with his cooperation) into a plan for a transition period leading to Arab sovereignty.

It is true that he has gone on asserting that the outcome of this agreement will be Israeli sovereignty in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. But the Camp David agreement lays down that the final disposition of these areas will emerge from negotiations between Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the inhabitants. Begin has never explained how he expected that Egypt, Jordan or Palestinian Arabs (who will, moreover, by then have enjoyed five years of self-government) will agree to hand sovereignty on a platter precisely to Israel. When taxed with this improbability he has claimed that Israel will veto any other outcome — and that then the autonomy regime will simply continue.

Even if he believes this, he is only confirming that the one certain outcome of the Camp David Agreement is that Israel will *not* acquire sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

That — and the Arab and American vision of Israel reduced to the 1949 Armistice Lines — is the cloud that hangs over the negotiations on autonomy.

9.5.80

251

Striking Failure

On Tuesday morning, the media brought the happy news that the teachers' strike had ended. In the same breath, they announced the latest stage in the dispute of the electricity company with power-station operators at Ashdod : the threat that the entire country's electric power would be cut off if by 3 p.m. that day the management had not revoked the dismissal of six workers (who had ignored a court order as well as instructions by the management).

There was also news of a sudden small strike by fueling workers at Lod, who had succeeded in preventing the flight of two foreign aircraft. There was no mention of the partial radio strike, perhaps because the listeners, deprived of their favourite programmes, do not need salt rubbed into their wounds.

Perhaps more shocking than the strikes themselves was another phenomenon that surfaced on Tuesday morning. An advertisement appeared in the Hebrew morning papers explaining the "great difference" between the benign, all-wise intellectual giants of the Alignment and the morally-stunted morons of the Likud.

The advertisement, spread over two pages, comprised 20 clauses on all the subjects under the sun, from peace to women's status, from culture to communications. It contained not a word that could be interpreted as hinting that the Alignment intends putting an end to the persistent epidemic of strikes which are making life a misery, destroying social values and disrupting, even undermining, sectors in the economy.

On the contrary: the Alignment ignores the problem. Its advertisement did indeed contain a paragraph headed "Joint Responsibility," which reads:

"A social and economic covenant between all the elements in the economy — the Government, the Histadrut and the employers — in order to cure the ills of the economy and to strengthen it, for a just distribution of the burden, to respect the trade union struggle and the basic rights of the workers".

This paragraph, if it means anything, is an insult to the intelligence and the feelings of a public suffering the daily disruption of one or another aspect of its life by groups of strikers (mostly well-paid), in vital public services.

Does "respect for the basic rights of the workers" demand this never-

ending ordeal for the people? Is it a basic right of the worker to exploit brutally the fact that he has in his hand an artery in the body of society — to threaten it with paralysis if his every last demand (reasonable or not) is not satisfied?

Obviously the authors of the tired cliches in their advertisement had no such idea in their heads. They know perfectly well that a threat by electricity workers, arrogantly uttered over the radio, that “there will be darkness in the state” if their national employers do not succumb to their diktat has nothing to do with rights, basic or other, but is simply an expression of naked violence against society at large.

Indeed, they know all there is to be known. In power for 28 years, it is the Alignment which fostered the blackmailing style of these “elite” groups of workers and allowed the state and the people — including the vast mass of “ordinary” fellow workers — to become their victims.

Let there be no mistake: The Alignment showed the way. The Likud government is no more than a timid imitator blundering along in its wake.

* * *

During the teachers’ strike, one of them was asked about the *bagrut* examinations. He replied blandly that the teachers would decide whether they would be held. No less.

The teachers will decide whether to disrupt the lives of many thousands of Israeli youth who have sweated to reach this watershed in their lives — and who in three months’ time must go into the army. They will decide whether these young people are compelled after their army service to go back to school — not to speak of their frustration, their mental suffering and, in the end, their disgust with a society which makes possible such callous, inhuman and anti-social behaviour by its educators.

Maybe the teachers did not intend to execute this punishment on their pupils. Maybe the threat was merely a cynical means of additional pressure on the government; and who cares about the agony of uncertainty injected into the hearts of all those youngsters?

As for the subject of the dispute itself, one thing is clear. Nobody believes that its settlement (now arrived at) was decided by justice, right or equity. The decisive criterion is the capacity of the teachers to mistreat the pupils, upset the lives of whole families, and hurt the nation.

* * *

This truth is what is so glaring in all the strikes of these “elite” groups. In almost every case the state or government authority capitulates (usually amid suitable semantic camouflage) simply because national damage and public suffering become intolerable.

Inevitably, the impact of damage often goes well beyond its immediate consequences. How many tens of thousands of people, for example, have vowed never again to fly El Al — because they have suffered the taste of the overriding importance of the personal interests of a handful of workers who happen to be capable of preventing an aircraft from taking off.

* * *

There is a framework for settling civil disputes in the world. Disputants unable to reach agreement have recourse to litigation — or arbitration. Judges are sometimes faced with problems of considerable complexity in fields in which they have neither experience nor previous knowledge. They simply have to study the relevant elements. Yet they take decisions and pass adequate, sometimes even brilliant, judgments which the contestants must and do accept.

Compared to such subjects, labour disputes present elementary, bread-and-butter questions. (Judges themselves earn their living by labour and are not always happy with their wages).

This truth is particularly valid in Israel where the disputes which are embittering and undermining our society are not in the field of private employment but in national, state undertakings, all vital public services. Why is it impossible to lay down a law that in specified public services, strikes (as well as lock-outs) are prohibited and disputes will be settled by adequate judicial machinery, in arbitration courts to be set up for the purpose? Why?

There is in fact no reason — except for a long obsolete socialist doctrine, which in any case was not, and in Israel certainly is not, relevant to the circumstances in which the Israeli national economy, its education system, its health service, its public communications media, its international communications are periodically disrupted and the nation held to ransom.

The outright opponents of national arbitration — concentrated in the Labour Party — refrain from giving reasons for their opposition. They presumably fear the ridicule and the protest of an intelligent public. They sometimes take shelter behind the childish assertion that arbitration has not worked or that “it does not exist in other countries”.

This is not even true; and sacred socialist cows did not prevent Britain in World War II, when socialist leader Ernest Bevin was minister of labour, from barring strikes; nor did it prevent their continued prohibition and the institution by law of national arbitration for some seven years after the war.

The powerful British trade unions patriotically recognized the need for guaranteed industrial peace during a critical economic situation.

* * *

Is Israel not in a state of emergency? In a society where about one-third of the national budget has to be assigned to defence, where every young man spends three and a half of the best years of his life in the army (and, from time to time, finds himself in the firing line), and where women, too, must do army service, and the state is under constant threat of war — and the national economy is in an equally constant state of crisis — it is grotesque that this should have to be mentioned.

Its reality however makes it all the more emphatically intolerable that the people should be denied the means to put a stop to the suffering and loss caused by the behaviour, bordering on sabotage, of any irresponsible group of “essential” workers.

* * *

The Likud is morally more guilty than the Alignment. The Alignment at least never in all its years of power promised to solve the problem. It remained consistent in its encrusted mentality, allowing the running sore to fester.

The Likud recognized the problem and the nature of the solution required. Before 1977 it promised to introduce legislation for obligatory arbitration in labour disputes in essential services. It never even tried to keep its promise, not even to the extent of explaining its attitude to the working population.

It would be fatuous to end on a happy note. The next government will be formed either by the Alignment (which prefers to be the accomplice of the strikers) or by the Likud (which has shown that it is simply not serious about any part of its proclaimed policies).

Unless a public movement, exerting pressure on the government, can

achieve a salutary change, our troubles in the field of labour relations are far from over.

29.5.81

Partners In Deception

The alarms of the election campaign and the clamour of criticism over its vulgarities smothered any serious debate on policies. More significantly, they obscured the grim fact that on the major issues of our time — the future of our country — the proclaimed policies of the incumbent Likud and of the opposition Alignment were nurtured by the same source, an identical untruth. Each of them found it more convenient to ignore the plain contents of the Camp David Agreement, as though they did not exist.

Shimon Peres and his party pretended that Menahem Begin was determined to achieve the “annexation” of Judea, Samaria and Gaza — which they oppose. They evidently believed that this “charge” would hurt Begin. This was manna from heaven for Begin who, for the past three years, has been assuring his followers that that was precisely what he intended to achieve and that Israeli sovereignty was “practical politics” in the context of the Camp David Agreement.

In fact, his claim is a monstrous deception, a hoax on the people of Israel. It is a claim effectively ruled out by the Camp David Agreement. Begin repeatedly insists that he will execute that agreement to the last comma; and one certain outcome of the Camp David Agreement, if it is implemented, is that if sovereignty is established in Judea and Samaria and the Gaza area, it will not be Israeli.

* * *

By that agreement of September 1978; Begin gave up his idea (embodied in his “peace plan” in December, 1977) of conferring limited autonomy on the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza “upon the establishment of peace”.

At Camp David he agreed that the Arabs of the “West Bank” and Gaza should enjoy full autonomy as a *five-year transition stage* towards the “transfer of authority” and the determination of the final status of the territory.

The Agreement lays down: “...not later than the third year after the

beginning of the transitional period negotiations will take place to determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza... These negotiations will be conducted among Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza..."

These are the negotiations from which obviously Begin "expects" Israeli sovereignty to emerge. Egypt and Jordan, and the inhabitants of the "West Bank" and Gaza would have to hand sovereignty to Israel on a platter. But even that is not the full extent of his act of deception.

The Camp David Agreement does indeed dictate one outcome from the negotiations. It says: "The resolution from the negotiations must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestine people and their just requirements", and goes on to give flesh to this injunction by laying down the procedure to be followed *after* agreement has been reached between Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Arab inhabitants.

Their agreement will have to be submitted to an *additional* vote by "the representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza".

In signing the Camp David Agreement, Begin in fact pronounced the extinction of the vision of Jewish sovereignty over all of Western Palestine which he presumes to invoke.

* * *

The Alignment has been no less disingenuous in presenting its own policy. Its members in the Knesset voted in almost solid unanimity for the Camp David Agreement; and its leaders have since been falling over one another to visit President Anwar Sadat and to whisper in his laughing ear their ardent intentions of implementing its provisions if returned to power.

But in the evident belief that the vast majority of people do not know or do not remember what is written in the agreement, they disseminate the charge that Begin the extremist intends to "annex" the "West Bank," whereas they, the moderates, feel free to exercise a chimerical "Jordanian option".

They would not, of course, "annex" any part of the Land of Israel; they would merely "retain" areas "vital to Israel's security," like the Jordan Valley and the Etzion bloc.

* * *

What tactic the Alignment will pursue in its renewed opposition status has not been vouchsafed. Begin and his colleagues, however, have already shown that they intend to continue befogging the public mind.

Begin quite unabashedly continues to speak fiction and fantasy. Last Friday (July 10) *Ma'ariv* columnist Yosef Harif wrote an indubitably authentic account of a conversation (between Begin and Dayan) in which Begin asserted his loyalty and commitment to the idea of Israeli sovereignty in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. In proof, Begin had an aide bring in a document from which he quoted a passage saying, "Israel stands on her right and claim to sovereignty".

But this was not a text from the Camp David Agreement. It was a passage from his own "peace plan" which died soon after birth, and was buried at Camp David. In the Camp David Agreement, there is of course no reference to any Israeli right or claim. Begin could with equal relevance (and veracity) have flourished the Revisionist programme of 1925 (which was a beautiful Zionist document).

Ironically enough, one of the significant differences between Begin's peace plan and the international agreement which he subsequently signed at Camp David was that while in his peace plan he fatuously proposed leaving the question of sovereignty "open," at Camp David he agreed to "close" the question — by those four-cornered negotiations plus a Palestinian Arab veto.

* * *

The chief negotiator at the autonomy negotiations, Dr. Yosef Burg, has already made it plain that on this more immediate issue, too, the policy of befuddling the public will continue. Asked by a radio reporter (on July 13) for a reaction to Sadat's forecast of a successful conclusion to the autonomy negotiations by the end of 1981, Burg agreed that there was a "good chance".

These are words without meaning. A "successful conclusion" to the autonomy negotiations means that the conditions will have been created for the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza to cooperate in setting up the autonomy council. There is not the remotest sign that the Arabs are prepared to cooperate, or indeed to consider, Israeli-sponsored autonomy on any terms whatsoever. No such autonomy is going to come into being.

Sadat certainly does not expect any autonomy to arise. His talk of a successful conclusion by the end of 1981 is merely intended to keep the ball

rolling, to tranquillize, to avoid any disturbance of Israel's steady progress towards Egypt's complete possession of Sinai.

If he maintains his reassuring tone and mien until that process is buttoned up, Israel has just nine months before the fiercest campaign of diplomatic pressure she has ever known bursts over her head, to withdraw "from all the occupied territories including east Jerusalem;" and the chorus will probably be led by Egypt.

The demand is not new, and Sadat takes every occasion to utter it. Only, after April 1982, it will be directed against an Israel in radically changed circumstances; an Israel shorn of Sinai.

* * *

There are, no doubt, people who still honestly believe that we are in the midst of a peace process; that jettisoning Israel's security belt in the south and the expulsion of Jews from Sinai constitute a healthy and strengthening process. So be it; there were, after all, many people who honestly believed in 1938 that Chamberlain and Hitler had saved the peace of the world, and many Jews in 1947 who believed that giving up most of Palestine would bring peace with the Arabs.

But where are those who are not misled, who saw from the start where the "peace process" was leading, who knew and know that the exodus from Sinai is a substantial, and most significant stage in the fulfilment of the Arab-Moslem dream of erasing the Jewish State?

Where are the intelligent Herut Party activists, Professor Moshe Arens and his colleagues, who voted against the agreement, who know the truth, who have given voice in the past to their fears — and are now lending their support to the policy which befuddles and anaesthetises the people? Whither have they disappeared and why are they silent?

17.7.81

Tweedledum 'n Tweedledee

Politicians as a breed are prone to an inability to recognize unpleasant present facts and they often suffer from an unwillingness to face up to them. They are equally prone to prettifying facts of history which are not congenial to their public image. Perhaps this is indeed what distinguishes the politician from the rarer breed of statesmen.

In Israel, with its unequalled profusion of severe and pressing problems, such failings are of unusually far-reaching significance. Hence the importance today of the pronouncements of opposition leader Shimon Peres who, commanding a parliamentary strength almost equal to that of the government, could, at one gust of a fickle coalition wind, become prime minister overnight.

He recently expounded on the differences between his own Alignment and the Likud. (*The Jerusalem Post*, January 29). What emerged was an astonishing hodgepodge of (no doubt unintended) misinformation.

He did indeed proffer some valid, if harshly-styled, criticism of the Likud, some of it in that bombastic rhetoric which he ascribes to his opponents, much of it unsubstantiated (for example that the Likud cares less for the poor than the Alignment in whose term of office slums and the villas of the new — subsidized — Israeli millionaires flourished side by side.)

“The Begin Government,” he wrote “indulging in Zionist rhetoric, is in practice a non-Zionist government”. There is some truth in this, but the example he cites is absurd: “There is no Zionism without *aliya*. During the term of the Begin government, *aliya* has... all but ground to a halt”.

Peres has simply forgotten similar periods of depression under Labour rule, as for example in 1965-1966.

Such depressions are the result of a variety of reasons. One is the difficulties of absorption compounded by bureaucratic insensitivity. Another is the more intangible psychological and moral climate which dampens enthusiasm. For these, the Likud bears a heavy burden of blame. It had, however, inherited its policy from its Labour predecessor — whose failure in absorption over the years had become a byword.

As for “climate” — the injection of gloom and failure of faith in some sections of the people and, in reflection, abroad, was a consequence of the traumatic experience of the Yom Kippur War and the subsequent bewildered defeatism of the Alignment government.

The Likud failed to improve that climate. It lacked the wit and wisdom to evolve a policy; but its intentions were certainly Zionist. The elements of “non-Zionism” in Likud behaviour are not to be found in the sphere of *aliya*. They lie elsewhere.

* * *

There is a pronounced non-Zionist quality in its policy on questions affecting religion. In concession to the avowedly non-Zionist Agudat

Yisrael, expanding the exemptions of religious students from army service and its preferential treatment for Aguda non-Zionist private schools, are a severe blow to Zionism, a chilling message to the youth, devaluing the concept of the security of the state and its people.

But Aguda leader Abraham Shapira publicly claimed that Peres was equally prepared to make the same concessions.

No less in conflict with Zionism is the government's continued failure to accord equality of status to non-Orthodox rabbis, Conservative and Reform, and to non-Orthodox congregations. That any Jew should be denied rights and status accorded to every religious community in the Jewish state is a denial of the idea on which Zionism rests. We are a people, one people.

But — the Alignment did not behave differently when it was in power.

* * *

The most grievous demonstration of “non-Zionism” in the government's record is the Camp David Accords. Designed ostensibly to pave the way towards ending the “conflict” between Israel and the Arabs, this document is an affront to historic truth. There is in it not a word to suggest that the roots of the conflict lie in the Arab refusal to countenance the existence of a Jewish state; and there is not one word to hint at the relationship of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel.

Neither Jewish rights nor Zionism receive even a mention. The only rights and aspirations mentioned — indeed, they are at the heart of the document — are “Palestinian” (Arab).

But — the Alignment voted almost unanimously for the Camp David Accords.

Peres's flights of fancy go far. “Alignment governments,” he writes, “initiated the peace process with Egypt”. Begin recently conceded this claim. Presumably he wished to ensure that when the day of reckoning came and the falsehood of the “peace” could no longer be denied, the wrath of the people would be visited on the Alignment as well as on the Likud. Peres's claim, however, is factually untrue. It is a classic politician's conversion of a humiliating defeat into an “achievement”.

Here is what happened: With Israel on the verge of a victory of historic proportions in the Yom Kippur War, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger flew to Moscow and drafted a cease-fire agreement designed to save Egypt from a stunning defeat. Foreign Minister Abba Eban, then visiting

Washington, happened to call on Kissinger a few hours before Kissinger left for Moscow. Devastating testimony to Kissinger's double-dealing towards Israel is provided by Eban's unsuspecting statement the next day on his return to Israel from Washington:

"I spoke with Dr. Kissinger on Friday and at that time the question of his meeting with the leaders of the Kremlin was not on the agenda. Nine hours later, while in Paris, I learned of his having left.. for Moscow... I know of no Soviet proposal for a cease-fire... and the subject is simply not on the agenda. It is our victory that will hold the key to any political move. At the moment I see no prospect of a cease-fire". (Ha'arelz, October 21, 1973).

Two days later, the government accepted a dictated cease-fire from Dr. Kissinger. That is how the Alignment initiated the "peace process".

Under Kissinger's pressure, it then not only withdrew from the substantial salient occupied by the IDF in Egypt, but allowed the Egyptian Army to remain on the east bank of the Suez Canal. That was the next stage of the Alignment's "initiative".

In 1975, the Rabin cabinet held out for six months against Kissinger's pressures for further withdrawals in Sinai, before succumbing and handing over control of the strategically crucial Mitla and Gidi passes and the oil of Abu Rodeis.

That, indeed, is how Alignment governments "initiated" the "peace process". At other times, Alignment spokesmen have described this process as "co-ordinating policy with the U.S".

* * *

This brief and necessarily incomplete recital calls to mind the process of the Likud prime minister's submission to American pressures between December 1977 and September 1978. That process converted his original "peace plan" into the transitional Camp David Accords for "the resolution of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects".

Likud spokesmen continue to pretend that the Camp David Accords are, in fact, Begin's original "peace plan" (which was dangerous enough in itself) and to ignore the inconvenient fact that it is a document whose essentials are of American-Egyptian manufacture.

Here, indeed, you have the key to the drama of our time: the absence of statesmanship in the conduct of the affairs of Israel precisely when statesmen are most sorely needed — to face the very bitter facts, to make them plain to our people, to call on the people to make the necessary

sacrifices so that economic dependence should not dictate Israel's foreign policy — and to represent her with dignity as well as intelligence.

The vain boasting about past performance and false promises for the future, which characterize both major parties in Israel, are an unhappy accompaniment to its entry into a period of momentous danger.

5.2.82

A Prescription For Palestine

The predominant theme of a demonstration in Tel Aviv last Saturday evening was the demand for Israel to put an end to “the occupation”. When this call is uttered by a body enticingly named Peace Now, its message is unambiguous: if Israel surrenders Gaza, Samaria and Judea (including, of course, eastern Jerusalem) it can expect instant peace.

The language of the banners — “Down With the Occupation,” “I Am Ashamed of the Occupation” — suggested moreover that the Israeli presence in Judea, Samaria and Gaza since 1967 was evil and shameful, and that its withdrawal is a moral imperative.

If the prescription of Peace Now were fulfilled, the political vacuum in Judea, Samaria and Gaza would be filled immediately — that is, Now — by the Arabs; more specifically, by the Palestinians; in fact, by the PLO —and a “Palestinian State”.

It is possible that not all members and supporters of Peace Now had this implication in mind. An innocent bystander at the demonstration would certainly conclude that unless the Peace Now people were a crowd of woolly-minded morons, they know that the sequence “Shame to the Occupation,” “Out with Israeli Rule” could be completed Now only by adding “Up With The PLO”.

Some of them may believe that this would be a good thing; and, in the Israeli version of a democracy-at-war with would-be destroyers, it is even permissible to disseminate the idea. How, then, can one blame the perhaps innocent demonstrator who, convinced by the Peace Now slogans, drew the logical conclusion, completed the sequence and hoisted the PLO flag at the Peace Now demonstration?

After all, the vision of Peace Now, with its inevitable corollary of the PLO as Israel's neighbour, surely includes the flying of the two flags in

pacific propinquity — say, at the border post at the Jaffa Gate, or outside Kfar Sava.

* * *

The Peace Now leaders reacted to the protests that followed the demonstration by disavowing the flag-hoisting act: “It is inconceivable” they declared, “that any flag other than that of Israel could be hoisted in the name of Peace Now”. (*Ma’ariv*, March 29). Yet an interesting question arises: Whoever heard of Peace Now raising a flag at all in demonstration for Israel against the propaganda of its enemies, its detractors or its declared friends? Peace Now’s strident voice has not noticeably been heard against, for example, the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia, in flagrant breach of US agreements with Israel, or Soviet measures against its Jewish citizens, or Syrian persecution of the Jewish community, or anti-Semitic attacks in Egypt or in outbursts by Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky. Etc. etc.

One does not have to take the Peace Now fringe seriously; but its supporters should realize the implications of its propaganda and its irresponsible sloganizing, enthusiastically reported and televised throughout the world.

At the cabinet meeting on Sunday, the prime minister expressed severe criticism of the Peace Now slogans — and of the Alignment Knesset Members who participated in the demonstration — criticism in which, it is fair to say, the vast majority of Alignment members in Israel concurred.

Mr. Begin’s statement, however, raised questions of the greatest significance for an anguished Israel.

“Judea and Samaria,” he said, “are not occupied territory. It was in Judea and Samaria that our nation was born... Our prophets prophesied in Judea and Samaria. The whole of Israel’s ancient culture, upon which we have been nurtured to this day, was created in Judea and Samaria”.

This is true. He could have added that by any canon of international relations, Israel has a superior right to sovereignty in all of Western Palestine. Only, it is a central feature of our ongoing tragedy that in the international document dealing with the future of Judea and Samaria, which Mr. Begin signed, their names, with their historical, political, geographical and emotional connotations, are not mentioned. The Camp David Agreements adopted the nomenclature introduced by the Arabs for erasing their Jewish context and associations — much as an earlier enemy,

the Roman Emperor Hadrian, after crushing the Bar Kochba rebellion, erased the names Judea and Jerusalem, and replaced them with Palestina and Aelia Capitolina.

The “West Bank” — that is the name Mr. Begin, with his co-signers gave to Judea and Samaria in the Camp David Agreements.

* * *

However, “West Bank” is perfectly in keeping with the spirit and content of the agreements. In it, there is not one word about the Jewish relationship with Eretz Yisrael, or one word about Jewish national rights, historical or political.

Nor is there one word to suggest that the conflict with the Arabs is an expression of the Arabs’ purpose of eliminating the Jewish State. On the contrary, the unequivocal implication of its terms is that the conflict was caused by deprivation of Arab national rights — an adoption, therefore, of the outrageous Arab claim.

There is no ambiguity about it. Here is the textual sequence: “The parties are determined” according to the agreement, “to reach a just, comprehensive and durable settlement of the Middle East conflict. *With that object in mind* they have agreed to proceed as follows:

“Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the representatives of the Palestinian people should participate in negotiations on the *resolution of the Palestine problem in all its aspects*”.

Hence the plan laid out at Camp David which would give the Arabs of the “West Bank” and Gaza “full autonomy” for a transitional period of five years. Their elected autonomy council will replace the “existing military government and its civilian administration”. After three years, negotiations will open “among Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza to determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza”.

“The resolution from these negotiations,” the agreement specifies, “must... also recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestine people and their just requirements..”.

Palestinian legitimate rights, Palestinian requirements... and finally, to ensure that it be understood whose is the overriding right to the country, the agreement reached in those negotiations must be submitted to a second vote — not by Israel, but again “by the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza”.

That is how the prime minister treated Judea and Samaria, “where our nation was born, where our prophets prophesied..”.

Who would undertake to use Menachem Begin’s masterpiece, the Camp David Agreements to prove that Judea, Samaria and Gaza are not, in fact, “occupied territory”?

* * *

It is with the far-reaching concessions of the Camp David Agreements in hand that the Arabs, aided by the European statesmen, supported broadly by the Americans, will now open their campaign of concentrated pressure upon Israel to make further concessions, beyond the Camp David Agreements.

The most moderate Arab demand at present is that Israel in fact forego even the projected negotiations on the “final status of the West Bank and Gaza,” and promise now to withdraw at the end of five years.

The alternative demand (supported by the Europeans) is immediate, actual Israeli withdrawal, or at least agreement to negotiate with the PLO — and thus instant acceptance of the concept of a second Arab state — in Western Eretz Yisrael.

This, indeed, is likely to be the central thrust in the next phase of the Arab campaign for the dismantlement of the Jewish state.

In the immediate confrontation, Israel continues to be led by a completely compromised government, which has shown time after time that it is incapable of resisting pressures. It has done nothing to inspire the nation with a sense of the emergency and of the need for economic austerity and productivity in order to lessen Israeli dependence (real and imagined) on the US; it has failed to mobilize the tremendous sympathy and sense of common interest with Israel in the US, and thus to build a belt of support against inimical Saudi-incited policies in Washington.

The Alignment opposition, equally compromised, has at every crucial moment jettisoned both its Zionist principles and its responsibilities and supported the government in its surrenders. Its leaders were not moved by principle but by sheer fear — that they might be accused by the “world” of “not wanting peace”. That is the level of their statesmanship.

Neither is in tune with the majority of the people; and only a drastic and early change in the political party structure can bring about the change in the conduct of national policy which is vital to Israel’s safety.

2.4.82

The Habit of Surrender

When Prime Minister Begin insists that the autonomy talks must be resumed, when President Mubarak, with a *judenrein* Sinai in his possession announces that in a few days time they will in fact be resumed and Secretary of State Haig joins in with optimistic forecasts as to results — what can they be talking about? If they are referring to the autonomy programme laid down in the Camp David agreements, they all know that it is just not going to be implemented.

Its implementation requires the cooperation of the Arabs of Judea and Samaria and Gaza, who are the appointed beneficiaries of the programme. No such cooperation is in sight. Since the Camp David agreements were signed there has never been the remotest sign that there is an Arab willing to run for election to the projected autonomy council, nor has any Arab expressed willingness to vote.

What then can be the content of a talk between Begin and Mubarak (after the now mandatory Middle Eastern hug)? What can Begin suggest to Mubarak? That he should use his influence with the Arabs of the “West Bank ?” After all, he knows the answer: Mubarak’s reply is that in order to persuade the Palestinian Arabs, he must offer them some inducement, however modest — like, for example, to give up East Jerusalem immediately and promise to give up the rest of Judea and Samaria and Gaza only after five years; or to undertake to dismantle the settlements only after five years, and for now only to stop building new ones; or, instead, to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and to negotiate with Arafat. Something; otherwise there is no point in trying to persuade them.

This is the point where in the past, except for secondary matters, the talks always ended. The blind alley has remained blind since 1979. With Israel still holding part of Sinai, the Egyptians preferred to drag out, or more usually to suspend the talks, in order to avoid a frontal confrontation. The US, for the same reason, concurred.

Now this obstacle to progress has been removed. Now the Americans will call for momentum.

* * *

The only way to achieve “momentum” is through Israeli concessions — towards the realization of “withdrawal from all the territories”.

One cannot foresee the precise degree of co-ordination between Washington and Cairo (as there was between Carter and Sadat). What is certain is that the US will, at the outset, suggest “moderate” concessions, such as “only” extending to the Arabs of East Jerusalem the right to vote in the election of the autonomy council, or such as “only” refraining from establishing new settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

The Americans were highly satisfied with the salami tactics they used on Prime Minister Begin in the past. After the Camp David agreements were approved by the Knesset, Harold Saunders, then an assistant secretary of state, explained the system in order to induce Jordan and the Palestinian Arabs to join in the autonomy negotiations.

“The art in the process”, he said, “is to put the issues in sequence, so that one decision leads to another... An example of how this works is found in the decision by the Israeli government to remove the settlers from Sinai. A few weeks ago that decision would not have been possible. But when the issue became the last remaining issue between Israel and a peace agreement with Egypt, then the Israeli people made the judgement that the issue should be resolved. I think it’s possible in dealing with the many complicated issues that concern the Palestinians to see a similar sequence of issues that could be resolved...”

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At what point the civilities of discussion will be replaced by American demands, by hint or threat of sanctions, depends on how far Egypt will cooperate with the US in the salami tactic, on how long the Saudis will refrain from giving their orders to Washington. But above all it will depend on the speed with which the Israeli negotiators begin to crumble. After all, Mr. Begin will be conducting the negotiations.

Too many people who recall his use of bold words and even bluster have forgotten that his record in negotiation is one of almost uninterrupted surrender that followed bold words and even bluster.

Here, in brief, is his record as a negotiator in defence of Israel’s interests:

He began in September 1977 by secretly promising Sadat all of Sinai, and allowed Sadat to win world sympathy for having been the initiator of the “peace process”. In December he brought Carter his “peace plan,” which included his autonomy programme. Who remembers that this was to be established as a permanent status and only after peace (with Jordan) had been achieved?

From those talks with Carter, through the exchanges that continued in the following months (with Begin or his foreign minister, Dayan), the Americans systematically proposed single amendments, gradually remoulding Begin's plan to conform with the image of their own solution.

They were persistent, but they neither pressed nor threatened. In nine months, culminating at Camp David, they achieved Begin's capitulation on all but two demands — Jerusalem and settlements, which remained "open" questions.

* * *

The peace programme was thus transformed into a transitional plan which would end after five years, and would be followed by negotiations in which Egypt, Jordan and the "West Bank" Arabs would have equal status with Israel.

In Begin's plan, the Arab autonomy council would derive its authority from the Israeli military government. In Washington in December, he resisted American proposals to give up this crucial condition. At Camp David he agreed to the replacement of the military government by the autonomy council.

In Begin's plan, Israel would be responsible for internal security and public order. At Camp David he agreed that this would be served by a "strong police force" organized by the autonomy council and manned by Arabs.

Begin's original plan, flawed and dangerous as it was, left "open" the question of sovereignty, but provided for Israel's overriding right to administer the areas. At Camp David he agreed to have the question closed by those negotiations with Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinian Arabs and to top it all, agreed to subject their outcome to a veto by the Palestinian Arabs — a moral capitulation of potentially far-reaching significance.

To these and all the other changes, Begin was unalterably opposed. To all of them, he agreed.

* * *

The complete story of Begin's capitulations is of course much more comprehensive — both within the framework of the Camp David agreement, the peace treaty and elsewhere — from his agreement in 1978 to "freeze" the settlement of Judea, Samaria and Gaza to his acceptance of

the Saudi-American demand for a cease-fire with a tottering PLO in Lebanon in 1981.

No less significant than the capitulations themselves are his efforts to pull the wool over the eyes of the people as to their significance (as when he persuaded the Knesset to agree to the dismantling of the Sinai settlements because otherwise there would be war); or when he pretended that he had pressed President Carter into abandoning American insistence that East Jerusalem was “occupied Arab territory”; or that while the Camp David agreements laid down that the Israeli military government would be “replaced,” it would in fact continue to function.

This weakness is not unknown in diplomacy — succumbing to the requests or demands of the other side and then exaggerating the pressures, or even claiming a diplomatic victory. But where in history has this weakness appeared in such extreme form and, prospectively with such dire consequences as in the case of Prime Minister Begin?

* * *

Now he is about to take charge of the renewed negotiations on the future of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

He has begun well. In an interview with NBC on Sunday he said (as reported by Israel radio) that he did not expect American or Egyptian pressures. Neither Reagan nor Haig had recently suggested any such thing; and President Sadat had once assured him that by giving the Palestinians the opportunity of autonomy he, Sadat, had done his duty by them! All is well then and tranquil in Begin’s capable hands.

This, three weeks after Israel protested to Cairo at the repetition, as an operative proposal, by Abdul Madjid the Egyptian delegate to the Kuwait “Non-Aligned” conference, of the total traditional formula as enunciated by Abdul Nasser for the elimination of Israel.

30.4.82

Squeezing Israel

The dominant fact in the life of Israel today, a fact too often blurred or crowded out of the media, is the determined effort of the United States government — the most publicized effort since the Six Day War — to bring about the reconfinement of the Jewish state to the Armistice Lines of 1949.

In the US, it is common knowledge, filtered down from the highest levels, that the administration is hoping for an early change of government in Israel; and it is widely believed that it is trying actively to promote the rise to power of the Labour Alignment.

The massacre in Beirut, in its crude and viciously distorted presentation, is providing a convenient additional weapon with which to bludgeon Israel.

The vigour of its exploitation — by spreading the calumny of Israeli blame — is certainly not a reflection of moral revulsion at the killing of unarmed civilians. After all, neither the US administration nor the media lost their cool over the seven-year reign of terror, including mass killings, that existed in Lebanon until Israel put an end to it. Not to mention the very minor tone in reference to the long list of horrors involving millions in the Far East, or in Central Africa.

If it were moral revulsion that moved the US government and media, they would, after all, have been heard and seen throughout the world denouncing the murderers; they would have been heard expressing their distress at the election as Lebanese president of Amin Jemayel, the leader of the Phalangists, whose members carried out the massacre; they would have pressed for immediate apprehension of the culprits, all of whom must be known to the authorities.

In that context, it would have been right and just to censure the Israeli authorities for their grievous blunder in allowing the Phalangists into the camp, and trusting them to behave like officers and gentlemen.

No. What was clearly uppermost in the minds and hearts of the Washington policy-makers and of the US media was that that blunder provided a timely opportunity to add fuel to the flames long being stoked under Israel — to bring about its surrender to the demands of the Arabs.

* * *

The turmoil in Israel — and the exploitation of the Beirut tragedy by the Alignment opposition — have given impetus to the unconcealed efforts of the Reagan Administration (launched already during the AWACS debate)

to split the Jewish community in the US, and to encourage the opposition in Israel in its campaign against the Likud government. These efforts have come in for severe criticism in the US.

“One assumes,” wrote Prof. Irving Kristol in the *Wall Street Journal* (September 10) “that our State Department... is counting on a response from Israeli public opinion, one that would bring down the Begin administration and replace it with another, more flexible leadership... This kind of gamesmanship on another country’s court is a very tricky affair, and more often than not ends badly”.

The New York Times columnist William Safire attacked Mr. Reagan directly: “What would your reaction be,” he asked (September 13) “if Menachem Begin invited Ted Kennedy to Israel, and in return for Democratic support of Israeli policy, promised to help him oust Ronald Reagan? Outrage, of course. No democracy has the right to conspire to overturn the electoral decision of a democratic ally. Yet that is what Mr. Reagan has done. He invited the twice-beaten leader of the Labour Party, Shimon Peres, to Washington and made a tacit arrangement: support our Mideast plan and it will be clear to Israeli voters that you, and not the stiff-necked Begin, are the chosen instrument of future American largesse”.

Mr. Peres (in Safire’s words) “leaped at the chance to become the State Department’s best friend in Jerusalem. He was the only Israeli politician with a clear idea beforehand of Secretary Shultz’s proposal to strip Israel of its rights in the West Bank”.

Peres did indeed then deny that he had made a deal with Reagan on his plan, and described the accusation as “false, ugly and unfounded”. Safire, however, persisted (September 16): “The fact is that Mr. Peres, the opposition leader, and not Prime Minister Begin, was consulted in the formulation of the Reagan Mideast decisions; Mr. Peres has since bragged that he hoped his expressed opinion had some influence, which they surely did..”.

Shimon Peres has allowed himself — also in his public appearances in the US — to stray far from the accepted norms of what is morally permissible in the political struggle. He is the first opposition leader in a democracy to campaign openly abroad against the foreign policy of his own country, to intrude himself into the handling of its diplomacy, and to allow himself to be manipulated into giving advice in effect to a foreign leader on how to contend with the policy of his own democratically elected government.

* * *

There is, however, a deeper significance in the fact that Mr. Peres has spoken approvingly of the “Reagan plan”. Many people have seen his remarks as an endorsement of the plan. It is certainly very nearly a complete endorsement. What else indeed does it mean when Mr. Peres says (on ABC television) that “we found in the president’s position a rather very close approach to our own?”

A very close approach? To a plan which calls in fact for the surrender of Gaza, of Samaria, of Judea including east Jerusalem? A “very close approach” to the traditional State Department doctrine which denies Israel’s rights beyond the 1949 Armistice Lines? A very close approach to the Rogers Plan — if newly- painted- and-powdered — whose acceptance Labour Prime Minister Golda Meir — in an interview in *The New York Times* on December 23, 1969 — declared (I wrote in error in a previous article that she had made the statement privately.) “would be treasonable”.

Has the Labour Party made a drastic change in its policy away from a “territorial compromise” based on the Allon Plan, which it has been promoting incessantly for years and years?

In this case, it is misleading the Israeli public. Or is it misleading the Reagan Administration (to Washington’s certain delight)? For the Alignment’s declared policy of “territorial compromise” is *not* a “rather very close approach” to the Reagan plan. Very far from it.

Many good, innocent people have been persuaded in the past that the territorial compromise suggested by the Labour Alignment is desirable and feasible. They are not necessarily people who read, study and dissect documents. They depend on leaders. They will certainly be deceived by Peres’s endorsement of the Reagan Plan into believing that the Reagan plan endorses the territorial compromise.

Let it be quite clear: The Reagan Plan, like the Rogers Plan, would not only legitimize the deprivation of the Jewish people of the heart of its historic homeland, not only legitimize the 1948 rape of Western Palestine by Transjordan — it would reduce Israel to the highest degree of vulnerability to an attack on its very life by the combination of Arab states.

* * *

The present campaign of American pressure encapsulated in the Reagan Plan is in fact only the first act in the developing international design to reduce Israel. It was long foreseen — as the inevitable aftermath of the sur-

render of Sinai to Egypt. The battle against it will, moreover, have to be waged in unprecedentedly difficult, indeed tragic, circumstances.

All the friends of Israel around the world, Christian as well as Jews, should be alerted to the urgency of their joining in the battle. Indeed, the several thousand Christians now in Israel for their now traditional joyful Succot rally organized by their embassy in Jerusalem, meet at a moment opportune for sombre deliberations on the part they — particularly the Americans among them — can and should play in the forthcoming political struggle.

They, like all of us, must moreover open their eyes to the even darker cloud that has been gathering for the last seven years and more: the campaign for the delegitimization of Israel as a nation and a state. This obscene project is reflected by the new wave of anti-Semitism unprecedented since the days of the Nazis, whose central target is now the sovereign State of Israel.

The purpose will surely be defeated; but the battle has yet to be waged with steadfastness, and with skill.

1.10.82

Loves That Labour Lost

There are two Israels, according to a London *Times* editorial article. The first: “a beacon of hope, a united people fighting with great gallantry against odds... aiming at a society of equality and conscience... a land of civilization, of science and culture..”. Then, however, “there is unfortunately the other Israel, the Israel of the ex-generals, the Israel that has been created not by idealism, but by war... This Israel is increasingly influenced by the defence establishment, by hard men who have spent their lives at war and been shaped by triumph in battle”.

This character assassination could have been penned by the Labour Alignment enemies of the Likud Government. Labour spokesmen and analysts have indeed in recent years persistently promoted the idea of “two cultures” in Israel, one evil and stupid — represented by the Likud establishment — and the other benign, progressive and rational. They themselves, of course, represent the second category; and they believe that they are so perceived by the just and benevolent “world” (represented by newspapers like *The Times*) which loves good Jews.

Alas — the “hard men” of the “second Israel” pilloried by *The Times* are precisely the Labour Party leaders. The article was published 10 years ago (in February 1973) when a Labour Alignment government ruled in Israel.

* * *

The eloquence of *The Times* was inspired by the unfortunate shooting down of a Libyan airliner by the Israel Air Force. The pilot had incomprehensibly strayed into Israel’s air space and had disregarded the warnings of an Israeli patrol. The Israeli patrol naturally assumed a hostile purpose by Col. Muammar Gaddafi. The circumstances were quite plain, and the Libyan pilot’s blundering performance was confirmed by the subsequent investigation. *The Times*, however, immediately categorized the event as a crime, which the old — the good — Zionists would have “regarded as an atrocity”.

Nor was *The Times* alone. A howl of denunciation and insult went up all over the world. The prestigious British weekly, the *Spectator*, added moreover that the airliner crash would “reinforce the political effects of Israel’s strike deep into northern Lebanon” — and that war might be expected at any time. What terrible people they were, these leaders of the “new” Israel, Golda Meir, Abba Eban and company.

* * *

According to Mr. Eban, writing in *The Jerusalem Post* on October 6, this just could not have happened. In an essay of incredible dissimulation, he wishes the world to understand that the relations between Israel and the world were always idyllic — spoilt only by the advent of the Likud. It is the “adventurism of Zionist Revisionism (of the Likud)” he writes that “the world community cannot absorb,” and “it is a far cry from the days when statements of Israel’s policy and vision were received with enthusiasm and warmth throughout the international system”.

Indeed. Eight months after the outburst over the Libyan airliner, the European members of the “world community,” watching Israel’s dire distress in the Yom Kippur War, refused to grant American planes, bringing urgent supplies to Israel, permission to refuel on their soil (while continuing themselves to supply arms to the Arab states). Eban obviously does not remember this manifestation of “enthusiasm and warmth” towards Labour-governed Israel. He also forgets that the then government

had paid a price in advance for that “warmth and enthusiasm”.

It had refrained from calling up the army reserves and from taking pre-emptive action which could have blunted the imminent Egyptian and Syrian offensive — in order to prove that Israel was not the aggressor. Does Mr. Eban know, does anybody know, how many Israeli soldiers’ lives were lost through that disastrous and vain sacrifice?

In the end, considerable segments of the institutions and media in the “world community” lambasted Israel as an aggressor, or evinced a hypocritical neutrality.

Nor did this exhaust the deep respect accorded Israel’s “policy and vision”. On October 20, 1973, when Israel had turned the tables after the disastrous opening of the war, Foreign Minister Abba Eban announced that a cease-fire was not even being considered — only victory.

At that very moment US Secretary of State Kissinger, to prevent that victory, was negotiating (behind Israel’s back) with the Soviets an ultimative demand to Israel for an immediate cease-fire.

There were many such manifestations of universal warmth and enthusiasm in the other crises in Israel’s life. The US denied Israel arms when the Arab states, armed by Britain, tried to destroy her in embryo in 1948. In May 1967, Foreign Minister Eban travelled, cap in hand, from capital to capital asking Western statesmen to honour the obligations undertaken in 1957 after Israel had agreed to withdraw from Sinai and Gaza. He came back empty-handed. Then the Security Council, confronted by imminent aggression by the Arab states against Israel, was rendered speechless by its warmth and enthusiasm for Labour-led Israel — and failed even to pass a resolution.

* * *

Mr. Eban writes of Israel’s “diplomatic collapse” — as a result of Likud policy, and that “our place within international organizations, seemingly secure decades ago, is now in question”. That place began to be questioned while Labour was in power. Only, Mr. Eban has seemingly forgotten, for example, that Israel was blackballed by UNESCO for “crimes against culture” a year or more before ever the Likud came to power. He also wishes apparently to erase from public memory the hostile audiences Israeli delegates to the United Nations used to encounter already in Labour’s day.

Most significantly — how can a Jewish leader have forgotten the most

vicious, the most far-reachingly dangerous resolution ever adopted against Israel and the Jewish people at the United Nations — equating Zionism with racism, an event which occurred while Labour ruled in Jerusalem?

The resolution's implication was the denial to Israel of the right of national existence. At that moment in time, the only Israeli "vision and policy" the "world community" had experienced for 27 years had come from a Labour government.

A year earlier the UN assembly had transgressed its own constitution and invited onto its platform a specially distinguished international guest — Yasser Arafat, whose farrago of hate-filled nonsense from that forum was greeted with rapturous applause.

* * *

The last 10 years have seen a recrudescence of open anti-Semitism and its popular growth in increasingly alarming proportions. The unreconstructed anti-Semite discovered long ago that he could now direct his venom against the Zionist target, the Jewish state.

Into this system the Arab campaign for Israel's destruction dovetailed neatly. In the 20th century, "robbing the Palestinians of their homeland" is a more plausible charge against the Jewish people than "the killing of Jesus".

Throughout the decade there has consequently been a continuing deterioration of Israel's international position. "The feeling grows that if only the Jews of Israel would go away and the Jews of America would stop supporting them the oil problem and the threat of war would vanish," wrote historian Barbara Tuchman (*Newsweek*, February 3, 1975) who added that "Israel is the excuse not the cause" for anti-Semitism.

Momentum indeed increased apace. By 1976, a percipient observer in the US incisively raised the alarm. Norman Podhoretz found he had to warn against the "abandonment of Israel" by the US amid the burgeoning new anti-Semitism (*Commentary*, July 1976).

Since the Likud came to power, the momentum of the hostile campaign has continued to increase. The Likud, like Labour, has had neither the wit nor the wisdom to assess its magnitude, nor to build up a machine adequate to resist its inroads in the world community.

Most significantly, the campaign has since 1977 enjoyed encouragement and support from an Israeli source — an irresponsible and often simply unscrupulous Opposition.

Nowadays, no self-respecting enemy of Israel or anti-Semite will fail to quote “Israeli sources”. In sum, as every third-grader knows, the world-wide campaign against Israel and the Jewish people has reached proportions unprecedented since the days of the Nazis.

* * *

At this moment a famous Jewish leader, Mr. Eban, announces to the “world community” in effect: “We have no complaints about your behaviour to us before 1977. It was marked by warmth and understanding for our policy and vision. As for your behaviour since 1977, the Government of Israel is to blame for that”.

Who can blame the leaders of the “world community” if they use Mr. Eban’s article as a certificate of *kashrut*, or at least of mitigating circumstances, for their actions?

15.10.82

Time To Say ‘Enough!’

My comments (on October 15) on Abba Eban’s “Dangerous Decisions” article were quite plain. I summed them up by charging him baldly with giving the world community a certificate of *kashrut* for their behaviour towards Israel by telling them, in effect, that we have no complaints about their behaviour to us before 1977, and as for their behaviour since 1977, the government of Israel is to blame.

This is a serious charge, and Mr. Eban cannot deny its grim validity. The facts are all there in black and white. One would imagine that, faced with the implications and possible consequences of his pronouncements for our sorely-tried and embattled people, he, as one of its leaders, albeit in opposition, would show at least some sign of contrition. He does nothing of the sort. He devotes most of his next article (October 22) to a “counter-attack” on me, in the patent hope that this will divert attention from the charge against him.

Is it possible that he does not grasp its gravity? Wonderfully, in this latest article, he manages to issue a new, specific *kashrut* certificate — to *The Times* of London. Mr. Eban could be forgiven for not remembering when he wrote “Dangerous Decision” that, in a leader on the downing of the Libyan aircraft in February 1973, that paper indulged in a piece of

character assassination directed explicitly against the Jewish people and its (Labour) leaders. It proclaimed that there were two Israels — the original civilized and idealist culture, and now the new “Israel of the ex-generals... created not by idealism but by war”.

But now, with my complete quotation of the obscene passage in front of him, he brushes it aside as “mere criticism of that action, which tells us nothing about the basic attitude of the critic towards Israel and the Jewish people”. It seems unbelievable, but there it is in cold print. Ten years after the event, Mr. Eban wipes the anti-Semitic spittle off his face, and off Israel’s face, and pretends it was only legitimate “criticism”.

Nevertheless, in the course of his article, he does substantiate the main burden of my charge — though the manner of his doing so does not enhance his credibility. My article had recalled to his attention the hostile behaviour of the international community towards Israel under Alignment government. I had cited only a few salient examples: the UNESCO blackballing, Arafat at the UN Assembly, the Zionist-racist equation, the shoulder-shrugging indifference of the Western governments to Israel’s dire danger in May 1967, her abandonment by the shameless European governments in October 1973. And that is only part of the dismal story.

I had to recall it because of the astonishing distortion of historic fact in Mr. Eban’s article of October 6. There he had waxed almost poetic over the idyllic behaviour of the international community towards Israel in the golden days of Alignment government. He had described them as “the days when statements of Israel’s policy and vision were received with enthusiasm and warmth throughout the international system”.

Now, in reply to my detailed (though only partial) analysis, he blandly proclaims that “the proceedings of the international organizations are not strictly relevant to what I wrote on October 6”.

* * *

I leave it to Mr. Eban to sort out the problem of his credibility. What is more important is that elsewhere in his article, he tells us what he himself describes as the truth. He confesses that “there were many cases of alienation from Israel in the past”; and further on he writes:

“The truth is that we used to live on two levels. There was certainly a level of antagonism and hostility, but I insist on the fact that there was also a level of warmth and understanding”.

How is it that in his earlier article he omitted to mention that there were *any*

“occasions of alienation”? Why in that article did he forget the interesting truth about the two levels — insisting, in fact, that there had been only one level, that Israel under Labour was a benevolent world’s blue-eyed boy? Is it because even the enemies of Israel, even anti-Semites, may be whitewashed in the holy cause of belittling and besmirching the non-Alignment government of the Jewish State? Nowhere in his article does Mr. Eban indicate any other motive.

His “attack” on me does bear obliquely on one important question relevant to our argument. He asserts that I have a theory that “the whole world is against us and always was”. This is a fabrication made out of whole cloth.

It ignores everything I have been saying and writing on the subject for years. In Israel and the US, I have incessantly promoted the theme that Israel, for a variety of good American (and Western) reasons, both political and moral, has a vast constituency of friends, large enough to provide a security belt against built-in tendencies in US administrations that are inimical to Israel.

Hence my incessant criticism of the Alignment government and, more emphatically, of the Likud, for failing to establish adequate machinery to mobilize and activate that tremendous heterogeneous constituency. This complex purpose cannot be achieved except by a powerful, authoritative government information ministry. That is, in brief, the idea of a “machine” of which Mr. Eban speaks with contempt and which, according to a poll published in *The Jerusalem Post* on September 17, enjoys the support of 87.6 per cent of the people.

The information failure, demonstrated tragically time after time, has been a considerable factor in the easy propaganda successes of the Arabs and the other enemies of Israel; and it is one reason why the situation has gone from bad to worse. The Alignment governments laid the foundations of failure, and **the** Likud, which continued the process, must bear a large share of the blame. There is one factor, however, which Mr. Eban and his colleagues have no right to overlook: the inspiration provided for Israel’s enemies, and the doubts sown in the minds of objective observers and of friends, by vilifying pronouncements from Labour Alignment leaders, far exceeding the bounds of political criticism, against the Likud and Mr. Begin personally.

This phenomenon accompanied Mr. Begin and his party long before they came to power. Here is a sample of Mr. Eban’s own performance. Shortly after the Yom Kippur War he was interviewed by the prestigious

weekly *The New Republic* (March 23, 1974). After he had declared that had Mr. Begin been a member of the government there would not have been a cease-fire and that “it would only have made possible a government of continual war,” he was asked if Begin could win in new elections. He replied:

“The people of Israel will never elect a government of that kind, never, because basically the people do not want a policy of endless bloodshed”.

With reams of such material in their Begin dossier, the foreign media were able, within hours of his victory in the 1977 elections, to disseminate an “authoritative” profile of Begin and the prospective government of Jewish State. The irresponsible hate campaign has continued to this day. Only a fortnight ago (October 14), Professor Shlomo Avineri, a leading Labour academic, published a scurrilous — and mendacious — attack on Mr. Begin, his background and philosophy, precisely in the *International Herald Tribune*.

* * *

Mr. Eban remarks in his article that “the world’s hostility and friendship are variables, and one of the factors that influence them is the way that Israeli governments decide, speak and act”. This is true.

Has Mr. Eban ever asked himself, then, how it came about that the “world” launched such a horrendous campaign of vilification against Mr. Begin the day after the 1977 election — long before he had formed a government at all? And to what extent he — Mr. Eban — and his friends were responsible for the mountain of prejudice built up over the years against the future prime minister.

Does he not sense now into what kind of moral and intellectual bog the reckless dictates of partisan hatred can lead? Will he and his friends not ask themselves now, with so much damage done, whether — without surrendering any right of legitimate criticism — the time has not come to say to themselves: “Enough!”

29.10.82

Arabs and Islam

The Saudi Connection — And Israel's Silence

The influence of Saudi Arabia on our affairs has not been adequately appreciated in the past. Oil was used as a political factor already before the State was established and engendered some of the cynical utterances of the time. President Franklin Roosevelt, after meeting King Ibn Saud in February 1945, said he had learnt more about the subject of Palestine in five minutes than he had learnt in his lifetime. It subsequently transpired that all that Roosevelt had heard from Ibn Saud were the traditional timeworn diatribes against the Jews in Eretz Yisrael and against Zionism.

That conversation took place at the beginning of the period of serious American penetration into the Middle East, and of the American oil companies into Saudi Arabia. Three years later the Jewish people had its first taste of the American connection with Saudi Arabia — when Ibn Saud exerted himself to prevent United States support for the establishment of a Jewish State.

In those days Saudi oil was produced by American oil companies under a concession granted them by the king; and concurrently with the attempt of the Arabs to prevent by force of arms the rise of the State, the oil companies conducted a vigorous campaign of propaganda in early 1948 against American support for it. They claimed that this support might result in the cancellation of the concessions by the Saudi monarch, stopping the flow of oil and destroying the excellent business they were building up.

This propaganda, which was echoed and found support within the American administration, unquestionably contributed to Washington's decision in March 1948 to wash its hands of the partition plan; it also influenced the unrelenting maintenance of the embargo on the supply of arms to both sides in the war. The Arabs, who received all their requirements from the British, did not need American or other arms; Israel had no other source, so that the embargo operated only against her.

The amusing truth is that in return for disseminating the deterrent threat that Saudi Arabia was likely to cancel the concessions, the oil companies

received solemn assurances from King Ibn Saud that whatever happened he would *not* cancel the concessions.

There were Saudi soldiers that fought at the front in the wars against Israel, but Saudia's main military contribution was the sending of reserves. A much more substantial contribution, which is continually growing, has been the financial support to the "confrontation States" especially Egypt and Jordan, and to the terrorists; and since the Yom Kippur War Saudi Arabia has played a major part in directing the oil threat against the Western States.

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For some time it has become evident that Saudi Arabia has gradually and systematically been building up a military establishment — and she appears on the horizon as a potential Power in our region. According to calculations made in the United States, her military expenditure is equal to that of Western Germany, France and Britain combined; the value of her current orders of military equipment from the US alone amounts to more than all the arms deals between the US and Israel since the Americans started supplying Israel with arms. For some years thousands of American technicians and advisers (governmental and private) have been active in Saudia, building, in addition to civilian installations and services, the infrastructure for a major "military entity". Their number is constantly on the increase and has reached 70,000.

The Saudis have been revealed as the fiercest enemies of Israel in every respect. They maintain a strict boycott of Jews as Jews. They are enthusiastic distributors of the antisemitic hate-book "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" (a basic commodity in the propaganda of the Nazis who used it to provide the "ideological" justification for the destruction of the Jewish people). They do not conceal the fact that the purpose of the military build-up of the kingdom is the war against Israel and nothing else. King Khaled expressed himself in characteristic terms in an interview in the *New York Times* in May 1976:

When we build up our military power we have no designs on anybody except those who took away by force our lands and our holy places in Jerusalem, and we know who they are.

They do not conceal the fact, indeed they boast, that Saudia regards

herself as the purchasing agent and chief storekeeper for all the Arab States in their war on Israel. “Our arms are at the disposal of the Arab nation in the fight against the common enemy” — that is how the Minister of Defence Sultan defined the task of his country.

They themselves indeed do not conceal. The fairy tales and the distortions, the nonsensical explanations calculated to disguise their purpose and the objective of their military build-up—they leave it to the Americans to concoct. No less significant perhaps than the tremendous part played by the United States in the military build-up of Saudi Arabia is the fact that the American administration is engaged in a systematic campaign of disinformation about the grave danger to Israel growing out of the “special connection” between the United States and Saudi Arabia.

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The business of deception and anaesthetizing reassurance which constituted a part of the unprecedentedly vigorous campaign to secure support in the Senate and among the public for the “package deal” of selling F-15 planes to Saudia, was (and remains) diversified and comprehensive. Spokesmen for the administration have not balked at blatant distortions to prettify Saudi Arabia (and incidentally to paint Israel as too demanding). Vice-president Mondale (whose personal friendship towards Israel is beyond doubt, but he has a duty to his chief) has asserted that The United States has been supplying arms to Israel “in a partnership relationship” for *thirty years*. Who among his listeners was aware that the US supplied no arms at all to Israel for the first 17 years of its existence, and that at the most critical hour in her life — at her birth and in the war for bare survival in 1948 — the US maintained the embargo against her so punctiliously as to jail citizens who tried to send her a few miserable rifles?

Thus President Carter claimed that Saudi Arabia had not participated in the wars against Israel; so has the fable of Saudi “moderation” also become one of the most widely disseminated fairy-tales in the United States. Among the examples of the Saudis’ moderation: last year they contributed some 25 million dollars to the terrorists. (In an article in this month’s *Commentary* Steven Rosen and Chaim Shaked point out that Yassir Arafat has paid no fewer than four visits to Riad this year and met with senior officials in the government).

It has also been stated by officials in the State Department and by other government spokesmen in Washington that the Saudis need the arms the

US is supplying, for defence against a possible attack on her oilfields a) by the Soviet Union, b) by Iraq, c) by Iran, d) by Cubans from South Yemen. None of these spokesmen has troubled to explain why against such threats from the north-east, from the east and from the south, the Saudis are building a most sophisticated air base precisely in the north-west of the kingdom, near the Israeli border. When they were pressed to the wall about the function of this airfield, they described it as a “toothless” airfield. Mark Siegel, for example, was told that Hawk missiles would not be emplaced there. After Siegel resigned from the White House it transpired that his colleagues had fed him with mendacities about the Saudian build-up. It was expected that he would pass them on to the Jewish gatherings he addressed on behalf of the administration...

These are grave facts, and they becloud our relations with the United States. To them must be added the no less serious fact that in the package deal Washington demonstrated its readiness to violate, explicitly and rudely, a solemn undertaking made to Israel. The acquisition of F-15 planes is a right for which Israel paid a heavy price, and represents an American recompense for the far-reaching concessions made by the government in Sinai in September 1975, including the abandonment of the Abu Rodeis oilfields and the withdrawal from the Mitla and Gidi passes.

From the sum total of the accumulating facts a change for the worse is rapidly emerging in the power-relations in the area, and a substantive hardening of the attitude of the Carter administration towards Israel. This attitude ensures the elimination of any prospect (if such a prospect exists at all) of an accommodation with the Arabs, and it brings closer the danger of war. For it encourages the Arabs to abandon any thought of the need for rapprochement with Israel and it strengthens their belief in ultimate victory over her.

These are subjects which should be placed at the centre of the government’s discussions, and on which the government should initiate talks with the United States. It is about them that the government should now mount a comprehensive information campaign in the United States, and set up a front against the incessant propaganda there being disseminated against us.

* * *

The angry debate on the planes for Saudi Arabia was at its height only a few weeks ago. Its implications and the implications of the Saudi

connection give sleepless nights to Israel's friends in the United States, who follow anxiously the political moves of their government. Throughout the many hours of debate in the Knesset this week — a debate that was concerned entirely with the relations between Israel and the United States not one word was uttered either by coalition Members or by Opposition Members, about the United States' behaviour and policy towards Saudi Arabia. Nobody raised the modest proposal to ask for explanations from Washington.

Is this not incredible?

Ma'ariv 23.6.78

The Palestinian Fire and the Jordanian Frying-Pan

It is common knowledge that a consensus of opinion exists in Israel against the setting up of a separate "Palestinian State" in Eretz Yisrael. Foreign statesmen have discovered that they can earn a friendly word and even lavish praise in some quarters in Israel if only they will declare that they are also against a Palestinian State. In this way they throw a mantle of moderation and generosity over the "solution" they propose to the "dispute": that Israel should simply withdraw to the Armistice Lines of 1949 (certainly with modifications, naturally insubstantial ones). The danger to the very existence of an Israel within the "green line" is usually described by the Israeli Information services as being related to the creation of a "Palestinian State" on its border.

This "explanation", as well as the promise by world statesmen that a Palestinian State will not arise in Judea, Samaria and Gaza, are likely to sow very strange illusions. They befog the political realities beyond recognition.

If Israel were to withdraw, hand over Judea, Samaria to Jordan and shrink into the 1949 Armistice Lines, neither Mr. Carter, nor Professor Brzezinski nor Mr. Vance would be able (nor would they lift a finger) to prevent the establishment of a "Palestinian" State if the Arabs wanted such a State to arise. No government in Israel which had withdrawn "under pressure of its own free will" to the Armistice Lines and had thus renounced sovereignty, will invade Judea and Samaria in order to prevent by force the consummation of the "democratic will" of the

residents of the territory. Should the Arabs then decide — even if under Fatah threats — to elect Yasser Arafat as their Prime Minister, nobody from outside will prevent it; and the Americans now making “promises” will shrug their shoulders, and wag an admonitory finger at shrunken Israel lest she think of interfering.

* * *

The logic of reality points unequivocally to the close relationship that would be created between a “Palestinian State” and the Soviet Union. Yasser Arafat does not pay his frequent visits to Moscow for reasons of health. They suggest a functional relationship. Officers of the terrorist organizations are regularly given courses and training in various schools in the USSR, and Moscow is a regular and reliable source for arms.

(The Americans, who are twisting and turning to the point of absurdity in order to leave a door open for political recognition of the terrorists, ignore, *inter alia*, the interesting phenomenon that the two main and most helpful patrons of the terrorist organizations are the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia. The Saudis gave the PLO last year, among other things, 35 million dollars.)

Nevertheless if the rulers in the Kremlin come to the conclusion that there is a greater chance of getting rid of Israeli rule if Jordanian rule is promised in its place, they are likely to persuade the PLO to accept this solution — as a first step. At the same time the Soviet Union will promise its support for an “independence” movement which will serve as a base for attacks on the State of Israel in the other parts of Falastin. The Jewish people, as it happens, has had experience of such political strategy on the part of the Soviets, when they applied it to our advantage. The unequivocal diplomatic support they extended to us helped substantially to pave the way towards the establishment of the Jewish State with the approval of the United Nations. They also supplied us with arms to prevent our defeat in the War of Independence when the British armed the Arabs and the United States helped them by maintaining a strict embargo.

Moscow’s object then was to get the British out, and to this end they were prepared to tolerate — and encourage — the rise of a Jewish State. Subsequently they transferred their support to our enemies; and now they give every aid possible to these seekers after our destruction. The USSR will have no difficulty therefore, if the need arises, in accommodating

herself to Jordanian rule in western Eretz Yisrael as an advanced stage towards domination by her “Palestinian” allies.

* * *

There is another illusion, however, which has been promoted no less avidly over the years: that if it is Jordan that gains control of Judea and Samaria (this time legally and with Israel’s blessing) no heavy artillery will be emplaced at Kalkilieh, that Hussein and the people of Jordan will agree to Israel’s “existing”, that of all the Arab States precisely they will restrain themselves when from a hill in Samaria they are able to look down on the green, tantalizingly tiny total ten-mile width of the Jewish State along its most heavily populated central strip.

This is one of the conventional stupidities of our time. It derives partly from a severe optical illusion about the personality of King Hussein. It may be that his evident personal qualities (he has shown that he is a courageous man), and the romantic episodes in his life, with their tragic accompaniments, lend him a certain human charm. Hussein is one of the most vicious and mendacious propagandists against Israel. There is nobody who can equal him in the dissemination of historical lies. Some years ago he distributed among thousands of scholars and clergymen in the United States, a recorded hymn of hate in which he claimed that Israel was a threat to the Christian Holy Places in Jerusalem. Jordan, he said, had guarded these places for hundreds of years. (“Jordan” was born as a separate State called Transjordan in 1946 out of a manoeuvre by Britain which had torn it out, in stages, from the area intended to be the Jewish National Home. Transjordan is simply eastern Palestine and it was thus referred to in the Mandate). During the only period that Jordan, as an illegal occupier, controlled the Holy Places in Jerusalem — between 1948 and 1967, she distinguished herself by her calculated campaign of vandalism, destroying all the Jewish synagogues, and desecrating the Jewish graves on the Mount of Olives. To this day Hussein continues to disseminate his tale in the Christian world.

More surprising is the phenomenon of forgetfulness about Hussein’s entry into the Six-Day War. He did so in spite of the pleas of Prime Minister Eshkol. It was he who gave the order to his soldiers then to kill all the civilians, men, women and children in some of the villages in Israel. Indeed there is not a single indication that he, any more than any other Arab ruler, has given up the hope of eliminating Israel from the map.

It is safe to assume that, unless he has partners, he will not dare to attack Israel even in the attenuated Armistice Lines of 1949. If however, these lines were restored, with Jordan resting on the Kalkilieh-Ramallah-Jerusalem “Border”, and a co-ordinated Arab States’ offensive were planned, there is every reason to believe that Jordan would rush unhesitatingly into the fray.

* * *

It is impossible to foretell the details of developments. Their thrust is clear. It is most important for our national health and the sanity of our political management, to erase the illusion born of thoughtless utterances by important people, that an Israeli evacuation from Judea and Samaria will be less dangerous if these areas are handed over to Jordan and not to a “Palestinian State”. The difference would be the same as that between breaking your left leg and right arm — and breaking your right leg and left arm.

Ma’ariv 18.7.78

The Existential Fact

The President of Israel pays an uncomfortable price for the rarefied air of his lofty post: he has to refrain from making political pronouncements. He is presumed to speak always for the whole house of Israel.

President Navon indeed did so at the World Jewish Congress assembly last Sunday, when he re-emphasized the importance of *aliya* and of Jewish education in the Diaspora.

When, however, the president ventures to give advice on the sensitive subject of the Jewish people’s relations with other peoples, he has to be particularly careful to ensure that the picture he conveys of those relations is credible and that the advice he offers is feasible and at least dignified. This Navon failed to do.

He called on Diaspora Jews, through the WJC “to establish a dialogue with Islam, so that Israel and the Moslem world could better understand each other”. Year in, year out, Israel and the Jewish people are subjected to a flood of insults, denigration and mortal threats from the “Moslem

world". Israel ever since her birth has been the object of a fiercely operated economic and social boycott, with which nations friendly to her are coerced to conform, on pain of economic sanctions; Israeli sportsmen and sports teams are barred from many international competitions — under pressure from the Moslem world.

In addition to the terrorism sponsored and financed by its affluent members, the Moslem world flaunts all the elements of belligerency. In an unrelenting diplomatic campaign it leaves no doubt of its determination to bring about the extinction of the Jewish State.

It is the Jews, then, says Navon, who must now take the initiative and (wiping the spittle from their faces) "establish a dialogue with Islam". So much for dignity. What of feasibility? Should they write a letter to "Dear Islam"? "Please speak to us"? "Please let us explain ourselves"? Perhaps something like this: "We are not *really* the scum of the earth, or the 'pest and plague cursed like Satan, who was expelled by God from the realm of his mercy'; and truly we do *not* deserve to be 'humiliated and restored to our previous miserable conditions', as your theologians and politicians claim in the name of the Koran". (This is only a small part of the catalogue of barbaric vilification disseminated by the Moslems not in the year 700 or 1300 but today).

Maybe Navon does not seriously believe that a dialogue is possible and was merely dreaming aloud. With the mounting evidence that the Jews of the Diaspora are facing a fresh period of embattlement by a reawakened anti-Semitism — much of it powered by the Moslem world — must the only advice that Israel can offer them be either degrading or fatuous, or both?

* * *

President Navon's thoughtless remark might be disregarded if it did not add a strain to the chorus of disinformation and misinformation so prominent in the campaign against our people. The relations between the Jewish people and Islam do *not* stem from some mutual misunderstanding but from a historic, deep-rooted, unbridled Islamic hostility, now reinforced by great wealth.

Indeed, one of the most critical tasks of the Jewish people is to ensure that at least its friends should absorb the fact — bleak, uncomfortable but existential — that the Islamic world, if it were prepared to accept Israel's collective existence at all, would only tolerate it as a subject community under Moslem sovereignty. Jews are not the only objects and potential vic-

tims of this sovereign purpose, as Christian communities have found to their cost; but they are the only ones who have had the temerity to proclaim their national independence on their own territory in the “heart of the Arab world,” and — worse — have successfully resisted the Arab attempts to destroy them.

Ignorance, and consequently misdirection, about the content and the systems of Islamic thought, is rife in the West — to its own peril as well as Israel’s. Bland, off-the-cuff, “even-handed” advice such as Navon’s only helps to foster that ignorance.

A startling and more flagrant example of disinformation (however unintentional) was provided only two days before Navon’s speech. In an article in *The Jerusalem Post* (16 January) Chaim Herzog describes a meeting with President Sadat in which Dr. Anis Mansour participated. He introduces Mansour to his readers as “a philosopher and poet of stature”. Who could guess from this impressive cultural attribution that Mansour has a specific philosophy on Israel and the Jewish people, and that his philosophy as published could easily have graced the pages of the Nazi *Stuermer*?

Editor of *October* magazine, and a confidant of his President, Mansour (who, by Herzog’s description, appears as an amiable personality) was in the forefront of the Egyptian media campaign against Begin, Israel and the Jewish people in early 1978 when Sadat first broke off the talks on Begin’s peace plan. This was not, however, a single-shot outburst. Mansour’s record is a long one.

In February 1972 he wrote in *Al Akhbar*: “They have what they call Passover, the feast of unleavened bread, which is celebrated by bleeding a non-Jew... The rabbi himself does the butcher’s work. This is the nature of our enemy”.

Then, for example (again in *Al Akhbar* and as reported in *Le Monde*, August 21, 1973) Mansour denounced the Jews as the “enemies of mankind. They have no principles. They respect no religion except their own and they are traitors to the countries that offer them shelter”. He went on to defend the killing of Jews by Hitler, a “genius, the value of whose anti-Semitic policy history is beginning to prove..”.

In *Akher Sa’ah*, a mass circulation Egyptian magazine (April 10, 1974), Mansour described the Jewish religion as “cruel and crude”. “Their own Bible,” he wrote, “declares that they are wild beasts and deserve all the suffering and pain that they have endured throughout the ages”, and so on.

* * *

Chaim Herzog, who at the UN represented Israel with resource and much dignity, is a candidate to head an Information Ministry in an Alignment government. His visit to Egypt was one of a series by Alignment leaders with the obvious purpose of “establishing relations”. Do his words on Mansour suggest the nature of such projected relations—kowtowing to crude anti-Semites and whitewashing them?

The implications of Herzog’s performance are not mitigated by the fact that his publicistic message of Mansour is in keeping with the precedents set by the Likud government. Mansour himself has been received in Israel as an honoured guest. The Likud government’s historic surrenders to Egypt were accompanied on the personal plane by self-abasement and unctuous flattery towards the Egyptian leaders. The agreements reached were also distinguished by a suppression of historic truth on the origins of the conflict.

* * *

Herzog seems willing to follow the example of the government also in befuddling the public by hinting at, and then withholding from his readers, his sense of truth of the relations between Israel and Egypt. He writes: “One cannot avoid a number of unanswered questions, and an uncomfortable feeling that in this historic and vital process we are being outmaneuvered”. No less; but he then proceeds to refrain from telling his readers what the “unanswered questions” are.

It is not unfair to conclude that he does so because he knows the answer to the “unanswered questions”: that the peace treaty is in fact a sham treaty and, when the entirety of Sinai is in Egypt’s cosy embrace, Sadat and Mansour, and Ghali and Tohamy, will be in the lead of a renewed and ever fiercer international campaign to press Israel into the indefensible 1948 Armistice lines — there to await the combined Arab onslaught, for which Egypt has kept open all her options, political, strategic and logistic.

In the meantime, the Israel government, in somnambulistic imperturbability continues to mumble about a “peace process” as though it existed: the Opposition leaders suppress their uncomfortable feelings and wave the tattered remnants of a “Jordanian option” as though *that* existed; and even the President conjures up, out of the thin air, dialogues with an unhearing, militant Islam.

23.1.81

Counsel of Despair

Incredible as it may seem, the “peace plan” of Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia is being accorded a solemn welcome by Western political leaders. German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher, British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington and French President Francois Mitterand have all proclaimed, each in his own style, that the plan is a positive document, a great step forward, testifying to Saudia’s moderation and its constructive role in the Middle East. It has also been greeted warmly in some quarters in the US as additional grounds for supplying the Saudis with AWACS planes and for amplifying five-fold the offensive power of their F-15 planes.

All these promoters of the plan, if they have read it carefully, must know that it is an undisguised prescription for the dismemberment of the State of Israel.

Its principles are simple. First the restoration of the 1949 Armistice Lines by “Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occupied in 1967, including Arab Jerusalem,” which must become the “capital of the Palestinian State”.

This blueprint for shrinking Israel into the death-trap of the Armistice Lines is followed by the traditional recipe for its outright erasure. It is worded in sophisticated terms, there must be an “affirmation of the rights of the Palestinian people” and compensation for “those Palestinians who do not want to return”. Israel must, therefore, accept those “refugees” who do wish to return —to return, that is, to the homes they abandoned in 1948 — at the orders of their leaders — in Jaffa, Haifa, Acre, West Jerusalem, et al. Further: the “rights of the Palestinian people” naturally include the right to the whole territory of Palestine.

It is not likely that these statesmen have simply followed the dictates of sycophancy now popular in Europe in order to win a pat on the head from the Saudi prince and that they have not even read the Saudi document. No; they assuredly know that what they are saying is that a plan for the destruction of the Jewish state is at least a reasonable basis for discussion.

* * *

The European statesmen evidently do not sense any discomfort at the idea. After all, Genscher and Lord Carrington in June, 1980, themselves played leading parts in formulating the Venice resolutions — whose

consummation would reduce Israel to absolute vulnerability against the coalition of Arab states.

Mitterrand, new to the business of issuing orders to Israel, having dutifully made his pilgrimage to Riyadh, and duly genuflected to the oil potentates, has adapted himself with surprising speed to the latest manifestation of Europe's self-abasement by adding his words of praise to the Fahd plan.

None of these statesmen has made the slightest acknowledgement of the fact that the Israeli Government promptly rejected the Fahd "principles" as a prescription for the dismantlement of Israel. This blunt disregard of Israel and what she thinks about these plans for her future has indeed become a habit. The Europeans' own Venice resolutions were couched in tones used towards a defeated nation "expected" to accept the conditions of peace dictated by the victors.

* * *

Yet the question must be asked — for all the bitterness of its roots — why the European statesmen should have inhibitions about a Saudi framework for Israel's destruction when Israel's own leaders have accepted and are implementing and promoting a so-called peace treaty which is laying the groundwork for the achievement, albeit in stages, of that very aim.

Anwar Sadat to his credit, never abandoned the traditional Arab formula; and now his successor has followed his lead. In his presidential inaugural speech, Hosni Mubarak told the Egyptian Parliament that Israel must withdraw from all the territories occupied in 1967, including "Arab Jerusalem;" that the Palestinians must be accorded the rights of self-determination; and what this meant, he said (again in Sadat's words) must be left to the Palestinians themselves to decide — because "all of it belongs to them".

It is no secret to the European leaders that the Israeli leaders (both in government and in opposition) continue to pretend that they believe that Egypt — flaunting demands identical, except for semantic refinements, with those of the Saudis — intends the Jewish State to have peace. Why, they may ask, should they not pretend the same about the Saudi Arabians?

* * *

This is the most depressing element in the developing grim prospect. In

the spring of 1939, when Ze'ev Jabotinsky was fighting his last desperate battle to open the eyes of the Jews of Eastern Europe to the imminence of a national catastrophe (he could not foresee the Holocaust), he wrote an article describing the reaction of the people he was trying to save. He entitled the article "Chloroformed". The East European Jewish leaders were then working powerfully against him — blindly minimizing or even denying the dangers to their community.

The political leaders of Israel, in government and opposition, are doing all in their power to anaesthetize the people. The reason is that they are afraid to face the facts squarely. Many if not most of them know the truth; that to the Egyptians, the acquisition of Sinai is merely the first major stage in an ongoing process of dismantlement of the state (though Egypt may be prepared to recommend to whoever rules Western Palestine that the Jewish community be allowed to live as a tolerated minority in the "Arab homeland").

The Israeli leaders maintain the pretence that it is perfectly normal for the Egyptians, after signing a peace treaty and underwriting the provisions of the Camp David Agreement (disastrous enough in itself) to press — and insist on — exactly the same concessions from Israel as they did before the agreement and the treaty.

They pretend that there is no significance in the fact (which indeed they ignore) that a weakened Israel will be submitted to the same pressures after the delivery of Sinai as it was before the "peace process" began. The same pressures? No; far stronger pressures, and now they will be of worldwide dimensions.

The prime minister blandly describes the Egyptian demands on Israel in Judea, Samaria and Gaza as "differences of opinion?" Difference of opinion — the demand for total withdrawal from the "West Bank" and Jerusalem, as though the Camp David Agreement (which at least postponed the evil hour) did not exist? And an opposition leader, Chaim Zadok, insists that Israel must fulfil all its obligations under the treaty because Egypt has punctiliously fulfilled its — a statement he must surely know is quite untrue. Both he and government spokesmen pretend not to have noticed Egypt's support in July 1980 for a UN resolution which, in fact, is a denunciation of the Camp David Agreement; that her spokesmen continue to vilify and spread hostile propaganda against Israel (an infringement of the peace treaty); that it is arming to the teeth, far beyond the rational requirements of a possible clash with Libya.

They do not dare to reply when these and other facts are published, nor

do they try to explain them, and the media in Israel, on the whole, appear to support a policy of not troubling the public with unpleasant information about Egypt.

Yet the parallel with 1939 is only partial. The people of Israel have not been anaesthetized. The majority understand that we are not heading for peace. But they are being cajoled into believing that it is now “impossible” to reverse the process — that while the US is entitled to claim “changed circumstances” (such as Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the Iranian revolution) to justify its breach of undertakings to Israel and the massive arming of Israel’s enemies — Egypt’s infringements of the Camp David agreement and the peace treaty do not even have to be explained — and only Israel, whose circumstances have changed grievously in the past two years — only Israel must march forward uncomplainingly into the teeth of the trap.

This is a counsel of weakness and despair. There is no reason in logic, in justice or in law why Israel should not declare boldly that the circumstances, changed not only by Soviet expansionism but by Egyptian and United States action, create unacceptable dangers; and that because, in the circumstances, the strip of Sinai still in Israel’s hands is vital to her security. Egypt must agree to reopen negotiations on its future.

23.10.81

Global Relations

The Soviet Union — And a Hypnotised World

The nations watch as though hypnotised while the Soviet Union by diverse means takes control of keypoints throughout the world. The Western governments, who are designed to be the collective victim of Soviets' expansionism, treat it as they treat statistics of traffic accidents: these too are disturbing and "Maybe something can be done?" From time to time an American spokesman directs at Moscow, in diplomatic terms, an appeal or a word of reproval. Thereafter his government resumes the regular course of its policy. This policy is not unequivocal, but its general thrust is predictable — and its results are unmistakeable. They make things easier for the Soviet Union.

The Carter administration cannot be blamed for this policy. It was laid down by previous administrations. It was most conspicuous in the days of President Nixon, when it was conducted by Dr. Kissinger. Its first victim was the State of Israel. Then the Americans took pains to deprive Israel of victory in the Yom Kippur War, forced a cowed Israeli government to spare the Egyptian Third Army and afterwards extorted from Israel more far-reaching concessions so that the United States could improve its relations with Egypt and "eliminate Soviet influence in the Middle East".

What in fact was the total influence of the American manoeuvres on the position of the Soviets in the Middle East? It made no difference to their excellent relations with the terrorists. The Soviets' relations with Iraq are of the closest and they maintain an air and naval base on its territory; with Syria their relations are reasonably close, and the port of Latakia is available for their use. Libya can be counted as one of the Soviets' satellites, South Yemen emphatically so. Excellent mutual relations with all of these, and with Algeria, ensure a network of bases for her extensive activities. Does she need Egypt today? After all, her interest in Egypt has diminished considerably since Kissinger's involuted policy brought her the prize of inestimable value for which she had been striving for eight years: the opening of the Suez Canal.

* * *

The opening of the Canal cut off some seventy percent (on average) of the route of Soviet ships from their home ports on the Black Sea to the Persian Gulf or the east coast of Africa. Previously the USSR had to move her warships, and to send her goods the length of the Mediterranean Sea, through the Straits of Gibraltar and then round the African continent, or alternately from Vladivostock in the Far East. Now the whole area east and south of Suez has become a kind of backyard of the USSR.

At the time, Israel was promised that if only she would withdraw in Sinai, she would be rewarded by the love of the Western States for the advantages they derived from the consequent opening of the Canal; but from the outset the advantages to the West were comparatively minor. As for the United States, the advantages were of even lesser significance. In view of her geographic remoteness the difference in length between the route through the Canal and that round the Cape of Good Hope is very small.

When the US was preparing the blow to herself she was, so to speak, already preparing the cure. She built a big air and naval base on the island of Diego Garcia in the heart of the Indian Ocean. It is difficult to see Diego Garcia as a counterweight to the multi-pronged expansion of the Soviet Union resulting from the opening of the Canal. From the outset however, Diego Garcia suffers from a serious drawback. It is designed for use in case of war, whereas the central fact of the Soviets' strategy is that they do not intend to wage war at all with the United States.

Their strategy is so to strengthen themselves that their power, and the fear of their power, mixed with the general fear of a world war, will ensure their superiority throughout the world without war — except those local conflicts where they do not advertise their presence. The main profit to the Soviet Union from the opening of the Canal is in the free movement of her vast mercantile marine, speedily and with maximum economy, in maintaining contact and bringing supplies — military and civilian — to her satellites like South Yemen, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, and her other clients in the area between the South African Republic in the south and the Persian Gulf in the north.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the opening of the Canal however is precisely the psychological one: the fact that the pressures and manoeuvres to ensure all these advantages to the Soviet Union came from the United States. The intense desire of Washington — blinded by the prospect of winning Egypt's heart — to bring about the opening of the Canal, and the goodwill which the people at the State Department

engendered for the Soviets as being completely innocent of any negative purposes in the world, provided incisive proof to the rulers at the Kremlin how far weakness of will and weakness of mind, lack of judgment and absence of foresight, reigned supreme in Washington. “With an opponent of this calibre” they might well have said in Moscow “there is no need to hesitate in pursuing our plans”.

It is no accident that within ten weeks of the opening of the Canal in June 1975 the Cuban emissaries of the USSR arrived in Angola, and these were steadily reinforced until they were able to ensure a victory in the civil war to the minority force of the pro-Soviet Agostino Neto. In the light of this development Secretary of State Kissinger did at last wake up and try to persuade the US Congress to send aid to the pro-Western majority force in Angola; but the Congress, which Dr. Kissinger had for so many years toiled to anaesthetize and reassure about the peaceful intentions of the Soviets now responded by quoting Kissinger’s thesis — and refused to intervene in a “local conflict”. That is how Angola became a forward Soviet base in Africa.

* * *

Now Rhodesia is at the centre of the stage — and the United States is working so energetically that the success of its moves will bring about the strengthening of those elements striving for the establishment of Soviet influence. Mr. Ian Smith has finally succumbed to the heavy pressure exerted on him, has reached agreement with the black leaders Mazarowe and Sithole and has set up a caretaker government. Democratic elections have been promised.

This agreement however is opposed by the dissident leaders, who are conducting a campaign of terror from across the border against the Rhodesian population. These leaders — Mugabe and N’komo — are declared Marxists, and Mugabe has even announced that when he takes power a one-party Marxist regime will be established in Rhodesia. As he and N’komo do not have the support of a majority in the country they are not prepared to join in the agreement for democratic elections. They maintain bases in Mozambique, Rhodesia’s pro-Soviet neighbour, where a Soviet general is already in command of the armed forces. It is apparent that Mugabe has been chosen by the Soviets to be the “Agostino Neto of Rhodesia”, and already several hundred Cubans have arrived in Mozambique.

What is the reaction of the United States? Instead of hastening to welcome the agreement between Smith and the black leaders, to promise them aid, ensure decisive influence for herself — and to demonstrate to the Soviets that she has learnt the lesson of Angola — she proclaims her dissatisfaction with the agreement, and chooses to conduct negotiations with Mugabe and N'Komo. They are thus gaining time and winning prestige among the black community in Rhodesia.

The danger that Rhodesia will fall into the lap of the Soviet empire has thus become very real. There will then be Soviet outposts on the borders of South Africa. For the Soviets that republic is the most enticing target in all of Africa. It is common cause among the experts that without the various mineral resources of South Africa it would be altogether difficult for the west to manufacture all the weapons it requires in case of war.

Does Washington possess some secret mysterious formula which neutralizes the known facts and the findings of commonsense — just as Chamberlain did forty years ago?

Ma'ariv 14.5.78

Saudi Arabian Fairy Tales

It is not fair to lay at the door of the Carter Administration the full blame for the dramatic failures of American policy over half the globe. These began with the previous administrations.

President Carter, moreover, has been ill-served by his Intelligence services. In Iran, by all accounts, they were completely unaware of what was brewing.

Whichever way the blame is apportioned, however, the painful fact emerging from the Iranian debacle, as it emerged from previous debacles (in Afghanistan or Angola), is that part of the time Washington does not know what is happening and the rest of the time it does not seem to understand the implications of what it is doing.

For a long time now, Washington has tried through a variety of unofficial channels to disseminate the theme that the requirements of the global

confrontation lead rationally to a cooperative front which should include Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Israel. This idea, however, has not been coupled with proposals for making Israel stronger, but precisely the opposite: Israel (presumably in sheer gratitude for being offered membership of this exclusive club) is required to reduce herself to approximately the 1949 armistice lines — that is to weaken herself, by miraculous coincidence, to precisely the extent required by the traditional Arab doctrine for the next attack on her. Six months ago, President Anwar Sadat put forward the same childish idea to Mr. Shimon Peres.

Had he stopped to think, Peres would have seen through this confidence trick designed to trap Israel into complete compliance with Arab demands. The truth is that the prime concern of the Arab states is not to fight the Soviets, but to find the ways and means for eliminating the Jewish State.

The immense Saudi military build-up is patently directed at Israel: And the same Americans who have tried to purvey the idea of a joint anti-Soviet front have been cooperating with the Saudis in camouflaging the anti-Israel purpose of their armaments.

On the one hand, the Tabuk airfield near the north-western border with Israel was described as a base for defensive operations against Iraq, five times the distance to the north east; against possible attacks on the oilfields hundreds of miles to the east. On the other hand (they said untruthfully), there were no Hawk missiles at Tabuk. And so on.

Significantly, the much-publicized softening of the Saudi attitude to the Egyptian negotiations with Israel came only after Sadat's repeated public assurances that the "peace treaty" with Israel would not affect his intention of fulfilling his obligations to the sister Arab states and to the PLO. Israel is the prime subject of the Saudi military programme.

* * *

Among the far-reaching reverberations of the upheaval in Iran, however, there is noticeable disquiet in Saudi Arabia. In spite of the substantive constitutional and social differences between the two countries, their frailties are essentially no less real; and the dangers to the regime are uncomfortably evident.

The example of Iran, therefore, provides reason enough for disquiet. It is evident, however, that the Saudis find in the Iranian debacle another lesson no less serious: that in an emergency it is not much use depending on the Americans to save the regime or even the nation.

American discernment of this reason for Saudi disquiet has been sharply demonstrated by the dispatch of 12 sophisticated warplanes as token witness that Saudi dependence on the US for its integrity and its security will not be betrayed.

* * *

From the tumult of these developments, however, a jarring note comes through. The Saudis are worried lest their dependence on the US may be their undoing?

The Saudis dependent on the US? But for years now we have had it drummed into our heads by American spokesmen, diplomats, politicians, businessmen, that the boot is on the other foot. We have been warned that it is the US that is dependent on Saudi Arabia. We have been told that Washington is compelled to heed Riyadh's bidding.

It has become the conventional wisdom that the determining factor in US policy on any issue in which Saudi Arabia has an interest is the Saudis' capacity and readiness to stop the flow of oil and petrodollars to the West, or to withdraw crippling sums from the American economy.

Now the flames of revolution in Iran have lit up the glaring truth that the whole story is, in plain American, phony.

* * *

This is not, of course, a newly-revealed truth, but for years its voice has been blocked out by the drums of Arab and pro-Arab propaganda.

Saudi Arabia arid, indeed, all the OPEC countries, have never been capable of taking and maintaining such measures against the US and the West in general as to force them to accept political dictates.

On the contrary, the measures themselves would soon begin to react unfavourably on their own economies. None of them, not "even" the Saudi economy, is invulnerable. Today, the most up-to-date studies of the economic relations between the US and the oil countries suggest that all the OPEC countries are heading for financial trouble.

A study by Dr. Theodore Mann, now a member of the State Department's policy planning staff (quoted in a brilliant analysis by Craig Karpel in the December issue of "Harper's Magazine") establishes that while "even rosy estimates" of OPEC exports for 1980 fall below those of 1973, the cost of basic industrial, military and social welfare items in the OPEC countries' budgets have escalated explosively.

“Taken together, this means that by the end of the 1970’s” writes Dr. Mann, “OPEC will not generate enough revenues to cover even much scaled-down versions of the spending needs of its members”.

Karpel himself quotes figures on Saudi Arabia which show that even she will not have enough money in her coffers to meet her obligations in 1980.

* * *

These analyses, and a large number of studies made since 1973 by leading independent oil economists and other experts, confirm and reconfirm that the information disseminated in order to create panic over Saudi Arabia’s capacity to hold America to ransom is quite unrelated to the facts. It is clear that the US, and the world generally, have for years been, and continue to be, the victims of a major hoax.

The capacity and the likelihood of Saudi Arabia damaging the US economy have been inflated and exaggerated; the damage the Saudis would inflict on their own economy has been ignored; the measures the US could apply to offset and overcome any damage has been brushed aside; the counter-measures the US could take to convince the Saudi Arabians and their allies of their folly — in particular the withholding of supplies, and especially military supplies — never surfaced.

The twisting of this truth into a story of American dependence on Saudi Arabia has inevitably weakened the strategic stance of the US. Whom has it benefited? Goods and Services rendered to the Saudis have brought in billions of dollars to the oil companies, the big banks, to big exporters, to advisers of various kinds and, inevitably to the public relations firms whose direct business it is to propagate the views of their employers, including the myth of their ineluctable power.

Altogether, they represent a tremendous lobby, perhaps the most powerful the US has known.

The oil and business interests have always been heavily represented in the bureaucracy dealing with foreign affairs. Their direct influence in the counsels of government is incalculable.

Already, in 1948, Israel experienced its efficacy (when the Truman Administration withdrew its support from the partition proposal and imposed an embargo on arms); and it helps explain in large part the illogicality, from the point of view of American interests, of American policy in the Middle East. This is not unprecedented. Was it not an American Secretary for Defence — Charles Wilson — brought into

Eisenhower's cabinet from his post at the head of General Motors, who took decisions on the principle that "What is good for General Motors is good for the United States?" And he probably believed it.

* * *

The doctrine establishing Iran as the central pillar of the US strategic structure in the Middle East was related to the policy of weakening Israel in order to satisfy the Arabs, which had begun to receive practical application in the course of the Yom Kippur War.

Whatever may still happen in Iran, the Iran-centred doctrine is no longer viable. If the administration will now take a fresh look (as it surely must) at the Middle East, it will discover a very disturbing state: Iran, at best an undependable ally, Saudi Arabia incapable of independent action and requiring American manpower (except, of course, for attacking Israel).

If the concessions made by Israel in the negotiations with Egypt are consummated, and all the more if she now succumbs to the further pressures being exerted on her by the US, she ceases to be a powerful factor for deterrence and for safeguarding the Middle East against further pro-Soviet erosion.

She will become a mini-State whose ever-present concern will be her own immediate defence and the maintenance of her very existence in the face of the combined threat of the Arab coalition.

Let nobody in the Washington corridors pretend that he does not know this.

* * *

This situation, still developing from day to day, surely cries out for a re-assessment in Jerusalem, for a pause and a standstill, and for taking steps to hasten the awakening of opinion in the US to the new situation, its dangers and its demands.

There can be no doubt that there are in the US already the beginnings of an awakening to the unhappy implications for the US of the Iran revolution and to the vital need for ensuring the efficacy of Israel's role in repairing the situation.

If only Jerusalem takes the initiative, and Israel's friends and her potential allies can be assured that she herself will stand firm, there is still hope

that Israel can be drawn back from the state of distress into which she is being led.

Is there nobody in Government with the courage to cry, "Stop!"

19.1.79

Irrational Obstacles

If Mrs. Thatcher proposes to bring Britain's international policy into harmony with her view of Soviet expansionist intentions in the Middle East, she will have to make an early overhaul of British policy towards Israel, and indeed towards Zionism.

This proposition may on the face of it seem remote from reality. Nothing, however, could be more relevant. A hostile attitude towards the natural claim of the Jewish people to nationhood, and the lingering effect of the truth once voiced by George Bernard Shaw, that "England never forgives those she has wronged," has at many critical moments in the past bedevilled the British Establishment's vision of the requirements of political sanity in this part of the world.

At this juncture, the demands of logic, of a sober appraisal of the needs of security for the foreseeable future, surely require that the State of Israel be strengthened. Israel alone of the states in the area is in no danger of being subverted from within; and it alone is capable of preventing the physical entry into Palestine of Soviet-directed forces which could overturn the delicate balance of forces in the region.

The essential condition, however, is that Israel should retain its strength and its strategic reach. To squeeze Israel into the Armistice lines of 1949 would mean ruling it out as a factor, as every adviser on strategy and Mrs. Thatcher's own common sense will tell her. It would be completely preoccupied with its own immediate, perpetually threatened security.

President Carter's recent statement that he does not favour a Palestinian State will really not alter the fact that if Israel withdraws from Judea and Samaria (as Carter desires) it is the Arabs who will decide what the new state will be called; Carter will not even have a vote.

Moreover, the most likely consequence is that the new Arab State in Eretz Yisrael, in order to prevent its being overwhelmed by its Arab neighbours (Egypt in Gaza, and Syria, Jordan and maybe Saudi Arabia

competing for the rest), will call for Soviet support, which could be delivered in the shape of Cubans.

* * *

There is a popular fallacy disseminated by Western statesmen that if only the Arab demands on Israel were satisfied, peace would descend on the Middle East and the whole of the area would become a bastion of the West. Some of them may admit, if nobody else is listening, that this could mean the disappearance of Israel; it is a risk that they are prepared for Israel to take.

But of course there would be no peace at all. First of all there would be a new war against a shrunken and weakened Israel. And in addition, all the other problems — that both the Americans and their European fellow-thinkers ignore — would assume magnified proportions.

It seems incredible that the strategy of the West should hinge on a policy that will open Western Palestine to Soviet influence; that does not face the implications (and indeed the immediate strategic consequences) of the revolution in Iran; that ignores the inter-Arab conflicts on the Persian Gulf; that ignores the seething differences between oil-rich Arab states and their poor relations (all of them kept more or less subdued as long as the existence of Israel requires a common front.) The turmoil that would follow the shrinking of Israel would outdo anything our generation has known.

The idea that Saudi Arabia would deny oil to the West unless its demands on Israel (in fact, for the elimination of Israel) are satisfied is, it is true, suitable for the pro-Arab propaganda of the American oil companies. Saudi Arabia itself does not even voice this threat. Its oil policy, especially in view of its heavy financial obligations, is based on purely economic considerations, striking a fine balance between its current need for income and its attempt to avoid the too speedy consumption of its reserves. The threat to the Western oil supply from the Middle East lies not in the withholding of Saudi oil, but in the development of a situation in which *the USSR will be in a position to deny that oil to the West.*

According to Western estimates the Soviet Union, today still exporting oil, will have to start importing within about five years. This economic prospect sharpens the strategic significance of the steady progress of Soviet influence. There is already a chain of Soviet “strongholds” stretching right across the Middle East, from Kabul to Addis Ababa, through Baghdad, Damascus and Aden. Strongly ensconced in satellite

South Yemen and Ethiopia, and with a strong naval presence in the Bab-el-Mandeb straits, the Soviets have a commanding position at the entrance to the Red Sea. At the other, eastern, periphery of the area, Iran has been eliminated (not without Soviet help) as a Western bastion (indeed, as we used to be told, *the* Western bastion); and the struggle is now on to determine whether Iran will be only anti-West or also pro-Soviet.

Whatever the immediate outcome in Iran, the West has been weakened and the Soviet Union strengthened in the Persian Gulf area. A dangerous situation could arise overnight in the Straits of Hormuz. As US Senator Harry Byrd recently pointed out, "40 per cent of the free world's oil supply is carried in tankers through this narrow but vitally important body of water". In reporting on his visit to the area, Byrd recounted the complaint of the foreign minister of Oman that the Western states are not giving adequate attention to the security of the Straits.

The senator also reported on unease in Saudi Arabia and a sense of encirclement, with the growth of Soviet influence north, south and east. Reference to these concerns was of course accompanied by the traditional demand for the shrinking of Israel.

A responsible American policy would have impressed upon Saudi Arabia the following three points. First, however unpalatable it might be in Riyadh, the Soviet threat is indeed real and indeed coming ever closer. Second, Saudi dreams of emasculating and ultimately crushing Israel conflict with her own vital interests. Third, the proper protection of Saudi security and the safeguarding of her oil require a regional defence doctrine, of which Israel is an indispensable part.

* * *

A US governmental study last year pointed out that in the event of a non-nuclear conflict between the superpowers in the Middle East Israel might deter the intervention of Soviet combat forces or prevent the completion of such deployment. The Carter administration ignored the implications of this judgement. It also ignored the appeal of 170 former generals and admirals, including the former Chief of Naval Operations Elmo Zumwalt, not to undercut Israel's value as a strategic asset. "No other society in the area," they wrote, "can be counted on to mobilize reliable battle-tested ground and air units... In brief, if not for the proven capability of the Israeli armed forces, we would be forced now to station a significant number of men and substantial material in that region". These

words were written before Iran had been eliminated as a “strategic area asset”.

Mrs. Thatcher, in the light of her awareness of the realities of the global confrontation, cannot fail to be alive to the cogency of these arguments, and indeed to the fact that the West is ignoring them at its peril. If she seriously seeks means of effecting a change of outlook and policy she will discover just how much an objective and clear-sighted appreciation of the realities in the Middle East is bedevilled and befogged by the traditions of the British Establishment’s anti-Zionist past.

There is, of course, a heavy load of guilt in that past. As time goes by, and as more evidence is revealed, the degree of British involvement in the Arab movement against Zionism becomes ever clearer. So does the deliberateness of the betrayal of the trust placed in Britain by the Jewish people after World War I, and of the quite clear obligation she undertook to foster the re-establishment of Jewish statehood in Palestine.

It was that obligation that brought about and legitimized her Mandatory presence in Palestine; but once she had control of the country she gradually transmuted that obligation into a comprehensive policy designed, at first covertly but ultimately openly (in the White Paper of 1939), to put an end to Zionism. The cruel climax of that policy was reached in the years of the Jewish people’s greatest distress — when a substantial portion of the British governmental machine was concentrated on preventing Jews from fleeing Hitler’s Europe — before and during the Holocaust.

Honest and outspoken Britons were conscious of the enormity of Britain’s policy, which Josiah Wedgwood described as “worthy of Hitler, worthy of the Middle Ages... the report of it will stink in the nostrils of posterity”. But behind the official policy — which was of course explained on the grounds of expediency there lurked in the corridors of the Foreign Office a more ominous phenomenon: a primitive, if elegantly-clothed, anti-Semitism. The exposure to public study of the internal minutes and reports have enabled historian Martin Gilbert to present (in his recent study “Exile and Return”) a comprehensive picture all the more shattering for its strictly factual and laconic style.

However firmly grounded the official attitudes were, however strong the prejudices, they were evidently strengthened and deepened by the ultimate expulsion of British power from Palestine precisely by the Jews who had so often been treated with contempt. Those views and prejudices have coloured British policy towards Israel. There have naturally been exceptions and perhaps brief periods of a more objective approach.

If Mrs. Thatcher, in pondering over Middle East policy, would direct her research assistants to examine the internal minutes and the notes passing between senior officials in the Foreign Office *since* the State of Israel was established, she will undoubtedly find substantial evidence to support the thesis that there is a spirit in the Foreign Office that has not yet accepted Jewish national independence as something that is here to stay. She will discover that support for Arab demands is accompanied in many cases by a considerable indifference to Israel's very existence.

This spirit is an obvious obstacle to a sober appreciation of the centrality of Israel to any plan of regional defence against further penetration of Soviet power. It is not so strange therefore that a revision of British policy on the global confrontation with the USSR — with its possible impact on American and Western policy in general — requires the curbing and indeed elimination of prejudices long nurtured in Whitehall.

8.6.79

Defeatist Doctrines

The unsentimental historian will probably find the most fascinating aspect of Western Europe's Middle East policy those nations' failure to understand — or their refusal to examine — the rather obvious fact that throwing Israel to the wolves inevitably must prove disastrous to them. Paying blackmail demands with Israel's security may provide a temporary warming-up of relations with the Arab states; but it will involve a long step towards the loss of their own independence.

Politics is often a matter of making the right choice. To this end it is desirable to understand what the alternatives are. Neville Chamberlain (who remains a decidedly relevant figure for our time) believed he was choosing between a "minor" sacrifice, by the Czechs, of their border province of Sudetenland, and plunging the world into war. There is no certainty at all that Hitler would have gone to war. What is certain is that Chamberlain was blind to Hitler's plain purpose. In spite of all Hitler had threatened — and done — Chamberlain simply did not realize that Sudetenland was Hitler's essential gateway to Prague on the road to the subjugation of Europe, including Britain.

By the summer of 1940, Britain was fighting for her life — alone. The road from Munich led inexorably to the Battle of Britain.

* * *

The Soviets are not planning world domination by way of war. They aim at an intimidating superiority. Aided by the incredibly myopic policy of detente — which in Russian semantics means Western aid in strengthening the Russian economy and deepening and expanding her technological capacity — the USSR is on the way to achieving her purpose.

One small example illustrates the relative perceptions of the parties. The Americans assumed that the Soviets agreed with their assumption that nuclear parity assured mutual deterrence because nuclear war would then bring about mutual assured destruction (jocularly called MAD). The Americans, therefore, obediently refrained from building a comprehensive civil defence system.

Precisely like Chamberlain, they made a slight error: the Soviets had other ideas. They developed the doctrine that, instead of resigning themselves to the prospect of unchangeable stalemate, they should aim at *winning* a nuclear war. They therefore did build a comprehensive civil defence system. In consequence, the number of American casualties (by US estimates) of a Soviet nuclear strike would be eight times that of Soviet casualties from an American strike (an “acceptable” 20 million).

* * *

At the same time, the USSR has developed a world-wide strategy of expansionism. She has become a major sea-power, ranging far beyond the dreams of 200-year-old Russian imperialism. Asia and Africa seethe with her incessant activity. Here again she has been aided by the myopia and the obtuse illusions of the pleasure-loving West. (Dr. Kissinger used to plead eloquently against charges of Russian expansionism). She has employed local insurrection in far-flung operations, with a high proportion of success. The use of Cubans as proxies for Soviet soldiers and advisers was a brilliant stroke. By such means, and by alert exploitation of opportunities the USSR, in the years between SALT I and SALT II, has established a preponderant influence in eight countries in Asia and Africa.

The central purpose of her strategy in Africa and the Middle East is the outflanking of the countries of Western Europe, and has much to do with the control of raw materials and their delivery. Where Hitler was forced, in most cases, to win country after country by invading them, the Soviet Union (already the overlord of Eastern Europe) aims at the psychological collapse of Western Europe.

In 1938 Sudetenland, a mere province in east-central Europe, was the

essential key to Hitler's strategy of domination. Today in the Soviets' global strategy, an indispensable stage is the shrinking of Israel, a miniscule triangle on the map. The USSR has devoted much time and energy and resource to this objective. In 1967 she actively provoked war, for the one-swoop elimination of Israel. She trained and armed the Egyptians for the 1973 war; and on its outbreak publicly urged the Arab states to join the Egyptians and the Syrians.

Her dividends were enormous. Through the opening of the Suez Canal she achieved complete freedom of movement for her ships, and predominance in the Indian Ocean; and the removal of all obstacles to her activity in Africa. The Soviets today view with satisfaction the dismantling of Israeli power in Sinai. The drastic reduction in Israel's strategic reach southward and south-eastward by the elimination of her airfields and the closing of the Israeli naval base at Sharm-el-Sheikh, no matter what takes their place, will dissolve the only serious stable source of deterrence or interference from the north with potential Soviet action in and from the Horn of Africa.

* * *

Now, from the Soviet point of view, comes the final phase in this theatre: the shrinking of Israel in Western Palestine. Even after the grim reduction in her strategic capacity by the loss of Sinai, Israel would remain the only serious deterrent in the area. In the security conditions prevalent in the region, Israel protects both Jordan and Saudi Arabia. It is not difficult to see the impact of Israel's reduction to strategic impotence on the security of Western interests in the Middle East.

The loss to the West of Israel's capacity would, however, be accompanied by a priceless addition to Soviet power. Israel would be replaced in Judea and Samaria by the Arabs. Inevitably control would be in the hands of the Arabs' recognized leadership — the "PLO," a client of the Soviet Union. And at that point Soviet strategy would be activated.

The PLO would not last in power a month without Soviet support, and intervention, whether by Cubans or otherwise.

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The Soviet goal is to establish a second Yemen or Angola in Western Palestine. The inevitable consequence of Western European efforts to

achieve the shrinking of Israel will thus be the establishment of a Soviet client state in Palestine, on the borders of Saudi Arabia.

How long will it then be before the USSR, without having to send a single Soviet soldier, can dictate her terms for non-intervention to Saudi Arabia? How long will it be before the Arab blackmail of Europe is merged with Soviet blackmail? How long before the countries of Western Europe, dependent on Middle Eastern oil, are reduced to the status of Finland?

* * *

There is certainly still time to prevent this course of events. There is still enough strength in the West. But essential for its effective application is a thorough rethinking of the prevailing defeatist doctrine and a thorough shake up of the dominant mouse-like policy.

14.9.79

The Flawed Architect

A fascinating phenomenon of the past year has been the appearance, in a number of interviews, of Dr. Henry Kissinger, the former US Secretary of State, in the guise of the Elder Statesman warning the US and the West in general of the manifest dangers of the increasing tilt in the balance of power in favour of the Soviet Union.

Dr. Kissinger with, from his point of view, impeccable logic and understandable caution, refrained in those interviews from mentioning that throughout the critical period of their intense expansionist effort, the Soviet leaders enjoyed, in effect, the encouragement and, indeed, cooperation of the then architect of American foreign policy — Dr. Henry Kissinger.

He also omitted to recall that he had compounded his responsibility by lulling the American public (including a sufficient number of legislators) into varying degrees of acceptance of his belief that, by exercising unsurpassed wisdom and unequalled skill, he was guiding the Soviet leaders into the paths of pacific co-existence (which, incidentally, was tangibly beneficial to many major business corporations in the US).

Moreover, with characteristic disregard of facts, Kissinger had habitually poured scorn on the warnings of his critics who, alert to the Soviets'

aims, were dismayed, even horrified, at Moscow's being enabled to exploit Kissinger's myopic detente mythology in openly promoting their objective: subjugation of the West.

* * *

It was Dr. Kissinger who preached that he would tame the Soviets by supplying them with wheat and other consumer products, by raising their standard of living, and by actually enabling them to increase their influence in the world. Though thus weakening the US, he would engender in the Kremlin leaders a kind of bourgeois contentment at having been enabled, strategically and economically, to get level with the Joneses of the West. They would then rest on their laurels, and peace and goodwill would reign on earth.

It was some time after leaving office that the new Kissinger emerged as the outspoken, though self-effacing critic of the global results of his own handiwork. Last month, however, there was a startling development in the Kissinger phenomenon.

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At a conference in Brussels, he painted in particularly chilling terms the prospect facing the West. He described the growth of Soviet strategic power and, *inter alia*, NATO's growing inferiority in weapons. He went further:

“No one disputes any longer,” he said, “that in the 1980s and perhaps even today the US will no longer be in a strategic position to reduce a Soviet counter-blow against the US to tolerable levels”.

These prognostications were not new to the audience Dr. Kissinger was addressing. It was composed precisely of experts on strategy, on defence analysis and on the fabric and thrust of Soviet policy. Two hundred of them had been assembled by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies at Washington's Georgetown University. Among them were men who had warned Kissinger repeatedly on his disastrous course.

For this audience, Dr. Kissinger presumably found he had to analyse the causes of what he now declared to be a disastrous reality. So it came about that the famous Secretary of State, with surprising frankness, confessed to

a share in the responsibility for some of the greatest blunders of the century.

* * *

“The amazing phenomenon” — he declared “about which historians will ponder is that all this happened without the US’s attempting to make a significant effort to rectify that state of affairs. One reason was that it was not easy to rectify.

“But another reason was the growth of a school of thought to which I myself contributed... which considered that strategic stability was a military asset, and in which the amazing theory developed — that is, historically amazing — that vulnerability contributed to peace and invulnerability contributed to the risks of war... The strategic vulnerability of the United States [was seen as] a positive asset... It cannot have occurred often in history that it was considered an advantageous military doctrine to make your own country deliberately vulnerable”.

There is another aspect to the Kissinger phenomenon over which historians might profitably ponder. It has surely not happened often in history that the architect of Great Power policy should be possessed of such glib, such sparkling power of persuasion, that his most glaring and dangerous inanities should be accepted for years on end by a majority of his countrymen (including their legislators) as pearls of wisdom.

* * *

Dr. Kissinger apparently got the first inkling of the consequences of his policy while still in office — when the Cubans began arriving in Angola. He pleaded then with Congress to send aid to the West-oriented majority and thus prevent Angola from being overrun by Soviet-directed forces.

He then was able to learn how successful had been his earlier years’-long indoctrinations. Congress refused to recognize the truth — which he had persistently smothered — that the Soviet Union was pursuing expansionist designs. His request was denied. Angola, still dominated by Cubans, is firmly in the Soviet orbit.

Angola was only one, if blatant, example of the Kissinger policy. It represented first-fruits of the Soviets’ realization that American policy was really and truly inane. They had watched, no doubt incredulously, as Kis-

singer brought about the opening of the Suez Canal (in June 1975). By August, in full self-confidence, they brazenly moved the Cuban operation in Angola into high gear.

The opening of the Suez Canal — multiplying many-fold the potential speed, *inter alia*, of USSR penetration of Africa and the Persian Gulf area — was in itself a crucial development in her relentless drive towards dominating the vital oil-producing Middle East, and the approach to the sources, no less vital to Western defence, of the raw materials and the searoutes of Southern Africa.

* * *

Western sorrows, however, have been compounded by the fact that, notwithstanding some brave rhetoric, Kissinger's successors have embraced the essentials of his legacy. No doubt by the time President Carter took over, the effort required to stem the Soviet advance was enhanced.

This does not explain the Carter Administration's own initiative in promoting Soviet expansionism. If, for example, it was Kissinger who removed the obstacles to Soviet penetration of Africa, it is Washington's present efforts that encourage the spread of Soviet influence in the south of the continent.

Zimbabwe-Rhodesia is a crucial example. If Washington were to have its way, the West-oriented democratically-elected black-majority government would be ousted, by terror and force, by the Patriotic Front of Mr. Robert Mugabe and Mr. Joshua Nkomo. Mr. Mugabe has frankly, and repeatedly, proclaimed that he aims at establishing a one-party Marxist state.

The threat to Zimbabwe-Rhodesia is an articulated one. The threat to the Republic of South Africa — and to her strategic assets, unreservedly vital to Western defence — of Soviet penetration is more remote, but no less real. It depends to some extent on the fate of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia.

Judging by Washington's behaviour towards South Africa, it scarcely seems to be aware of these realities. By comparison — in Dr. Kissinger's day it seemed unbelievable to many that this man (who, in his brilliance, was busily applying the philosophy of "peace through vulnerability," that is strength through weakness), did not, in fact, know what he was doing.

* * *

Dr. Kissinger's activities were far-ranging, indeed worldwide. His applied philosophy inevitably gave tremendous impetus, practically and psychologically, to what has been described as the retreat of American power. It also had its chilling impact on the countries which proved to be its victims. Israel was not the least of them.

In the light of Dr. Kissinger's frankness, will not the Israeli leaders of his day take an example from him and recognize the folly of their surrenders to his pressures?

12.10.79

Defending the Middle East

Former US President Richard Nixon has presented to his fellow-Americans and to the world at large an enlightening revelation of major error. In his new book, extracts of which have been published, he displays a keen and comprehensive grasp of the frightening facts and implications of Soviet global policy. He is indeed very blunt.

"We are at war," he writes, "engaged in a titanic struggle in which the fates of nations are being decided. This war — World War III — began before World War II ended. Since 1945, Soviet expansionist pressure has been relentless... This expansionism, from the seizure of Eastern Europe to the present thrusts into Africa, the Islamic Crescent and Central America, has been accompanied by a prodigious military build-up that has brought the Soviet Union to the verge of decisive supremacy over the West".

After giving chapter and verse for his farranging lament, Mr. Nixon concludes with a grim prognosis:

"In the 1980s, America will confront two cold realities for the first time in modern history. The first is that if war were to come, we might lose. The second is that we might be defeated without war. The danger facing the West during the balance of this century is less that of a nuclear holocaust than it is of drifting into a situation in which we find ourselves confronted with a choice between surrender or suicide — red or dead".

* * *

Mr. Nixon's analysis does lack the explicit frankness of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's recent astonishing admission of the inanity of the policy he (and President Nixon) had pursued towards the Soviet Union. Mr. Nixon's analysis makes such a confession superfluous. If the Soviet Union is by now "on the verge of decisive supremacy over the West" — as most observers have indeed for some time been asserting — who are more to blame than Nixon and Kissinger? They spent their years in office deliberately shutting their eyes to Moscow's expansionist policy; they denied the existence of such a policy, they insisted that, at worst, the Soviets could be appeased, and would be induced to behave responsibly, by means of a tranquillizing diet of Western consumer goods and technological know-how; they shut their ears to explicit Soviet asseverations that détente itself was a means of strengthening the USSR at the expense of the West, and would not lessen by one whit Moscow's right and obligation to pursue her various global involvements. They watched indulgently as Moscow changed the balance of military power to the West's disadvantage. In the Middle East they cooperated actively, and exerted pressures, in laying the groundwork and lowering the barriers to Soviet expansion landward in Africa and seaward into the Indian Ocean. That, briefly, notwithstanding occasional anti-Soviet rhetoric, was the essential content of their détente policy.

Its outcome was demonstrably built-in to the visible realities. Those realities, which Mr. Nixon now outlines so forcefully, were spelt out by a whole school of political and strategic thinkers during Mr. Nixon's incumbency — when the Soviet drive could have been contained with relatively little difficulty. They incessantly warned Mr. Nixon (and his successor Gerald Ford, as well as their chief adviser Henry Kissinger) of the inevitable disastrous consequences of détente.

* * *

Indeed, a chilling forecast of what might happen was presented to a Senate committee in November 1967 — even before Mr. Nixon took office — by a distinguished scholar on Soviet policy, Prof. Philip Mosely. After pointing out that in the past "the strategic inferiority of Soviet power has set definite limits to the extent of the risks that the Soviet policy makers were willing to run," Prof. Mosely went on to offer his prescient warning:

“In any future period in which the Soviet Union might attain either nuclear equality or nuclear superiority... we would be prudent to assume that Soviet policy would be tempted to undertake a more extensive, more acute and more dangerous range of risks in order to pursue its declared long-range ambition to reshape the world according to its own dogma”.

He was followed in later years by a galaxy of thinkers and analysts of international repute, who drew on their knowledge, on their studies and on the evidence of their eyes and ears, and who had to confirm sorrowfully the progressive vindication of Mosely’s vision. All in vain.

In the controversy that raged over détente, their insistence on facing the glaring facts was decried as panic; their exhortations for a reversal of policy as “cold-warmongering”.

Now the Soviet Union marches forward towards the vision of nuclear superiority; she is ensconced in West Africa and in East Africa, her shadow looms ever larger over countries and peoples of Southern Africa (whence the West derives essential and irreplaceable minerals for its defence equipment); she is taking control of Afghanistan, she has long controlled South Yemen; she pursues unhindered a policy of domination and repression by proxy in the Far East; and the American president who did so much to make this possible records the facts with admirable objectivity.

Meantime, Western citizens wonder whether even now their leaders will summon up the will to resist the wave of Soviet imperialism. More particularly, whether Washington will change its policy. In Mr. Nixon’s own homely language, “The question is: which will the Soviets encounter: steel or mush?”

* * *

For a moment it seemed that an unequivocal reply was being given to this fateful question. President Jimmy Carter, after only three years of direct personal confrontation with Soviet policy and methods — and albeit only after he had caught Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev out in a direct lie — announced his awakening to the realities of Soviet aims. He has taken a number of steps (positive in themselves) which could cause the Soviets some discomfort and embarrassment.

No fundamental change has however been made in US global policy in the Soviet Union’s immediate target area: the Middle East. The test is a

simple one. The Nixon-Kissinger policy towards Israel, inherited by the Carter Administration, continues to be pursued with single-minded and many-pronged persistence.

In the early '70s, Washington exerted great pressures for an Israeli withdrawal in Sinai which would facilitate the opening of the Suez Canal. As a natural consequence, the floodgates were opened for the Soviet Union's gigantic leap forward into the heart and the length and breadth of Africa, and into the broad expanses of the Indian Ocean.

So now, unabashed and unheeding, Washington is pressing upon Israel a withdrawal which would be at once a threat to her very existence and would hand the Soviets on a platter a major victory in their drive for domination of the Middle East.

Consummation of Washington's purpose would bring the Soviet Union into the heart of Eretz Yisrael — armed with the relevant credentials as "sponsor and protector of the Palestinian people" — not only against Israel, but, if necessary, against the neighbouring Arab states. Israel, the only nation in the Middle East that is both politically stable and still possessing serious deterrent capacity, will have been rendered strategically insignificant.

Moreover, Washington's present effort to rest her deterrent strategy on Egypt — that is, in fact, on the steadfastness and political immortality of one person, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat — is feckless and irresponsible. Only yesterday, the Shah of Iran was such a bulwark.

* * *

Those in the West who have realized the unprecedented gravity of the Soviet threat, and of the heavy contribution to its efficacy made by fatuous policies in Washington, must now weigh the significance of the incredible perpetuation of these policies.

They must realize that the centrality of Israel's deterrent role in the defence of the Middle East, now a matter of immediate concern, cannot be reconciled with the demand, strategically absurd and morally outrageous, that the people of Israel give up the heart and the backbone of Western Palestine.

On Europe

The Trap of “The Holocaust Trap”

Tens of millions of Americans have been deeply impressed — according to the reports that have been reaching us — by the televised rendering of Gerald Green’s story on the Holocaust. Even the viewers who have criticized the artistic or professional level of the play agree that it has left a deep imprint on the American consciousness.

It is apparent from the reports that by bringing the shocking substantiation of the European holocaust into their living-rooms the average Americans do indeed experience something of the dread of an eyewitness of the tragedy; and it is hoped that they are learning some practical lesson from the experience.

From other reports it appears that out of the desire, even the passion, to promote the cause of Israel, some Jewish functionaries and commentators have been seeking support in the Holocaust when speaking of Israel’s problems in 1978 and in calling upon the American public to stand by her. But the lessons they suggest are not always applicable, and the result is that truths are twisted and colour is lent to ideas whose impact may be undesirable.

* * *

Let us get straight to the point: without any ill-will notions are being pressed upon the public to encourage the idea that the Jewish people decided to establish its State as a result of the Holocaust and that the Western world helped it to do so. Another idea is that the logical and cruel lesson — of the Holocaust — that in an emergency nobody outside can be depended upon to help — continues to pursue Israel 33 years later, and that it is that traumatic experience in the Nazi period which drives Israel to adopt an “uncompromising”, “intransigent” attitude on its right to control the conditions of its own security. Hence the argument that “Israel’s clinging to the territories” on the “West Bank” (which, of course, do not belong to her) is a consequence of that trauma.

These ideas — which are now being given more pointed expression as a

result of the intense interest aroused by the screening of “The Holocaust” — naturally dovetail into a thesis that has been disseminated for some years by Arab propagandists — and maybe they themselves are now using it as a text. The thesis runs roughly like this:

“The imperialist power decided to compensate the Jews for their sufferings in Europe by giving them Palestine. Why should the Arabs (who have always been the owners of Palestine) pay the price for the sins of Europe against the Jews?”

In the wake of the television play there have been articles published in the United States pouring out expressions of seeming identification with the feelings of the Jewish people as the victim of the Holocaust, and understanding for its “fears”; and they conclude with sorrowful and reproachful shaking of the head at Israel’s expecting conditions for her security (presumably exaggerated) which are unacceptable — for, after all, the Holocaust in Europe in the forties, for all its horror, cannot in our world, and by all canons of morals and justice, justify demands in the Middle East in 1978.

Two weeks ago (21 April) the *Washington Post* published an article by Stephen Rosenfeld entitled “The Holocaust Trap”. It is impossible to tell whether it is inspired by abysmal ignorance or by sheer wickedness. It is not Israel that Mr. Rosenfeld seeks to warn against a “trap”, but the poor American administration.

In summing up he writes:

For Americans the problem... is to proceed with a policy that is neither disrespectful of Israel’s holocaust legacy nor intimidated by it. Diplomatic skill is required and empathy too. That way alone, if at all, can the holocaust trap be avoided.

And the grounds for putting Israel in its place are — the influence of the “trauma of the Holocaust” on its policy. Thus:

“The predominant force which led to the establishment of the State, the compulsion which has been Israel’s chief security concern during the 30 years of its existence is that its very existence should not be dependent on the will of others. This also explains Israel’s attitude to the whole subject of negotiations: Israel believes that even

the chances for open and friendly relations which she regarded for many years on the essence of peace no longer answer her requirement. She needs additional safeguards, under her own control, and especially additional

No doubt these placid words seem to be logical — to all those innocent people who do not know that they are grounded in mendacity, and in distortion and that in fact they turn history on its head.

* * *

Let all those who go out to explain Israel's mind and posture be warned: do not fall into the trap of the "Holocaust trap". There is no way of combating the various forms of distortion resorted to by our enemies, and which sometimes mislead our friends, except by repeating the basic truths in simple language.

First — The Jewish people set up its state in Eretz Yisrael because this is its land. The depth of the relationship between the Jewish people and the land is unique in human history; and it is interwoven in the warp and the woof of two thousand years of Western culture. The right it thence derives to "re-establish its national home in Palestine" was accorded modern international recognition 60 years ago (in the Palestine Mandate), and it is a part of the international law of our time. Our people built its state in despite of the British who betrayed their pledge to help us. (It was because of that pledge that they were granted the Mandate by the League of Nations in 1922). This fact is most relevant in relation to the Holocaust. Were it not for the British betrayal, which was exposed in all its cruelty in the thirties, it is possible that the Holocaust would not have taken place at all, it would certainly not have assumed the proportions that it did, most certainly many Jews, maybe hundreds of thousands, would have been able to escape its clutches after it had begun.

The extent of the Nazis' satanic plan for the "final solution" was made possible only because favourable circumstances existed in eastern Europe. When war broke out there were some four million Jews subjected to varying degrees of distress and persecution in the midst of hostile populations — of Poles, Rumanians, Lithuanians, Latvians and the rest. They remained confined there because, except for a small minority, they were not accepted anywhere else in the world.

The worst sin, however, was committed by the British, who shut the

gates of the Jewish National Home which they were holding in trust. Already at the beginning of the War — before the Nazis began the minor operations in prelude to mass murder, the British Government made it clear that the gates would remain locked.

When the mass-murder-mills began to work, and opportunities were presented to the British and to the Americans to save Jews — not to “help” in a general way, but to save specific live Jews — they decided with deliberation to refrain from doing so. The British had a particularly convincing reason: they did not want Jews in Palestine. When the British Government was asked by Chaim Weizmann in 1944 to bomb the railway line from Hungary to the Auschwitz death-camp, where every day 12000 Jews were being slaughtered, they delayed their reply — which was negative — for fifty-seven days — and explained their refusal on “technical” grounds which would not deceive an infant-in-arms.

Thus the end of the war found the remnant that had survived subjected to continuous harassment by the British when they tried to reach Eretz Yisrael — down to the final episode of the ship “Exodus” in 1947; and all the while the British regime of oppression in Eretz Yisrael continued, until the Jewish revolt put an end to it.

And in the war of independence? The infant State of Israel had to fight for its existence against the will of the British who collaborated with the Arabs, and having to face the arms the British supplied, some openly and flauntingly, some clandestinely, to the Arab States — while America imposed a strict embargo on arms. This was a bare three years after the end of the Holocaust. Only with the help of arms from the Soviet Union and, to some extent, from France, did we manage to hold our own; and only by the supreme heroism of our youth and at a terrible price in blood did we establish our State. It arose, moreover, after its foundations had been laid in two generations of struggle and toil, and with the recognition of the nations, and with the inspiration of thousands of years of history — and of longing.

* * *

Yet the most grievous distortion and the most vicious, in the “Holocaust trauma” version, is the erasure of the history of the “dispute” between Israel and the Arabs, and the concealment of the fundamental reason for Israel’s setting the conditions of its security: the Arabs’ intention to destroy the Jewish State, and their unceasing war, in many guises, to fulfil

their dream. The stories about the “Holocaust trauma”, ignore completely the history of the State of Israel, ignore completely the facts burnt into the body and the heart of the people here, in Eretz Yisrael, over the last sixty years.

Despite the experience of the Holocaust in Europe, and in spite of previous bitter experience with the Arabs, the Zionist leadership agreed, only two years after the Holocaust, to give up the heart of the country and to rest content with a fragile mini-State whose width at its most populated area was some 14 kilometers — for the sake of peace with the Arabs. The response of the Arabs was that they would “bring to Palestine blood and destruction as the Mongols had done in the 13th century”; and indeed, with the aid of the British, they tried to complete Hitler’s work. The “Holocaust trauma” story inevitably erases the wars forced upon Israel in 1956, in 1967 and in 1973, and the many other manifestations of their attempt to eliminate us; erased also are the memories of the thousands of victims sacrificed on the altar of the imperialist ambitions of the Arabs, and their threats to this day — in semantic variety — that the day of destruction will yet come.

* * *

These — stated most briefly — are the dimensions of the new and sophisticated lie being employed in order to subdue us — for the sacred object of appeasing the oil suppliers. The bigger and more sophisticated the lie, the more difficult is the task of demolishing it. All of us must be alert to the trap of the “Holocaust trap”.

Ma’ariv 12.5.78

The Holocaust and Israel

“Modern Israel came into being,” said President Jimmy Carter in the Knesset on Monday, “in the wake of that historic crime (the Holocaust), the enormity of which is almost beyond human comprehension”.

This reference to the enormity of the Holocaust, and Carter’s emotional reaction to his visit at Yad Vashem, were manifestly deeply sincere. It is a pity that they should have become entangled in the president’s address

with the very grave problems related to the current “peace” negotiations.

The words of an American president are not spoken in a vacuum. Baldly uttered as they were, his correlation of the birth of Israel with the Holocaust harmonizes with one of the persistent themes of Arab propaganda: that the Jewish State came into being as the result of the Holocaust; that it was inflicted on the Arabs by the Western Powers as an act of compensation for the crime of the European Holocaust ; that the Arabs are thus being made to pay for the “imperialists” crimes against the Jews.

Baldly stated as it was, his remark, even in its most restricted sense, is not a reflection of the truth. The Holocaust came to an end in 1945; Israel came into being in 1948. The three years that separated the State from the Holocaust represent almost a complete historic chapter in themselves. filled with a further trial in agony and with great heroism.

In those three years, the Jews of Palestine were engaged in a struggle with the rulers of the country, the British, who were so unimpressed with the horrors of the Holocaust that they persisted in their policy of preventing the rise of Israel.

The Jews, therefore, had to struggle to break open the gates of Palestine for the survivors of the Holocaust, to put an end to British rule, and to pave the way for the establishment of the Jewish State.

* * *

In that period, the population suffered the severities of British repression, thousands of Jews spent time — from weeks and months to long years — in prison and in distant exile. Hundreds were killed, some on the high seas, some in battle with the British. And some the British hanged on the gallows.

The struggle with the British, and the revolt against their rule, was not the result of the Holocaust. It was indeed rendered the more intense, the more desperate in the light of the lessons of the Holocaust; but it had its beginnings long, long before the Holocaust in the betrayal of Britain’s trust, the betrayal of British undertakings given to the Jewish people during and after World War I.

Then the Jewish people were promised the facilitation of the establishment of the Jewish National Home, and the promise degenerated into measures to prevent its fruition, measures which finally, as it

happened, left the Jews of Europe, with nowhere to go, an easy prey for the Nazis.

The Jewish struggle in Palestine drew its inspiration from the attachment and devotion of the people to the land — the only nation that had owned the land, and that had laid uninterrupted claim to it as its national territory for over 3,000 years.

The struggle derived its strength from the idealism and self-sacrifice of the 600,000 Jews, most of whom had come back to their Homeland under the impulse of modern Zionism.

To encapsulate the rise of Israel as coming “in the wake of the Holocaust” as the president did is, in fact, (however unwittingly), a travesty of its historic proportions, its reflection of 50 years of political history, and the rivers of sweat and blood and sacrifice which nourished its roots.

* * *

That is not all. Such an encapsulation serves to obscure the grimmest facts of all in Israel’s problem. After the UN recommendation to partition Palestine and to establish a Jewish State, it was not the Germans any longer that fell upon the embryo state to prevent its being born, and then to choke out its life at birth. It was a coalition of Arab states that launched the attempt at its destruction.

There was no equivocation about their purpose. They had then not yet thought of the need for a semantic massage of Western sensibilities.

Their collective spokesman, Azzam Pasha — the secretary-general of the Arab League — promised that the invasion of Palestine would be likened to the destruction and massacres that accompanied the invasions of the Crusaders and the Mongols, that is genocide. It was directly out of the agony of that war that Israel was born.

That, the articulated Arab purpose of the annihilation of Israel and its people — and not some vague theoretical Holocaust — is the threat that has pursued Israel since its birth.

The president’s error, in the course of a ceremonial address in focusing Israel’s concerns, might be overlooked — if it did not conform to the set policy of the US.

Carter’s words enhance the ominous content of his government’s policy: of applying to Israel all the resources of persuasion which would bring

about the conditions that would facilitate the carrying out of the Arab purpose.

* * *

References to the Holocaust by an American president should be seen in the perspective of US policy at the time.

In recalling its agony and its horror, as Carter so movingly did, there can be no logical or honourable escape from recalling that they could have been mitigated, if not prevented, if the Germans' policy had not been supplemented by the policies of its enemies, primarily of Britain and, to a lesser degree, of the US.

They deliberately and openly closed their doors to all but a trickle of the refugees fleeing from the Nazi hell before the Holocaust. At that time, it is safe to say, the main theme of Nazi policy was still to drive out the Jews. The German decision that they could exterminate the Jews with impunity was encouraged by the reaction of indifference to their fate in the great democracies.

But the behaviour of the democracies before the Holocaust pales before their deliberate refusal to save Jews that could be saved, or to take action to slow down the slaughter, when the Holocaust was in full progress.

* * *

It may be that a president, overburdened with the problems of the present, has not the time to study all the policies of his predecessors. But in recalling the Holocaust, it is surely reasonable that he should ask himself the question, "What were we Americans doing about all this?"

An hour's study of the official documents, or, for example, the studies by Arthur Morse and Henry Feingold based on the official documents, would give him the chilling reply.

But the lesson that should be learned derives not only from the period of the European Holocaust. Three years after the Holocaust had ended, and after the Jews had fought their way — accompanied by considerable and sometimes effective American sympathy — to the threshold of immediate statehood, and were then attacked by seven Arab States, well-armed and equipped by the British, the American government had so far forgotten, or were so unmoved by the agony and horror of the Holocaust, that they imposed an embargo on the area that effectively prevented a really empty-handed Israel from receiving aid.

It must be remembered that the infant Israel, by then including many of the survivors of the European Holocaust, was thus left — as far as Washington was concerned — to the mercies of an enemy who declared without inhibition his intention of completing Hitler's work in Palestine. But for Soviet aid, it is hard to see how Israel could have survived.

* * *

Israel's successful defence in 1948 did not put an end to the Arab striving for her demolition. The American president must surely be aware that the war of 1967 was the result of Arab belief — unreservedly proclaimed by their leaders — that a second attempt on the life of Israel had good chances of success.

He is surely aware that the borders then attacked — the Armistice lines of 1949 — were indefensible. They have been described by one of the most accommodating of Israeli leaders — Abba Eban — as a “death trap”; and it is universal doctrine in Israel, beyond all party disagreements, that it would be fatal for Israel to withdraw to those lines.

It is unbelievable that the president does not know this, or that he does not know that the unchanging Arab doctrine lays down Israeli withdrawal to those lines as the necessary prerequisite for their next attempt at annihilation; and that precisely this is the purpose of all the Arab states — all publicly pledged to come to the aid of the terrorist organizations (which they finance and arm) in the fulfilment of their unvarnished aim of dismantling the Jewish State.

In sum, therefore, it is precisely the State of Israel, whose people were the victims of the Nazi extermination programme, and subsequently the victims of further efforts to destroy them in their own Homeland, which is denied, by American doctrine, the right accorded to all peoples — of determining for itself the minimum conditions of its own security.

It is precisely the State of Israel that has been pressed, and is now being pressed and manoeuvred by the American establishment to withdraw to the lines of that “death trap”.

Our sanity demands, and our national safety may depend on, our understanding — and perhaps on Carter's understanding — that this is the political context in which must be viewed his reference to the Holocaust and Israel's determination to prevent its repetition.

16.3.79

Neglected Faces

A committee in the Education Ministry is about to start designing a compulsory course on the Holocaust for the two final years of high school. During the summer, one thousand teachers will be trained to teach the course, which will be based on excerpts from memoirs of Holocaust survivors, film clips, photographs and visits to museums. It will be studied “from a Judeo-centric perspective, and not as a sub-heading of Hitlerism and the Second World War”.

It would indeed be strange if the Holocaust were to be studied “as a sub-heading of Hitlerism and the Second World War”. But the list of source-materials mentioned suggests a narrowing, rather than a broadening, of the study. If at last the Holocaust is to be taught intelligently and with an educative purpose, it is not enough to keep alive and even sharpen (as one must) the memory and the sense of its horror, evoking the natural emotional response. It should be presented in the complete context of its historic truth — even the possibly conflicting versions of that truth — to challenge the intellect and the imagination. Survivors’ memoirs, film clips, photographs and visits to museums will tell the human story of the Germans’ application of their “final solution” to the Jewish problem. They will no doubt be able — on the basis of first-hand evidence — to go beyond the confrontation between the German savages and the Jewish victims, and project also the existential facts of the anti-Jewish collaboration enjoyed by the Germans among the local populations in the occupied lands.

But the story of the Holocaust does not begin chronologically with the events that could be photographed, or that could be described in the personal memoirs of survivors. If it is to be studied seriously, some of the Holocaust’s most important lessons for our time are to be learned precisely from the period that preceded the fires of the Holocaust itself, and from circumstances that arose outside while the Holocaust was in progress.

* * *

Many of the Jews who perished in the Holocaust could have remained alive if the Zionist Movement had not been lacking in political acumen and courage in the years preceding the World War. The German invaders did not find in Poland and Rumania (or in the rest of Eastern Europe) a serene, prosperous Jewish community. Very much to the contrary: the Jews of

Eastern Europe were in desperate straits. They were in a state of permanent torment, beset by a virulent anti-Semitism encompassing a wide range of discrimination and oppression — from economic exclusion to popular violence.

Beyond the violence there persisted an ominous and irreversible economic destruction of the Jewish community. They were in the midst of a process — the emergence of a Polish middle class — which was driving out the Jewish middle class, rapidly cutting the ground from under their feet (by the mid-1930s it was estimated that one third of the Jewish population had been reduced to living on charity from abroad). Door after door was being shut before the Jews in the Polish economy, until it became clear that Jewish existence in Poland had neither hope nor prospect.

Their plight was not a secret to the Zionist leaders. Both Weizmann and Jabotinsky soberly recognized its nature. Weizmann told the British Royal Commission on Palestine, in 1937, that the Jews of Eastern Europe were “dust, moral and economic dust in a cruel world. They will bear their fate or they will not”. He had neither comfort nor advice for his people in Eastern Europe. Jabotinsky — launched his “evacuation” campaign, urging them to leave Europe and press for opening the gates of Palestine.

With the limited means at their disposal, Jabotinsky’s movements, (Revisionists, Betar, Irgun) succeeded in bringing out some 16,000 Jews to Palestine. His campaign was stultified — by the Jewish establishment. The Zionist Organization launched a vigorous counter-campaign. They denounced Jabotinsky as cooperating with anti-Semitic governments anxious to get rid of their Jews. They urged the Jews of Eastern Europe to disregard his gloomy prognostications and rather to devote themselves to struggling for their civic rights. And they dissuaded Jews in the West from contributing to the funds essential to Jabotinsky’s enterprise. Finally, they even denounced the conditions on the crowded immigrant ships.

Had the Zionist Organization applied its very much larger resources to a gigantic emergency campaign, they would conceivably have worsened their relations with the British, but a very large number of Jews would have been saved from the European death-trap.

* * *

Nor is it possible to teach the Holocaust and to ignore the part played by the Western Powers, primarily the British.

One of the central features of British international policy in the years before the war was the swift evolution of its effort to put an end to

Zionism. The British had long-since smothered the fact that their presence in Palestine had neither legal reason nor moral justification once they had betrayed the Zionist cause.

Recent research has made plain the depth of the cynicism (and contempt for the Jews) in their policy in those desperate years. Incredibly they even discussed a proposal of Foreign Minister Lord Halifax (quoted by Martin Gilbert) that it should be suggested to the Jews that they “*themselves should voluntarily give up their rights (in Palestine) instead of having it forced on them*”.

This was in January 1939. Whether the formal invitation to a ceremonial national suicide was ever issued, is not known. Very shortly afterwards, however, the British announced the policy (the White Paper) which effectively violated their pledge and their obligation to the Jewish people — whose implementation meant permanent minority status for the Jews in Palestine and the end of the Zionist upbuilding.

At the same time, they stepped up their efforts, vigorous and far-reaching, to prevent the escape of the Jews from Europe. Every country of potential transit — Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece — was badgered and bullied not to allow Jews to go through. They even demanded Nazi co-operation. Jews were succeeding in leaving Germany without visas (presumably with German connivance) and with a view to trying to “land in any territory that seems to present the slightest possibility of receiving them” (in the words of the British Foreign Office). The British Ambassador in Berlin thereupon called on the German Government (in March 1939) to “check unauthorized emigration” of Jews.

Simultaneously, the British Colonial Empire was closed to Jewish immigrants. Almost all the countries of the world followed suit. At the Evian Conference in July 1938 this attitude found formal expression; the only exceptions were Holland, Denmark and Santa Domingo. The United States, for its part, refused to relax its quotas, and indeed collaborated with the British in some of their diplomatic moves in the war against the Jewish refugees.

How is it possible to teach the Holocaust, and ask the student to learn its lessons without his being guided to learn the crucial fact that before the Holocaust began the German Government (up to 1941) preferred the Jews to leave Europe and did not prevent them from going; and that it was British anti-Zionist policy and the vigour with which it was pursued, and the climate it created throughout the world that closed the trap on the now doomed Jews of Europe.

That is not all. The physical destruction of the Jews was not merely the pragmatic alternative method to execute Hitler's decision to get rid of the Jews. Can there be any doubt that the demonstrated universal indifference to their fate and the British eagerness to prevent them escaping convinced Hitler that he could launch the "final solution" with impunity?

* * *

Hitler's confidence on this subject was given a tremendous boost after he had invaded Poland, and when his conquering forces began killing whole Jewish communities, men, women and children, and burying them in mass graves they had themselves been forced to dig. There was no reaction from Britain. These atrocities were not even used in British propaganda against the Germans. The popular press (with one major exception, the then-Liberal "Manchester Guardian") did not even mention them. Nor was there any relaxation of the British war on those Jews who were still getting passage on the rickety ships of the "illegal" immigration.

At that time, Dr. Weizmann appealed to the British Government to give "legal" immigration permits to 20,000 children still within the British quota. This was refused, and these children, like all the others, were left to Hitler.

By 1941 there could be no doubt in Hitler's mind that his enemies were according him an open season in his policy towards the Jews. In January 1942 at the Wannsee Conference the plans were laid for the "final solution," which became the Holocaust.

The subsequent refusal of the British and the Americans — when the Holocaust was in progress — to lift a finger to help save various groups of Jews who by connivance with Nazi officials could be saved; and the British refusal, accompanied by equivocation and subterfuge, in the later stages of the war, to bomb railways leading to Auschwitz or the camp itself, and thus at least slow down the process of destruction, only underlines their eagerness to see in the disappearance of the Jews of Europe a substantial stepping-stone to the consummation of their own anti-Zionist policy in Palestine.

* * *

The revelations in these less-known corners of the Holocaust will no doubt arouse discussion, perhaps even controversy. But if the Ministry of

Education is serious about giving the new generation an opportunity of understanding the Holocaust (and indeed the history of Zionism and of Israel) the exploration of these areas cannot be excluded from the special course on the Holocaust.

27.4.79

Lip-Service in West Germany

The fortieth anniversary of the outbreak of World War II focused people's minds, albeit briefly, on the memory of the horror visited on the world by the Hitler regime. It evoked commemorative pronouncements by West German leaders denouncing the Nazis. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt said on West German television that "the post-Nazi era will never be at an end" and that "the memory of Auschwitz will remain alive for many generations in Europe, in Israel, in America and in many parts of the world, and it must remain so in our own country". Mr. Schmidt, moreover, conveyed a practical message of high moral significance to his fellow-countrymen: Germans had an obligation, he said, to place the interests of their neighbours "as high as our own".

The Jewish State is manifestly not to be a beneficiary of this self-denial. Towards Israel, the German government has gradually slid into a posture where not only are Israel's interests not placed as "high" as Germany's own, but are indeed to be sacrificed on the altar of what the German leaders perceive as Germany's interest.

These leaders cannot be suspected of naivete. Neither should Israel be treated as naive. West Germany's oil requirements are as exigent as those of her European neighbours; and it is easy to understand the policy of kowtowing to the Arabs — of which Foreign Minister Genscher has just concluded a peripatetic exhibition in the Middle East — as a means of making sure of a supply of oil, as well, perhaps, as of other mercantile advantages. Only, Bonn should understand all the elements and implications of this policy.

Mr. Genscher reported that he had reached "broad agreement" with his Arab hosts on the "Palestinian question". If the programme for which Bonn is proclaiming its support is implemented — "self-determination for the Palestinian people" and a "political unit" or "political homeland" for

the Palestinians — it would involve the territorial reduction of Israel to what Mr. Abba Eban (Israel's former foreign minister) described as a "death trap". Reduced to those lines, Israel will within a predictably short time be fighting for her life against an enemy as intent on her destruction as Hitler was intent on destroying the Jews of Europe.

* * *

It may be said that the policies of the British and French and, indeed, of the Americans are no better than that of the Germans. This is pitifully true.

It is fair to add that when the German mass killing of Jews in World War II was in full swing, Vichy France collaborated actively with Hitler, while Britain and the United States refrained from saving the many Jews who could have been saved, whether by bribing willing Nazi officials or by military action against the death machine itself. This specific memory relating to Auschwitz, however, hardly requires that Germany today should respond to the initiative of Britain and France in a common policy which, if consummated, will pave the way for the final stage of the attempt by the Arabs to liquidate Israel.

Will the Germans argue they do not know this, that "it is not so?" It is true the Arabs have developed sophistication since the crude days of 1948, when they threatened to visit upon the Jews a destruction equal to that of the Mongol invasion; or (in 1967) that they would throw the Jews into the sea. Then, indeed, that object could conceivably be achieved in one throw: Israel's width from the sea was 15 kilometres.

Now that purpose is wrapped around in code-words like the "restoration of the rights of the Palestinians," or the "right of return". All these "rights" refer to the territory of Israel (in addition to Judea, Samaria and Gaza).

When US President Carter met Syrian President Assad in early 1977, the latter explained that one must understand that there are two parts to the solution of the problem of Palestine. Israel's withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967 was only one part. The other part was the return of the "refugees" of 1948 to their homes (in Jaffa, Haifa, Acre et al). Mr. Carter afterwards characteristically described Mr. Assad as a "moderate".

Mr. Genscher, who also visited Damascus, reports that he reached "broad agreement". The German leaders cannot claim that they did not know, that they were not told, what the Arabs intend by the "solution of the Palestinian problem".

That problem is not one of a homeless people that has to be provided with a homeland. That is a hoax. The Palestinian Arabs have a homeland — three quarters of Palestine is under Arab rule. It is called Jordan, and it is in fact part of the patrimony of the Jewish people, handed over by the British to a Hedjazi Arab princeling.

If Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Genscher and their colleagues would read the Palestinian Covenant, they would find that the PLO — which is no more than the fighting arm of the Arab states — quite simply claims all of Palestine, on both sides of the Jordan, as their “homeland”. This is a straightforward admission that the Palestinians are not a homeless people at all. The rest of the Covenant is devoted to the real central purpose of the PLO and its masters and paymasters: the erasure from the map of the tiny triangle marked “Israel”.

The Palestine problem consists of the inability of the Arab states so far to achieve that objective. They tried to prevent Israel’s birth in 1948, when the Jewish leaders for the sake of peace naively agreed to give up yet another part of the only Jewish homeland. They failed, but they could have established a “Palestinian State” in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. They did not do so, and, instead, prepared for the next attempt on Israel’s life.

They failed again in 1967, and Israel, in repelling them, took back the rest of Western Palestine. That is why the Arabs then had to decide to achieve their objective in two stages. The first would be to get Israel back into the indefensible pre-1967 lines.

It is support, meantime, for this objective that the Germans are, in fact, offering the Arabs in return for oil supplies.

* * *

It seems that the German leaders are aware of this. They have now made it plain that they do not care if we know it. There was no remonstrance directed at Mr. Willy Brandt for meeting, on equal terms, with Yasser Arafat; indeed there can be no doubt that the meeting was approved by Bonn.

There is equally no doubt of the authorization of the “private” meeting of Mr. Moehlmann, a close collaborator of Foreign Minister Genscher, as a gesture of friendship to the PLO leader.

These “gestures” bear a significance even beyond the political considerations of support for the Palestinians at this stage of their campaign for the annihilation of the Jewish State. The German leaders

know who and what Arafat is: the leader of the most barbaric murder organization of our time. This title is due to him not because civilians have died as the result of military operations carried out by his followers. It is because *civilians are their only target*. No group of the PLO has ever sought to attack Israeli soldiers. Their clashes with Israeli forces have come about only when the soldiers have caught up with them before, during or after an attempt to murder civilians.

Arafat's choice of the helpless as victims is a matter of principle. When PLO "fighters," for reasons of their own, captured three diplomats (a Belgian and two Americans) in the Saudi embassy in Khartoum in March 1973, they shot them (on direct orders from Arafat in Beirut) only after they had tied them to their chairs.

Arafat's crowning achievement has consequently been the murder of the most helpless people of all: children.

Have the German leaders, who have no doubt followed the exploits of the "Palestinians," never sensed this special affinity, the continuity of purpose in the murder of Jewish children? Mr. Brandt, who once knelt in contrition before the memorial to the Jewish victims of Hitler, now confers, in publicized friendship, with Hitler's successor in the deliberate murder of Jewish children; and his action is quietly approved by the German Government.

Is it by his policy towards Israel that Chancellor Schmidt expects the German people to keep alive for generations the memory of Auschwitz?

7.9.79

Europe Blows a Kiss of Death

In October 1973, when the US Defence Department was organizing a massive airlift of weapons to Israel, Washington applied to a succession of European governments to permit the planes carrying the weapons to land in their territory for essential refuelling. All of them refused.

Israel was still reeling from the impact of the surprise twin offensive launched by Egypt and Syria on Yom Kippur, and the world at large had been made aware that she was in dire danger. That meant that if she could not stem further Arab advances, her very existence might be at stake.

All the European governments applied to were, of course, friends of

Israel; but they were bravely prepared to watch whatever consequences she might suffer from their help for her enemies.

There was no secret, and there was no attempt to keep secret, the reason for this extreme act of doubtless reluctant abandonment of the State of Israel and its people. The reason was the quaking unwillingness of those governments to offend the Arabs, their belief that if they were to permit the planes to land and refuel, the Arabs would deprive them of oil. Ostensibly proud governments lost their heads, and were thus reduced to whimpering impotence.

The French Foreign Minister, Michel Jobert, told the National Assembly “Nous pesons peu” — we count for little — and the German Foreign Minister later explained cryptically that his government had behaved in the way it had because it was “aware of the limits of its influence”.

The US Government was fortunately able to call on long-standing treaty rights with Portugal that entitled her to use airfields in the Azores for refuelling; and the arms were delivered.

* * *

In the years that followed there was no increase in the “weight” of the French Government. Indeed, under President Giscard d’Estaing it became flabbier and more subservient in its relations with the Arab states. Its pursuit of their favours (notably in Algeria and Iraq) and its humiliations at their hands fill a particularly embarrassing page in Europe’s modern history. Nor has the German Government increased in moral stature. Former Chancellor Willy Brandt who, like Chancellor Schmidt himself, had in the past given expression publicity to outpourings of contrition over Hitler’s “final solution” — held friendly intercourse, duly televised, with Yassir Arafat, the man whose declared policy they know is to complete the work of Hitler, at least in Israel.

Moreover, Chancellor Schmidt recently (last March) voiced, in what can only be described as brutal terms, a threat as to what would happen if Israel did not surrender to the immediate demands of the Arabs (that is, surrender Judea, Samaria and Gaza and acquiesce in the establishment of a Palestinian state under the leadership of the PLO).

In that case, Schmidt said, a new war might result, the Arabs would use the oil weapon and the West (that is, first of all presumably, Schmidt)

would force Israel to make even more far-reaching concessions than she would have to make today.

Schmidt gave this briefing at a closed meeting of the Friedrich Ebert political and economic discussion group, but his statements filtered out.

* * *

It is in this context that the resolutions of the members of the European Community must be viewed. Yet to be historically fair, governments which in 1973 were capable separately of a deliberate decision which made feasible the military defeat of Israel through lack of arms and thus the immediate prospect of her being overrun and eliminated as a state, can hardly be described as having become “more” hostile in 1980. After all, the resolutions they adopted in Venice envisage, in present circumstances, a much more gradual progress towards Israel’s elimination.

The most revealing of the resolutions adopted in Venice is the one that promises European “guarantees”. As propaganda, it is also the most dangerous, for to some it may sound plausible. After all, it pretends to breathe goodwill — like the kiss of death. What it means is that the statesmen involved feel certain that the territorial conditions they would impose on Israel would make her indefensible. But, they are saying, Israel need not fear: they — the Germans, the French and the Italians — all will come to save her. (Always, provided of course, that their oil suppliers and their providers of petro-dollars would not object.)

This, of all the resolutions, is probably the most open call to Israel to commit national suicide for the immediate convenience of the members of the European Community.

Israel survived the horrendous demonstration of European indifference to her fate in 1973. She will no doubt survive the Venice resolutions. In practical terms they do indeed “count for little”. They do not reflect European strength but weakness. But they do add a dimension to the great propaganda campaign in progress whose central object is to build up public opinion in favour of forcing Israel to give in to the Arab purpose. And Israel’s failure to build a semblance of a sane and adequate counter campaign continues.

* * *

The Venice meeting must, however, be viewed in an even broader

context. Nothing that is said and done in Europe today is unrelated to the overhanging cloud of relations with the Soviet Union. The US policy of détente, embraced with equal enthusiasm by European politicians and big businessmen, introduced a similar deterioration in Europe's security alertness — encouraged moreover by the assurance of the American "nuclear umbrella" (which would look after everybody).

The belated decision by NATO last autumn to introduce new weapons which would narrow the gap with the Soviet Union inevitably aroused the ire of the Russians.

After all, the prospect that Western Europe might begin to feel itself — and might even become — a match for the Russians would be a heavy blow to Moscow's aim of turning Europe into one large docile Finland. Precisely this Soviet scowl seems to have activated West European appeasement.

This spirit is patently working strongly in Helmut Schmidt. His impending visit to Moscow while Soviet forces are still engaged in violently subjugating Afghanistan is in itself a public manifestation of this spirit. Going there at a time when President Leonid Brezhnev is breathing fire and brimstone over NATO's armament plans — he must surely be carrying proposals.

What can he offer Moscow? There is much reason then in the widespread suspicion that he intends trying to make a deal: mutual restraint — NATO will forego its armament plans and Moscow will refrain from introducing its own new missile.

Thus, the *status quo* will be maintained; with it, the frustration of Western resolve to close the gap, and thus a firm step forward towards the conscious subjection of Western Europe to the Soviet purpose.

* * *

It is apparent that Schmidt's view of relations with Moscow is also a factor in his attitude to Israel: appeasement of Moscow is helped along by unfriendliness to Israel.

This consideration (under the inspiration also of Giscard d'Estaing, who is closely collaborating with Schmidt) has without doubt begun to colour the attitude to Israel of all those in Europe who, out of despair or pragmatic convenience, have started making peace with the idea that a Soviet-dominated world may not be so terrible after all. Dominated, that is, like Finland, not like Poland. This current may well have been flowing in the Venice deliberations.

It is in harmony with this spirit that Schmidt hinted broadly last week that the Soviet Union's views must also be taken into account. To the Knesset group that called on him, he indicated that Israel would have to knuckle under to pressures because of developments in the "international situation".

The lessons to be drawn by Israel are numerous; they go to the roots of the foreign policy of the Alignment — which laid the foundations of Israel's tribulations in the international field — compounded by the historic blunders of the Likud Government. They need to be analysed separately.

20.6.80

Invitation to Suicide

A group of important personalities from Britain has been on an official visit to Israel (and to her enemies, including Arafat). Their declared purpose has been to learn at first hand the facts and viewpoints in the conflict between Israel and the Arabs. By the standard procedure for such three-day lightning visits they should soon be propounding a complete solution to this hitherto intractable problem. This group however appears to be especially sophisticated. They reached their conclusions and published their findings *before* setting out on their study tour.

Nevertheless, the public posture of its members is that of serious political personalities. They are a parliamentary delegation of the Liberal Party, and they include the party's most important members: its national leader, Mr. David Steel MP, and its spokesman on foreign affairs, Mr. Russell Johnston MP, who is also the leader of the party in Scotland.

It was Mr. Johnston who, three months ago, "after detailed consultation (according to the official press release) with the Liberal Foreign Affairs Panel," issued a policy statement on "The Middle East".

That statement is, at best, a concoction steeped in ignorance and prejudice in roughly equal parts. It is a fine example of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*. Its quality is most readily tested by the inclusion of the seemingly innocent — and equitable — demand for "free access for all to the holy places of Jerusalem under internationally agreed arrangements".

The immediate and obvious implication of this formulation appears to be that at present, under Israeli rule, there is no free access to the holy places. As any third-grade pupil could enlighten the delegation, Israel is the

only authority in modern times which has enabled and encouraged absolutely free access to all the holy places. A fifth-grader could explain to them, moreover, that the reason for this is the Jewish people's natural sense of sovereignty in Jerusalem.

Jews have no psychological need for repression and discrimination against other religions in order to "prove" their legitimacy.

* * *

There may, however, be a different reading to the Liberals' demand. They, and all the others who have recently become so deeply concerned about the freedom of access to the holy places, are all united in their desire to see Israel relinquishing East Jerusalem (together with Judea and Samaria). This consummation would bring about Arab Moslem control of the holy places.

The very notion is enough to make any civilized person shiver. Mr. Johnston and his colleagues are presumably aware that during the 19 years the holy places were under Jordanian occupation no Jew was allowed access to the Western Wall, nor even an Israeli Moslem to the mosques in the Old City — despite the fact that access was "guaranteed" by the internationally sponsored Armistice Agreement.

It may even have reached Liberal ears that during those years the Jordanian authorities destroyed almost every Jewish synagogue in the Old City as well as desecrating the cemetery on the Mount of Olives, used by Jews as a burial place for centuries before Islam was born.

Is it then from the Arabs that the Liberals are demanding "free access" and, tongue-in-cheek, flourishing the fig-leaf of "international arrangements"?

There are two other not-irrelevant facts they may recall. When the holy places were under the political control of a Christian power (Britain, to whom the Mandate — over Palestine on both sides of the Jordan — had been granted because she had undertaken to facilitate the "reconstitution of the Jewish National Home"), Jews were indeed "permitted" access to the Western Wall, but were restricted (and forcibly prevented) in the fulfilment of some of the rites of Judaism (such as blowing the *shofar* on Yom Kippur).

And throughout the years that Jordan was busy eradicating physical evidence of the 3,000-year relationship between the Jewish people and its

capital, not a single Christian voice was heard in protest, not even from the British Liberal Party.

* * *

The Liberals, to their credit, veil their motive only lightly. They do not waste hypocritical words on truth and justice. In their statement they say unequivocally that their party “believes that peace and stability in the region require an improvement in relations between the Moslem world and the West” (and they proceed at once to improve these relations by adding the bald, and monstrous, judgement that the impediment to that peace is simply “Israel’s refusal to withdraw from the Arab territories which it occupied in 1967 and its attempt to colonize the territories”).

They certainly know that this is poisonous nonsense; but that is what is required of them by the “Moslem World” — which is their thinly veiled code-name for the wealthy Arab states.

In this, moreover, they are not alone. Their statement is nearly identical with the resolutions adopted in Venice in June by the European Economic Committee — whose demands on Israel add up to an invitation, gently and by stages, to commit suicide.

* * *

It is a wry joke that people like these British Liberals should be discussing, with straight faces, how peace can be assured in the Middle East if only Israel is reduced to strategic impotence and dangerous vulnerability, when almost within earshot conflict rages at the heart and centre of the Middle East, between Iraq and Iran.

Iraq — demonstrating once again how an Arab state automatically tears up its agreement even with a Moslem neighbour as soon as it senses that the neighbour has become beatable in war; Iran — once primed as the great Western bastion against Soviet encroachment, barely holding its own against an untried, third-rate Iraqi army; both together demonstrating their potential capacity to undermine the Western economies (apart from the danger to world peace) — and, thus, lighting up the incredible fatuities of Western policy over the past dozen years.

It was in 1968 that Britain withdrew from the zone “East of Suez” (for reasons of economy, probably the most expensive economy in history in terms of blood as well as money); and the Americans failed to see the need

for credibly filling the vacuum, failing completely moreover to grasp the nature of the forces at work.

If the Steels and the Johnstons of the West really wish to “do something” about the threat to peace in the Middle East (and its concomitant threat to world peace, not to mention world economic stability, or what is left of it) they should stop puttering around with the Arab hoax of a “homeless Palestinian people”.

If there is a Palestinian Arab people, it has a recognized homeland east of the Jordan — three-quarters of the whole of Palestine.

Let the Liberals and their counterparts in Western Europe pioneer a campaign for a drastic revision of Western political and strategic concepts in the Middle East. They must understand that the shrinking of Israel will not prevent any war. It will only bring war nearer — and the subjugation to Soviet power not only of the Middle East but of Western Europe itself.

Let them note that while the West has been busy bullying Israel, the blows to its own security have been advancing inexorably westward — Afghanistan, Iran, the Gulf; and the Western oil route, now disrupted.

Now, too, is the time (indeed it is late enough) to make it plain to the Saudi Arabians, and indeed to the Egyptians, that the West will not be blackmailed into undermining its own security by the sacrifice of Israel; that the common interest — against chaos in the area and inevitable Soviet encroachment — demands, *inter alia*, that Israel be not weakened but strengthened.

3.10.80

Replying to Schmidt

No less disturbing than Chancellor Helmut Schmidt’s incredible performance on German television has been the reaction of the German press and of public personalities in the Bundesrepublik. Schmidt was interviewed on April 30.

One day went by, and another, and a third. Not an astonished comment, not a word of angry criticism, not to speak of shock, came from the moulders of German public opinion. Nor do the outraged reactions from Israel appear to have touched a chord in their hearts.

When four such days has passed, Asher Ben-Natan, Israel’s former ambassador in Germany and now chairman of the Israeli-German Friendship

League, called a press conference in Tel Aviv. He was still expecting to hear from Germany, he said, “expressions of protest and disavowal of the terrible things Chancellor Schmidt said on his return from Saudi Arabia”.

Ben-Natan found he had to appeal to the Friends of Israel in Germany to disavow the statements made by the chancellor. Otherwise, he warned, it was doubtful whether the relations that had been so laboriously built up between the two countries would be able to continue. (*Ma'ariv*, May 5).

That very day, the German media came to life. They all rushed to Schmidt's defence against the attack made upon him by Prime Minister Begin the previous night. They were soon joined by a variety of public personalities, including spokesmen of the official opposition. It seemed as though all had jumped at the opportunity presented by the personal nature of Begin's attack to sweep Schmidt's outrageous remarks under the carpet. In their violent lambasting of Begin, they do not appear even to have mentioned the remarks the chancellor had made three days earlier.

Mr. Ben-Natan is right. Israel has a problem with Schmidt and his government, and a problem no less painful with that unofficial Germany with which Ben-Natan and many others in Israel have for years been assiduously building bridges, so hopefully and seemingly so successfully.

* * *

Early in 1980, in conversation with a high dignitary of the Catholic church in Germany, I recalled to him the friendly meeting between Willy Brandt, the Social Democratic leader, and Yasser Arafat. I asked him: “Why did the church not react? When you saw this obscene picture on television of a German leader displaying friendship with the man who has undertaken to complete the work of Hitler, were you in the church not stunned? Did you feel no moral revulsion, no need to protest?”

The question must now be asked again, not only of the Catholic church, but of all Germans who claim moral stature, and who mould public opinion in their country.

How could they listen, unmoved, to Schmidt's chilling pronouncements on German policy towards Israel, so obviously inspired by some of the more savage untruths of Arab propaganda? How could they watch the chancellor so deliberately “forgetting” the small matter of Hitler's final solution and listen to his malicious insinuations and his mendacities, all designed not only to put an end to the sense of Germany's guilt and her moral obligation to the Jewish people, but also to justify German support

for the Arabs, who openly preach and prepare the final solution of their problem of Israel's existence? How could they sit in their armchairs in front of the television screen and not tear their hair at a new moral decline in the leadership of their nation and not weep over the degradation of their own humanity? How come they did not even on the morrow raise their voices or take up their pens in protest?

* * *

Did Chancellor Schmidt himself realize the enormity of what he was saying? Omitting to include the Jews even in his catalogue of the victims of "Auschwitz," he expanded on the "historic advantage" that the Germans derive from the fact that "the Arab peoples are practically the only ones in the whole world who had no negative experience with the Germans... it plays a role in the open-hearted friendship with which they meet us".

Did his ears not hear that his mouth was affirming precisely a direct Arab-German link in "Auschwitz?" The reason why the Arab peoples had no "negative experience" with the Germans during the Hitler regime was that when they encountered the Nazis, they cooperated with them.

In the wake of Schmidt's ecstatic explanation of Arab friendship the moderator of the interview asked him, with special reference to Saudi Arabia: "You stressed that we meet with a sincere friendship, but does not a friendly relationship imply a concrete obligation to help if one is asked to do so?"

Schmidt replied: "Certainly. Friendship carries with it the moral obligation of solidarity. And this is a friendship which is not only based on moral grounds but has also grown out of certain parallel interests, and it demands solidarity".

Needless to say, the "certain parallel interests" reside, as emerged later in the interview, in Saudi Arabia's benevolence and generosity in the supply and the pricing of oil.

This then, was the good news that the German chancellor brought to his people: that they were now able to reap the positive fruits of the good relations between the Arabs and the Germans in Hitler's day.

At his Tel Aviv press conference, Asher Ben-Natan recalled specific "horrible foundations" of Schmidt's vision of friendship with the Arabs: the Mufti of Jerusalem helped Hitler's army establish a Moslem unit to cooperate in destroying the Jews; and in the pro-Nazi revolt in Iraq the

Arabs identified with the Germans only because of their anti-Semitic policy.

Did the German press and the German intellectuals and the Friends of Israel not grasp the abysmal significance of Schmidt's happy report? He was, after all, basking in the unique glow of Arab friendship in the name and to the benefit of the whole German people.

* * *

It was, however, on the issues directly concerned with the State of Israel that the chancellor demonstrated the full force of his absolute identification with the Arabs. He brushed aside impatiently the uncomfortable questions put to him by the two interviewers, Matthias Walden of *Die Welt* and Carl Weiss of the Third Television Network, who pulled no punches, and subjected them instead to a long statement of what was in fact PLO propaganda.

He thereby displayed incredible ignorance of the roots of the conflict between Jews and Arabs, and even of the facts of the current phase. For example, he spoke of "refugees and expellees" from "the West Bank and the East Bank of the Jordan;" and he urged support for the PLO (which has for years been one of Moscow's most favoured beneficiaries in arms and training and diplomatic promotion) because if they were not supported they would be "pushed into the arms of Moscow".

There can be no doubt that the chancellor of Germany was simply repeating like a parrot whatever had been poured into his eager ears by his Arab friends. Many of the people who saw and heard this farrago of nonsense and ill-will towards Israel know the truth; and they kept silent.

* * *

Israel's problem with Germany, however, is even graver than appears now on the surface. The statements Schmidt made in the television interview dovetail with the even more monstrous doctrine he has been disseminating to justify German promotion of the establishment of a "Palestinian state" and bullying Israel into accepting it. This doctrine was brought to public notice in Israel last August by Daniel Dagan, *Ha'aretz* correspondent in Bonn. It runs roughly as follows:

The Jewish state arose as a result of the Holocaust. Germany was to blame for the Holocaust. Germany was therefore responsible for the

establishment of the Jewish state. She consequently bears at least part of the blame for the “sufferings of the Palestinians”. She thus has a moral obligation to support the Palestinians in their struggle.

This doctrine is then placed in a pragmatic frame. All out support for the Palestinians, including the dissemination of their propaganda against Israel, will bring Germany deeper friendship and growing economic benefits from the Arab sponsors of the PLO.

Schmidt’s outburst was not just an incident. It reflects a policy leading Germany along the road of historic moral regression. By their reactions Israel’s friends will be tested. But Israel, through the new government it elects next month, must make its own effective reply.

15.5.81

Peril in Sinai

On June 19, 1967, Abba Eban, then foreign minister, gave the UN General Assembly a masterly review of the events and situations that had led to the Six Day War. He recalled the arrangements made in 1957 — after the Sinai Campaign — and the assurances then given to Israel in the General Assembly by the US, France, Britain and Canada, as well as other states.

“These assurances,” he said, “expressed with special solemnity by the four governments which I have mentioned, induced Israel to give up positions which she then held at Gaza and at the entrance to the Straits of Tiran and in Sinai”.

The first of these assurances related to the stationing of a UN Emergency Force “to separate the armies” in Sinai and Gaza, and the exercise of free and innocent passage in the Gulf of Akaba and the Straits of Tiran.

“As we look back,” said Eban, “it becomes plain that the Arab governments regarded the 1957 arrangements merely as a breathing space, enabling them to gather strength for a new assault”.

That assault — on Israel within the 1949 Armistice lines — came in 1967. On May 14, Egyptian forces began to move into Sinai. On May 21 President Nasser announced he was blockading the Gulf of Akaba to Israeli ships. Meanwhile, on May 18, he had ordered the removal of the UN Emergency Force. The UN secretary-general, ignoring all the

procedures and safeguards laid down for that force, and indeed the very reason for its existence, acceded instantly to this order.

“It is often said,” Eban declared, “that UN procedures are painfully slow. This decision was disastrously swift. Its effect was to make Sinai safe for belligerency from north to south... and to leave an international maritime interest exposed to almost certain threat...”

“Israel’s attitude to the peace-keeping functions of the UN has been traumatically affected by its experience. What is the use of a fire brigade which vanishes from the scene as soon as the first smoke and flames appear? Is it surprising that we are firmly resolved never again to allow a vital Israel interest and our very security to rest on such a fragile foundation?”

Eban spoke then for all Israel, and his undertaking was unequivocal: that no government in Israel would ever allow itself to forget what happened in 1967, nor ever again rest any part of the security of the state or the lives of its people on the assurances and guarantees of other peoples.

That agonized declaration, that bold assurance of future steadfastness in the face of foreign promises, has been swept away like chaff in the wind. In the Israeli Government’s headlong rush towards the disaster of the surrender of Sinai, it embraced anew the transparent illusion that an international force would be an effective barrier to renewed Arab aggression. Indeed, Israel’s security in the south is planned to be based on foundations even more fragile than those of 1957.

* * *

Even an international force that would fulfil its function conscientiously will be of little value for keeping the peace when Egypt decides (together with other Arab states) to launch war on Israel. Former chief of staff Haim Bar-Lev — in criticizing the surrender of Sinai on security grounds — pointed out that “all security arrangements, from demilitarization to the presence of UN forces, have one single value: a so-many-hours’ warning. Even if all of Sinai is demilitarized, and there are large numbers of UN forces and an infinite number of American early-warning stations, the military value is of half a day, at most a day of warning”. (Knesset Minutes September 27, 1978).

* * *

The precise detailed sequence of future events is hidden from us; yet their thrust is sharply delineated in the present facts. When President Sadat signed the peace treaty and agreed to the stationing of a multi-national force in Sinai he also launched Egypt on an arms-purchasing spree, substantially strengthening her tank and air forces, and ordered the digging of a tunnel under the Suez Canal.

There can have been no doubt in his mind that, faced by Egyptian determination to go to war, such a multi-national force would be no obstacle. Which government — British or Italian, French or Dutch — would risk the storm of public protest and obloquy at the hazards to which its sons would be exposed in protecting the State of Israel against attack? If the Egyptian Government orders them out, they will leave with alacrity.

In addition to the illusion such a force will create, however, it will become a positive danger in the foreseeable circumstances in which Egypt would launch war.

The essence of those circumstances is public knowledge. If Israel does not succumb to Egyptian, all-Arab, American and European pressures (perhaps including sanctions) to give up control of Judea, Samaria and Gaza, the arms build-up now in progress throughout the Arab states will be brought to its prescribed consummation: the threshold of war — recalling to mind the prelude to the 1967 war.

What happened in 1967? Then Israel, still believing in the validity of international assurances, turned to the Security Council for action against Egypt's flagrant violation of the 1957 undertakings and of the UN Charter. Then, all that happened was, in Eban's words, a "desultory debate which sometimes reached a point of levity".

* * *

As in 1948 — and again subsequently in 1973 — the UN did not lift a finger while all the world waited — in agony or hope — for the Arabs to destroy Israel.

Now, in 1982, the European governments to be represented in the multi-national force are not even formally neutral. They are all on the side of the Arabs — accepting the guidance of Saudi Arabia. They are all parties to the arrogant Venice Declaration which calls, *inter alia*, for Israeli surrender of Judea, Samaria and Gaza. They will consequently see a just cause in a renewed Arab effort to force Israel out of those areas.

That they will not countenance action by their soldiers to obstruct the

Egyptians may be taken for granted. Who is prepared to guarantee that they will not use their forces to impede the Israelis?

This is not a merely logical prognostication. The governments involved have themselves made it plain that their bias — their identification with the Arab purpose — inspires their participation in the multi-national force. That is the only rational explanation for their persistence in introducing the otherwise irrelevant Venice Declaration in succeeding texts of their letters of acceptance of a share in the multi-national force. They want it to be clear that their soldiers' role in Sinai will be a function of the Venice Declaration.

They adopted that Declaration in the best tradition of international cynicism and double-talk as a "policy for peace" — whose consummation would spell peace without Israel. Helping Egypt not too obtrusively, for example by withholding "early warning" information from Israel, in a war for achieving the objective of the Venice Declaration — the return of Israel to the 1949 Armistice lines — would thus be a safe contribution to the Europeans' own "peace plan".

What could be more logical than to use their own forces, already on the spot, to this end? What, indeed, is more likely?

Seven years before their Venice Declaration, the European nations extended a helping hand to Egypt in its Yom Kippur aggression by refusing US planes, carrying supplies to a most hard-pressed Israel, permission to land and refuel on their soil.

Agreement to any international force to keep the peace in Sinai — thus compounding the reckless surrender of Israel's security belt — is a breach of the solemn pronouncement by Abba Eban, backed by the whole people, that Israel would never again allow itself to be led into the same trap.

To allow into Sinai troops whose governments not only identify with the objectives for which the Arabs will be launching war against Israel, but openly announce that it is in the spirit of those objectives that their troops will in fact be sent to Sinai, is an act of unparalleled irresponsibility.

22.1.82

The Soviet Jewry Complex

The Fallout Epidemic — Made in Jerusalem

In the field which distinguishes Israel from all the other nations, the field of *aliyah*, it is on the brink of a defeat which she has inflicted on herself.

The great struggle in our day over the right of emigration from the Soviet Union began some ten years ago. It began with the actions of individuals and small groups. Whoever has not himself experienced the Soviet totalitarian regime, grounded in a doctrine-which-permits-no-doubt, which, by methods merciless even barbaric, suppresses any opposition or heresy and especially every manifestation of the “Zionist heresy”, can use only his imagination to grasp the courage in the heart of a youngster who gets up in his high-school class, contradicts his teacher and declares that a Jewish nation does exist, that it does have a homeland, that its State is Israel, and that he himself is proud to be a son of this people — as did Dov Sperling who was sentenced in consequence to a year in a school of correction; or who makes a Zionist statement at his place of work and even submits an application for emigration to Israel — and is sentenced to three years’ imprisonment like Boris Kuchabayeovsky of Kiev.

The list is long. It includes also the group of Jews who brought about a turning-point in the struggle when they planned the hijacking of a plane (the property of the Soviet State) in order to cross the frontier and finally arrive in Israel. Two of them were given the death sentence (afterwards remitted to imprisonment), the remainder were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

In those days a youth named Yasha Kazakov wrote a letter to the President of the Soviet State and informed him that he belonged to the Jewish people, is ashamed of the Soviets’ policy toward Israel, demands permission to proceed to Israel and foregoes his Soviet citizenship. The contents of his letter, which Kazakov succeeded in having published in an American newspaper, was perhaps the first dramatic testimony to the heroic struggle for *aliyah* in the Soviet Union.

By printing and publishing Zionist materials, by learning Hebrew in groups, by establishing contact between different groups, in a hundred

“primitive” ways, all illegal in the USSR — a “Zionist movement” grew out of its stony soil.

When the news of the struggle spread throughout the world a powerful movement for *aliyah* from the Soviet Union sprang up. It took on many forms, from diplomatic pressure to stormy demonstrations, including the bothering of Soviet diplomats; and famous people joined the movement including distinguished statesmen. In the United States it achieved serious political dimensions and, at the initiative of Senator Henry Jackson, the suspension of a trade agreement with the USSR. Indeed a movement without precedent.

The Soviets did not persist in their intransigence. They began issuing exit permits in serious, if fluctuating numbers. In the decade altogether 120,000 immigrants from the Soviet Union have arrived in Israel, but simultaneously the persecution of *aliyah* activists by the government continues. We have no explanation for this paradox.

Meantime however a grave and dangerous development has taken place. At the moment when one of the highjackers of the plane — Yisrael Zalmanson — finally reached Israel after having served his eight years in gaol, when the latest hero and victim of the struggle — Anatoly Scharansky — is setting out on his long journey to serve thirteen years in gaol, and his story agitates people from one world’s end to another ; and another heroic figure in the struggle, Ida Nudel sets out to four years of prison in Siberia (and on her way there is beaten up by a group of anti-semites) — in these very days another group of young people from the Soviet Union is enjoying the sweet fruits of the struggle and agony of the Scharanskys, the Zalmansons, and the Kazakovs. They were granted permits to leave the Soviet Union, they received the long-desired visas for Israel, the train took them across the border, they reached the intermediate station at Vienna — and they are on their way to America.

* * *

The proportion of “drop outs” is now about 60% and is on the rise. The percentage of those coming from specific cities, particularly from the Russian republic — Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Charkov, Odessa — is the highest of all, about 80, while the percentage of drop-outs among those originating in the Baltic States is comparatively low — about 20% — but it too is on the rise.

The reason for the difference is simple and significant. Latvia, Lithuania,

Estonia and parts of Rumania were annexed by the Soviets only during the Second World War. There Zionism was strong and widespread. In the “original” Soviet Union the outlawing of Jewish nationalism in all its manifestations has been in force for six decades, there the pressures exerted were much heavier, and Jewish culture and Zionism, and even their symbols, were almost completely erased. That, of course, is why the outbreak of the Zionist “revolution” surprised not only the Soviet government, but all of us. It is certain, however, that this awakening could not convert all or even most of the Jews into idealistic Zionists.

The “drop-outs” should therefore be treated with understanding. While they lack any Zionist spiritual equipment, they are bombarded by a mass of official anti-Israeli propaganda, unbridled and unceasing. Even maximum scepticism towards the official Soviet propaganda does not suffice to neutralize it, especially as parts of it from time to time enjoy some kind of endorsement from Israel itself — for example, about various and strange absorption difficulties. In addition, of course, they are constantly being “threatened” with the war that is due to break out in Palestine.

All this would not however have prevented the “drop-outs” from going to Israel if they were not confronted by a most tempting alternative — of migrating to the United States, the leader of the free world, the land of unlimited economic possibilities. After all, it would never be too late to go to Israel. Israel would always open her motherly arms to them. It is possible that they do say to themselves that dropping-out is an act unfair to Israel, that it is also not fair to exploit the heroic struggle of the *aliyah* activists, that it is a slap in the face to all those people throughout the world, including many non-Jews, who have been fighting for the right to *aliyah*; that their dropping-out gives support to the Soviet enemies of Israel who have claimed consistently that Zionism is a fraud and that the Jews of the Soviet Union do not want Israel and do not need her. Possibly it even occurs to the drop-outs that they are contributing to the possible collapse of the whole *aliyah* arrangement — which is dependent entirely on the goodwill of the Soviet Union.

Yet if they do ask themselves these questions, they discover that apparently Israel herself is not so concerned. Neither in Moscow nor in Vienna is the issue put up to them in this way — and the drop-out movement would be impossible if the Israeli Government did not accommodate itself to it. Accommodate itself? It goes much further. Israel, in whose name and in the name of whose desire for *aliyah* the whole battle is being waged and all the noise throughout the world is made, participates actively in paving

the way of these holders of her visas to go to the United States and other countries.

* * *

When the travellers arrive in Vienna and laconically inform the Israeli representative on the train of their desire to continue their journey to the United States, they are transferred without any discussion to the hands of the *Hias* organization. They then have to make their way to Rome to wait there for their American visa. Their maintenance while they are waiting, their travelling expenses and indeed the American visa itself they are able to get if they are classified as “refugees”. But these travellers from the USSR are not refugees — that is, people who have nowhere to go; they have a visa issued by the Government of Israel.

And lo and behold, the Israeli Government agrees, under the eyes of the whole world, to cancel the value and the meaning of its visa, and acquiesces, under the eyes of the whole world, with the preference given to the status of refugee over the status of immigrant to Israel of a “returnee to Zion”. At this point, however, a problem arises. In order to obtain a transit visa from Italy the traveller must state his country of destination and to prove that he has a visa for that country. On Israel — he is turning his back, the American visa he has not yet received; what shall he tell the Italians?

Here once again the Israeli Government rushes to his assistance and gives the Italian authorities a certificate that his destination is Israel. How deep the contempt evoked by this deception in the hearts of the Italians we do not know. But what do they care?

Thus the “drop-out” arrives in Rome as a respected tourist, flaunting his good visa, “on his way to Israel” — in order to metamorphose the next day into a poor refugee, homeless and nowhere to go, living on the charity of international organizations and waiting for a visa to America — all with the blessing and the cooperation of the Zionist State.

* * *

The “drop-out” movement has, of course, nothing to do with saving people. It began with a stupid act by the Government. It grew and spread as a result of weakness and complacency in Jerusalem; and it is propelling Israel towards a loss of prestige and political status far beyond the

importance — weighty enough in itself — of losing most of the Jews of the Soviet Union.

When in Vienna in 1971 a group of the arrivals from the Soviet Union asked to be permitted to travel to the United States (and in fact to be helped to do so), the answer (without ideology and without moralizing) should have been rationally: “Impossible. The Soviet exit permit is granted on condition that you go to Israel on the basis of visas that we have given you. If any of you subsequently wishes later to leave Israel you are free to do so. At this moment the State of Israel is responsible for seeing you arrive in Israel. Of course we shall not prevent you from travelling from here to whatever other destination you please; but Israel is not a travel agency and will also have no part of an act of deception — neither toward the Soviets and certainly not toward the Italians; nor towards the Americans or the Canadians. Please be so good as to board the plane for Israel. We believe you will wish to remain there; but if afterwards, as residents of Israel you decide you wish to move elsewhere, nobody will prevent you”.

The government did not give this rational reply. It co-operated; and the phenomenon spread and now the emigration to the United States has become a big “business”. It occupies the *Hias* organization from the moment that Israel transfers the drop-outs at Vienna — and thereafter the Joint Organization in Rome as well as other American and international organizations for helping refugees.

It is clear that this nasty, shameful and dangerous situation must be brought to an end; and it is clear that this will be very difficult to change, for already vested interests in its perpetuation have been created. As for the *olim* themselves it is apparent that they have been encouraged to believe that they have a natural and entrenched right; and the people who organize absorption for the immigrants in the United States have presumably convinced themselves that they are saving lives.

* * *

There are encouraging signs in the new regime at the Jewish Agency. Both the chairman Arye Dulzin and the head of the *Aliyah* Department Rafael Kotlowitz appear to be alive to the problem and are trying to apply measures for returning *Aliyah* from the Soviet Union to an honest and safe course. Without co-operation and even some initiative from the Government their efforts have little chance of success. Hitherto the

Government has shown the same palsy as the Alignment. Does it realize how heavy a blow is being brought down on our heads, the blow we are bringing on ourselves in Vienna?

Ma'ariv 25.8.78

Anti-Zionism De Luxe

When a television interviewer asked released Prisoner of Zion Israel Zalmanson what had sustained him in the long years in the Soviet gaol, he replied: "It was the sense of fighting for a cause". And indeed, that is the light that shines out from the grim story of all of them. They have explained that when, in 1970, they decided to hijack the Soviet plane and try to escape across the border, they realized that their chances of success were slim. But what was essential to their purpose was the act itself, *whether it succeeded or not*. Their act would reverberate throughout the world to demonstrate the force of Zionist belief and the Zionist urge in the heart of the totalitarian Soviet state.

They knew they were risking their lives; indeed two of them, Mark Dimshitz and Eduard Kuznetzov, were at first sentenced to death. They accepted the dire risks involved as the price to be paid in fighting for the cause: the natural right of a Jew to live in the Jewish Homeland.

Their instinct was correct. Only by an articulate and vivid demonstration could they attract the attention of the world, and, as they hoped, gain its support.

Is it not fantastic to recall that little more than a decade ago the Soviet Jews were described by author Elie Wiesel, after a visit to the USSR, as "the Jews of silence?" Had that silence persisted, it was altogether possible that the Soviet regime might try to solve its "Jewish problem" by deporting some hundreds of thousands of Jews to the Siberian wastes. Only by breaking that pall of silence was there hope of bringing effective pressure to bear on the Kremlin.

That was the message of the early pioneers of the Zionist revolution in the Communist State — like Dov Sperlman and Boris Kuchabayevsky and Yasha Kazakov — a 20-year-old youth who smuggled to the West a copy of his defiant letter to the president of the most powerful and most repressive totalitarian State on earth, renouncing Soviet citizenship and demanding an exit visa to the Jewish State. That message — reinforced

by the dramatic account of the Leningrad hijack — triggered the tremendous world-wide movement, of almost incessant agitation for the freedom of *aliya* for the Soviet Jews.

The movement has not been purely Jewish. It has been given much muscle by the effective involvement of many non-Jews. Not the least of the reasons for US Senator Henry Jackson's honoured place in Jewish history is his unremitting, selfless effort, his sophisticated and effective political campaign to exert pressure on the Soviet Government. There were many other Gentiles in many countries, less famous and less powerful but equally devoted.

But the incredibly brave struggle of the Russian Zionists, which has written a new and golden chapter in Jewish history, and the world movement that arose in its support, are being betrayed on an ever growing scale by the permissive “drop-out” process in Vienna.

Most of the Jews currently emigrating — whose freedom has been bought by the sufferings of the Zalmansons and the Butmans, and by the Shcharanskys and the Nudels and the Mendelewiches still languishing in Siberia — are proceeding to the US. The simple fact is that this grotesque distortion of the struggle has been made possible only by the active collaboration of the Israeli Government with part of the Jewish Establishment in the US.

* * *

Too many people are unaware of the mechanics. The Soviet Union has not opened its gates to emigration. It has responded to the pressures of Jews who have insisted on their right as Jews to emigrate to Israel. The grant of the formal permission to leave is conditional on the recipient's proceeding to Israel. Because the Soviet Union does not maintain diplomatic relations with Israel and has not agreed to a direct flight to Israel, the emigrants have to break their journey at Vienna. There the Jewish Agency takes care of their further transit and travel arrangements, to Israel.

At Vienna, however, the old-established American Hebrew Immigrants' Aid Society (HIAS) steps in. Over the past few years, it has developed a sophisticated mechanism for bringing Soviet Jews to the US.

How can HIAS bring them to the US when they have a visa only for Israel? By a kind of sleight of hand. The potential “drop-outs” are converted from proud Jews free-at-last-to-go-to-their-Homeland, into

poor-refugees-seeking-asylum, and waiting for the American government to take pity on them. For reasons presumably beyond the control of the HIAS, this transformation cannot be effected in Vienna itself. The persons concerned must go to Rome and there wait out the processing of their applications by the United States authorities. This may take weeks or months — during which time they are maintained at public cost by HIAS.

How do they get into Italy? Refugees without a place to go are not readily given entry visas.

Here the Israeli Government steps in. When the Israeli authorities know that “Mr. Cohen” has turned his back on Israel and intends proceeding to America, they issue him with a certificate for the Italian Government assuring them that “Mr. Cohen” is on the way to *Israel*. On the strength of this certificate Mr. Cohen is given permission to enter Italy.

It would be an insult to the intelligence of the Italians to suggest that they do not know the truth. But their interests are protected.

Nor, of course, are the Soviets deceived. For the moment it suits their purpose to have “Zionism exposed as a sham,” and the Israel Government as betraying its trust and being humbled into the bargain. “Mr. Cohen,” clothed in the habiliments of a homeless refugee, waits his turn for an American visa in Rome.

* * *

This is anti-Zionism de luxe. Why should we deceive ourselves? Fifty years ago, before there was a Jewish State, such a development would have been hailed as a tremendous victory for the enemies of Zionism. Today it represents a double victory, over Zionism and over the Jewish State as well.

One cannot altogether blame the Soviet Jews. The vast majority of those that drop out come from those parts of the Soviet Union which have been under the Communist heel for over 60 years. Theirs is the third generation of the Soviet suppression of Jewish culture. Their revived sense of Jewish identification has in recent years been attacked not only by Soviet propaganda but by unflattering reports about the difficulties of life in Israel — without the defences of a counterbalancing Jewish education, religious or secular. But, above all, if they are made aware, before ever leaving the Soviet Union, that not only will they be free to go to the rich and comfortable US but that the Israeli Government itself is so unconcerned at losing them that it is prepared to practice a deception in order to help them

over the formalities of getting to the United-States — why should they have second thoughts about their obligation to Israel, or about the sufferings of those who made possible their release from the Soviet bonds, or indeed of those who are still doomed to spend years lashed to the wheel of Soviet oppression in Siberia because they insisted too loudly on the right of Jews to go to their homeland?

* * *

Why is the Israel Government committing this incredible blunder?

It is a failure of will. The process of “dropping out” began comparatively innocently some years ago (under the previous government). Exceptions were made for individuals, at the request of relatives in the US.

Now that the drop-out has developed into a problem of historic proportions and far-reaching political as well as ideological implications, it is being perpetuated because the Israel Government simply lacks the courage to put a stop to it. They have not the courage to stand up to the American sponsors of the process and to refuse to collaborate.

Some of the American Jewish apologists for the drop-out have the effrontery to suggest that halting the process would prevent the saving of Soviet Jews; and that it would mean denying the Soviet Jews the freedom of choice.

This is woolly-headed nonsense — if it is not plain cant. When the Soviet Jew reaches Vienna he has already been saved from the Soviets. But in leaving the Soviet Union he accepted a condition: that he go to Israel. This is an obligation he owes to Israel. Why should he not fulfil it?

The principle of freedom of choice is very important. But it does not override every other principle and undertaking. In no society in the world is there absolute freedom of choice *against the interests of that society*. The redirection of Soviet Jews to the US is of direct and immense harm to Israel. It is a severe blow to its prestige, and strikes at the heart of its historic function as an Ingathering State.

What is more, the exercise of the “right of free choice” is, of course, only postponed. Any Soviet Jew who discovers in Israel that he does not like living in the Jewish Homeland is free to go elsewhere, just like anybody else.

If a Soviet Jew decides nevertheless to break away in Vienna, renege on his obligation and find his way to the US or elsewhere, nobody will prevent him. But it is monstrous that the State of Israel should then be called upon

not only to deny her Zionist purpose, but actually to cheapen her national signature in order to help him to do so. It is monstrous that Israel should herself set her hand to a manoeuvre which establishes the status of a homeless refugee as preferable to that of a citizen of Israel. A century of Zionist struggle is thereby dishonoured.

* * *

Allowed to continue, the drop-out process threatens to develop into a national tragedy. It is the government's duty to put a stop to it.

11.5.79

The New Antisemitism

But You Jews. Are Accustomed...

Early in 1967 (a few months before the Six-Day War) I gave a talk at a Hashomer Hatsa'ir Kibbutz to a group of non-Jewish volunteers from Britain, all of them students and Socialists, who had invited me to come and tell them about the *Irgun Zvai Leumi*. Thus I outlined the historical and political background of the revolt whose object was the overthrow of British rule in Eretz Yisrael. In the course of my talk I described the repressive methods of the Mandatory government.

In one of my replies to questions I remarked that if the British public, which had been taught to hate the Jewish underground, had been subjected to the same treatment as the Jewish community in Eretz Yisrael, it would undoubtedly have reacted as we had reacted — by armed revolt. I had hardly completed the sentence when one of the young men started saying: “But you Jews were used to..”. — and then he realized the import of what he was saying — but you Jews were used to being beaten, so how can you draw comparisons with us? — and did not complete the sentence. His face went red, he fell silent, and the discussion came to an end.

He was indeed talking about the period before the restoration of our independence, when Jews did appear to many people throughout the world as born to take blows without retaliating and, as a people, were even expected to accept this status (and to enjoy the pity of good Gentiles). But this young man's thinking was the thinking of 1967, nineteen years after the rise of Jewish statehood; and now it is 1978, thirty years after independence, and such ideas about the Jewish people are still widespread on various levels and in different forms among the nations of the world.

* * *

Two years ago the American monthly *Commentary* published an article entitled “The Abandonment of Israel” in which the author (the journal's editor, Norman Podhoretz) asserted that a tendency to forsake Israel was becoming apparent in the American administration (then headed by President Gerald Ford and his right-hand man Henry Kissinger). In

describing the atmosphere surrounding the attitude to Israel, Podhoretz pointed to a recurrent grim phenomenon. He defined it as antisemitism; at any rate it is specific, and has length and breadth and a distinct odour. It is expressed in the view that the Jews are (as he put it) “the only people in the world who are not entitled to otherwise universally acknowledged rights”.

“All other peoples” continued Podhoretz “are entitled to national self-determination; when the Jews exercise this right they are committing the crimes of racism and imperialism. All other nations are entitled to defend themselves against attack; when the Jewish nation defends itself it is committing the crime of aggression. Of the estimated thirty-five million refugees who have been displaced by war and other calamities since 1945 alone, only the three-quarters of a million displaced in the Jewish war of national liberation are expected to be repatriated”.

The historian Theodore Draper (who also commented that there is something “suspicious and ominous” about the double standard applied to the Jewish State) quoted a statement by former Senator William Fulbright that what was expected from Israel was not expected from any other nation. Draper commented: “All the self-interested hypocrites have a right to ask of Israel what they would not dream of doing themselves”.

* * *

For some years this phenomenon has been making itself felt in the daily life of the people of Israel. It pervades the great ongoing debate on our central national problem. In the Six-Day War the Arab States tried for the second time to achieve their dream — and their leaders even declared this was their purpose — to wipe out the Jewish State. On the eve of the war crowds celebrated and danced in the streets of their capitals, in the sight of millions of television viewers throughout the world who waited expectantly for the historic event which was about to unfold: the final Arab victory over the Jewish State.

Thus, when war broke out everybody knew — thanks to the technological advances of our time — why it had broken out; and then realized from what fate victory had saved Israel. Is there another people from whom, in these circumstances, anybody would have dared demand that it erase the reality, forget the horrendous alliance of the Arab States against it and the threat to its very existence; that it should “withdraw from the territories”, and return the bases of aggression to the aggressors — and thus facilitate renewed aggression? Is there any other people whose

friends would not have pressed it not to evacuate territory on any account but to stand firm until the aggressor asked for negotiations?

Soon after the war politicians in the east and west alike began, in diplomatic or not so diplomatic terms, to call on Israel to accept the principle of retreat. They continued to do so even when the Arab rulers — whose defeat had not weakened their determination to destroy Israel — decided at their Khartoum Conference not to recognize Israel, nor to make peace with her, nor to conduct negotiations with her.

* * *

Who pays attention to the fact that in all the never-ending appeals and declarations and threats directed at us since 1967 — there lay the assumption that Israel has no real right to negotiations in which she alone with the other side would discuss their relationship. No: first of all Israel must announce her readiness to withdraw and to announce publicly how far she would withdraw (so that her intentions should first undergo examination by the politicians of the world and by every last commentator in the Press, on the radio and on television). It is standard procedure among the nations that even a people defeated on the field of battle — and even if it has been forced into unconditional surrender — has an elementary right to negotiate. We are a people which was both a victim of aggression and victor in the war in which it repulsed the aggressor. This is a status which surely entitles it not only to honour and respect but also to a preferential right in determining the conditions of peace which will emerge from its negotiations with the enemy who sought to encompass its destruction.

The attitude adopted to us was exactly the opposite. It found expression in the wonderful satire by Ephraim Kishon: “Sorry We Won”. Ever since 1967 Israel has been subjected from all sides to pressures whose spirit may be rendered briefly as “Don’t waste time arguing, just retreat!”; or (in moderate tones) “Fine, fine, have negotiations if that’s what you want, but first swear you will withdraw”.

In this spirit the American administration ignores, as its predecessors ignored, Israel’s right — on impeccable legal, not to mention moral, grounds — to maintain the status quo until the other side is prepared to enter on negotiations, and her right to refrain from disclosing her intentions until she sits down at the negotiating table. In this spirit, from time to time, Washington prepares and publishes plans for the “solution of

the dispute”. They do of course all contain a reference to “negotiations between the parties”, but as they also include a ready-made “solution”, and its central feature is Israel’s capitulation — even this reference is no more than lip-service and an insult to the intelligence.

* * *

That is the practical implication of the phenomenon discussed by Podhoretz and Draper (as well as by other scholars and thinkers). Thus over the years an atmosphere of “normality” has been created around the denial of Israel’s right to negotiation. Thus, in the final analysis, whoever has been generous enough to recognize Israel’s right to negotiation, has thereby already made a concession, indeed a major concession, for which Israel is expected to pay a price, indeed a heavy price. Many Israeli citizens (and others) have found it hard to understand why Sadat was accorded such enthusiastic praise in the world as a “moderate” — when everybody knows that he has not budged from his demand for complete Israeli surrender, and proclaims repeatedly that he will not concede “one centimeter”.

The reason fundamentally is that Sadat agreed to stop denying Israel’s right to negotiation. He actually agreed to allow Israel to sit down with him at the negotiating table. For this concession inferior Israel has to pay a price — and the surrender of almost all of Sinai, as well as the other far-reaching concessions in the “peace plan” are not price enough. This is not a story by George Orwell or Franz Kafka, or about the Wise Men of Chelm. This is respectable reality in the world.

* * *

It would have been possible to combat the “double standard” phenomenon, for it is not rooted entirely in antisemitism. To some extent it is a consequence of education and of induced habits of thought such as those of the British student I have mentioned. In time it should be possible at least to moderate it considerably. There is, however, another side to the coin (which Podhoretz and the others did not mention): the proneness of Jews to accommodate themselves to the phenomenon, and then gradually to resign themselves to inferior status, to accustom themselves to it, to treat it as normal, to defend it — and finally to attack and even to slander

whoever stands up to combat it and who demands for his people the status and rights enjoyed by all the nations of the world.

Thus — the present moment. Among the first voices to call for a policy which would involve foregoing the normal right of the Israeli nation to maintain the status quo until properly constituted negotiations take place, were voices from Israel. For eleven years now the internal debate has gone on with those who call not only for withdrawal but specifically for a statement of intent, for a declaration in advance, for a promise, an undertaking that Israel will retreat. Such a declaration would make substantive negotiations superfluous and indeed absurd. There can be no doubt at all that these Israeli voices have been a source of inspiration and reinforcement for all those elements throughout the world who are working to force upon us in practice the status of an inferior people.

There is no need to prove the degree of danger in this capitulation to the world's "fashion". Will not our scholars perhaps rouse themselves and speak 'up not only about the double standard, but also about the persistence — and perhaps the deepening — of the negative spirit of *galutiut* manifest within the independent people of Israel in its own land?

Ma'ariv 7.7.78

Quaker Enemy

One of the shocks of our generation has been the discovery that within the Quaker movement, renowned as a society of gentle, pacifistic "friends of humanity," a strong organization has been built to help the cause of the destruction of Israel.

To most people the revelation came in 1970 when that organization — the American Friends Service Committee — published a "report" entitled "Search for Peace in the Middle East". It is a virulent anti-Zionist document, replete with anti-Israeli mendacities. Its authors called on Jewish Americans to refrain from supporting Israel and cloaked its anti-Semitism with the hoary pretence that they were merely warning Jews to beware of an anti-Semitic "backlash".

The American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League published a devastating analysis of the Quaker "report". Professors Arnold Soloway, Edwin Weiss and Gerald Caplan wrote of the document:

“Inconvenient facts are innocently omitted, however essential such facts might be to an understanding of the issues. Whole sections of pertinent historical facts are simply left out where their inclusion would have threatened or destroyed the authors’ thesis”.

Thus the report omitted “the whole complex of events that led to the establishment of the State of Israel and the wars of 1948, 1956-1957 and 1967...”

“Major statements are casually made,” the critique continued “with no evidence offered in support... Finally the body of the report draws conclusions without basis even in the material presented by the authors. And it is full of ‘factual’ data tending solely to prejudice the reader against Israel. The authors reserve their pejoratives solely for the policies, actions and structure of the Israeli government and for Israel’s Jewish supporters in the US”.

* * *

The “report” proved to be the guideline for increasingly active AFSC intervention in the Arab-Israel conflict. Its broad scope emerges from a remarkably painstaking study by sociology professor Rael Jean Isaac published in last month’s *Midstream*. The “Friends” carry on an impressive countrywide propaganda campaign on behalf of the Arabs — above all on behalf of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Their concentration on promoting the PLO cause was given specific expression in 1975 when AFSC adopted “a formal decision to make the Middle East its major issue”. Within a year their Middle East programme had a full-time staff in nine regional offices in addition to the national headquarters.

They have pursued their purpose in an endless series of conferences, seminars and symposia. A Jewish participant in such a conference in 1977 then described the open and unchallenged anti-Semitism displayed there. “Jewish participants,” he wrote, “were asked to tolerate some anti-Semitic remarks in order to keep the lines of communication open... Abuse of the term ‘Jewish Zionist’ became so pronounced the moderator imposed a minute’s silence in order to restore ‘harmony’” (Marven Maurer, *Midstream*, November 1977).

Maurer has now described (in last month’s *Midstream*) the proceedings at a conference organized by the AFSC last April. Participants included representatives from a number of organizations identified variously with terrorist, radical, anti-Israeli, pro-Soviet and anti-American causes. These

included the Jewish section of the American Communist Party.

“At this conference,” writes Maurer, “a combination of religious and peace groups sought ways, invariably expressed in the most syrupy and holier-than-thou shibboleths so reminiscent of their meetings on Vietnam a decade ago, to sever Israel’s remaining strands of support within the American public”.

Maurer’s detailed account leaves little doubt that *Pravda*, and maybe even the *Sturmer*, could have reported the proceedings with approval.

The AFSC has not contented itself with trying to influence American public opinion. It has also tried to influence US policy directly. During the Yom Kippur War, with Israel in dire straits, the AFSC called for rejection of its urgent request for arms. It had, in effect, writes Dr. Isaac, been lobbying for the destruction of Israel.

In 1974 the AFSC went into action “in the field”. It opened an office in Jerusalem, under the banner, of course, of humanitarian purpose, but in fact to render aid and succor to Arabs engaged in anti-Israel activities and to subvert Israeli authority.

Thus Ann Moseley Lesch was sent to serve in Jerusalem. She already had a record of pro-PLO sympathy. In Jerusalem she prepared files of “information” which she subsequently published in pro-PLO publications. But the major thrust of her activity (writes Dr. Isaac), “was to build up a PLO infrastructure under the very nose, of the Israeli military administration”. While serving in Israel, Ann Lesch also went on a visit to Lebanon to meet Yasser Arafat.

“The Israeli authorities, their patience strained by Ann Lesch’s activities, first decided to expel her and then, when the Foreign Office was reluctant to adopt such a dramatic measure... to refuse to renew her visa at the end of the three-month period for which it was valid. The AFSC’s response was to attempt to intimidate the Israeli government. A top-level AFSC delegation met with the director general of the Foreign Office on March 31, 1976. The delegation pointed out the unfavourable publicity to Israel that would attend the forced departure of Ann Lesch. The Foreign Ministry backed down and agreed to extend her visa for... a ‘probationary period’ during which she would refrain from further political activity. Not long afterwards Ann Lesch left Israel”.

Timidity and secretiveness at the Foreign Office — which, moreover, ignored the appeals of security officials in the field — enable the Quakers to persist in their activities. In some of these they cooperate with other American-based (and US government-financed) organizations. Their prin-

cipal overt act has been the building of projects to help strengthen the position and prestige of pro-PLO mayors.

“While the projects themselves were innocent — a market in Halhoul, a library in Hebron, a water irrigation project near Nablus — the effect and apparent intent was to build up a PLO leadership cadre, since only avowed PLO sympathizers could obtain money”.

None of the AFSC directors sent to Jerusalem has been a Quaker. Ann Lesch, her successor Jim Fine, and then Jean de Muralt were not chosen for their religious devotion, but obviously, rather for their hostility to Israel. Indeed De Muralt, in a remarkably frank interview with Dr. Isaac soon after he resigned, described his predecessor Jim Fine as “more Palestinian than Arafat”.

The most active component of the AFSC office in Jerusalem has been the “Community Information and Legal Aid Centre”. Despite its innocuous title, the Centre handled only political problems — to help captured PLO members and to initiate, encourage and finance Arab legal actions against the Israeli government (which, whatever the result, are always good for some anti-Israel publicity).

A typical case was that of Mohammed Burkan. He claimed he had been ejected from his home in Jerusalem in which he and his family had lived “from time immemorial, in peace and quiet”. By the time the case ended it was established: first, that the house had been a Jewish house as late as 1938; second, that he had left the house from which he was supposedly expelled at a much earlier date; and third, that he had staged the “expulsion” for television cameras. The court suggested that the AFSC-paid lawyer ought to be tried for transgressing the ethics of his profession.

The Burkan case strikingly presents a microcosm of the whole Arab-Israel dispute over Palestine. It reflects the myth of Arab ownership, of alleged centuries of national possession of the land; and the mendacities of Arab “expulsion” in 1948. It reflects the authenticity of the Jewish patrimony of Eretz Yisrael. It illustrates the unblushing Arab use of the big lie to suit the national purpose. Only there is no Supreme Court available to render justice, and what the Arabs lack in evidence they make up for in the superior persuasiveness of oil; and there are always Jews available to help them, just like the gullible television crews who rushed to help the Quakers ‘establish the legitimate rights’ of Mohammed Burkan.

7.12.79

Lebanon

The Third Cheek

There is a pattern to our modern troubles in this country. On the first of the intermediate days of Passover, the 4th of April, 1920, following inciting speeches against the Jews, an Arab crowd in Jerusalem went berserk, fanned out over the Old City and attacked Jews. The customary slogan for such occasions — *Itbah el Yahud* (Kill the Jews) — was now amplified by “*Ad-dola ma’ana*” (The government is with us).

Members of the Jewish defence organisation, Hagana, then newly-formed, rushed to the Old City. At the Jaffa Gate they were blocked by a unit of British soldiers. The rioting inside the walls continued intermittently for three days. The rioters carried only “cold” weapons — knives, daggers and sticks — and the number of dead was comparatively small, five in all, but the number of wounded, men, women and children reached two hundred. Two women were raped.

Two Arabs were tried for these two rape attacks and were given fifteen years in prison. The same sentence was handed down to Ze’ev Jabotinsky, who headed the Jewish defence organization. Nineteen of his comrades were sentenced to three years’ imprisonment; and all were confined in the Acre fortress. Subsequently Jabotinsky’s sentence was reduced to one year and that of his comrades to six months. When the first British High Commissioner, Herbert Samuel, entered on his office at the end of June that year, he announced a pardon for all the prisoners, Arabs and Jews alike.

The Jewish prisoners protested against the pardon in these circumstances, but after discussion they decided by a majority, against Jabotinsky’s opinion, to accept their release. After leaving prison Jabotinsky continued the struggle for the cancellation of the sentence altogether.

“The very fact” he wrote “that a pardon has been granted which implies that we had committed a wrongdoing, cannot in the least satisfy our demand for justice. The fact that a pardon has been granted at the same time to those who instigated the riots shows that the High Commissioner wishes to put us, the members of the Haganah, on the same level as those who caused the riots themselves. Consequently we cannot leave the matter where it stands.”

(In an unprecedented personal campaign, which at the outset seemed almost hopeless, against the stubbornly conservative British establishment, Jabotinsky won out. In March 1921 the trial was cancelled.)

We have made progress since then. The Security Council decision of 19 March has not a single word to say about the massacre carried out by the Arab terrorists on the coast road in Israel. It was directed entirely at forcing the Israeli Army to stop the operation it had launched to destroy the source of the shedding of blood, in southern Lebanon and across the border with Israel.

* * *

If in fact the Security Council decision is implemented fully and the UN force is to be the agency for preserving the peace, the Christians of southern Lebanon will be in danger of annihilation. It may be assumed that the Shi'ite Moslem villages too will not escape the threat. The UN force will not prevent the gradual return of the terrorists to southern Lebanon. In the first place the Security Council decision does not authorize them to do so; the only hint in the decision that may be interpreted — with difficulty — as a directive for internal action in Lebanon is in the clause obliging the UN force “to assist the Lebanese government in ensuring the restoration of its effective authority in the area”. Without a request from the Lebanese government the UN force will have no grounds for action against the terrorists.

In practice, however, the force will not even have the means to mount a significant operation. The weapons to be supplied to its members are specifically defined as “defensive”. They are prohibited (according to their official mandate) from opening fire except in self-defence, that is if they are attacked in person. The force is given no authority to take measures to prevent renewed “peaceful” infiltration by groups of terrorists into the southern zone. Neither the decision nor the guidelines (issued by UN Secretary-General Waldheim) give grounds for expecting the UN soldiers to intervene in order to protect, for example, Christian villages if they are attacked.

The second implication of the Security Council decision flows directly from its text. The UN force is authorized to put up a barrier against any operation by the Israel Defence Force. The present operation of the IDF in Lebanon is defined simply in the resolution — and its authors did not recoil from the mendacity — as a military operation against the territorial

integrity of Lebanon, that is to say an operation forbidden absolutely. If therefore the latest murderous PLO attack is repeated in the future, counter-action by the IDF will again be classified as infringing “the territorial integrity of Lebanon”. The second guideline in the decision of the Security Council does in fact tell the UN force “to restore *international* peace and security”.

The UN force will be empowered, even without any request from the Lebanese government, to act as a barrier against any act of retaliation, or any act of succour by Israel. That is the meaning staring out of every word in the resolution, out of the circumstances in which it was proposed and out of the way it was received.

* * *

In consequence of this chapter of events, and taking into account the accumulating facts of recent months in Israel’s relations with the United States, we must surely take a new look at the aggravation of the danger in the political arena. The resolution adopted by the Security Council was submitted by the United States. It was drafted in Washington. It is an unmitigatedly anti-Israel resolution. Its essential principle — apart from its practical application — is the renewed assertion that Israel is not entitled to the right of self-defence accepted throughout the world.

Two years ago, Mr. Norman Podhoretz, one of the most acute American political thinkers, wrote an article entitled “The Abandonment of Israel” in the monthly *Commentary* (July, 1976). There he analyzed this trend in Washington policy. **He** pointed moreover to the blatant tendency in the world to apply a double standard to Israel, to demand of Israel behaviour not demanded from any other nation in the world.

What he wrote was true; but it was not the whole truth. In some measure we are treated in this manner because it is assumed or believed that we accept the status involved. Here is an example close to our shores. Israel has been denied the right to send her ships through the Suez Canal. This right is accorded to all the nations of the world by virtue of an international Covenant of 1882. When in 1975 President Sadat agreed to allow Israel to send goods through the Canal on condition that she did so in non-Israeli ships — thus emphasizing afresh Israel’s inferior status — this “achievement” was flourished by Israeli government spokesmen as a welcome recompense for their far-reaching concessions in Sinai under the (second) “separation of forces” agreement.

The examples are many. So, it appears, we allow ourselves to be regarded. During an interview that Defence Minister Ezer Weizman gave the American interviewer Barbara Walters after the IDF entered Lebanon, Miss Walters expressed the explicit opinion that “for the sake of peace” Israel should “have turned the other cheek” (following the massacre by the PLO on the Haifa—Tel Aviv coast road). Mr. Weizman in his reply unfortunately did not tell her the story of the religious French officer whom everybody knew as being observant of the New Testament injunction to turn the other cheek. One young rascal put him to the test. One day, thrown into the officer’s company, he slapped his face. The officer did not turn a hair. Emboldened, his assailant slapped the other cheek; whereupon the officer fell on him and broke every bone in his body. When his comrades upbraided him for thus infringing the commandment, he explained gently: “We are told to turn the second cheek, not the third”. How many cheeks has the Jewish people already turned in Eretz Yisrael?

Miss Walters does not make policy. But her advice reflects faithfully the status accorded to us by the nations of the world, led by, of all people, the United States. Analyze their requirements of Israel and you will find that it is Miss Walters’ idea that moves them: do not react, retreat, make concessions, surrender, take risks for peace, in fact give the aggressors another chance. A week ago the State Department spokesman, Mr. Nodding Carter tried to exonerate the PLO from blame for the atrocity of the coast road. Now the administration officially has gone one better and in drafting the resolution of the Security Council has ignored completely the terrorists’ attack, and the Jewish blood that was shed was not even accorded a mention. Moreover, it added insult to injury by refusing to wait 48 hours and give a hearing to the Prime Minister of the people which had suffered the attack.

We can only hope that the Israeli government will succeed in preventing the implementation of the UN resolution in the dangerous spirit in which it was passed. Perhaps the government will be able, by standing firm, to achieve the assumption of control of security conditions in southern Lebanon by the Lebanese themselves. Be that as it may, the true attitude of the Carter administration to Israel has been exposed.

There is a lesson to be learned from this fact. President Carter would not have gone so far in developing a policy essentially hostile to Israel if he did not believe

a) that pressure on Israel would achieve results;

b) that American public opinion in general and the members of Congress in particular would permit such a policy.

He has good reason for such a belief. On the one hand — the Israeli government's retreat in recent months from positions entrenched in principles, first in proposing the disguise of settlements in Judea and Samaria by confining them to military camps, then the recognition of the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and Gaza as a separate entity, and finally the tremendous concessions contained in the Begin "peace plan". On the other hand the American administration enjoys the benefit of the continuing failure of Israeli information policy, with all its vagueness and contradictions in presenting the Israeli case. The information failure distorts our image, embarrasses even our best friends, leaving them helpless against the purposeful and forceful information campaign of the administration.

The elements in the situation that has been created are indisputable. The political concessions that were made in order to avoid a confrontation with the American administration did *not* prevent a confrontation. They only invigorated the administration for further effort, and thus hastened the confrontation — which is now in full progress. It is open, floodlit, to the public gaze.

Does not the government see that it must call a halt and reconsider — urgently — where it is heading?

Ma'ariv 24.3.78

Wanted Urgently: A Policy Against the Evil From the North

The Syrian Government now no longer has the excuse that it is "restoring order" to justify and explain the horror it is committing in Lebanon. It does not even trouble to make this "reasonable" claim. Thus, in the eyes of the whole world, hundreds of artillery pieces of the Syrian army continue day after day to shell the Christian sections of Beirut; and so, day after day, peaceful citizens, men, women and children are being killed, and those parts of the Christian sector of Beirut that survived the civil war are being destroyed. Thus Syria draws closer to her political goal — the control of

Lebanon — as a further step in the realization of the dream of “Greater Syria”.

Indeed this was the first cause of the bloody events in Lebanon of the past three years. The civil war opened in April 1975 with a joint onslaught on the Christians by Lebanese Moslems and the PLO, and it was carried out under the inspiration of the Syrians and with their material aid. Thanks to this aid the Moslems gained the upper hand and were preparing to take over the government of the State. At that moment, in the twinkling of an eye, by a well-planned act of sleight-of-hand, the Syrians changed sides: their army invaded Lebanon and overcame the Moslem-PLO coalition. They saved the Christians from mass slaughter; and by their own didactic method they brought home to the surprised Lebanese Moslems and the PLO that their attack on the Christians, and the lives they had sacrificed, were not intended to bring about the transfer of power to them but to the Government of Syria.

In these circumstances the Christians could not but be grateful for the Syrian intervention, even if they understood the nature of the trap into which they had been drawn. The Syrians for their part scrupulously took care not to upset the traditional Lebanese constitutional structure. A Christian was duly installed as president. It was the Lebanese parliament that formally elected Elias Sarkis, but it was the Syrians who appointed him.

The Syrians then took steps to legitimize their status. The Lebanese Government officially submitted a “request” to the Arab States, and the Arab States acceded to it, to “dispatch” an inter-Arab military force to keep the peace in Lebanon. Other Arab States sent forces to the extent needed to provide a fig-leaf — and the Syrian army was recognized as the “inter-Arab peace-keeping force” in the sister-State of Lebanon — a respectable status for the cat appointed to watch the cream.

Now, it seems, we have reached the final phase of the Lebanese tragedy. A section of the Christians, recovering from the shocks of the civil war, began to manifest a spirit of rebelliousness toward the Syrians. This served as the sign for the Syrians to launch the next phase of President Assad’s plan — to put an end to any effective Christian force and indeed to dismantle the Christian fabric in the State. A strange spectacle now unfolds: a foreign army wreaks destruction in the capital and slaughters its Christian citizens; the partisan forces of the Christian population fight back to the best of their ability; and the “legal” government of Lebanon looks on in apparent indifference. Apart from a

“plan to solve the problem” which the President submits from time to time to his masters in Damascus, it does not even squeak.

Obviously, then, no Lebanese government rules in Beirut, and the body calling itself the Government of Lebanon is a captive puppet of the Syrians.

* * *

Suddenly, while the heavy rain of Syrian shells continues to pour down on the homes of Beirut’s Christian citizens, this government rises to its feet and issues an order. It has decided to impose its authority — but not on Lebanon, only on one zone in the State, and it is sending a unit of its army to do so. The chosen zone is the south of the country — the only part of the country where there is an effective Lebanese Christian force, which sprang from the grass roots, which has shown efficiency and resource in resisting attacks by the terrorists, which has achieved co-operation with the Shi’ite Moslems in the area, and which is assured of assistance from Israel if renewed attacks by the terrorists make this necessary.

The brutal fact projecting from the mission of the “Lebanese unit” is that the Syrians have decided that — with the Christian centre going up in flames and the murder of the community going ahead as planned — the time has come to start with the elimination of the independent Christian force in the south; and, no less important, to put an end to the relations of the population in the south with Israel. The aim of the Syrians of course is also to put an end to the “good fence” and, at long last, to lay the groundwork for a war front on the Israeli border. The “Lebanese unit” is nothing but an arm of the Syrians.

The Syrians, brimming with self-confidence, do not deny their responsibility. They even boast of their domination. Damascus radio proclaims incessantly: the attack on Beirut is a calculated act of punishment against the “alliance of the Christians with the Israeli imperialists against Lebanon”. As for the “Lebanese unit”, it is being sent in order to put an end to the co-operation between the militias of Hadad (the enemy of the Arab nation) and the Israeli enemy.

Hence, of course, the route to be followed by the unit. Its purpose is transparent: its orders are to avoid the concentrations of terrorists in the area and to advance into the Christian enclave. The Syrians obviously wish to bring about a confrontation inside the enclave.

We do not know what orders have been given to the unit on action

inside the enclave. It is reasonable to assume that they will issue an ultimatum for the dissolution of the militias, and that they will try to arrest Hadad (and his colleague Chidiak) and transport them to Beirut. They may also try to close the “good fence” without delay. Most important: everything they do will be by order of the “legitimate Government of Lebanon”.

Major Hadad’s actions and statements prove that he is alive to the Syrian plot and that he comprehends the gravity of the danger confronting his men and the village communities, simple and naturally peaceloving, to whose defence he is pledged. He knows the Syrian enemy, he knows the weaknesses of his own people, he understands the dilemma of his co-religionists in Beirut. Out of his commonsense and his natural courage he says : “We shall not let them pass”. It is no small matter that the Moslems in the area have also declared that they will not let them pass; they too are not deceived.

Hadad, hearing of the pressure being exerted on Israel by the Americans to influence him to agree to allow the passage of the unit from Beirut, has not hesitated to make it plain that even if he and his men are abandoned they will stand firm. They themselves will determine their fate because it is their home that is threatened by destruction. Its defence is in his hands and he is aware that his standing firm may be the only obstacle to the danger of extinction.

* * *

The dishonorable pressure on Israel to give silly advice to Hadad and in fact to abandon him, harmonises with Washington’s behaviour since the beginning of the Lebanese conflict. Both America’s interventions and her non-interventions help to promote the Syrians’ ambitions. To this day the United States has made no serious effort to prevent, or to halt, or to slow down the bloodshed in Lebanon. She encouraged Syrian intervention; from the outset she has pretended, and still pretends, that the Syrian presence in Lebanon is a “stabilising influence” (just as her Ambassador to the UN, Andrew Young, found the Cuban force in Angola to be a stabilising influence). It was she who extended her approval to the Syrians, “reassured” the Israeli Government, urged her to agree to the Syrian invasion of Lebanon and, ever since then, she (like the whole Christian world) watched unmoved while Christian blood is shed and encourages a situation in which Christian blood will continue to be shed.

Washington has a “special attitude” to Syria. It finds cruel expression on the Lebanon issue, but it is evident in other contexts as well. Shortly after he took office President Carter met President Assad in Geneva. Of course they discussed the question of Palestine. When Carter asked Assad to explain his reaction to the idea of a “Palestinian State”, Assad replied:

The Palestinian matter must be seen in its entirety. It has two parts. On the one hand there is the problem of the territories occupied by Israel, which must be returned. But there is also the second problem — the restoration of their homes and their lands to the refugees.

Actually President Assad does not miss an opportunity of giving public expression to this Arab attitude. In describing subsequently his conversation with Assad, Carter exhibited no sense of shock at this first-hand articulation of the Arab prescription for the destruction of the Jewish State. On the contrary he spoke approvingly of the Syrian ruler whom he described as a “moderate leader”.

The behaviour of the American administration both before that conversation and after it, makes it evident that it regards with favour the expansionist aims of Syria, even at the price of Christian lives, even if it means more dangers to the security of Israel. There is no escape from this conclusion. Now, with the flames in Beirut lighting up the scene, Washington is cajoling Israel to bring pressure to bear on Major Hadad. She knows full well that carrying out her wishes would, sooner or later, bring the threat of death to the whole population of southern Lebanon, and the tightening of the Arab belt of aggression surrounding Israel.

* * *

We have reached a critical moment. It is inconceivable that Israel should continue to take part in this game of pretence and deception whose consequences are the tragedy in Beirut, the growing threat to the independence of Lebanon and, at the same time, the attempt to subjugate and abandon the Christians in southern Lebanon. Hitherto Israel has honoured unequivocally her promise to stand by the Christians of southern Lebanon. The situation in Beirut, however, and the despatch of the military unit to the south dictates a new stance by Israel. It is impossible to maintain a dialogue with the United States based on two parallel untruths — that there is an inter-Arab force in Lebanon which is keeping the peace,

and that there is an independent government in Lebanon which is really and truly trying to establish law and order in the south.

It is up to the Israeli Government to lay down publicly a policy deriving from the simple realities. These realities demand a number of immediate conclusions which have to be included in an operative programme:

- a) to announce to the world that Israel does not recognize the body called the Government of Lebanon; this non-recognition will be valid until the Syrian military forces are withdrawn from Lebanon.
- b) to convey a warning to the Syrian Government that if the shelling of Beirut by her forces does not cease, Israel will feel compelled to take action as required by the situation.

This is the immediate minimum called for, not only for very real human and moral reasons, but by the basic interest of Israel's security. Fate has chosen to create a close and deep common interest between us and the Christians in Lebanon.

The administration in Washington will undoubtedly be angry at our dissociating ourselves from the conventional lies which she is pressing us to accept as a basis for our actions. There is no doubt however that such a stand on Israel's part will result in pressure on Syria. It will surely bring relief to the Christians — and beyond the administration there is a vast public opinion. The first indication of public reaction to what is happening has come in the decision of Congress to cancel financial support for Syria. Israel will find considerable support if she takes a courageous stand and explains it adequately. In any case, in the existing situation Israel has no option morally and pragmatically but to launch a realistic policy.

Ma'ariv 1 1.8.78

Hypocrisy in Lebanon

The kindly gesture of the Californian Christian group setting up a radio station at Marj'ayoun to provide light relief for its embattled inhabitants serves to underline how minimal has been the support Christians in the West have accorded the Lebanese. The Western media have even purveyed a nonsensical — but helpful — pretext for Christian indifference by labelling the Lebanese Christians as "right-wing" and their would-be destroyers as "left-wing". If the Lebanese had had to depend on their

fellow-believers they would long ago have been emasculated — or destroyed — as a community, and their surviving remnant subjugated to Syrian Moslem rule.

That, after all, is the source and the root of the horror and destruction the Moslems have brought down upon Lebanon. It began early in 1975 with the combined onslaught by Lebanese Moslems and Palestinian Arab terrorists to crush the Christians and destroy their power in the country. The attack was sponsored by the Syrian Government, who had two objects in view. Following closely upon the crushing of the Kurdish revolt in Iraq, the attack in Lebanon dovetailed into the overall purpose of extinguishing the pockets of non Arab-Moslem independence in the “Arab world”. The second purpose was to establish specifically Syrian hegemony over Lebanon — which they claim as part (like Palestine) of “Greater Syria”.

With the Christians on the brink of defeat, the Syrians, in a brilliant political manoeuvre, sent their troops into Lebanon, changed sides, and saved the battered Christians from annihilation. They thus took control of the ruined country, installed a Christian puppet as President (in accordance with the existing constitution), and then calmly renewed their cooperation with the local Moslems and the Palestinian terrorists. Except for occasional outbursts the Christians, gravely weakened by the slaughter, destruction and flight of many of their people, have collaborated with their Syrian masters as their only means of survival.

One part of the Christian community, however, was able to hold on to its freedom: the Syrians did not reach southern Lebanon — because Israel refused to countenance the presence of Syrian forces in proximity to her border. That was how the local militia, under Major Sa’ad Hadad, came to build up a large pocket of independence. The Syrians did indeed at one stage try to penetrate the zone by guile. The puppet government in Beirut announced the despatch of a “Lebanese Army” unit to restore order in the south. Hadad, recognizing the transparent trap — of the Syrian wolf in Lebanese’ uniform — threatened resistance; and the attempt was abandoned.

* * *

But the Christian villages had by now become a major target of the “Palestinian” terrorists. In earlier years, before the assault on the Christians, the PLO had occupied a part of southern Lebanon, whence

they carried out some of their famous exploits against Israeli targets, like civilians in Kiryat Shmona, and in Nahariya, or a crowd of schoolchildren at Ma'alot, trapped in a room and mown down by machine-guns. Now, as allies and hatchet-men of the Syrians, the PLO undertook the double task — of continuing the “war” against Israel, and wiping out the southern Christians.

With much superior fire-power and backed, as they are in all their works, by the resources of the Arab States, they might have overwhelmed the Christians. They did cause considerable damage by shelling the villages, almost destroying the infrastructure of living throughout the area. Only by Israeli help to the population — exemplified by the Good Fence — was a minimum standard of life restored and maintained. Israel made it possible for these brave tough people to defend their hearth and home against the real threat of annihilation.

This, however, is not all. There is in fact a working, if unwritten alliance, initiated by the Alignment Government in its day. Meanwhile the Christians have been joined by their neighbours, Shi'ite Moslems, and together they guard over some 100 villages and 100,000 inhabitants. Fate has thus drawn together Israel and the South Lebanese Arabs against a common enemy who aims at the annihilation of all of them.

* * *

The US from the beginning encouraged the Syrian take-over in Lebanon. Pretending ignorance of Syrian objectives and machinations, Washington (together with the Arab States) sponsored the Syrian joke of “keeping the peace”. It was the US that stifled Israeli protests, and ever more emphatically ranged herself on the side of the Syrian-terrorist coalition. Washington actively promoted the entry of the bogus Lebanese unit into the Christian enclave — urging Israel to press Hadad into irresponsible acquiescence. When the terrorists murdered a busload of Israelis and the Government tried — in the “Litani” operation — to put an end to the terrorist threat, Washington was in the forefront of protest. The Litani operation, it so happens, was bungled — and facilitated the decision to send a UN force to establish a No Man's Land in southern Lebanon. Predictably, UN units, whose specific duty it was to keep the terrorists out, allowed PLO infiltration. Consequently all the elements of confrontation are back where they were before the Litani operation.

In the face of a great new terrorist build-up in the area, including a

massive Syrian contribution of heavy artillery, the Israeli Government decided to abandon the policy (inherited from the Alignment) of merely retaliating after PLO outrages, and to conduct a war of attrition against the PLO at its bases. This policy has proved itself. PLO plans have been disoriented, their bases have been disorganized, forays into Israel have been prevented, static artillery attack has no doubt been weakened.

* * *

The death of civilians in these attacks is not inevitable. It is the consequence of the Arabs' deliberate tactic of establishing their bases in the heart of a civilian population. Using their own civilians as cover, or as decoys, is common practice among the Arabs. It has a long history in their attacks on the Jews in Palestine. This is precisely what has happened in Lebanon. The Arabs simply allow, or drag, or force the village women and children to stay with them *in the front line of a battle they have initiated*.

The US Administration are perfectly aware of this. What they, with the help of the media, are trying to achieve by pressure on Israel, is that the PLO should be given complete freedom of action — to build up its strength, to shell southern Lebanese and Israeli villages at will, to penetrate Israel and attack their favourite targets — women and children; while Israel keeps her hands tied behind her back and expresses gratitude at Washington's statements of sympathy with the bereaved. This would no doubt help to contribute to the happiness of the Saudi Arabian oil suppliers.

If the United States and its humanitarians will at least try to stop the bloodshed, they must remove the culprits. They must persuade their Saudi allies and their Syrian beneficiaries to clear the PLO out of Lebanon (which even the unfortunate Government in Beirut is begging them to do). The Christians and Moslems in the south only want to be left in peace; and Israel has no interest in disturbing Lebanon's peace.

Maybe the international humanitarians will at least try to explain to the PLO leaders, with whom they are all so keen on hobnobbing, that civilized peoples who, for whatever reason, are waging war, actually take measures to get civilians, and certainly women and children, away from the battle-zone in which they have chosen to fight.

There certainly dare not be any question of Israel's succumbing to the hypocritical demands from the West that she should even now turn the other cheek.

31.8.79

Making War, Not Peace

Less disturbing only than the sudden renewed outbreak of violence in Lebanon was the Western proposal to send an international force to separate the combatants. The combatants are the Christian civilians in Beirut, and in the small town of Zahle who have been the victims of a murderous artillery onslaught by the Syrian "peace-keeping" force. The number of dead is estimated at 250 and the wounded at 650.

The enlightened West, though unable to pretend that the events in Lebanon are merely an internal matter, has had nothing more to propose than a force to separate the two sides. Yet even the most myopic of Western statesmen must now surely face the fact that the Syrian "peace-keeping force" is not a peace-keeping force at all but a force which, upon orders from Damascus, makes war on the Christians of Lebanon.

The ostensible reason for the Syrians' presence in Lebanon since 1975 was indeed their keeping the peace between the Christians and the coalition of Lebanese Moslems and PLO. Yet even if this were true, this explanation has been exposed as a lie and a sham. The Syrians are behaving without inhibitions as an occupying power who do not even observe the rules of war, launching their shells deliberately at residential areas — trying simply to kill as many Christians as possible.

While this carnage has been in progress for more than two weeks, the UN, which has a Charter and rules and regulations, does not budge. It holds no meetings, does not debate a proposal — for which the situation cries out — to inform the Syrians that their force is no longer seen as a peace-keeping force, and should be recalled to Syria.

The Security Council will certainly not pass such a resolution — firstly, because the Soviets will veto it. It is equally true, however, that not a single Western leader either has called on Syrian president Hafez Assad to take his troops out of Lebanon.

Their proposal — which has in the meantime been shelved — was to send

an international peace-keeping force to keep the peace between the Syrian “peacekeeping force” and the peaceful Christians. This proposal only serves to underline their impotence, and its innate futility. Such a force would only give a further stamp of approval to the Syrians — who would snap their fingers at it whenever it suited them.

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The Syrians, after all, will continue to dictate policy to the Lebanese government. How sad it is, and how grotesque, that while the Syrians are killing and maiming hundreds of their own people, the members of the Lebanese government do not dare to call for their departure.

It was indeed reported that some Christian members of the government did threaten to resign if the slaughter was not ended, but this threat is evidently the limit of their protest.

On the other hand, how chilling it is to learn that the French president promises that no steps will be taken without the consent of the Lebanese Government. Giscard knows, and he knows that the Syrians know that he knows, that they, the Syrians, *are* the Lebanese government.

Hence, the equally cynical declaration by the Damascus spokesman that the Syrian force will be withdrawn only at the request of the Lebanese Government.

* * *

Here indeed, has been the sin of the Western powers and — in the circumstances, most culpably — of the United States. They have kept their eyes closed to the real roots of the “dispute”. Why, after all, has the war in Lebanon been continuing, in its various configurations, for six years? Why did prosperous, comparatively peaceful little Lebanon have to be ruined?

Here is no routine quarrel, to be solved by a formula or a peace-keeping force. The Lebanese tragedy is an expression of the refusal of the Arab-Moslem “world” to tolerate within its bounds the existence of any non-Arab, non-Moslem sovereignty. Even the partial sovereignty of the Christians in Lebanon is intolerable.

Moreover, the urge to destroy Christian power (and, if need be, the Christians) is heightened by the specifically Syrian ambition to include Lebanon in a Greater Syria.

It is absurd to fall in with the description of the Syrians’ role as **peace-**

keeping. It was they who instigated the initial onslaught in 1975 by the local Moslems and the PLO. The ferocity of the attack and their superior force brought the Christians almost to their knees.

It was then that the Syrians moved into Lebanon — to save the Christians from annihilation. It was thus cleverly with Christian blessing that they established themselves legally in Lebanon, even doing battle for a time with their erstwhile allies to deepen their hold on the country.

They thus finally became the dominant power, and even controlled the constitutional elections — of a Christian president, a Sunni Moslem premier, and the rest. One factor alone prevented their overrunning the whole country physically: the terms laid down by Israel — through the mediation of the US — for the southern limits of their advance.

That is how the free Christian enclave in the south came into existence; how the Christians there (and their Shi'ite Moslem neighbours) were able gradually to equip themselves and to deploy their forces in the face of continuing attacks by the PLO, the allies and front-fighters of the Syrians, who have retained effective control of a part of Southern Lebanon.

* * *

Against this background, what has been the policy of the US? It persisted in maintaining the pretence that the “Lebanese Government” was in fact a free government, and that the Syrians were in fact “good Samaritans” who had rushed, out of sheer altruism, to save the Lebanese from themselves.

It persisted in its refusal to recognize the South Lebanese Christians’ right to fight for their hearths and homes and their vital role in keeping alive the flame of Lebanese independence and freedom.

Instead, Washington exerted repeated pressure on Israel to facilitate the occupation of Southern Lebanon by so-called Lebanese forces, which were, in fact, Syrian or Syrian-controlled. It repeatedly made known its displeasure at Israel’s aid to, and cooperation with, the Christian forces; and even at Israel’s operations against the bases of the PLO enemy from which terrorists sallied forth to kill Israeli civilians and whose artillery persistently shelled the Christian villages.

To enjoy the full flavour of the fecklessness of this policy — shared by the whole official Western world — it is necessary only to add that Syria and the PLO, whose cause was thus being so loyally promoted, are among the most favoured clients of the Soviet Union.

* * *

To the credit of the Alignment government, it must be said that after the initial error in acquiescing in the presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon at all, it rejected the pressures of the US Government. It was that government that first implanted renewed hope in the hearts of the brave Christians in the south — with its implications for their comrades in the north.

The Likud Government withstood even greater pressures. Had the demands of the Carter administration been complied with, it is most probable that all Lebanon down to the Israeli border would be dominated by the Syrians and their no less brutal PLO allies.

The Lebanese problem will not be easily solved — if indeed there is any hope left of solving it in the context of a unitary state — primarily because the Moslems (supported by the Soviet Union as well as the Arab states) are confident of the rout of the Christians.

Hitherto they have been encouraged by the policy of the US. In the name of a minimum of international decency and of self-interest, the Reagan administration should first of all, and immediately, announce the end of that policy of encouragement.

If the administration intends to fulfil its promise of a reversal of foreign policy and to base it on the principle of strengthening America's friends, and not the friends of the Soviet Union, now is the time to apply this principle in the Lebanon, boldly and speedily.

17.4.81

The Gathering Clouds

The Soviet Union has for years been providing direct aid and comfort to the terrorists. Yasser Arafat pays two or three visits to Moscow every year and confers regularly with Soviet Ambassador Soldatov in Beirut. Several times every month, one or another of the terrorist leaders meet with some official personality from the Soviet bloc.

The Soviet Union has long maintained training camps and facilities for PLO members in Eastern Europe, and is the main supplier of PLO arms. Their political relationship is complete.

At the same time the Soviets have been developing ever closer and more intricate relations with Syria and with Libya. They supply Syria's growing arsenal with the most sophisticated weapons (and retain control over their use) — a cosy satellite relationship. Wealthier Libya buys arms from more

diverse sources, but her basic armament is Soviet-supplied; and her political affiliation is uninhibitedly pro-Soviet.

In the last several months it became known even to the careful follower of the media that, parallel with the joint naval exercise carried out by the Soviet Union and Syria in the Eastern Mediterranean, these two countries, together with Libya, had launched a combined operation to supply the PLO with massive quantities of up-to-date heavy arms. The purpose was, no less, to transform the terrorist organization into a regular army.

Its strength, it was estimated, would be 20,000 men, and its dramatic impact would be the creation of an effective war front on Israel's northern border (and an equally effective reinforcement of the threat to the Christians in Lebanon).

Here for the Soviets was opened the practical — and proximate — prospect of military force at their disposal in the Middle East — backed, moreover, by a long-established political alliance. A tasty element in this anti-West prospect is its intended contribution to the elimination of Israel as the most significant obstacle to the Soviets' creeping expansion in the Middle East.

Except for the initial surprise, the operation has not been kept secret. In response, the United States has not lifted a finger, nor even indicated an awareness of this new impending threat to her interests. On the contrary, she has in fact extended her friendly cooperation.

When Israel, suddenly awakened to the completely new dimensions of the threat being built up in the north, launched an equally new-dimensioned attack on PLO bases, installations, supply lines and headquarters in order to prevent the consummation of the build-up, the US promptly intervened, and by drastic gestures coerced Israel into stopping the operation and accepting a cease-fire — thus guaranteeing the success of the Soviet purpose, and ensuring that there would be no interference from Israel in the build-up of a PLO army. This, after all, is the political history of the fortnight that culminated on July 24.

* * *

When a world statesman commits a blunder or acts stupidly, there are always wiseacres at hand to proclaim that "he knows what he is doing" or "he knows something we don't".

The truth — which our generation has learned time and again from bitter experience — is that what appears to the average intelligence to be a stupid

act only too often turns out to have been in fact a stupid act.

The British records of the time have shown that Neville Chamberlain's policy towards Hitler in 1938 was even more fatuous than his critics thought. More recently — and closer to our affairs — Henry Kissinger, the much celebrated statesman, has calmly admitted that his central geostrategic policy — détente — was absurd. The great impetus his policy gave the Soviets can be measured in our own hemisphere by the tremendous expansion of the Soviet presence throughout Africa, in the Persian Gulf area and in the Indian Ocean.

United States policy in Lebanon culminating in last Friday's cease-fire, has been for her, no less than for Israel, a resounding, self-inflicted defeat.

US policy in Lebanon has been self-destructive from the start. It was Washington that backed the invasion of Lebanon in 1975 by the Syrian Army in the guise of a "peacemaker".

Did the State Department not know that it is Syria's historic national policy to incorporate Lebanon into "Greater Syria"?

It was the US (in Kissinger's day) that pressed Israel into acquiescing in this Syrian pretence (against "guarantees" of limitations on the scope of Syrian operations). The US thereafter tried to thwart every Israeli act to aid the Christians and to prevent their subjugation.

To this day, the US treats Major Sa'ad Haddad, fighting on and for his own Lebanese soil, as an outcast. In short, if the State Department had its way, Syria today would not only control the Lebanese government but would rule supreme over all of Lebanon — with an appropriate role given the PLO.

* * *

Washington did achieve one cherished purpose in the course of this fortnight's transparently irrational and self-defeating behaviour. It exalted and enhanced the popularity of Saudi Arabia.

By dragging it in as a "mediator," the administration will be able to insist it is a "moderate," and thus improve the chances of congressional approval for selling the sophisticated F-15 equipment and the AWACS planes.

If it succeeds, the Saudis, having collaborated with Washington in ensuring uninterrupted construction of a front against Israel in the north, will have gained a greatly increased capacity in strengthening the front against Israel in the south.

Nobody in Washington can continue to pretend that this is not so. American diplomacy has failed utterly to squeeze from the Saudis a form of words which will justify Washington's claim that these arms are intended for use against the Soviet Union. The Saudis see no need to lie. They insist that they do not feel threatened by the Soviets. The enemy, they say, is Israel.

* * *

Throughout all these developments administration spokesmen in Washington have taken care to announce from time to time, without batting an eyelid, that Israel is a trusted ally of the United States.

It is no great merit in the Americans that they took advantage of the glaring voids in Israeli policy, of egregious blunders in Israeli conduct and the gaucheries of the Israeli prime minister, to achieve Israel's defeat. In this brief fortnight, all were exposed.

Israel has no information machine relevant — let alone adequate — to her unique requirements. A properly equipped special ministry would have launched an early campaign to draw the attention of world public opinion to the dramatic escalation in the Arab preparations against Israel, and the serious implications for the West in the emergence of a new dynamic Soviet base in the Middle East.

But in a crisis, the existing Foreign Office machinery — and its devoted officials — are reduced to shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted.

The government's failure to understand that the Lebanon operation might bring on violent reactions is a manifestation of sheer irresponsibility. There was nothing to prevent the building and repair of shelters — which had been neglected for years; nor the quiet preparation of plans for quick evacuation of women and children, in case of need, from Upper Galilee.

The reason for this failure is not secret. It has long been obvious that the prime minister does not look beyond one move, and consults nobody on its implications and probable consequences.

No less typical was his abject surrender. The implications of this cease-fire may well be no less serious than those of the cease-fire after the Yom Kippur War — agreed to by the Golda Meir government against its own better judgment. But Begin has always crumpled under American cajolery and pressure, from the mutilation of his own "peace plan" through the Camp David agreement to the sham peace treaty with Egypt.

* * *

The northern debacle is only one corner of the unfolding picture. The Syrians, with Soviet aid, strengthen their front by adding a new army.

The Saudis, with American aid, intend to reinforce the southern front with the most sophisticated lethal equipment and arms.

Egypt, with American and Israel's aid is about to receive the greatest reinforcement of all: Israel's strategic depth and security belt.

The agreement to station a multi-national force in Sinai is a fitting final accord to the sham peace treaty.

Egypt will order the force out of Sinai as soon as it decides the time has come to end the "peace" — and the Arab coalition is ready to launch its war on Israel.

31.7.81

American Mystery

What is the present condition of the great mystery of our time: Washington's policy in the Levant?

The bloodletting loosed by the PLO and its Moslem allies upon the Christians in Lebanon in 1975 was the result of Syrian manoeuvres and encouragement. In the next phase, when the Christians, badly battered, appeared to be on the verge of total defeat and indeed threatened by annihilation, the Syrians changed sides, came into Lebanon, attacked the PLO and rescued the Christians. They thus prevented the PLO and the Moslems from taking over state power. This role they took upon themselves.

To achieve "legitimacy," they persuaded the Arab League to intervene and to create an "Arab peace-keeping force" — which was, in fact, Syrian. Elias Sarkis was their nominee as president; and he dutifully "invited" them to stay in Lebanon to "keep the peace". Through a puppet government, the Syrians thenceforth conducted Lebanon's affairs.

Repeated efforts by the armed Christian organizations to loosen the hold of the Syrians — and of the PLO who established themselves throughout the civilian centres — were crushed with characteristic brutality. Only two forces — a cluster of villages adjacent to the Israeli border, organized by Major Sa'ad Haddad and Israel — prevented the Syrians and the PLO from completing their control of all Lebanon.

It is to the credit of Yitzhak Rabin's government that it took Haddad's

Christian militias under its wing. Ravaged by artillery attacks by overwhelmingly superior PLO forces, the villages of Southern Lebanon would have been obliterated were it not for Israeli arms supplies, logistic support and humanitarian services supplied through the “Good Fence” at Metulla.

The Syrian objectives were not secret. They had always claimed Lebanon to be part of Syria. Its possession meant also the eradication of the partial sovereignty enjoyed by the Christians — anathema to the Moslems. Control of Lebanon provides the basis for deepening the front against Israel — whose conquered territory is also marked out for inclusion — with the rest of Palestine — in “Greater Syria”.

Throughout the years of destruction and slaughter in Lebanon, Syria was able to depend (apart from its Arab friends) on two great supporters. Long a client, indeed a near-satellite of Moscow, with whom it maintains close contact, Syria has been the recipient of tremendous quantities of Soviet arms. In any confrontation with the Soviet Union, Syria would be a natural Soviet base. Its other great supporter is the United States of America.

* * *

Washington embraced the fiction of Syria’s “peacekeeping” role. It exerted considerable pressure on Israel in 1976 to agree to an extension of the area under Syrian control. It pretended that there was a stable and independent government in Beirut, and made great efforts to persuade Israel to abandon Major Haddad and his brave people — to the mercies, inevitably of their sworn enemies.

In the war within Lebanon, which in the years from 1975 brought about the uprooting or flight of nearly a million people and the death of an estimated 100,000, which destroyed the fabric of life in this previously tranquil, civilized country, the US role was in diplomatic support of the pro-Soviet forces of destruction.

The thread of self-frustrating irrationality in US policy is not new. Indeed, the high priest of US policy towards the Soviet Union up to 1976 — Henry Kissinger — subsequently confessed that future historians would stand amazed at its absurdity (“that to be strong we must be vulnerable”). Its absurdity in Lebanon has been more immediately obvious — and gruesome.

* * *

Parallel with its policy towards Syria, the US government has continually thrown up a protective cover for the PLO. With the incessant campaign of murder against Israeli civilians in plain view, Washington did its best to thwart every Israeli effort to put an end to PLO activities. Every severe reaction by Israel was met by denunciation from Washington, sometimes by hint of threatened sanctions and ultimately by sanctions themselves.

If the PLO's intentions towards Israel were not enough, it became universally known that its organization served as the operative agency of the Soviet Union in the promotion and organization of international terror. The Soviet Union provided arms and, together with its satellites, training facilities for PLO officers.

The PLO's own bases in Lebanon were developed over the years as training centres for members of all the world's terrorist organizations. The PLO thus became the heart and centre of the scourge of international terror.

When the Reagan Administration came to office, it immediately raised hopes of massive action against this novel threat to the Western world. One of the first statements by Secretary of State Alexander Haig in January 1981 was in fact a declaration of war on international terror.

To this day, no visible effort has been made to fulfil this pledge. On the contrary, precisely like its predecessors, this administration has performed grotesque acrobatics in order not to notice PLO activities throughout the world, and it has pretended never to have heard that here was an organization whose declared central passion was the destruction of the State of Israel and its people.

Indeed, it was the Reagan Administration that first actually "punished" Israel for making a determined attempt to destroy the infrastructure of its mortal enemy.

In the spring and summer of 1981, Israeli Air Force attacks on PLO headquarters and bases in Lebanon had all but brought about the consummation of that objective. Israeli Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan, a competent judge, believed that several more days of action would have completed the task. His view was shared by terrorist leader Yasser Arafat, who appealed urgently to Saudi Arabia to save his organization from collapse — by getting Washington to press Israel to desist.

The Saudis complied at once; and the US, in knee-jerk reaction, duly pressed Jerusalem. Hence the tragi-comic cease-fire of July 1981 (Washington had meanwhile withheld from Israel planes already contracted for).

The US Administration thus played a major part in facilitating the tranquil, undisturbed renewed build-up of PLO forces and arsenals, now accelerated by huge supplies of arms from the Soviet Union.

The dimensions of PLO arsenals so far overrun by the Israel forces in the present Operation Peace for Galilee have shocked even Israeli intelligence experts and ordnance specialists. One of them has assessed the quantities of all types of arms, ammunition and explosives as sufficient to arm one million men. Such quantities are far, far beyond any prospective PLO capacity. They light up the cumulative threat being built up, a stone's throw from Israel's northern border, by the PLO in collaboration with the Soviets — and under the cosy protective hand of the US.

* * *

As another unexpected by-product of the Peace for Galilee Operation, Israel demonstrated in astonishing degree that she is the one serious, dependable deterrent force (apart, perhaps, from Turkey) in the Middle East. The downing of nearly 100 MiG aircraft in aerial combat without loss (surely an unprecedented feat), the destruction of 19 SA missile batteries, again without any damage to the attacking planes, and then the destruction of sophisticated Soviet tanks — all classified in the West as being the highest range of Soviet technological capacity — constitute a significant Israeli contribution to Western military assessment and planning.

* * *

Operation Peace for Galilee has thus faced the masters of US policy with several accomplished, and embarrassing, facts. The military strength of the PLO has been broken and its international ramifications have been at least seriously curtailed. Syria has emerged with substantial injuries and with lost face. Major Haddad has been welcomed spontaneously as a leader far beyond his own enclave. Israel's action has, in fact, frustrated almost all the policies which the US has pursued for years.

Above all, the damage done by the way to manifest Soviet concerns has not only served to expose and emphasize the identity of interests between the Soviets, the Syrians and the PLO, but the incredible fatuity of American policy in supporting and protecting the Soviets' poisonous clients.

No wonder, then, that on television last Sunday, US Secretary for Defence Caspar Weinberger, ranted and raved against Israel. No wonder, then, that Prime Minister Menachem Begin, according to US network reports, received such a cold, even sour, welcome from the habitually jovial President Ronald Reagan when he arrived at the White House on Monday. For the American leaders had little option but to accept a situation not of their making — and to adopt Israel's perfectly rational proposals which, in addition to the rest of the bounty, offer the possibility of restoring Lebanon.

The lessons of Lebanon should indeed move the makers of US policy to question anew their thralldom to Arab interests and dictates, their compliance with the State Department's traditional anti-Israeli doctrine — and the consequent undermining of America's strategic posture in the global confrontation with the Soviet Union.

But such a re-appraisal would, of course, put an end to the American Mystery.

25.6:82

Shattered Illusions

With the final act in Beirut not yet concluded it is surely premature to try to gauge the precise depth and breadth of the upheaval brought about by the war in Lebanon throughout the Middle East, and the rumblings far beyond. What is already clear is that some illusions have been shattered.

Among the Israeli soldiers, who after all represent a cross-section of the people, there are those who had naively accepted the notion that the PLO was in fact an idealistic liberation movement. They have now learnt the truth. Suddenly they were confronted with the phenomenon of 12-year-old children who had been drafted into the terrorist organization and put through a course in killing. In the Israeli soldiers' first contacts with Lebanese towns and villages, they learned how the members of the PLO, from the moment they imposed themselves on the countryside in the mid-70's had ravaged the population. They learned of the mass slaughter of the Christians in Damour; and of the masses of refugees who had fled their homes in the south, from Tyre and Sidon and Nabatiye, five, six and seven years ago, to find shelter in Beirut in the north from the regime of robbery

and murder and rape to which the “fighters” of the PLO subjected them.

They were soon accorded dramatic visual corroboration of what they had heard. Hardly had they effected the occupation of the south than tens of thousands of those refugees began choking the roads — returning, after the enforced years of exile to their now safe Nabatiye and Sidon and Tyre. Suddenly the IDF soldiers discovered that they were not an occupying army: the people whose country they had invaded saw them and treated them as their liberators from a ruthless band of oppressors.

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Suddenly light was shed on the true roots of the conflict over Palestine. To the astonished eyes of the IDF, and subsequently to television viewers, there were revealed gigantic, indeed “unbelievable” stores of arms, mainly Soviet (but also some of Western including American manufacture), which Chief-of-Staff Eitan confirms must have been built up since the cease-fire of July 1981. More and more quantities continue to be exposed. Scores of trucks will be busy for many weeks, day after day, shipping these arms to Israel; and nobody yet knows what volume of arms is stored in Beirut and the north.

Only a tiny fraction of these arms could possibly be required for terrorist operations, even on an international scale. The volume and professional variety of these arms relate to needs far beyond the capacity of the PLO. They could be intended only for a considerable force from abroad, whether from Arab countries, like Libya, South Yemen or Algeria, which have no frontier with Israel, or from eastern bloc states like Cuba or East Germany, already expert in the despatch of Soviet surrogate expeditionary forces. What is certain is that Operation Peace for Galilee has not only achieved peace for Galilee, but has also destroyed the foundations of a formidable new front with immense destructive power in the war planned against Israel by the coalition of Arab states.

* * *

With all eyes focused on Lebanon, on the PLO and on Syria, and with minds boggling at the magnitude of events, little attention has been paid to the other Arab states. Special attention should indeed be paid to Egypt. What should Egypt’s reaction be at this stage, with Israel poised at the

gates of Beirut to ensure the departure of the PLO from Beirut and from Lebanon?

After seven years of the most horrendous bloodshed loosed upon Lebanon by the Syrians and the PLO, after obliteration of Lebanon's independence and its domination by Syrian power and PLO gangsterism, Israel has opened up the prospect of internal peace and the honorable restoration of that independence. Syria's wings have been clipped and it is clear that its imperialistic ambitions will now be checked. Moreover, Lebanon, which has no quarrel with Israel over territory or anything else, can now freely establish relations with this country and add another brick to the building of peace in the area, which Egypt claims to have initiated by its treaty with Israel.

The revelation that the PLO is an organization of barbarians not only towards Jewish civilians, but no less to Arabs (Moslem as well as Christian), must have been brought to the attention of the Egyptian leaders in their own intelligence reports from Lebanon, as well as by the tremendous wave of gratitude that welcomed the Israeli army and the visible flood of refugees returning, after years of PLO-imposed exile, to the safety now afforded by Israel's presence. All this should surely have moved the Egyptians to welcome the prospect of a peaceful completion of the salutary revolution Israel has all but accomplished in Lebanon.

Given the Egyptian much-vaunted concern for the Palestinians, they should surely shudder at the thought that they have been campaigning for the installation of the PLO thugs as the Palestinians' rulers. Whatever the ultimate outcome in Palestine, they should surely now be pleased from their own point of view, at the prospect opened up at the gates of Beirut, that an authentic local Palestinian leadership, free of terrorist pressures, might now emerge.

This is the picture that should be in the minds of all those who believed, or allowed themselves to be persuaded, that the Egyptians, because they signed a "peace treaty" with Israel, are really and truly interested in peace in the region and in a living Israel.

* * *

This has always been an illusion; and Egypt's behaviour and reactions have been quite, quite different. The swift advance of the IDF destroyed all the PLO bases and laid bare the astronomical stocks of arms it was preparing, inflicting tremendous blows on Syria. It stunned and shocked

the whole Arab world, and not least Egypt. Nowhere, in fact, were the early Israeli announcements about the IDF's limited objective — of a 40-km. security belt — more successfully misleading (deliberately or otherwise) than in the Arab world.

Far from manifesting a quiet satisfaction at the breaking of the power of the PLO, at the cessation of its atrocities against the Lebanese people, and at the possibility of a restored independent Lebanon, the Egyptians have been moving heaven and earth to prevent the final consummation of the prospect. There are indeed clear elements of panic in their behaviour.

They are engaged in a last-minute effort to prevent the PLO from being forced to leave Beirut, to keep the terrorist organization in being as a living entity, and to “force” Israel to leave Lebanon. Egypt in short is desperately trying to save the PLO (and the devil take the Lebanese).

Moreover Israel's success in putting an end to the cosy situation of bloodshed and anarchy that had reigned in Lebanon has been met by veiled threats from Cairo. President Mubarak has said that the autonomy negotiations would not be renewed unless Israel withdrew from Lebanon, and deputy Foreign Minister Butros Ghali (heading the diplomatic offensive against Israel) has even threatened Israel with “economic sanctions”. These somewhat toothless pronouncements are being outdone by a renewed campaign of vilification of Israel in the most extreme terms in the Egyptian press.

* * *

Nobody should be in the least surprised. Egypt and the PLO are both parts of the same spectrum. The PLO is first and foremost an arm of the Arab states. It was sponsored by them, financed, armed and trained by one or another of them, and given shelter and diplomatic cover by all of them, as required. It has been cultivated, and indeed recognized, as the thrusting sword of the Arab nation for the elimination of the alien, infidel Jewish state. Its task has been to keep the kettle of violence boiling against the day when it will be possible and necessary (failing Israeli suicide) to launch the final attack upon Israel across all its borders at once.

Egypt and the rest of the Arab world are still vibrating feverishly in consternation and confusion at Israel's blow to this long-term strategy, and the war in Lebanon has provided the people of Israel, unexpectedly, with a new warning of Egypt's aims.

9.7.82

Afterword

Reflections on Jabotinsky On the 100-th Anniversary of his Birth

For some time, I have considered writing a biography of Ze'ev Jabotinsky. Immediate preoccupations have interposed delays; but I suspect I may also have shied away from the formidability of the task. This may be the reason why others, intrinsically perhaps more qualified than I, gazing at the picture of Jabotinsky they have built in their minds, and seeing how difficult it is to take in its dimensions, its intellectual and spiritual variety, its profusion of colours — have also not taken up the task.

In his *Story of the Jewish Legion* in World War I, Jabotinsky recalls that during the campaign in Transjordan a Bedu, caught stealing ammunition, had his ass confiscated. “The men, though dead tired, decided to give it a name... There were more than 50 men named Cohen in the battalion and... their initials exhausted all the letters of the alphabet except X. The ass was consequently named Cohen X... The Bedu demanded a receipt for the confiscated animal... At one stage in my life I studied law... and that is enough to upset a man’s balance for the rest of his days: I gave him a receipt. He put it away carefully and took it along to the depot at Jericho, and for weeks afterwards letters went back and forth between G.H.Q. and our battalion relating to Cohen X”.

Who ever recalls that Jabotinsky had had a legal education? It is common knowledge that he knew a number of languages. How many people know that in addition to the seven of which he had complete command — Russian, Italian, French, German, Hebrew, English and Yiddish — he had a reasonably adequate knowledge of at least 20 more, including nearly all the remaining European tongues. He took a profound interest in language, and had a most rare talent in speedily acquiring a knowledge of any language he studied. He surprised Scandinavians by quoting long passages from the Nordic sagas in the original; he electrified an audience in Belgium by delivering his speech in Flemish. The stories told by his friends of his linguistic researches are endless and fascinating.

He could, without difficulty, have been a leader in the field. Yet how small a corner of Jabotinsky did this occupy?

You move your gaze, and you discover Jabotinsky the classical translator — a giant in the realm of poetry. He translated Bialik into Russian (and it was said that the translation excelled the original). He translated Edgar Allan Poe into Russian, and his *The Raven* established him as a Russian poet. He translated Poe into Hebrew. His *Annabel Lee*, set to music, is sometimes heard on our radio. It is ingenious — and beautiful. Into Hebrew he also translated *The Rubbaya of Omar Khayam* (from Fitzgerald's English rendering) and it is a Hebrew gem. He found time to translate only about one-third of Dante's *Inferno* — and his translation has been described as probably unequalled in world literature.

He contributed impetus and shape to the Hebrew language in the formative years of its rebirth. He was one of the first (if not the first) to write Hebrew poetry with the Sephardi *milra* accentuation. He gave the early Habimah theatre players lessons in Hebrew diction (and published a booklet on Hebrew pronunciation). He preached the need for writing Hebrew in Latin characters. He studied Maltese in order to help him evolve a system; and he often used it in his Hebrew letters to his son. His little book for English speakers, *Taryag Millim*, is a light-hearted introduction to the study of Hebrew — in Latin characters.

His literary output in Russian was not inconsiderable. He was 16 when, studying in Italy, he began contributing to one of the big Russian dailies in Odessa. The pen-name he used for his feuilletons — *Altalena* — soon became well known throughout the Russian intelligentsia.

He wrote plays and poems and short stories. He wrote two novels, both of Jewish content. One of them, *Samson the Nazarite* (published in the U.S. as *Prelude to Delilah*), is surely the most delightful and penetrating fictionalized account of the Samson story — and it is not lacking in allegorical content, startlingly appropriate to this day.

Maxim Gorky is said to have charged the Zionist movement — with having stolen Jabotinsky from Russian literature; indeed, when I had the privilege, as a very young man, of a friendly chat with Jabotinsky, he told me that he had “11 novels milling around in my head — but who knows whether I shall ever get round to writing them?” He died three years later.

You can turn to Jabotinsky's writings on social questions. He could not devote much time to them: they related to the shape of society in the Jewish State and the state did not yet exist. Yet his essays contain, *inter alia*, the complete philosophy of what came to be known as the Welfare

State — intertwined with the social philosophy of the Bible.

And his concept of *hadar*? How many people realize that the ideas he laboured to inculcate in the Betar movement (and in the people at large) provide the answer to all those problems of behaviour which plague our society? Courtesy, civility, flowing from concern and consideration for others, together with punctuality, punctiliousness, neatness and cleanliness — for all his grim preoccupations with the problems of his tragic period, he sensed the need for impressing the urgency of these qualities in the newly-coalescing Jewish people.

Capacities which would have sufficed for several brilliant academic and literary careers appear, in the context of Jabotinsky's historic role, as a minor, at most contrapuntal, phenomenon, merely adding depth and shading to the most colourful Jewish leader of the century.

He was indubitably also the most controversial — the most beloved and the most maligned. Seeing far ahead of his contemporaries he inevitably aroused their antagonism and even hatred. His struggles against established opinion and against the Establishment are the stuff and the drama of Zionist history. His public life was a saga. He was a man of utterly unflinching courage, of a natural unassuming dignity, of a warmth of manner which even now, 40 years after his death, one cannot recall without emotion; his faith in the justice and the ultimate victory of the Jewish cause was unassailable, and was unclouded by any calculation of personal fame or profit.

So he began his first great political campaign, in December 1914 — for the creation of the first modern Jewish army unit, to fight alongside the Allies to free Palestine from the Turks (an undertaking for which he was excommunicated from the Zionist Organization — until the venture succeeded). So he continued until his last tragic campaign, two decades later, for the evacuation of the Jews of Europe before disaster overtook them, for which he was vilified by all the other Jewish leaders.

As time goes on the picture of that campaign becomes ever more clearly etched: of Jabotinsky, his heart breaking in the anguish of understanding the horror of the Jewish scene, standing out in lonely eminence against the darkling sky of a Europe rushing headlong to Hitler's war.

In the 20 intervening years, as leader of the Revisionist-Zionist Movement, as leader of the Betar youth movement, as the inspirer and mentor of the underground Irgun Zvai Leumi, he was the teacher of two generations who played a crucial role in the miracle of our national rebirth.

The texture of his teachings, passages from his political thought, find their way, years later, again and again into the thinking and the articulation of his disciples and his opponents alike.

He did not see the fruit of his labour; the unrelenting cold logic of his mind, expressed in precise, incisive language, yet shot through with the fire of faith, was manifestly that of a prophet.

Thus — prophet, statesman, poet, philosopher, soldier, linguist, novelist, leader of men, living out a life of drama and of almost continuous tension and conflict — this, briefly stated, is the complexity of his would-be biographer's problem.

Pondering over Jabotinsky — unbidden comes the thought of the quality that apparently moved and predominated in his make-up. In 1937, at the height of his conflict with the official Zionist Organization, he was urged and pressed to restore unity in the movement. But he found the prospect was too slender; and he said "*God's name is not Unity, but Truth*".

17.10.80

