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Some Thoughts on Zionism...

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Space-Age Zionism

The ideological “ghost” of A.D. Gordon haunts the nooks and crannies of Zionist thought. The religion of physical labor is still the working theology of socialist Zionism, not only in ideological discussions, but also in the turmoil of daily social and economic policymaking. The clarion call, “from services to industry,” rings throughout the land as the magic formula to solve all our ills. It conjures up the image from socialist realism posters of sweaty, heavy-muscled forearms gripping the means of production. History has made nonsense of this ideological “ghost,” but it is still doing active damage to the Zionist dream. It is a dybbuk which must be exorcised if Zionism is to fulfill its rendezvous with Jewish destiny.

Zionism was not formulated in a vacuum, but rather in the social, cultural, industrial, scientific, and intellectual atmosphere of nineteenth-century Europe. Indeed, it was a product of European developments and absorbed large amounts of nineteenth-century axiomatic thinking into its very essence. This was completely natural and unavoidable (even necessary). There is no guilt involved. Certainly one cannot point an accusing finger at A.D. Gordon, one of the most creative thinkers in Jewish history. His social theories were germane for the historic period he lived in; his cultural theories are still startlingly relevant and a sufficient rebuttal to our neo-Diasporists. But we are unfair when we rely on him to supply answers to a period in which he didn’t live. We must stop being lazy; we must cultivate more intellectual ambition. We must stop quoting the classics and start thinking for ourselves. The solution to our current malaise is

not a return to historic origins but a return to the historic originality symbolized by A.D. Gordon and the other classic Zionist ideologues.

Classical Zionism

Zionist ideology was formulated to solve the problem of nineteenth-century European Jewry, most specifically that of East European Jewry. Although part of classical Zionist analysis attacked the psychological-cultural-spiritual problems of Western Jewry and is still largely relevant today, most of classical Zionism pertained to the condition of Eastern European Jewry. An honest confrontation with the facts as they are (and not as we pretend them to be) forces us to conclude that the greater part of classical Zionism is inadequate to our current needs.

1. Classical Zionism analyzed a Jewish people without a Jewish state, maintaining that this statelessness was the primary characteristic of Jewish abnormality and thus the primary reason for Jewish distress. Today we have a Jewish state, and while the majority of the Jewish people live outside it, we cannot deny that the state has radically revised the dialectics of Jewish existence.
2. Classical Zionism analyzed a Jewish people that for the most part lived in great poverty under tyrannical regimes. Today the majority of the Jewish people live in democratic countries and are often among the richest ethnic groups in their respective countries.
3. Socialist Zionism based its social theories on the “abnormal” socio-economic structure of the Jewish people—the so-called inverted pyramid. The Gentile social structure was “normal” in that the majority were in the productive base and only a minority were in intellectual activities or services. But since World

TSVI BISK *has recently written* *Futurizing the Jews—Alternative Futures for Meaningful Jewish Existence in the 21st Century*, Praeger Publishing House, 2003. *This essay was first published in the late 1980’s.*

War II the entire industrialized world has undergone a technological revolution which rivals and outstrips the industrial revolution in its ramifications.

An Age of Revolutions

We are in the midst of the most revolutionary period in the entire history of the human race. First, the microelectric (computer) revolution is moving out of its Paleolithic and into its Neolithic stages with the vast part of its development still ahead. It is comparable to the very rise of human consciousness; a new kind of intelligence has been created on the planet Earth, one which will enable the expansion of human consciousness to the same degree represented by the development from prehistoric to historic man.

The second revolution, the conquest of space, is the most dramatic event on this planet since the first amphibian left the water and crawled onto land. From the moment that John Glenn and Yuri Gagarin left the atmosphere on the first manned orbits of the planet, the “natural” environment of life (as represented by its highest manifestation, conscious man) was no longer only the planet Earth, but the entire cosmos. When Nixon called landing a man on the moon the greatest event since the birth of Jesus, he was not engaging in hyperbole, he was understanding the event; it was the most profound and significant practical, biological, spiritual, and cultural event in the entire history of the human race. Its full significance has not yet been understood (if indeed it can be understood). Future shock and cultural and intellectual inability to absorb even the event’s short-term implications have caused us to analyze it like accountants (profit and loss on a year-to-year basis), to cut budgets, and in general to turn our backs on our cosmic destiny. The quicker this temporary aberration of fear passes, the better, for there is some question whether we can survive on this planet without expanding our natural environment, our society, economy, and culture out into the cosmic realm.

The third revolution, the genetic revolution, but rivals and sums up the other two. In many ways it can be viewed as the most significant event on the planet since the very creation of life and the beginning of evolution. Man is now creating new forms of life and

will be able to interfere in and direct the entire evolutionary process. We may say that responsibility for evolution has now passed from objective, deterministic, accidental means to subjective, idealistic and directed means. Man has taken his rightful place as king of his realm and is on the verge of realizing his God-like potential.

Zionist Ideology in a New Age

What has all this to do with Zionism? Everything! This is the environment in which a neo-Zionist analysis of the Jewish people will be created, not in some Tolstoyan romance of man and land. The social theories of nineteenth-century Zionism will become increasingly irrelevant until they will have the same significance for us as the social theories of medieval feudalism. Ideology is not theology; it is an intellectual tool, not a catechism of dogma. We do not believe in ideological principles; we use ideological tools. True, one may believe in an ideological analysis, but only if that analysis be accurate and capable of answering some real need. Zionism is an ideology, not a theology; there are no dogmas to believe in, only intellectual tools to use. When these tools are no longer relevant, it is perfectly natural to trade them in for more useful models. This is not a betrayal of one’s ideals, but simply a rejection of irrelevant ideological analysis. It betrays nothing except the stupidity of stubbornly holding on to an outdated, unuseful value system.

Anachronistic ideology, which does not answer the living needs of our people, results in hypocrisy. Party ideologues praise physical work and call for a return to origins, but they themselves have no intentions of ever engaging in physical work, nor of educating their children to go into industry or the more menial services. Concerned with all the little material perks which go with their way of life, they would be bored to tears if they had to “return to their origins.” Many communal and cooperative settlements (kibbutz and moshav) and the food industries they supply depend on Arab or Sephardic Jewish labor.

The kibbutz has developed to a point where it, too, has an inverted pyramid. A kibbutz of six hundred members, ulpanists, and volunteers may have

seventy-five working in agriculture, another one hundred in industry, with the rest in services. A quick review of one of the more developed kibbutzim would probably reflect the same reality. Only the undeveloped kibbutzim still have a “normal” pyramid. There is nothing here to be ashamed of; in and of itself the situation is not immoral. But it is a fact which reflects the living reality of our lives and which must be faced squarely by any ideology which truly wishes to be relevant. It is the contradiction of an ideology completely out of touch with reality which causes the hypocrisy. A relevant ideological analysis would allow us to use the stychic (unintentional, deterministic) developments of the scientific revolution in creative and humanistic ways, helping us transcend the present reality, build the future, and correct the inner contradictions which haunt us today.

The Jewish “Worker”: Zionist Dream or Social Injustice?

Some proudly proclaim that we still have 350,000 Jewish industrial workers, as if this fact in and of itself justifies a continued belief in classical Zionist social theories. But what percentage of these are Sephardim who are industrial workers because they have no choice? What percentage of the lower-paid industrial jobs are filled by Sephardic workers? Do these workers see themselves as the concrete expression of the Zionist dream or as suckers being exploited by hypocritical Ashkenazi ideologues who when they talk proudly about Jewish labor do not mean themselves or their children? In other words, isn't this “proud” statistic part and parcel of the social gap, not a statistic to be proud of, but one to be ashamed of?

The socio-economic structure of present society is finite, with all available elite areas already filled to overflowing. Indeed, there is a kind of built-in vested interest in the social ethnic gap in our present society: we need our Sephardic and lower class masses in order to sustain these elites (and indeed to allow themselves to be defined as elites). The scientific revolution, however, is essentially infinite in its possibilities. As Professor Ze'ev Katz so rightly points out, a rapid scientific revolution in Israel is the only way for the Sephardic community quickly to

expand its own elite and gain relative parity with the Ashkenazi community.

The scientific revolution will take place in any event. Unless it takes place within the framework of a relevant socialist ideology, it will widen the social gap. It is the task of neo-Socialist Zionism to use the scientific revolution to close the social gap, not to resist this revolution with nostalgia and fear of change.

Let us examine the call, “from services to industry.” What does this mean? Do we want fewer policemen on the street or more? Fewer doctors and nurses or more? Fewer teachers or more? And what about Tzahal? All these are services. Do we really mean these? Of course not. We mean the bureaucracy. But how big is the bureaucracy and how much can we cut from it, and will those cut from it really go into Israeli industry as it is presently constituted? About 18% of the working population are clerks (public and private sector). Now let us assume we succeed in cutting this, after great effort, by 10%. Only 1.8% would be available for the job market, and only an infinitesimal number would go into industry as it is presently constituted. Now there is no question that we should cut our flabby bureaucracy in order to save money and provide better service, but this is not the answer to production. The answer is to build a supersophisticated, hypertechnological means of production, which would be almost completely automated. Japan has over ten thousand robots “employed” in her industry. One would assume that these robots are more efficient than ex-Jewish agency clerks. If one wants to visualize the future of Zionism, one should read good science fiction and not A.D. Gordon.

Normalization

In addition to all this, we may note within Zionism a tremendous paradox regarding work and normalization. Zionism called for a mass return to physical and productive work which would put the Jews in contact with the primary means of production. This was the primary condition for the normalization of the Jewish people, i.e., to make them more like other peoples. Thus was born the myth of the new

“Jewish peasant” and “Jewish worker”. The Jews were to be peasants and workers like other peoples. Yet the “nature” of other “normal” peoples with “normal” peasants and workers is for these peasants and workers to strive to become middle class and to wish for their children to become middle class (professionals, academics, and managers).

So the first stage of turning Jews into peasants and workers is unnatural and abnormal: people of a higher cultural level consciously willing themselves to become peasant and workers by way of an active ideology of proletarianization. No need to mention that true workers have no need for such an ideological framework and are workers and peasants by way of their existential reality (it took the Jews to make an ideology out of peasantness). Thus the first generation of Zionist pioneer workers was characterized by a rather unnatural and abnormal overt demonstration of their “workerness” (cloth caps, self-conscious jut-jawed posings and the like).

Yet in the end they were quite successful. The first artificial pioneer class did indeed create true Jewish peasants and workers in their children. Being true peasants, they had no self-conscious or romantic attitudes towards it; being true peasants, they desired to become bourgeois. This pioneer class (or its intellectual representatives in the second and third generations) called for the self-conscious inculcation of peasant values—not only as existential fact but also as a value. But making this a value is artificial and abnormal. So what is left of this epic struggle for normality? We are forced to come to the startling conclusion that much of Zionist analysis and semantics were filled with internal contradiction even during that period when they were most relevant.

This question is central to aliya, yerida and neshira—they very heart and soul of Zionism. We want a Jewish majority and a majority of the Jews in this country, yet we have built an economy which is good at absorbing Arabs from the West Bank and very bad at absorbing Jews (whether because of wage scales and economic expectations or because of professional skills and opportunities). I do not agree with those who posit that the pioneering instinct in Israel is weaker than in the past. The socio-economic reality of

Israel is completely different than it was during the Third Aliya, and thus the pioneering instinct must be given completely different modes of expression if it is not to turn on itself in cancerous frustration.

Zionism has as one of its major slogans (on which will always be relevant) “We came to the land (of Israel) to build and to be built.” The assumption here is that someone expending his full energies in a heroic task will himself be uplifted and be more able to realize himself as a human being. The concept of “self-realization” (*hagshama atzmit*) also reflects this dualistic meaning: each individual must realize his ideological ambitions himself and not depend on others to do it for him (i.e., the obligation of aliya), and by doing this, his human, individual self will also be realized. When Berl Katznelson was asked for a definition of socialism, he replied, “the uplifting of man.” Man the collective and man the individual. This includes the concepts of “to build and be built” and “self-realization.”

But the simple fact is that today there are altogether too many people in Israel with a feeling of frustration, of being prevented from making their full contribution to society and to themselves, of alienation from society, of stunted personal growth, and of wasting their lives. Thus it is no surprise that the ever-growing number of yordim includes Israel’s elites, attracted not only by the money and security of the United States, but also by the combined sense of challenge—and opportunity to confront that challenge—and the feeling of wide-open horizons contrasted with the intellectual wasteland of today’s Israel. No question but that relief from the pressure cooker which is Israeli society also plays an important part, but it is my working thesis that if more people saw a real opportunity to contribute to solving Israel’s problems without wasting their lives on bureaucratic nonsense, more people would be satisfied and fewer would opt for yerida.

Space-Age Zionism

This can only be achieved by making the central Zionist challenge of our day the transformation of Israel into the world’s most developed and

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The Magen David: History of a Symbol

Judaism is a religion of rituals, customs, signs and symbols that for many non-Jews are unfamiliar, strange, and often misunderstood. Some of these practices, rites and symbols are purely religious, some traditional or historical, some are regional, while others denote cultural influences. A partial list of Jewish symbols and rites includes such items as the Menorah, the seven branched candelabrum; the Mezuzah, a small case containing the Shema prayer which expresses Judaism's central belief in the unity of God and is attached to the right doorpost of a Jewish home; the Shofar, a ram's horn sounded during the Jewish High Holidays; the Tallit, a prayer shawl; Tefillin (phylacteries), small square leather cases with thongs attached, one for the forehead and the other for the left arm, containing slips inscribed with scriptural passages (Jews are required to don a pair of Tefillin each morning at services except on Sabbath and festivals); Yamulka (skullcap); the Kittel, a long white outer garment generally worn at the Passover holiday seder table, and in the synagogue on the Day of Atonement; Peah, earlocks worn by Orthodox Jews in conjunction with Biblical law which forbids removal of hair from the corners of the head; and such rites as Pidyon ha Ben, the ceremony of redeeming a first born son; the Bar Mitzvah, the memorable occasion in which a boy of thirteen is formally ushered into the adult Jewish community; the Birkat Kohanim, the priestly blessing of the congregation.

Probably the most identifiable symbol of the Jew or Judaism is the Magen David, the Shield of David, sometimes also referred to as the Star of David, a hexagram of two equilateral triangles having the same center and placed in overlapping but opposite directions. Today it is the central element of the State of Israel's flag, and the symbol is frequently found emblazoned on the walls and windows of synagogues,

and on ritual implements and vessels. It surmounts the graves of fallen Jewish soldiers, and is the official badge of the Jewish military chaplain. In Israel the Red Shield of David is the equivalent of the Red Cross elsewhere. Although the Magen David is now the most commonly and universally recognized sign of Judaism and Jewish identity, both within and outside of the Jewish community, it has only achieved this status in the last two hundred years. For most of Jewish history, the representation of the Menorah served as the traditional motif (it still remains as the official seal of the State of Israel).

Part of the popularity of the Shield of David is a long and complicated history. In order to unravel this story, the first thing to be observed is that the hexagram symbol itself is centuries older than its Hebrew name Magen David. Indeed, the hexagram has been found on objects date back to the Bronze Age (3,200 to 1200 B.C.E.), and examples are known from almost every civilization, East and West. The Pythagoreans attributed great mystical significance to the six pointed star, and it played a similar role in locales as diverse as Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China, Japan and Peru. The design is also found on Hellenistic papyri, and on the Iberian Peninsula after the Roman conquest. Besides its magical properties the hexagram also seems to have been frequently employed for purely decorative purposes.

Some anthropologists claim that the triangle of the hexagram pointing downward represents female sexuality, and the triangle pointing upward male sexuality, thus their combination symbolizes unity and harmony. In alchemy, the two overlapping triangles symbolized "fire and water." Together they represented wisdom and the reconciliation of opposites. Fire that rises is symbolized by the upward pointing triangle, and water that descends from the sky is represented by the downward pointing triangle. The medieval alchemists seemed to have derived their interpretation from a well known Midrashic

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explanation of the Hebrew word for heaven "shamayim" (a combination of "shama," the high place and "mayim" water). Later it was widely believed that shamayim, i.e. heaven was a paraphrase for God. Based on this hypothesis, the hexagram when used by Jewish mystics was a graphic substitute for the Ineffable Name, just as Adonai (Lord) was a verbal one. In support of this view, it has been pointed out that even in Christian magical literature each of the four outer triangles of the hexagram were usually labeled with one of the Hebrew letters of the Tetragrammaton namely Y H W H. It is observed also that in medieval alchemical symbolism, the four triangles represented the four cardinal points, and therefore the notion of universality and the omnipresence of God.

The name Magen David is of unknown origin. There is no mention of it in the Bible, or in any rabbinic literature. Some medieval Jewish texts attempted to trace the six pointed star back to King David himself. They maintained that it was the magic design on David's war shield that protected him from his enemies. It was supposedly inscribed with the seventy two letter name of God, and later passed down to Judah Maccabee. Others held that the Shield of David was designed and named as a complement to the popular pentagram, the five pointed star known as the Seal of Solomon. In Arabic sources, the hexagram along with the pentagram were widely used for ornamental purposes and for magical amulets. Both symbols were easily interchanged, and the term Seal of Solomon was frequently applied to both figures. Legends connect the Seal with the magical ring used by King Solomon to control demons (Talmud, Gittin 68 a b). A legend of the Koran expands on this theme and states that the Seal of Solomon came down from Heaven engraved with the all-powerful name of God. It was supposedly partly made of brass, and partly of iron. With the brass part King Solomon sealed his orders to the good spirits, and with the iron part the bad spirits. Folklorists point out that it was a common practice in Antiquity and the Middle Ages to name some particularly powerful charm after Biblical heroes. Thus a famous book of magical spells, for instance, was entitled *The Key of Solomon*, and another went under the name *Sword of Moses*. The

"Shield of David" would have seemed a peculiarly appropriate name for a magical sign.

Some scholars have tried to identify the Magen David with Rabbi Akiba and the Bar Kokhba rebellion against Rome (135 C.E.). However, the first verified, though by no means universal Jewish use of the hexagram, dates from the seventh century B.C.E. on a seal owned by one Joshua ben Asayahu, but its significance remains obscure. In all likelihood it represented a magical symbol, for such seals were often employed on amulets, and were embellished with what was believed to be signs of power.

In the Second Temple period (516 B.C.E. to 70 C.E.) the hexagram and the pentagram were rarely used by Jews. Some time later, it appears on a synagogue frieze in Capernaum (2nd or 3rd century C.E.). The hexagram motif is also engraved on a Jewish tombstone of this same period at Tarentum in Southern Italy. What meaning the design was intended to have we can only guess. It may have been ornamental or, as has been suggested by some scholars, a symbol of the coming of the Messiah. They base this interpretation on the Biblical prophecy of Balaam (Num. 24:17) which reads, "there steppeth a star out of Jacob" which was thought to allude to the advent of the Redeemer.

It was not until the Geonic period of Jewish history (end of 6th century to first half of the eleventh century) that the hexagram becomes a more frequent symbol of Jewish culture, although it is still by no means exclusively Jewish. If anything it was cross cultural.

The hexagram next comes into prominence in Muslim and Christian countries in the Middle Ages where it is used mainly for decorative purposes, and sometimes as a magical emblem. It now appears frequently in churches, but rarely in synagogues or on Jewish ritual objects. Belief in the magical powers of the hexagram among the common folk is best illustrated by the following example from Germany. Here the symbol received the intriguing name Drydenfuss and was regarded as representing the footprint of a trull (demon), or of an incubus, another evil spirit. The

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One Nation, Under Allah

Americans concerned with the separation of church and state feel increasingly embattled these days in light of the tone being advanced in Washington by the Bush-DeLay-Scalia Amen Axis. The Baltimore Jewish Times' James D. Besser has noted that "both in the legal and political realms, the church-state wall is taking a beating." As to breaches in that wall created by recent legal cases, Marc Stern of the American Jewish Congress has detected various "constitutional shifts" which have "altered that landscape" (Forward, November 14, 2003).

Allow me to propose, however, an alteration in the framework presupposed in this brand of analysis which offers an alternative to such dour assessments. In the words of famed Harvard philosopher George Santayana, "to attempt to be religious without practicing a specific religion is as possible as attempting to speak without a specific language."

This *bon mot* should receive pride of place in any consideration of the recent decision of the 9th Circuit Court that the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance betokens "a profession of a religious belief, namely a belief in monotheism," which would be tantamount to affirming that "we are a nation 'under Jesus,' a nation 'under Vishnu,'" etc. (For the record, this decision was written by Judge Alfred Goodwin, who is the son of a minister; and the original 22-word version of the Pledge itself—sans the controversial phrase—was penned by a Baptist minister, Francis Bellamy.)

Allow me to elaborate upon Santayana's dictum: no one speaks Language; they speak a particular

language, such as English, Hebrew, Spanish, and Chevash. Language is something that in daily life, as opposed to the rarefied aeries of meta-analysis, exists only in the plural, as a lower-case noun.

Similarly, no one practices Religion, they practice a specific religion. In other words—to draw an analogy from prescription drugs—there is no such thing as generic religion, just brand names.

Or, to cast matters in a more distinctly Jewish framework, there is the analogy of kashrut (the dietary laws): when it comes to religions, there is milchig (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Shinto, the Way of the Tao); there is fleischig (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism); there is even treif (the various white supremacist groups such as the Christian Identity Movement, the World Church of the Creator, etc.); but what there is not—except perhaps in the most peripheral and marginal if not trivial of ways—anything that genuinely equates to *pareve*, and this constitutes the crux of the matter. Thus, it would be more accurate to speak of the relation of religion(s) and (the) state, or better yet, of sectarianism and the state, vice 'religion and state.'

In addition, the term 'religion' is itself ambiguous. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, the late Harvard expert in comparative religion has noted that "the word 'religion' has had many meanings; it would therefore be better dropped. This is partly because of its distracting ambiguity, partly because most of its traditional meanings are, on scrutiny, illegitimate. ...quite simply...what men have tended to conceive as religion...can more rewardingly...be conceived in terms of two factors, different in kind, both dynamic: an historical 'cumulative tradition', and the personal faith of men and women."

STANLEY COHEN is a long-time observer of religious activity in America.

In his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, Senator Joseph Lieberman (D.- Conn.) had opined that “the constitutional separation of church and state...promises freedom of religion, not freedom from religion.” Not quite. The fact of the matter is—as Smith’s salient distinction elucidates—that the freedom to exercise one’s faith has as its corollary freedom from having one’s tax dollars used to support another’s tradition.

For as Senator Dick Durbin (R.-Ill.) has cogently observed regarding the relation of religion(s) and public life: “It is one thing to say that we have the freedom to practice. It is another thing to say that we condone by government action certain religious belief.” Can there really be such a thing as a cross-cutting public acknowledgement that does not constitute official endorsement? Does *pareve* exist? Or is it that once government becomes involved, willy-nilly, what eventuates is the willingness to impose specific religious beliefs (there are no unspecific beliefs) on others through the power of government: after all, favoring a religious tradition means, if nothing else, discriminating against the non-religious.

There is no good reason for the government to be in the religion(s) business in the first place. “PUBLIC” is not synonymous with “OFFICIAL” or “GOVERNMENTAL.” Moreover, in this instance, the proper antonym of ‘religious’ is not ‘non-religious’ and certainly not ‘anti-religious,’ but, rather, ‘a-religious.’ Let us make it quite clear: the public square is one thing, and the bestowal of an official, tax-subsidized, imprimatur another. In a religiously diverse country such as ours, the formulation of the topic should not—as is common currency—center on the government stake in ‘religious’ activity, but rather, on the modalities which best allow the government to be an a-religious bystander.

At the same time, there is the astonishing irony—*pace* Rev. Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Justice Antonin Scalia and President George W. Bush and others who purport to “stand with Christ”—that from a Bible-centered Christian perspective, according to the Gospels, Jesus himself called for rendition to Caesar

of what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s: i.e., the separation of religious activity from government. One can only wonder as to what the luminaries named above must truly have in mind, in cultivating an agenda which so deliberately contravenes the explicit teaching of their “lord and savior.”

A further anomaly is that the thrust to knock down the existing wall of church-state separation is being spearheaded by self-identifying conservatives whose base ideology is one of profoundly LIMITING the role of government in people’s lives, rather than expanding it, as would surely happen here.

The focus of law is concrete activity, actual practice, quotidian behavior: or, as it is known in Jewish tradition, *halachah limaaseh*. In this respect, following Santayana, the 9th Circuit Court decision got it right, however much it flies in the face of Roy Moore-style politicians and grand-standing radio talk-show hosts all too eager to enroll the Deity as a campaign aide. ‘The camel’s nose under the tent’ argument very much applies. Jihad, after all, may legitimately be translated from the Arabic as ‘faith-based initiative.’

Sayyid Qutb was a 20th century Egyptian thinker who is the intellectual hero of contemporary radical Islam. Dubbed the “philosopher of terror” by a March 24, 2003 cover story in the New York Times Sunday Magazine, he deplored what he considered the “hideous schizophrenization of modern life”, by which he meant the creation of autonomous realms free from religion. As this article put it, according to Qutb,

The truly dangerous element in American life... was not capitalism or foreign policy or racism or...women’s independence. The truly dangerous element lay in America’s separation of church and state—the modern political legacy of Christianity’s ancient division between the sacred and the secular.

The more chinks there are in the wall between church and state, the more homage we pay to the ‘spiritual godfather’ of 9/11. ■

The Dilemma of the Israeli Arabs

Damned if they do and damned if they don't. Israel's Arab citizens are between a rock and a hard place. Another dozen such aphorisms accurately describe the dilemma of Israel's Arab citizens among whom are many vociferous critics of Israeli policy, both domestic and foreign; some who are nothing less than a disloyal "Fifth Column" and others who cannot express their loyalties and sentiments openly for fear of being targeted by extremists and sympathizers of the "Intifada".

Almost all observers sympathetic to Israel (let alone those who are hostile) commonly despair that any meaningful formula can be found to integrate the Arab minority in Israel. These views have hardened further as a result of the last three years. Scores of Israeli Arabs have been involved in acts of disloyalty, hostility, and providing aid to terrorists. Nevertheless, an important question still remains unanswered. Is there any hope at all of some future accommodation for the non-Jewish communities in Israel to positively identify with the state? Is there any viable model of majority-minority community relations Israel could draw from to create a common sense of loyalty and identification?

I have purposely used the term non-Jewish rather than "Arab" to draw attention to the fact that many of the same dilemmas exist among Israeli Druze, Arab Bedouin (who in Israel are entirely Muslim), Christians (both Arab and non-Arab) and Circassians (non-Arab Muslims) among whom are to be found individuals whose loyalty to the state has been unquestioned. Indeed, a deeper exploration of the dilemma presented by the attitudes of many Jewish Israelis raise issues that transcend the immediate Palestinian-Israeli and general Arab-Israeli conflicts.

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The most relevant fact omitted in a general discussion of any manageable future Israeli social and political environment of common citizenship is group vs. individual behavior. Is the rubric "Jewish" stamped in present day Israeli identification cards under the category labeled "Leum" (nationality) a criterion for different standards? There is no question that among an overwhelming majority of Israeli "Jews" and "Arabs", it is, yet the facts are more complicated.

Not All Jews have been Loyal

Let us start with the following facts: not only was Rabin's assassin, Yigal Amir, a self-proclaimed Orthodox Jew, but all those who have been convicted and sentenced for the crime of treason against the State of Israel have been Jews—as duly inscribed on their Israeli identity cards. They also represent the broadest possible spectrum of the Jewish population including both Ashkenazi and Sephardi, religious and secular and held diverse ideological motivations. They include General Yisrael Baer, a close associate of Ben-Gurion and member of the General Staff; Aharon Cohen, a native born "Sabra" and ultra-leftist from Kibbutz Mishmar HaEmeq who spied for Syria; Sammy Baruch, a textile merchant who sold military secrets to several Arab states; technician Mordechai Vanuno who revealed Israel's nuclear capacity; and wealthy businessman Nahum Manbar who illegally sold chemical and biological information to Iran. There were (and may still be) others among the Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union who were long-term "sleeper agents."

The Non-Jewish Population: A Mosaic of Different Groups

At the same time many "non-Jews", namely the Druze, Circassians, Arab Bedouins and even a few Christian Arab and many Moslem Bedouin volunteers (and more than a few anonymous Moslem Arabs both

inside Israel and within the territories) have served in the Israel Defense Forces and/or provided valuable intelligence information. The “Intifada” has already provoked the murder of dozens of Palestinian Arabs who have served Israel (or simply been suspected) and have been lynched or sentenced to execution by the Palestinian Authority as a result.

Most friends of Israel are unaware that the Druze, Circassian and Bedouin veterans of the IDF have suffered casualties in excess of the Jewish population when measured as a percentage of their relative populations. The current "leader" among Israeli settlements with highest per capita casualties is the Druze village of Beit Jat in the Galilee. This contrasts to the non-participation of segments of the orthodox Jewish population who are exempt from national service of any kind. These facts of course do not sit well with the proclaimed image of Israel as a “Jewish state”. It is obvious that loyalty is NOT determined by birth or what is stamped in an I.D. card.

It is indeed true that among the non-Jewish communities whose past attitudes and behavior were largely passive and among whom there were no cases of treason or active aid to the enemy in wartime (1956 or 1976), there are now disturbing signs of alienation, humiliation and hostility. How could it be otherwise in the current situation?

Yet it is not only the Intifada and the painful acts of mass murder and mayhem carried out by the fanatical Palestinian terror groups (whose victims have also included Israeli Arabs and foreign workers from Romania, Poland, Thailand and other third world countries), but the lack of any initiative to develop loyalty and identification to the state by Non-Jews who have often been left in a "state of suspended animation". Moreover hundreds if not thousands of would-be converts to Judaism have often spent years and considerable resources to win acceptance as Israeli citizens although their loyalty and sympathies have never been in doubt. Religious conversion is nevertheless the accepted way of winning entry into a society that many abroad consider to be among the least desirable in the world due to the threat of terror attacks.

Israel's National Identity

Israel certainly should not sacrifice its basic identity to accommodate the Arab minority by changing its flag. It remains as much a treasured and valid symbol to both secular and religious Jews in Israel as the Christian crosses in the Scandinavian and Swiss flags, or the British Union Jack. Yet religious conversion in these states is not a measure of civic participation or loyalty, nor should it be in Israel. The same applies to the question of the national anthem. Before the Intifada, the desire to change the words or entirely replace HaTikvah with a new anthem were a subject of legitimate debate among many Jews who felt that the words were no longer appropriate for the independent State of Israel then approaching its 50th anniversary. It is not only the Arabs who feel uncomfortable in singing the lyrics. The anthem was ethnocentric as well, written as if all the worlds' Jews only looked towards the East to find Zion.

Many states have dual anthems. Denmark has one sung on occasions of historical significance in which a naval victory over the Swedes is recalled (*Kong Christian stod ved højen mast...* King Christian stood by the high mast) and another civic one of a quite different tone (*Der er et yndigt land...* There is a beautiful country) whose words describe the natural beauty of the landscape. The Finnish anthem has words in both Finnish and Swedish. The latter is sung by Finnish citizens of Swedish origin in the autonomous Åland islands. These are only two examples of how other states with diverse population groups or that wish to emphasize diverse aspects of their history have coped with providing an alternative that offends nobody.

Critics will immediately cry out..."but Israel is in the Middle East and not Europe", or “Arab-Jewish relations are burdened with more than a hundred years of conflict and can hardly be compared with peaceful Scandinavia or Switzerland” (whose national anthem may also be sung in all the various official languages). Clearly this is the mentality that the past determines the future and subsequently there is no hope.

For more than fifty years the same "state of suspended animation" has existed leaving most non-Jews in

Israel in a state of limbo. Are they citizens? There is no doubt according to Israel's declaration of Independence. Can they be judged by the same standards and fulfill equal duties and enjoy equal rights? This is in doubt. Although Israel's declaration of independence clearly states that all citizens are equal, both Israel's Arabs and many among the ultra-Orthodox have always looked at one side of the equation. Both have demanded equal rights without equal obligations. Equal does not necessarily mean identical. Military service may be replaced by some civilian duty, but to continue wobbling the issue or sitting on the fence has only led to growing disaffection that now even affects the Druze and Circassians.

The Diversity of Israel's "Arabs"

Israel's population today is just over 6 million of which non-Jews constitute 16%. This does not take into account the former Jordanian occupied areas of East Jerusalem. Of the nearly one million Israeli citizens who are lumped together as "Arabs", there are significant differences among three communities who have voluntarily served in the Israel Defence Forces. These are the Druze, Circassian and many Bedouin tribesmen who are Muslim.

The Druze and Circassians: Hebrew has been fervently embraced by the Druze in Israel, a community of 70,000 Arabic speakers who are considered a "heretical" or "deviant" Moslem sect. The Druze sided with the Jews in the War for Independence in 1948-49 and have since voluntarily accepted the obligations of military service in the Israeli Defense Forces and the Border Police. They have in the past voted heavily for the Zionist parties and admired "strong" Israeli leaders, particular General Moshe Dayan and Menahem Begin. The same has been largely true among Israel's 170,000 Bedouin minority, largely concentrated in the Negev, and traditionally hostile to the urban-dwelling, nationalistic and more religious Moslem population.

The greater degree of social integration with the Jewish majority is also leading to greater use of and fluency in Hebrew, so much so that many observers report of spontaneous Hebrew conversations between

Druze men or among youngsters at play or while watching football games without any Jews present. Obviously their shared loyalty, sense of common citizenship and language has also led to greater demands for real equality in every walk of life. Yet, the Druze have their own flags (one version used by Druze soldiers in the IDF contains the Star of David and is flown only in their own villages alongside the Israeli flag), and their religious particularity remains unchanged. They are a "minority within a minority" and their relationship with other Arabic speaking Druze living in Arab states hostile to Israel is a cause of concern and suspicion among both Israelis and Arabs. There is a large Druze minority in Syria, a state that has been particularly hostile to Israel.

The 3,000 Circassians in Israel are non-Arab Moslems who settled in the Galilee region of Palestine at the end of the 19th century after fleeing from their homeland in the Russian occupied Caucasus region to Turkey and Turkish controlled areas in the Middle East. They were loyal subjects of the Ottoman Turkish regime and like the Druze, have been on good terms with the Jews and loyally serve in the Israeli armed forces. All the men are fluent in Hebrew and scores of Circassians have moved from their Galilean villages and settled in Israeli cities from Eilat to Haifa. They speak their Circassian language at home but due to their physical isolation from other Circassian settlements in Jordan and Syria, they have readily given up Arabic and adopted Hebrew instead as the most practical means of common discourse.

The Bedouin: A third group of Israel's "Arab population" are the 170,000 Bedouins (almost entirely Muslim and mostly located in the Negev), a still distinct group who have traditionally been hostile to the settled population and government authorities throughout the region. The problems of providing health, education and welfare services to the Bedouins and integrating them into the national society with its laws and demands upon all citizens has evoked the same opposition in Arab countries as it has in Israel. Traditionally, the Bedouin have been less susceptible to the claims of modern nationalism and Islam. Many Bedouin tribesmen felt no "divided loyalty" in serving as trackers and scouts for Israel's army and security forces, yet times have changed and Israel now faces the threat of added Bedouin hostility.

The biggest issue for the Bedouin has always been "land use" and grazing rights rather than formal legal "ownership" of land. Traditionally, no attention was paid to the formal ownership of land when Bedouin tribesmen built temporary structures or grazed their herds of sheep and goats. For this reason, all Israeli governments have been interested in having the Bedouin abandon their nomadic life and settle in towns. Israel's security needs in the Negev, especially the use of land as training ground for the army and for airports, have often posed conflicts with the areas grazed by the Bedouin.

The first Israeli Bedouin town, Tel Sheva, was founded in 1967. Another six towns have been established since then and the residents of these towns now account for more than one-third of the Bedouin population. Much resentment among the Bedouins has been caused by the urban framework of these towns that are felt to be too restrictive of their mobility. The problem remains, however, that the best way to provide necessary services is to a sedentary population. The extremely wide gap between Bedouin living standards and that of the settled Jewish population has produced new tensions. Children who formerly took an active part in herding activities are now idle or forced to attend schools. Part of the adaptation to an urban life style has led to more interest in religion and the establishment of a fixed mosque for the Bedouin population in the regional capital of Beersheba. This has been viewed with great anxiety by the Jewish population who fear an identification of the Bedouin with extremist Islam. All these factors have contributed to a radicalization of this segment of Israel's Arabs.

The Settled Moslem and Christian Arab Population: The bulk of the Arab population comprises more than 700,000 Israeli citizens who are Muslims and another 150,000 Christians living in villages and towns. In theory, every Arab child must go to school in Israel for at least 8 years and Hebrew is taught from the third grade. Hostility towards Israel has always been largely due to the experience of being reduced from a majority both ethnically and religiously to the status of a minority. The previous confidence of being a Christian or a Moslem and therefore part of a

prestigious world-wide religious community was dealt a severe blow by Israel's independence and military victories.

The lack of an appropriate framework and symbols by which the Christian and Moslem population can identify with the state rather than a specific grievance based on prejudice is the problem which Israeli statesmen, educators, philosophers and politicians have not sufficiently addressed. High school graduates are fluent in Hebrew after 3-5 hours a week instruction for ten years. Knowledge of Hebrew is much greater among men and those who work in the Jewish sector of the economy outside of the village. Hebrew is needed for higher education as there is no university in Israel especially for Arabs. The shortage of appropriate skilled jobs for Israeli Arab university graduates has always been a primary factor in antagonisms and resentment towards the state. A successful Israeli Arab who writes in Hebrew is Anton Shammas, author of the critically acclaimed novel, *Arabesques*, but his work and name are totally unknown among Jewish communities abroad, and within Israel he is regarded with suspicion by both communities.

Before the Intifada, and even recently, there have been severe tensions between Muslim and Christian Arabs over the construction of a new mosque adjacent to the monumental Catholic Cathedral in Nazareth. These differences will surely re-emerge just as the tensions between secular and ultra-orthodox or Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews, now dormant, will also need to be faced and resolved in a sense of common civic responsibility once the present crisis has subsided. All are hyphenated Israelis. The challenge of the future is to increase the Israeli part. Those who are afraid of equal rights have always insisted that even Israel's "loyal" non-Jewish citizens have acted only opportunistically and are not motivated by the same feelings of loyalty and patriotism. Yet these same critics do not apply that standard to measure the disloyalty of some Jews who customarily avoid all civic obligations. Instead, they often argue the cause of some "higher morality" such as preserving the modesty of women or devotion to the Torah.

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Recalling the Geneva Initiative

Although months have passed since the conference at Geneva, it is worth recalling my observations having attended the event on behalf of the Labor Zionist Alliance:

The Geneva Initiative 'launch' was divided into several parts. The reception and the launch event were both 'spectacles' in the truest sense of the word. Nothing substantial was accomplished in Geneva; the accord had already been drafted and widely circulated and no official agreement was undertaken. Instead, the reception and the launch were carefully designed to forward a succinct image and accompanying message to the press, the populations of Israel and the Palestinian Territories, the PA, the Government of Israel, and the international diplomatic corps.

The press was not present at the remaining portions that I attended. At these times the atmosphere was strangely tranquil. There was little effort by the attendees to generate sound-bites or photo-ops; instead there was a cordial atmosphere that, to me, reinforced how much the conflicting parties have in common. People networked, chatted, and ate as though dialogue between the Palestinians and the Israelis and the achievement of a draft accord was a normal occurrence. Perhaps this is the point. I hope that organizations, both in Israel, the Palestinian Territories, and abroad can be galvanized to collaborate towards the creation of a critical mass of support for dialogue.

Beyond Buzzwords

I was glad to see that a slogan we in the LZA helped to jointly develop, 'Peace is Possible', was used by

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the organizers of the Geneva Initiative. Evidently we hit on something. We were ahead of the curve in finding a simple digestible message. The Initiative has enhanced this simple message by demonstrating that there is a partner and an agreement within reach (and even the approximate width and breadth of an agreement).

Two slogans emblazoned the walls of the launch spectacle: "there is a partner" and "there is a plan." Although the Geneva agreement is 'virtual', it has become increasingly apparent to even the most casual observer that tired clichés bear little currency; force and national resolve will not solve this conflict. What should come as no surprise is that when peace comes it will be reminiscent of the Clinton Parameters. What is different about the Geneva Initiative is its familiarity; according to Haaretz:

1. The Palestinians will concede the right of return. Some refugees will remain in the countries where they now live, others will be absorbed by the eventual Palestinian state... some will be absorbed by other countries and some will receive financial compensation. A limited number will be allowed to settle in Israel, but this will not be defined as a realization of the right of return.
2. The Palestinians will recognize Israel as the state of the Jewish people. Israel will withdraw to the 1967 borders, except for certain territorial exchanges, as described below.
3. Jerusalem will be divided, with Arab neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem becoming part of the Palestinian state. The Jewish neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem, as well as the West Bank suburbs of Givat Ze'ev, Ma'aleh Adumim and the historic part of Gush Etzion—but not Efrat—will be part of Israel.

4. The temple mount will be Palestinian, but an international force will ensure freedom of access for visitors of all faiths. However, Jewish prayer will not be permitted on the mount, nor will archaeological digs. The Western Wall will remain under Jewish sovereignty and the “Holy Basin” will be under international supervision.

5. The settlements of Ariel, Efrat and Har Homa, will be part of the Palestinian state. In addition, Israel will transfer parts of the Negev adjacent to Gaza, but not including Halutza, to the Palestinians in exchange for the parts of the West Bank it will receive.

6. The Palestinians will pledge to prevent terror and incitement and disarm all militias. Their state will be demilitarized, and border crossings will be supervised by an international, but not Israeli, force.

7. The agreements will replace all UN resolutions and previous agreements.

The Oslo Criminals, Once Again

Why does this agreement so enrage the right? Perhaps because its authors and supporters represent a well respected cross section of Israeli society: authors (Amos Oz), military men (former chief of staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak), Laborites (Amram Mitzna, Avraham Burg, Yuli Tamir), Meretz members (Haim Oron) and many more. A group such as this hasn't emerged since the days of pro-Oslo activism. Perhaps the right is scared because this is one indicator of the start of a new movement.

More importantly, Amram Mitzna, the former head of the Labor party, correctly claims that the right is afraid “because now many people will reach the understanding that they have been deceived for the last three years. For three years the prime minister brainwashed the public on the grounds that only force will bring victory.” The Geneva Initiative “proves that there is a partner on the other side and an alternative to the bloodshed.” (Haaretz, 16/10/2003) Beilin concurs: “I know they'll say it's a bad agreement, that we caved in and gave away everything. But one thing they won't be able to say: that there is no partner.” (Haaretz, 13/10/2003)

From Virtual to Veritable?

In a recent interview Yossi Beilin implored the international community: “don't help us manage the conflict, help us end it.” How will the Geneva Initiative do this? By introducing alternatives to the discourse of violence (i.e., a partner and a plan), peace has been forced back on the agenda.

While there was no official American presence at the Initiative launch (except for ghosts from the past including a message of support from Clinton and stern but kind words from Jimmy Carter who was in attendance), the recent meeting between Colin Powell and the documents organizers—Abed-Rabbo and Beilin—might signal a shift in the Bush administration. Reluctant support of the Initiative, qualified on its congruence with the quartet Road Map, is a bold move as it stands at odds with the raucous Sharon cabinet. A flurry of new peace plans have emerged in Israel (both left and right). The left has a new rallying point (and the right has a renewed adversary).

Notwithstanding their disdain for the Initiative, the right has been forced to respond. Both Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Ariel Sharon have recently called for unilateral withdrawal of Israeli settlements from the Occupied Territories.

Initiating the Initiative

Our message is clear and it coincides with the Initiative: there is a plan, there is a partner, the people desire peace and the current leadership is frustrating such efforts. We ought to grow the excitement generated by the event in several ways, the first of which is directly borrowed from the address of Yasser Abed-Rabbo. We must continue our efforts to convince the Jewish community and the incoming administration that there are alternative ways to support Israel. Knee jerk support has allowed the Sharon government to pursue self-destructive policies that will take years to remedy. For the US and the American Jewish community to be a true friend of Israel it will have to act as a stabilizer. ■

Tikkun Olam and Building Democracy: Israel's Mission

Kabbalah has gone mainstream. Synagogues and Jewish community centers advertise special classes. Jewish, and even non-Jewish, public figures have become entranced with the aura of mystery and mysticism that has been identified with kabbalah. Kabbalah, however, is more than a faddish retreat to experience the new. Among other things, it contains the central idea of “tikkun”—or “repair”.

Tikkun rests on the notion of a spiritual catastrophe that once played on a cosmic stage, an occurrence that causes the collapse of spiritual or divine grace from the highest level to the lowest. When it occurs in human existence, according to kabbalists, it takes on the sense of the microcosm. Under proper conditions, however, this rupture or powerful discord in cosmic or individual harmony, can be repaired.

The idea of “tikkun olam”, of “repairing the world”, that has struck the imagination of so many, has given Jews a way to connect to Jewish life through the pursuit of social justice. This is an endeavor well within the historic Jewish credo. But, according to the kabbalists, something more is required. While humans can help bring about tikkun by positive acts and mystical meditations, the notion of tikkun, a key element in Lurianic Kabbalah, demands something more—a change in personal behavior, such as piety, virtue and the observance of the commandments.

When Zionist philosophers projected a revived Jewish nation, they foresaw a state meant to repair the Jewish condition that had been torn apart during the last two millennia by a variety of catastrophes. The reborn Jewish commonwealth was meant to restore the Jewish people to wholeness, after being scattered and suffering persecution for centuries. In the wake of the Holocaust this sentiment gained additional impetus.

JERRY GOODMAN is the executive director of National Committee for Labor Israel. This article is reprinted with permission from Rayanot, a publication of the Park Avenue Synagogue.

The modern State of Israel would also be an inspiration for world Jewry as well as a “Light unto the Nations”, and thus become an instrument for tikkun olam or repairing the world.

As Israel observes its 55th anniversary, we should acknowledge what it has accomplished. It has brought in millions of Jews who sought a place to rebuild their lives. European Survivors of the Holocaust. Soviet Jews leaving despotism and anti-Semitism. Ethiopian Jews seeking to be reunited with the community of Israel. Argentinean Jews seeking refuge and respite. Scientific discoveries, as well as new cultural and religious institutions, have emerged from its soil. In fact, a strong, vibrant state has been created, as a home for any Jew who wishes to live there.

What it has not become is a beacon of enlightenment. Absent that condition can Israel be an instrument for tikkun olam?

The general conclusion of a recent survey by the Israel Democracy Institute is that Israel is most definitely a formal democracy, but it has not yet internalized the substantive concepts of democracy. In fact, over the last few years there has been a disturbing decline among Jews in support of democratic norms, including general support of the democratic system, support of specific values, and support for equal rights for the Arab minority.

Nearly 20% of Israel's population is Arab, whether Muslim or Christian. Most of them would prefer that Jews not rule their ancestral homes, but for the most they have adjusted to reality. Yet, they live as outsiders in the Jewish State. They are surrounded by a society where more than half of its Jewish population is opposed to full equal rights for Arab citizens of Israel. They are seemingly willing to accept the fact that serious political and economic discrimination exists against the Arab minority. The

end result is that the Arab minority has been relegated to a virtual second-class status.

While Israel's Jews seem opposed to full equality for Arab citizens, nearly half are in denial and reject the notion that Israeli Arabs are in fact discriminated against compared to Jews. Yet, 53% state quite bluntly that they are opposed to full equality for Arabs, and 57% think that Arabs should be encouraged to emigrate, rather than attempt to integrate them fully into society. A whopping 77% would limit full equality and insist that a Jewish majority vote must be a factor in crucial political decisions, a position that goes to the heart of whether a non-Jewish minority can live a full life in a Jewish State.

Using a list of indicators established by the Institute to measure democracy, Israel places in the lower half of the list. The index reflects the fact that the protection of human rights in Israel is poor, certainly by American standards. The latest survey projected a twenty-year low in the percentage of Jews who support the statement that democracy is the best form of government. Of more than 30 countries for which there was data, Israel and Poland ranked lowest in the percentage of citizens who accepted the statement that democracy is a desirable form of government.

Equally disturbing is the fact that a gnawing sense of unease about public institutions has permeated the country, especially in the last two years.

For years Israel prided itself on the degree of participation of its citizens in the political process. It was a commonly held conceit. The reality is that long before the current wave of violence, and the strict and often restrictive measures taken to protect the population, there had been a downward trend. Over the last 7 years the country slipped to number 22 out of 31 nations reviewed.

The majority of the Jewish population had always held the IDF, Israel's Defense Forces, in high esteem, and viewed it as a vital institution in nation building and integrating new immigrants into society. While it still rates high the IDF has nevertheless suffered erosion in public trust. Certainly, Arab terrorists must

be halted in their efforts to kill Israelis. Reports of the excessive use of force, however, and the IDF's reluctance to curb the violent behavior of West Bank Jewish extremists and vigilante groups, has impelled more Israeli Jews to rethink the IDF as a respected institution.

More troublesome is the fallout from the continuing violence in the region and the inability to halt Arab terrorist suicide bombers. Together with a faltering economy that has left hundreds of thousands living below the poverty line, this has seemingly caused a decline in the trust ordinary Israelis place in the Prime Minister and the parliamentary system.

Equally disturbing is Israel's ranking with Mexico, India and Romania (also democratic in form but not in substance), out of 31 nations surveyed, in which the population supports the view that "strong leaders" are better in running the state than laws and deliberations. In part, this reflects the turnover in governments, which is more frequent than in other democracies.

Have many Israelis lost hope? If so, much of it reflects the seemingly endless struggle with the Palestinians, the tragedy of random violence and killings by Arab terrorists, the immersion of young soldiers in degrading situations involving Palestinian women, children and the aged in addition to terrorists and armed militants. Much of it also reflects the widening gap between the newly wealthy and the multitudes at the bottom of the economic ladder scrambling to climb higher or merely survive.

Recently, Israel's Minister of Finance, Benjamin Netanyahu, acting on behalf of the government of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, introduced a set of economic proposals that critics described as overly harsh. The proposed reforms, designed in part to streamline the public sector and save millions of dollars, precipitated a wave of unrest and strikes. Protests were organized by the heads of opposition parties, as well as youth movements, labor groups, especially municipal and teacher's unions, Arab workers from the Galilee, and activists in various social and human rights organizations. The unrest culminated in a general strike organized by the Histadrut, Israel's largest labor federation.

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Hayim Greenberg: An Introduction

Preface by Daniel Mann: Over a half-century has passed since the untimely death of Hayim Greenberg in 1953, but his writings—many of which appeared in the Jewish Frontier, of which he was the founding editor—remain remarkably timely and enlightening, and demonstrate why Greenberg's influence extended far beyond his movement and resonate to this day.

The Labor Zionist Alliance has undertaken to renew the acquaintance of both its membership and the broader public with the work of Hayim Greenberg through the pages of this magazine. In this issue we are reprinting the most definitive biography and evaluation of Greenberg, written by Marie Syrkin, his co-worker and later editor herself. It appeared originally in the Hayim Greenberg Anthology, edited by Syrkin and published by Wayne State University in 1968. In subsequent issues, we plan to reprint some of Greenberg's most significant articles, with new commentaries by selected individuals. We will also reprint a few of his shorter pieces, which were fascinating vignettes of his surroundings or incisive comments on a wide range of topics.

This project is being coordinated by LZA's Hayim Greenberg Task Force, chaired by Daniel Mann and comprising Rabbi Herbert Bronstein, Chaikey Greenberg, Chava Lapin, Harriette Leibovitz, Ari Levy (representing Habonim Dror), Beila Organic, and Martin Taft.

Suggestions and comments from readers of the Jewish Frontier are welcome.

The moral and intellectual influence of Hayim Greenberg extended far beyond the American Labor Zionist movement of which he was the acknowledged leader. As Zionist theoretician, socialist thinker, writer on ethical and philosophical problems, and political spokesman, he affected various circles of the Jewish and non-Jewish world.

HAYIM GREENBERG and MARIE SYRKIN were the founders of the Jewish Frontier. DANIEL MANN is a past president of the Labor Zionist Alliance.

Born in 1889 in Bessarabia, Hayim Greenberg early attracted attention as a wunderkind. By the age of fifteen he was already establishing a reputation as a remarkable orator for the young Zionist movement. Before he was thirty his brilliance as a journalist, essayist, and lecturer had made him a leading figure in the cultural renaissance of Russian Jewry. At the outbreak of World War I he was editor of a Russian weekly of Jewish interest, *Razswiet* ("Dawn"). After the Russian Revolution he lectured on medieval Jewish literature and Greek drama at the University of Kharkov. Arrested several times by the Soviet government for his Zionist activities, Greenberg left Russia for Berlin in 1921. His last battle in Soviet Russia had been for the right of instruction in Hebrew (proscribed by the Revolution) and for the continued existence of the Hebrew theater, Habimah, in Moscow. He composed the famous memorandum on behalf of Habimah and with the help of colleagues he persuaded Maxim Gorki, Lunacharsky, and Vyacheslav Ivanov to sign it. Although he left Russia without accomplishing his aim he still had hopes, and he tried to win the support of Romain Rolland. He also tried to interest Anatole France in this matter. He continued until it was obvious that all doors were locked. In Berlin he edited *Ha-Olanz*, the Hebrew weekly of the World Zionist Organization, and the Zionist monthly, *Atidenu*. In 1924 Greenberg left for the United States where he edited the official publications of the Labor Zionist movement, chief among them the Yiddish weekly, *Der Yiddisher Kemfer*, and the English monthly, *The Jewish Frontier*—posts which he held till his death in New York in 1953.

Most of the essays in this volume were translated from the Yiddish, Hebrew, or Russian; some were written directly in English. Like a number of Jewish intellectuals of his generation, Hayim Greenberg was an extraordinary linguist with a genuine literary command of four languages. Unlike the usual polyglot he had grace as well as fluency, and an

unfailing sense for the shades of meaning in words, even in the language he last acquired, English. I mention this circumstance because it throws light on a fundamental aspect of his nature. Greenberg often spoke with regret of his quadrilingual existence, and the regret implied the several worlds which he had individually mastered but among which no absolute harmony had been established. As his biography indicates, he moved at ease in the culture and speech of Russia, in the world of Yiddish, in Hebrew Israel, and in Anglo-Saxon United States. All this did not add up to ease in Zion. Each world drew and charmed him in special ways and for different reasons. Fashionable jargon would probably designate such a state of mind as "alienated" or "uprooted." But this would be an oversimplification. Greenberg was neither homeless nor deracinated. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that he was multirooted as well as multilingual. No link in his past had ever been wholly severed, and the tentacles of feeling reached nostalgically to several and sometimes contradictory areas of thought and tradition.



Marie Syrking

Part of the explanation can be given in the terms of geography. A man who was raised in Czarist Russia, who fled after the revolution to Western Europe, who spent the latter part of his life in the United States, and who was a Zionist leader in all these lands, with Israel either in the foreground or in the background, obviously had more than his share of emotional and intellectual territory to inhabit. Yet for a twentieth-century Jew such a career is not unique. It falls into a familiar pattern which we designate with such words as "exile" or "refugee."

Greenberg was neither. He actively loved and enjoyed America, though a melancholy tenderness for the Russia of his youth never left him, and the dream of Israel always possessed him.

This multilingual existence corresponded to a complex and sometimes contradictory inner life. There was always a conflict between the meditative scholar, the prober into the sources of human conduct,

and the party leader, subject to the daily pressures of journalism and politics. He resolved this conflict by permitting no essential disparities among the several worlds in which he lived. What might otherwise be a routine Zionist address would be illuminated by his cosmopolitan scholarship and profound ethical concerns. He assumed that his audiences, whether they were Yiddish-speaking workingmen or a university faculty, wanted a high seriousness in the examination of a public issue. Whatever his theme, he was incapable of the tacit insult of talking down to his listeners, and his audiences, even if they did not follow every subtlety and allusion, were grateful for the compliment. His disciples wanted nothing less. And the readers of the party journals

he edited learned soon not to be surprised if the chief article dealt with Hindu religion, Freud, or the meaning of the Crucifixion. His party comrades and his readers learned to examine the day's event philosophically. It was a peculiar and sometimes disconcerting technique for an editorial board or an administrative committee to acquire, but it was Greenberg's characteristic laboratory method, which as much as anything earned him the name of "the conscience of the Movement."

At the same time, despite a genuine reluctance to assume public office, he found it impossible to refuse responsible posts in the world Zionist movement during the crucial years of struggle for the establishment of the State of Israel. As chairman of the executive of the Zionist Emergency Council in America during the war years, and later as member of the American branch of the Jewish Agency executive, in which he became head of the department of education and culture, he was always actively involved in the realities of political struggle. Because of his special gifts and background he succeeded in establishing contacts with the progressive leaders of several Asiatic countries—contacts which were to prove invaluable during the period in 1947 when the cause of Israel was being debated before the United Nations. He also played a major role in winning over many of the Latin American delegates to the Partition Resolution which established a Jewish state. The fact that he had a common language with the leading intellectuals of his time, including the foremost Protestant clergymen and such Catholic philosophers as Jacques Maritain, enabled him to secure a sympathetic hearing for the Zionist case among circles ordinarily closed.

But no matter how surprisingly effective this delicate and reticent thinker proved to be as a political figure, his abiding influence lay in his dual role of writer and spiritual spokesman of the Socialist-Zionist movement in the United States. His essays, of which three volumes have appeared in Yiddish and two in English, reveal, if only partially, the richness of a mind too often deflected from its natural course by the responsibilities of political leadership in a tragic and heroic time.

In examining Greenberg's essays, one notices that certain subjects, the keys to his abiding and passionate concerns, appear and reappear. In this respect there is an interesting consistency in Greenberg's intellectual life. Themes sometimes superficially antithetical establish their harmony in his thought: socialism and nationalism, religion and psychoanalysis, rabbinical lore and modern skepticism. They all serve to illuminate each other. The result is not, as might be feared, a casual, undigested mixture, but a body of thought marked by

a fundamental consistency of outlook even though there may be contradictions in detail.

His attitude toward socialism was characteristic. He was a socialist and always called himself one, but he rejected the dogmatism of the Marxist. The notion that man was solely a social or economic animal whose needs could be met purely in economic or social terms seemed to him the ultimate blasphemy. In his brilliant "Notes on Marxism" he dissects the limitations of Marxism: "The redemptive quality of socialism lies not in its capacity to abolish suffering, but in its ability to free man from degrading suffering, from suffering that is zoological rather than human.... It cannot give more. No matter how high the socialist Tower of Babel should rise, it will not reach infinity." Socialism could liberate man from the indignity of physical need. To confuse this with a redemptive principle was to overlook the complexity of man as a spiritual being. For this reason he opposed the Marxist attempt to establish a philosophical connection between socialism and atheistic materialism. Greenberg's view of man's soul was too complex for him to accept the fairytale simplicity of the Marxist version of man's motives and needs. In his anti-Communism Greenberg was never, like so many liberals, a disillusioned fellow-traveler turned sour by evidence of unsavory practice in the Socialist fatherland. Greenberg's opposition was more fundamental. His conception of socialism had to allow not only for the analysis of Marx but also of Freud, and it had to include the illumination of religion.

In Russia, at the time of the Revolution, Greenberg had been a Social Democrat, a Menshevik. After his departure from the Soviet Union he continued to speak and write against the Bolshevik corruption of socialist doctrine. Greenberg never made peace with the dictatorship and the repression of individual liberties within Soviet Russia and, unlike many liberals during the twenties and thirties, never permitted himself any illusions as to the regime. Long before the shock of the Nazi-Soviet pact, Greenberg was acutely analyzing the nature of Bolshevism, a task for which few in the United States were equipped.

In "To a Communist Friend," written in 1936, Greenberg refutes the argument that the end justifies the means:

Ends and means in politics are analogous to form and content in art. Form in art is not merely technique; means in politics are not merely instruments. The content must be felt in the form. The means must contain the basic elements of the end. When this minimal harmony between ends and means is lacking, we get the stake at which the Holy Inquisition burns unbelievers to save their souls. I cannot subscribe to Nechaev's famous slogan: "Full speed ahead, right through the mud."

Free democratic socialism, which respected the rights of the individual and disavowed the concept of transitional generations, generations which could be brutalized or sacrificed for some remote future, was the only socialism that Greenberg could accept or preach.

On one occasion, when Greenberg developed the idea that no individual must be viewed as the means for advancing the welfare of another because each man is an end in himself, he was accused by a labor audience in Palestine of implied opposition to the life of the Palestine pioneer. Greenberg answered this objection in uncompromising terms:

I would be an opponent of pioneering in Palestine if the hardships entailed in the rebuilding of a long-neglected country were imposed on Jewish youth from above and against its will, if the pioneers in Palestine were considered fertilizer on the fields of the country so that a later generation might enjoy its roses. But pioneering in Palestine is a voluntary task freely undertaken by those rejoicing in it.

Greenberg's fundamental expositions of the moral bases of Zionism led him into discussions far removed from the level of journalistic polemics. One of these occasions was an exchange of views with Mahatma Gandhi, whom Greenberg venerated as a saint. Gandhi's failure to oppose the dissemination of

anti-Jewish propaganda among the Moslems of India by Arab agents was the starting point for several "Open Letters" to Gandhi. In 1937 Greenberg warned against the kindling of religious fanaticism among the Moslems of India. In the light of subsequent developments, particularly the emergence of Pakistan, the words then written have a prophetic ring. Greenberg's unilateral romance with Gandhi was sometimes viewed by hardheaded realists among Greenberg's associates as one of his philosophical quirks, but the fact remains that Greenberg was unique among American Zionists in his understanding of the shaping forces within Asia.

It is astonishing to observe the freshness he could bring to the restatement and rearguing of the Zionist position from every angle. In his life, part of which was always devoted to the editing of Zionist periodicals, familiar dragons had to be re-slain not annually but monthly and sometimes weekly. Yet Greenberg rarely wrote a purely routine article. He was saved from mechanical repetition by the richness and variety of his knowledge and by the streak of poetry in his nature which enabled him to use his learning as leaven rather than ballast. Whether he was discussing patriotism and plural loyalties, or defending Socialist-Zionist theory, or answering Arab arguments, he would write on a level of seriousness that transformed many articles originally written as journalistic chores into classic expositions. Despite the fact that many of his best articles reached only a limited Yiddish-speaking audience, he was probably the most profound and eloquent Zionist publicist in the United States; his work was regularly reprinted in South America and in the Palestinian press.

Greenberg's Zionism was as free from ideological fetishes as his socialism. At a time when Labor Zionist circles proclaimed the return to "productive," that is to say manual, labor as a central thesis of the movement, Greenberg insisted on examining the slogans and rejecting the "masochistic self-flagellation" implicit in the notion that the Jewish middleman fulfills no productive function. In "The Myth of Jewish Parasitism" Greenberg takes a heretical position in addressing his party. He asserts that "any work which is socially useful or satisfies

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TO THE EDITOR:

I will need a few moments to make sure that my bifocals are in place, that my hearing aid is adjusted and that my wheelchair is nearby before writing to you of my displeasure at the space and approbation afforded the unappealing, unfunny and uncivil Ali G. in the summer 2003 issue of the Jewish Frontier. I feel confident that my senior moments of forgetfulness will not affect my sense of humor or my appreciation of biting satire.

The above paragraph is in response to the explanation that there is a generational gap between those who appreciate Ali G's brand of humor and those who disparage it and worry at what it signifies. I think such a sweeping generalization is a cheap shot promulgated by those who wish to hide behind the current acceptance of a growing uncivil society where verbal assaults replace wit, where ugliness replaces beauty and where the bully -either on the playground on the screen- is presented as a macho hero rather than a sicko.

In a generation that sits in front of a computer and then sits in front of a television screen for most of the day and night, one that uses a computer chat room and a variety of dating services because it does not have the time or energy to invest in the most basic of human interactions, a generation that cannot tolerate quiet introspection and uses the cell phone every free moment to make sure there is a connection with someone somewhere, such a generation, I fear, is in danger of losing the interpersonal sensitivity that distinguishes satire from sadism.

Finally, the gratuitous inclusion that Ali G. is a Habonim Dror alum boggles the mind. Why would we feel any delight in thinking he is a product of our youth movement. Habonim Dror inculcates the best concepts of social democracy in its members. It is serious about idealism, volunteerism, tikun olam and world peace. It was in Habonim that I was introduced to the satire of Orwell's Animal Farm and 1984. Over the years, television has given us some great political satire such as in the early sketches of Saturday Night Live. We came face-to-face with the ugliness of racism in All in the Family. Satire pricked our national conscience but never insulted our intelligence. Ali G. is an

insult to the very audience that finds brilliance in his humor. He is an ingrate that will delight in biting the hand that feeds him.

Fradie Ehrlich Kramer, New York, NY



Ali G, cover of Jewish Frontier Summer 2003

George Levy passed away at age 81 on Saturday, May 8, 2004. He was a Member-at-Large of the NY Regional Committee LZA and Chairman of the Sarah Lederman Chapter for several years.

He will be missed.

NY Region LZA mourns the passing of our beloved friend and member Roslyn Panitz

We shall all miss her.

Ben Cohen, Chariman, NY Region, LZA

Pictures from the Labor Zionist Alliance Biennial Convention, March 2004

From top left: Kenneth Bob, newly-elected president, Labor Zionist Alliance; Jeffrey Mallow, past president, Labor Zionist Alliance; Jechil and Sally Dobekirer, New York; Ethel and Martin Taft, Los Angeles; Benjamin Cohen, Chairman NYC LZA. Photography by Larry Zolotor.



Space-Age Zionism

sophisticated society and economy, the world's first space-age society. This may appear ridiculous given Israel's present development and level of popular culture, but given the stupendous scientific and technological power of the Diaspora and Israel, it is not impossible. Moreover, it is the heroic challenge, the very activity towards goal, which will answer many of our problems. Golda and others have said that we cannot compete with the United States regarding standard of living. I ask why not? Switzerland, with no natural resources whatsoever, now has a higher per capita income than the United States. What does Switzerland have that Israel does not have? True, she does not have Israel's defense budget, but she also does not have the fantastic intellectual resources of the entire Jewish people at her disposal either.

Jews are well represented in the three revolutions we mentioned earlier. If we set the space-age society as our aim, we will be able to exploit Jewish brainpower to the same if not greater extent that we have exploited Jewish financial power. In the course of our neo-pioneering struggle, we will create the tools which will allow Diaspora Jewry to contribute their abilities to the building of Israel. Israel as a space-age society must be an all-Jewish challenge. As the socio-ethical laboratory of the entire Jewish people, Israel would be the central tool for Jewish survival in fact and not only in slogan. An ever-growing number of Jews would then spend extensive periods in Israel, contributing their skills. This, in turn, would eventually result in greater aliyah and attract and absorb yordim.

Instead of bemoaning the Jewish desire for education and excellence as not answering the needs of the Israeli economy, we should use this desire to build a different kind of economy—an economy which will widen the qualitative gap between us and neighboring Arab countries, close our own social gap, absorb large numbers of Jews, and raise the standard of living and popular culture. The question is not whether the universities are suited to the needs of the economy, but whether the economy is suited to the needs, aspirations, and talents of the Jewish people. Today a

person's profession is an integral part of his personality; in many cases, asking him to leave his profession is tantamount to asking him to castrate himself. And for what? We need these very skills to build up the kind of qualitative power we need to sustain our very existence.

It is time for a neo-Zionist analysis of Jewish life as it is today. It is time for Zionists to stop wallowing in nostalgia over the admittedly powerful emotional symbols represented by the early pioneers. It is time for those honest and far-seeing Zionists to come together, verbalize their feelings, and begin to lay the ideological and organizational foundations for a space-age Zionism. What is needed now is the creation of a society or a movement for space-age Zionism. It will not be easy. Ridicule will be forthcoming in wholesale lots. Vested interests dependent on "Zionism" in inverted commas will rise up in viciously aggressive defense. And many honest but not deep-thinking and not far-seeing Zionists—people who have an emotional vested interest, as it were, in continuing to mouth classical Zionism slogans—will be truly offended by what we say.

But the task is unavoidable. Sooner or later we must undertake it. We are living in a terrible time, a time of great upheaval, a time of the evolution of conscious life from A to B. All values, concepts, secure frameworks are being blasted away, and many of us cannot take it. There is a return to that "old-time" religion in search for a secure emotional and intellectual and spiritual haven. Others of us sustain a kind of whacked-out existence and when troubled take drugs, turn on the T.V., or go shopping. But those of us who are of stronger stuff, those of us who can stare into the abyss, must pick up the gauntlet. The challenge is there. The human race must confront it or perish. In terms of the challenges of the Space Age, the Jewish people are favorites and not underdogs. No other people on the face of the earth is better prepared by virtue of education, temperament, and proven historical adaptability to face the challenge of the twenty-first century. Zionism, which presumes to be the survival ideology of the Jewish people, must take the lead. The state of Israel, as the concrete manifestation of the Zionist dream, must be the instrument—honed, oiled, and ready—which can be placed in the hands of the Jewish people to enable them to confront their awesome future. **¶**

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JOSEPH ADLER

The Magen David: History of a Symbol

hexagram, it was believed, could serve alike to conjure up demons, or to keep them at bay.

Not until the middle of the twelfth century does one hear of the hexagram as the Shield of David. The earliest literary source for this name so far discovered is in the Hebrew work *Eshkol ha Kofel* by one Judah Hadassi, a member of the Karaite sect (a Jewish movement dating back to the 8th century that rejected rabbinism and the Talmud).

However, all evidence suggests that the chief proponents among Jews of the magical attributes of the Magen David were practitioners of the *Kabbalah* (Hebrew for tradition or receiving, and the overall designation for Jewish mysticism). Among the latter were those who stressed "practical kabbalah." i.e. a form of white magic using the sacred esoteric Names of God and the angels, the manipulation of which could affect the physical no less than the spiritual world—thus, the use of The Magen David on protective amulets and talismans. Names of God and biblical texts were frequently inscribed within the triangles. On some of these medieval amulets the Seal of Solomon, the five pointed star, often accompanied by rampant lions, was substituted for the Shield of David.

The fifteenth century kabbalist Isaac Arama claimed that Psalm 67, later known as the Menorah Psalm because of its seven verses, was engraved on King David's shield. Another tradition stresses that the shield had inscribed on it the six aspects of the divine spirit enumerated in Isaiah 11:2. Still another kabbalistic interpretation regarded the Magen David as a messianic symbol because of its legendary connection with David, ancestor of the Messiah. The messianic interpretation of the Magen David also found favor among the seventeenth century followers of the false messiah Shabbetai Tzevi (1626 1676). Similarly, the famous amulets given by the Talmudic scholar and kabbalist Jonathan Eybeschutz (1690 1764) in Metz and Hamburg supposedly had on them a hexagram designated as a seal of the Messiah ben David, "seal of the God of Israel."

The first official use of the Shield of David design can be traced back to the Emperor Charles IV who in 1354 granted the Jewish community of Prague the privilege of displaying their own flag on state occasions. The banner in red and gold was emblazoned with a Magen David. The design soon began to appear in the city's synagogues, on books and other articles, as a printer's mark, and as the official seal of the Jewish community. However, aside from two tombstones (one of David Gans, the astronomer and historian), there is no other example of the Magen David being used on a grave stone prior to the eighteenth century. From Prague the symbol of the Magen David gradually spread throughout Bohemia, Moravia, Holland, Austria, and Germany and eventually to the rest of Western Europe. However, the symbol's migration eastward was much slower,

With Jewish emancipation following the French Revolution, Jews began to look for a symbol to represent themselves comparable to the Cross used by their Christian neighbors. They settled on the hexagram rather than the ancient symbol of Judaism, the Menorah. Precedent for such a choice already existed with the steadfast growth and acceptance of the design by many Jews and non-Jews alike. A few generations earlier, for example, in seventeenth century Vienna, the Jewish quarter had been separated from the Christian quarter by a boundary stone inscribed with a Cross on one side and a Shield of David on the opposite side. It was the first instance of the six pointed star being used to represent Judaism as a whole rather than an individual community. By the end of the eighteenth century the adoption of the hexagram by Jewish communities was almost complete (it had finally made its way to Eastern Europe and to Oriental Jewry), and almost every synagogue and ritual object bore the design. Indeed, by 1799 the hexagram had already appeared as a Jewish sign in anti-Semitic cartoons.

In 1822 the popularity of the Magen David reached a new pinnacle when the design was incorporated in the Rothschild family coat of arms when they were raised to nobility by the Austrian Emperor. Other prominent figures followed the Rothschild example. Thus, the famous poet Heinrich Heine, in his letters from Paris to the Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung, signed his

correspondence with a Magen David instead of his name.

Even greater impetus for the general acceptance of the Magen David as representing Jews and Judaism came with its adoption by the First Zionist Congress in 1897 as the symbol of the movement and the central motif on its flag. Theodor Herzl, the father of modern Political Zionism, also used the design on the masthead of the first issue of *Die Welt*, the Zionist movement's journal. With the growing oppression of the Jews in twentieth century Europe and the rise of anti-Semitic totalitarian states the Magen David became a beacon of hope, strength, and unity for world Jewry. The Nazis, in turn, used the Shield of David as a badge of shame. Nevertheless, like the Phoenix of fable, the Magen David has risen from the ashes of the Holocaust as a symbol of Jewish unity and identity, and as a national emblem of the State of Israel. **II**

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NORMAN BERDICHEVSKY

The Dilemma of the Israeli Arabs

Israel will lose nothing if it accepts the principle of equal rights and equal responsibilities for individuals rather than for communities. However, this does not mean comprising the "national identity" of the state with its Jewish character and symbols.

Undoubtedly there were many more educated Arab (and Druze, Circassian) individuals who could have been appointed to the post of Israeli representative at the UN or European Union than the party hacks who were selected as part of the coalition politics stemming from Israel's proportional representation system. Even among states whose religious or national-linguistic identity is represented by a dominant group such as Hindus in India, the President is a Moslem and until recently in Iraq, the Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz was a Christian.

After 50 years of procrastination, there has been one Israeli Arab appointed to the level of ambassador (to Finland) and an Israeli Druze (Walid Mansour) to Vietnam. The Arab is Adib Hassan Yihye, a lecturer at

Tel Aviv University and the National Defence College, a resident of Kfar Kara who was awarded an Israel Prize in 1986 for his work in education. He also teaches Arabic and Hebrew at Ulpan Akiva, a residential language school in Netanya that was twice nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize for its work in Jewish-Arab relations.

For those elected Israeli Arab M.K.'s (Members of Knesset) who have expressed support for the Intifada, the choice should be stark—they have not kept their pledge of loyalty to the State and must be removed from office. In spite of all the damage done, there may be some hope in following a policy that leaves no choice of sitting on the fence. National service (not necessarily military) should be legislated for the entire population and the rewards in the form of benefits for doing national service should be provided without discrimination.

Israeli-Arab Reluctance to Accept Palestinian Citizenship

Even today it may not be too late. Almost 30% of Israeli-Arabs in the Triangle Area agree to the annexation of their villages to a future Palestinian State. Put another and logical way this means that a large majority (almost three-quarters) would not exchange their Israeli citizenship for a Palestinian one. All observers agree that the percentage of Israeli Arabs who would vote in favor of a change in the border if it were a realistic choice would be much lower than those who said they would do so as a mechanism to vent their anger in a theoretical survey. The reasons are clear to most observers. Probably, a majority of Israeli Arabs still feel Israel has much more to offer them than the chaos, brutality and deprivation of all human rights that would almost certainly be the case in a Palestinian state. This is even true of the Arabs of East Jerusalem. They have held Israeli ID cards since 1967 but in spite of Israeli government efforts and pressure to convince them to seek Israeli citizenship, no more than one thousand did so for the first twenty years of occupation. Since the Oslo agreements in 1992 more than 15,000 have applied (not reported by the uninterested international media)!

The Arab-Israeli weekly, Panorama, reported only 9 percent of a cross-section of Umm al-Fahm, (the largest Arab village in Wadi Ara) residents supported the idea. The head of the Labor party's Israeli-Arab section, Ghaleb Majadla said "No one will prevent us from identifying with our people and their suffering and fighting on its behalf in legitimate ways. To the same extent, no one will take away our Israeli citizenship which is citizenship that we are entitled to and was not granted to us as a favor." Qassem Ziyad, a veteran teacher of Arabic who taught the language to thousands of Jewish students in the kibbutz educational movement, has decided to rally Arab regional leaders against any proposal for an exchange of territory with the Palestinian authority.

According to Ziyad, "There have been several generations formed of Arabs with an Israeli social and civilian identity. We are part of the social fabric of the country and that's a fact. We serve it in the most positive sense of the word. So don't tell us to go to hell." According to the Givat Haviva Institute, 58% of them said that "the events of the Intifada have estranged them from the state."

Growing criticism of the Palestinian authority, a much more clear-cut critical American position, and the eventual realization that Arafat & Company have led their brothers and cousins on the other side of the Green Line down a dead-end path will ultimately create a change in attitudes. The Arabs of Israel have legitimate grievances. It behooves Israel not to put symbolic obstacles in the path of those Arab citizens who do not identify with the enemy. This should require some attempt at finding the kind of minor compromises that foster identification with the state and lower barriers to full participation in Israeli society but without insisting on acceptance of all aspects of Jewish identity. Sponsoring a competition for Arabic words to a common anthem and replacing Hatikva (or permitting an alternative anthem) that sings of love for a common homeland would offend no one except the obtuse and obdurate. Israel must, of course, also strive to eliminate some of the major disparities in employment opportunities and municipal services to Arab towns and villages.

Many observers who are aware of the unrelenting hostility of Arab Knesset members and many

prominent figures in public life among the Israeli Arabs do not give sufficient recognition to the unabashed opportunism that characterizes the political culture prevalent in the region. This means there are no real political parties, no free press or independent judiciary—hence the expression “The Arab Street”. Questions and issues of policy are not debated. They are manifested in street demonstrations, almost always orchestrated. In stable states with strong governments, the “people” support the government. In weak states or in the case of Israel, extremist religious and political groups capable of using force, coercion and the threat of violence hold sway because they promise greater pain and punishment than the rewards offered by the government.

This should have been obvious during the recent “Iraqi Freedom” campaign. Many critics of the Bush administration bemoaned the “apparent lack” of support for American troops until it was clear from Baghdad that the regime symbolized by Saddam Hussein’s statue was gone forever. There is a residue of Arab opinion in Israel that is disaffected but afraid to speak out in any public forum against extremists who preach secession, civil disobedience or constant sympathy for the Intifada. Many Israelis who are suspicious and pessimistic of ever reaching any accommodation with the Arab minority in the country see only emigration as a “final solution”. This is short-sighted and self-defeating. It also plays into the hands of extremists. Even if many Israeli Arabs are opportunistic and blow with every change in wind, it would be a smart policy to offer a framework based on the “carrot and stick” approach. In so doing, Israel would at least be spared the accusation that it is an “Apartheid state”.

There have been attempts from responsible Arab figures in Israeli public life that should have been reciprocated more vigorously. One recent event clearly illustrates this. In February 2003, an initiative was taken by Archimandrite Emil Shofani, of the Greek Catholic church in the Galilee, who is also the principal of the Al-Mutran (St. Joseph) High School in Nazareth to help bring about Arab-Jewish reconciliation. A communiqué titled *Remembering the Pain For the Sake of Peace* called on Arab citizens of

Israel to help change prevailing sentiment and not lapse into national seclusion. It proposed a tour of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi death camp in Europe in order to “delve deeply into history and swim in the Jewish past. We wish to learn and know the suffering, difficulties, torment, and destruction... to identify with and to express, with all our strength, solidarity with the Jews.” The participants are to meet there with a delegation from France that will include Jewish and Muslim community leaders. This initiative was immediately criticized with veiled threats by “nationalist spokesmen” among Arab political parties in Israel.

Caught in the Middle

Although Israeli Arab participation in the Intifada and open expressions of disloyalty dismay many Jews in Israel, signs of loyalty and even heroism are often ignored. One recent case that made headlines was that of 17-year-old Rami Mahamid who informed police of a suicide bomber by mobile phone just in time to prevent many fatalities at the bus stop in the Arab village of Umm-el-Fahm. One policeman was killed and Rami seriously injured by fragments of the explosion. Rami was given a police citation by Brigadier General Dov Lutzky, for “saving life with great courage and initiative” and celebrated his “good citizenship.” He was originally shackled to his hospital bed until his story was checked out due to fear that he might have been an accomplice.

Rami described himself as Israeli, not Palestinian, but he spoke with some bitterness about the reality of the Arab minority in Israel. “I feel always under suspicion,” he said. “You don’t feel free in your own country.” This is the great dilemma of Israel’s Arab minority. They are under constant suspicion as disloyal. The way forward is to recognize and reward those who are loyal and make them feel that Israel is their state too.

Anyone who doubts this is unaware of how Jews and Arabs in Israeli football clubs, restaurants, garages, and the entertainment world have performed harmoniously together. The Arabs of Israel do face a dilemma that in the end only they can solve, but it must be aided by a willingness to foster their

integration. Those who elect to stay in Israel must be loyal citizens or else they will have no future. They must, however, be given encouragement and a new framework to emphasize that their status is not an ambivalent one. Most of all, recognition of loyalty should be rewarded and common citizenship stressed instead of the deterministic division of society into “Jews” and “non-Jews”. **JF**

JERRY GOODMAN

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Tikkun Olam and Building Democracy: Israel's Mission

Beyond the particular reforms sought by Mr. Netanyahu is the fact that in recent years Israelis have been subjected to a gradual erosion of services to the poor, as well as the more basic principles that built Israel's social consensus. Retirement pensions, health care and social security have all been severely cut back. More than a half million children live below the poverty line.

Thomas Paine, paraphrasing the prophets Micah and Isaiah in his *Age of Reason*, wrote “religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow creatures happy.” Israel needs to make certain that its poorest can emerge from poverty and degradation. The Jewish State was not reborn so that it can violate the social norms of a democratic and just society.

For Israel to become a deeply entrenched democracy in substance, as well as in form, democratic values need to be taught to Jewish and Arab children in all Israeli schools, and put into practice in every day life. Furthermore, Jewish residents on the West Bank and in Gaza can no longer be allowed to flaunt Israel's laws. As a minority they must no longer be allowed to dictate national policy to Israel's majority.

At the last World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem delegates reaffirmed that Israel must be Jewish and democratic. There is no dichotomy. If so, political restructuring of an awkward parliamentary process is a good beginning. Tiny, minority parties now hold an entire nation hostage in bargaining with larger parties to run the government. Greater stability needs to be

put in place so that the population will regain faith in the democratic process.

Israel is the Jewish homeland, and the land that contains the prophetic heritage of the Jewish people. It can be a light unto the nations and help repair our troubled world. But it must first begin to change and undertake the tasks needed to build a truly Jewish, democratic and just commonwealth. **JF**

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MARIE SYRKIN

Hayim Greenberg: An Introduction

human needs is productive work," and that there is nothing shameful or unethical about the economic structure of the Jewish community despite the preponderance of the middleman. At the same time he stresses the historic necessity of the Labor Zionist program:

Nor do I deny the need for a thorough re-stratification of our economic life, but this re-stratification ought not to be motivated by a sense of collective guilt.... A reshaping of Jewish economic life is a historic necessity, and it cannot be accomplished without the popular enthusiasm that Zionism generally, and Labor Zionism particularly, have aroused for these aims. There is nothing wicked in being a middleman. We are building a new nation in Palestine and we cannot succeed unless we make its economic life varied and many-sided and thereby relatively complete. It requires no effort and no propaganda on our part to create a Jewish merchant class in Palestine. But the emergence of a Jewish agricultural class cannot be a spontaneous process.

Within its historic context the glorification of manual labor had been essential.

Greenberg could accept a doctrine without becoming doctrinaire. This quality of mind often resulted in his occupying a dissenting role in the party councils he headed. In an address to the Zionist Congress held in Jerusalem in 1951 he shocked many of his Mapai

comrades by his refusal to negate the Diaspora, and by his bald assertion that mass emigration to Israel was not currently on the agenda of American Jewry, no matter how many flaming resolutions about the "ingathering-of-exiles" might be adopted by the congress. Greenberg's unpopular position was founded on a realistic appraisal of the frame of mind of American Jewry, as well as a profound appreciation of American democracy. Greenberg's love for the United States and his hopes for a rich creative Jewish communal life within its borders were strong and genuine. And while he believed that a dynamic and imaginative sector in American Jewry would have the vigor eventually to seek complete Jewish fulfillment in Israel, this meant for Greenberg no conflict in loyalties but an enrichment of personality.

With no awe for the restrictions of dogma, Greenberg could function freely within an ideological framework, and he never hesitated to alter the design according to his beliefs. His chief difficulties were created by the exigencies of Realpolitik. All his life Greenberg had fought for the creation of a Jewish state, yet as a socialist and pacifist he had always been repelled by the trappings of statehood—uniforms, protocol, and a standing army. Often he was openly critical of a specific development of this kind in Israel. At the same time he was wise and temperate enough to distinguish between minor expedients and major compromise. In fundamentals his moral insistence on the purity of the means never yielded to rationalization.

In one respect he underwent a crucial change. His pacifism, largely inspired by Gandhi, could not survive the shock of Hitler's persecutions. He never intellectually renounced pacifism as the ideal solution to the problem of war but, like many other pacifists, he found himself personally unequal to advocating pacifism after the rise of the Nazis.

Despite the originality and penetration of much of Greenberg's writing on philosophical and literary themes, there is one field in which he is pre-eminent: his writings on the nature of Judaism. Though he had long abjured outward forms and orthodoxies, Greenberg had a deep religious streak. He wrote of Jesus and of Buddha as well as of the prophets. Under the forbidding title of "The Universalism of the

Chosen People," he could analyze the nature of Jewish election with a richness of reference which elicited the admiration of theologians and a brilliance which charmed the general reading public. In an essay on the Book of Jonah, "Go to Nineveh," Greenberg summarized his conception of the Jewish ethos and man's calling:

Jewish prophecy in contrast to pagan prophecy knows no fatalism. There is no Fate within the whole Jewish concept. There is no faith in blind decrees. But there is Providence watching and listening over the world. Providence may be appealed to, may be prayed to, may be moved to do man's desire if that desire is just and pure. Jewish prophecy, therefore, is by its nature and function conditional rather than categorical. Jonah wanted to see an immutable decree in God's decision to destroy Nineveh... Therein lay his transgression. Instead of being a prophet whose prophecy would move the sinful to repent, he preferred being an oracle, a Golem, through whom spoke the blind, brutal future

One cannot pigeon-hole Greenberg as a thinker; the consistency is one of attitude. His writings reflect the continuous painstaking struggle of a sensitive and subtle spirit to discover the ethical bases of action, social or individual. As one of the chief figures of the Socialist-Zionist movement he could not afford the role of parlor commentator. He was at the center of political activity during the crucial years of the movement, and he had an astute statesmanlike grasp of the realities of a given political moment, but he always insisted on examining every issue in its fundamental moral aspects—a trait admirable in a philosopher, though not always endearing in the editor of a party publication

One might say that he was a nineteenth-century romantic born too late into a brutal time with which he was always at odds. But the formula is unimportant. What matters is the fascination of his personality and mind. The essays printed in this volume represent only a small part of Hayim Greenberg's writings. They indicate the range of his interests even if they give no concentrated view of any one field that interested him. Least satisfactorily

represented is the genre in which he excelled—the familiar essays or feuilleton, most of which were written in Yiddish. Greenberg was at his best in a form giving free play to mood and imagination. The flavor of many of these essays proved to be too delicate and elusive for adequate translation.

To explain Greenberg's moral and intellectual influence on his world something else should be noted. He was elusively more than the sum of any or all his writings, no matter how felicitous in expression or searching in thought. There are men whose written words appear to exceed them, almost as if the works had been ghost-written although the author himself was the ghost; the book overshadows the man and becomes an independent and greater entity. The reverse was true of Hayim Greenberg. Whatever field he touched on, the *said* was not his all, carefully garnered and given; the *unsaid* was even more—a deep reservoir from which he brilliantly and unexpectedly drew. He did not exhaust himself spiritually. This was especially true of the areas of his most intimate concern, the questions of religion and social ethics. Not everything had to be stated, made explicit or resolved. There was a secret treasure to be cherished, an untapped wealth of which his writings, whatever their excellence, were luminous intimations.

Perhaps this was a part of his fundamental reticence. He had deep reserves and he was willing to let these glow within rather than shine without. He believed that an idea was not necessarily best realized in the publicity of outward expression. Private contemplation was also activity. In this he was closer to Oriental quietism than to Western dynamism, and it is one of the paradoxes of his existence that a man of his temperament and intellectual bent should have been repeatedly thrust into a role of leadership in the vortex of events.

It is another paradox that Greenberg, silent and withdrawn as he often was, should have been the most eloquent of speakers. I do not refer merely to his extraordinary oratorical gifts; when he was in the vein there was none better, and he could enchant audiences without pandering to them. He was the master of an almost lost art—conversation. He merited a Boswell not for the faithful recording of epigrams or witticisms of which he was sparing but of something

rarer—literary creation with the spoken word. Nobody could tell a story like Greenberg, and by story I do not mean anecdote or joke but a reminiscence which in the telling became a finished artistic product which but for the accident of the medium would have had permanence. His hearers learned to recognize the premonitory signs. A moment of silence, a flick of the cigarette, and another one of the thousand-and-one adventures of the spirit would begin. From Dostoyevskian encounters in revolutionary Russia to bizarre and whimsical meetings in San Francisco the stories circle the globe. The hero of the tale might be a religious ecstatic, a Bolshevik commissar, an Arab scholar, or a plain "nut" but, however humorous or piquant the circumstances, he would be portrayed in a moment of moral crisis with a richness of detail that made Greenberg's "characters" intriguing realities for his friends. Some of these stories have been recorded in his "Diaries" but many of the most perfect and touching share only the eternity of their hearers. The same is true of his brilliant analyses of philosophical and political problems, of which only a small portion appears in his published work.

Greenberg was a paradoxical, ambivalent figure: a great orator who disliked the role of public tribune; a great story-teller who wrote few tales; a meditative scholar who was a political leader; a religious pacifist whom Hitler transformed into a defender of war; a man who longed to consider everything *sub specie aeternitatis* and who for years had to meet the deadline of the journalist. All these conflicts went to make up the many-faceted, sensitive being that was Hayim Greenberg. He had that rare combination of poetry and lucidity which makes a great essayist and a great teacher. **JE**

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