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ZIONISM and the ISRAELI STATE

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An analysis of the June (1967) war

It is hard for many Jews to realize or accept the fact that the central event in their contemporary ethnic lives - genocide at the hands of the Nazis - was an historical occurrence that is neither emotionally nor politically compelling for most of the earth's peoples. To feel deeply about other peoples' catastrophes is a luxury afforded only to those who are sufficiently advanced economically and astute politically to be reflective on a broad scale. While the peoples of Asia and Africa, or at least those among them who are free from the overriding concerns of day to day survival, might reasonably be expected to empathize with the victims of Hiroshima, they cannot be expected to comprehend or be shaken by the liquidation of millions of foreign people who lived in another milieu. In particular, the Jewish disaster in Europe was not a major event in the history of the Arabs -- or would not have been in the natural course of events in the Arab world.

My position on the immediate events of May and June 1967 is as follows:

1. The removal of the UN buffer forces from Egyptian territory, the movement of Egyptian troops to its own borders in Sinai, the Egyptian declaration of intent to blockade the Gulf of Aqab, and the paper agreement to put the Arab armies under a joint command were all essentially political moves, likely in response to pressures from Syria. Syria was itself under threat of attack from Israel because of border raids from Syrian territory.
2. Egypt, and certainly Jordan and Syria, had neither the intention (at least not in 1967) nor the capability of making war on Israel.
3. Israel's government and intelligence agency had prior knowledge of the Arab weakness, separately or together, and probably knew the lack of intention.
4. Israel took advantage of an extremely provocative situation and used it as an excuse to attempt to effect certain long-standing political and territorial aims.
5. Israel had recourse to other than a military response, was in no danger of extinction and knew it, and has weakened its long-range security interests by its invasion of the Arab states.

In the days before the June 5 war, it was well-publicized that Moshe Dayan, the hero of the 1956 Sinai war, was brought into the Israeli government as defense minister. It was significant enough in itself that this hard-line protégé of David Ben Gurion entered the cabinet, but a far more significant though less well-known move was the granting of two cabinet posts to the Herut party.

One would have to be versed in Zionist history to grasp the import of this event. In the 19 years of Israeli statehood, Herut had been excluded from every government. Herut is the Israeli political manifestation of the world-wide Unit United Zionist-Revisionists whose founder, Vladimir Jabotinsky, hoped to model the Jewish State along the lines of Mussolini's Corporate State. Herut is the most chauvinistic, most violently anti-Arab, anti-labor, irredentist of Israel's political groupings. Its slogan has always been 'a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan'. Its military organization before the establishment of Israel - the Irgun Zvai Leumi - carried out the massacre of the Arab village of Deir Yassin, near Jerusalem.

To give an idea of the depth of hostility between the Revisionists and the Israeli establishment, the Irgun, under its leader Menachem Beigen (who now sits in the cabinet), brought in a shipload of arms to Tel Aviv port in 1948 during the first UN truce of Israel's War of Independence. The arms were meant solely for the Irgun -- and Israel was in desperate need of arms at that time. But Ben Gurion, the provisional premier, fearing to strengthen the Irgun and concerned over the political ramifications of so open a truce violation, took the unpopular step of blowing the ship, the Altalena, out of the water. Despite the venom between the parties of the former governments and Herut (which draws about a 15% vote), Herut for the first time entered the government in the last days of May.

One of the parties in the Israeli government - Mapam, a left-wing socialist party - sent out a news bulletin to its

friends in the United States dated 1 June 1967 -- four days before the war. I quote from that bulletin (with emphasis added):

Mapam opposes changes in the makeup of the government because their practical meaning is the addition of radical groups who demand exploitation of our immediate advantage... The reason given was to exploit the existing military advantage... (We) thought it right to utilize every political action... We are for exploitation of political negotiations... A strained peace is better than war.

Knowing Mapam, its leaders and its thinking, I regard this as evidence that at least part of the Israeli government regarded the Egyptian moves as political (hence the call for a political response), that the majority in the government chose to make a military response to this political challenge, that the government knew its own strength vis-a-vis its adversaries, and knew very well the distinction between the inflammatory threats of Ahmed Skukeiry (of the Palestine Liberation Organization) and actual military capability. (Military 'advantage' is an understatement. According to James Reston in the New York Times of 28 June 1967, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff and the CIA gave Johnson a report that 'Israel would win in a few days even if the Arabs made the first major strike from the air.')

As to that part of the fifth point dealing with possible Israeli responses other than military, the 14 June 1967 Times quoted from an interview in the French weekly, Le Nouvel Observateur, with a 'high Soviet official'. Before the shooting started, according to this account, the Americans proposed to Kosygin that the US would compensate Israel for accepting a compromise on shipping in the Gulf of Aqaba and offer major assistance to Egypt and Syria while the Soviet Union would begin a parallel aid program. Kosygin is said to have regarded this favorably and as a result of the US-Russian exchange the Egyptian Vice President Mohieddine was invited to Washington. (The war began before he reached there.) The Soviet account was that during May 'Soviet intelligence was concerned over an Israeli project to push as far as Damascus and to overthrow the Syrian government.' (This view is in agreement with the following comment in the June 10 issue of the British journal The Economist: 'The Russians may justifiably have believed that Israel was getting ready to invade Syria.') Further, by this account, Nasser massed his troops on the Sinai border with full Soviet agreement but later asked for the withdrawal of UN forces and announced the blockade without the approval or even the knowledge of the Russians.

This potential compromise may well have been unsatisfactory to Israel. There were, however, other plans in the offing as well, such as bargaining off the Aqaba blockade against a settlement of the Arab refugee question, such as the proposed US and British test of the announced blockade of the Tiran Strait leading to the Gulf of Aqaba. (A detailed news analysis in the Times of 10 July confirms this.) The only point is that there were other responses possible than the military one that Israel chose.

The sequence of events concerning Syria dates back to border raids upon Israel from Syrian and Jordanian territory in late 1966. As reported in the New York Times editions of 15-17 November 1966, Israel launched a daylight assault with tanks, artillery and troops against the Jordanian villages of Es Samu and Jimba. The claim was that Syrian marauders operated out of Es Samu. (In 1956 Israel threatened retaliation against Jordan, moved troops to the Jordanian border and then turned upon Egypt. Some UN observers commented that the attack on Jordan's villages might be a maneuver to divert attention away from an all-out attack planned on Syria.) The UN truce forces reported to the Security Council that at least 125 houses, one clinic and one school were destroyed at Es Samu. This is the general pattern of Israeli retaliation -- all out of proportion to the provocation. The Security Council condemned Israel, and Goldberg said, 'Israel's raid into Jordan, the nature of which and consequences in human lives and destruction far surpassed the cumulative total of acts of terrorism against Israel's frontiers, ... was a deliberate governmental decision... a conscious act of responsible leaders... an entirely different level from the earlier incidents.' (One might wonder whether the US spokesman would have been as condemnatory had the Israeli assault been upon the territory of the leftist Syrian regime.) In the wake of these attacks Syria and Egypt coordinated military plans.

In the Times editions of 13 and 14 May 1967, Israel's prime minister Eshkol was quoted as warning that Israel would not hesitate to use air power and an Israeli observer stated that Israel 'must use force and the UAR won't come in.' The Times noted that these comments were stronger than those usually heard in responsible quarters. Eshkol further stated that 'Israel will choose the time, the place and the means to counter the aggressor.' At about this time Syria began taunting Nasser about hiding behind the skirts of the UN buffer force.

Whether or not the Soviet reports concerning Israeli intentions in Syria were correct, and whether or not the Russians and/or the Arabs believed them to be correct, the Egyptian actions can be seen as other than preparatory to an attack

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upon Israel. At best, if the reports were true or if Egypt believed them, the movement of troops would then be seen as a purely defensive action. If it is true, as reported in the September 1967 Ramparts, that Nasser was unprepared for the quick withdrawal of UN forces, then he made a gross political miscalculation. Even if the Israelis were not fully persuaded (or wished not to be persuaded) that Egypt was not about to attack, there was no doubt in Israel about the outcome should war occur. Surely the cost of war is less to the country that strikes first (provided it wins). But that is true in every such situation and thus would be a cogent argument for 'preventive' war in general. (In any case, it was incredibly stupid of the Egyptian leadership not to realize that Israel would respond exactly as it did.)

There is a myth that must be dispelled if any reasonable discussion of Middle East events is to take place. That is the 'David and Goliath' myth, the myth of 'tiny Israel', the myth of Israel's victories being attributable to 'miracles' and to the 'lack of choice' -- or 'ein brera' as Israelis are so fond of putting it. The myth has great public relations value. It brings political support, emotional support more readily. It makes fund-raising easier. It builds up an aura surrounding the state. Unfortunately, a people (or part of it) learns to believe its own mythology -- especially when some Arab sources uncleverly propagate the same myth.

But the fact is that a highly skilled, technically competent, mobile, motivated and relatively rich people is inevitably going to prevail in large-scale open warfare against a poor and backward people. This is not arguing from hindsight but from reality -- a reality made even more clear by reflecting on the impotence of Egyptian forces in Sinai in 1956 and, in more recent days, in the Yemen, a country backward even compared to Egypt.

In analyzing Israel's victory in the New York Times of 8 June 1967, the military editor, Hanson Baldwin, pointed out the central fact that 'the Arab nations are still essentially feudalistic in social structure.' This legacy of Turkish and British colonialism is in fundamental distinction to Israel's modernity based upon a population with sophisticated European skills and a level of development artificially sustained by hundreds of millions of dollars from American compatriots and German reparations. Israel has a gross national product per head of \$1366 while Egypt has a GNP per head of but \$143 and Syria and Jordan only slightly more. Baldwin continues:

Since the vaunted superiority in numbers of the Arab armies was never brought to bear on the fighting fronts, Israel probably had an over-all numerical superiority in the troops actually involved and a clear-cut superiority in firepower and mobility in the actual battles.

On the question of Arab propaganda, General E.L.M. Burns, the Canadian who commanded the UN peace force set up in 1956 and who was chief of staff of the UN Truce Supervisory Organization from 1954 to 1956, made the following comments in his book Between Arab and Israeli:

In the flood of propaganda which pours constantly out of the Cairo press and radio, there have been many threats of the direct vengeance on Israel. These have been assiduously collected and published by the Israeli Government (which) argues that what is said must therefore reflect the policy of the responsible authorities. This ignores the nature of propaganda, which is not necessarily a statement of intentions of those who control the propaganda sources, but is a mode of inducing a desired frame of mind in those who listen to it. (They) want the Arab population to believe that Egypt is implacably hostile to Israel and proposes, at some indefinite time in the future, to go to war with the object of overwhelming the Israeli state. But it is not proof that they are actually planning to do so.

Further from Burns:

Hostile propaganda has (Nasser) perpetually threatening the destruction of Israel, but in none of his speeches have I found that he has gone beyond the statement (given in) a New York Times interview of 6 October 1955 -- '...No Arab is saying now that we must destroy Israel. The Arabs are asking only that the refugees receive their natural rights to life and their lost property, which was promised to them by UN resolutions seven years ago... No, we are not aggressive. The threat is from the other side.'

And more:

Nevertheless, Egypt, if she aspired to the leadership of the Arabs, could not appear weak, could not seem to submit to Israeli threats and provocations. Therefore there had to be reactions to Israeli blows such as the Gaza raid. There had to be the appearance of inflexible hostility to Israel and a show of intention to obtain restitution for the refugees. The authorities could not be too severe on Palestinian Arab infiltrators; they might even have to devise ways in which the demands of those refugees to be armed and led against the Israelis could be channelled into forms of hostile action which seemed unlikely to bring about full-scale war.

While the ability, and perhaps the right of Israel to continue as a political nation-state may be questioned, the right of the Israeli populace to exist is elementary. Any Arab threats of annihilation of a people, no matter if they are only rhetorical pronouncements for home consumption, are outrageous and deserve unqualified condemnation. The psychological pressures operating on a people living under a barrage of ominous threats cannot be discounted. But it is the responsibility of a country's leadership to apprise its people of the true situation -- of the motivation behind Arab propaganda and of actual military strengths.

It is unilluminating to discuss the June war in isolation from all that has gone before.

Zionism and the formation of the Israeli state

To become more fundamental, the central issue in Southwest Asia is the fact that a Jewish state has been established in the Arab midst without the invitation or consent of the indigenous population. The Jewish immigration occurred, and could only have occurred, under the aegis of Western colonial rule. (The old slogan was that early Zionism was a handmaiden of British imperialism.) The creation of Israel caused almost a million Arabs to become refugees. Israel treats its remaining Arabs as an underclass. It maintains its artificially high standard of living only because of outside resources. Israel has allied itself with Western colonial and exploitative interests by its down-the-line support for the French in Algeria, by its close relations with South Africa, by its joining with British and French colonialist forces in their attempt to regain control at Suez.

If the days of United States and other Western influence and control in the Middle East are numbered, then to the extent that Israel places its hopes for survival and prosperity on Western alliances and on a Western orientation -- to that extent its aspirations are placed in jeopardy. Even those Israelis and those friends of Israel who also are supporters of American policy aims around the world and who are therefore happy about the close identification between the US and Israel, should be farsighted enough to realize the disaster that can eventually result from such close identification. Conditions in the Arab world are such as to make likely, at some point, the emergence of genuine revolutionary forces. The US response, judging from past and present experience, is not too difficult to imagine. And there is no guarantee that any US counter-revolutionary response will be successful. If Israel continues to support imperialist interests, then to Arabs and many others it will continue to be regarded as a European import into Asia, a foreign and artificial creation sharing none of the aspirations of Asians and Africans and, indeed, standing in opposition to these aspirations. Although the tremendous disparity in Arab and Jewish populations is, militarily, a total irrelevance for the present, in the long run the Arab population advantage - combined with the inevitable productivization of the Arab states - will not be at all irrelevant.

The classical Zionist position is that the existence of a Jewish state in Palestine is an interrupted event. A 2000-year exile, because of unique circumstances, has not led to the elimination of separate Jewish identity. Thus the Zionist claim on Palestine is rooted in history. Furthermore, Israel was established partially in response to a problem confronting European Jewry. There is surely no need to recount the horror of Auschwitz and Treblinka. But there may be need of remembering that the survivors of the holocaust languished in Displaced Persons camps for two to three years. Leaving aside the desirability of an independent Jewish state and the preferences of those survivors, there simply were no open doors to England and America. There was only Palestine, first illegally and dramatically in the face of the British blockade, then openly after the creation of Israel.

This does not mean, however, that in the absence of a Jewish state the survivors would still be in DP camps. It is hardly likely that French and German economic recovery would have taken place around hundreds of thousands of Jews behind fences. Once the Marshall Plan was effected the Jews would have been settled somewhere. (That would have

meant 1947-1948 -- and the DP camps were cleared only in 1948-1949 in any case.) At the same time that the US was barring its doors to all but a trickle of Jews, it was pushing, albeit reluctantly and hesitatingly, for the creation of Israel. The UN partition plan passed by one vote. Had there been just one more independent African or Asian country in the UN in November 1947 the plan would have failed. In that event, it is almost a certainty that under pressures from a large American Jewish community, from humanitarian imperatives, and from the necessity of removing the DP camps from the midst of resurging Western capitalist economies, the US would have let some Jews in and would have seen to it that England, Argentina, Brazil, etc., let the rest in. There is little doubt that many of the Jewish survivors would have opted for America. The prospect of emigrating to an unfamiliar region of Asia when their relatives and friends had come to the US by the millions must have appeared bleak to many. America was their 'promised land', not Palestine.

The obvious question is why a problem brought on by Christianity and by European fascism should be solved in an Asian context at the expense of the native population. And to speak of a 2000 year old Jewish existence as justification is to invite chaos in the world as it presently exists. The road of claims on historic territories is not the road to world peace and equality even if the historic claim is coupled with the immediate problem arising from contemporary European politics.

Jewish immigration to Palestine began in the 1800s and was given British sanction by the Balfour Declaration of 1917. The impetus for the migration was the desire for Jewish nationhood. But in the twentieth century it is no longer possible for the nationalisms of the advanced countries to be progressive. European nationalism - and Zionism is a part of it - can only be retrograde. The only healthy nationalisms are those of the colonial and recently colonial countries, and even these have many unhealthy aspects.

Jews left Europe because of pogroms, ghettoization and landlessness. Jews came to Palestine while it was under Turkish as well as British control. Zionists fall into a political spectrum. While some Zionist groups certainly were 'handmaidens of British imperialism', others were socialists who set up collective farms and advocated a bi-national state. The point is that the desire for Jewish nationhood grew out of persecution and the struggle for survival.

These, however, were European problems. Furthermore, some European Jews - Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, for example - had other solutions for Jewish existence in Europe. The vast majority of Jews who left came to America. Years later these Jewish immigrants to America furnished the means by which other European Jews bought their way into Palestine. Zionist organizations bought land from absentee landlords, but the Arab fellahs whose forebears had worked those lands for thirteen centuries were often removed.

Sometimes the purchased land was empty, but it is a rather unique event to buy a country -- even when you pay 'top dollar' for the land! The Turks and the British and the reactionary Arab landowners beholden to the colonial rulers allowed European Jews to buy a country. If the Palestinians had had a say in the matter this could never have been done. One wonders at the morality of the Zionists who thought nothing of buying the land out from under its people at the behest of colonial overlords. (It should be noted that early Zionist literature and discussion centered entirely on the question of the correct Jewish path. If there was any appreciation by the Zionist theoreticians that human beings already lived in Palestine it was well hidden. Even the left-wing socialist-Zionist Ber Borochov in his 'Nationalism and the Class Struggle' contented himself with the sole observation that 'normal relations between the Jews and Arabs will and must prevail', while his editor added the remark that 'the Jewish colonists were harassed by Arab thieves and murderers'.)

Some Zionists were West European Jewish capitalists engaging in business ventures with manpower often supplied by impoverished East European Jews. Some focused on the solution of Jewish problems to the exclusion of all else. Some argued that the Arabs had let their land rot for centuries and that therefore the Jews had a right to try their hand. Some Zionists justified their position by contending that the Jews would incidentally raise the level of Arab life. And some sincerely hoped to cooperate with the Arabs in Jewish-Arab fraternity.

Had the question been only that of a haven, the ideal solution would have been for the Arabs to grant permission for Jews and anyone else to enter Palestine contingent only on the absorptive capacity of the land. Jews would then have lived as and alongside the Arab inhabitants, not at their expense. Such generosity might more reasonably be expected from a vast and wealthy country like Canada which can absorb millions of additional people and which is not in the midst of the type of struggle to establish its national identity after centuries of colonial domination as is the Arab world. (Of interest in this connection is the Evian Conference on refugees called by President Roosevelt in July 1948. Canada was among the 31 nations represented at Evian, refused to be committed and, in the event, allowed in precious few

exiles. The other participants pledged token immigration or none at all -- with the exception of the Dominican Republic which, to everyone's incredulity, offered to receive 100,000 Jews from Germany and Austria provided that settlement expenses did not fall on itself. The Zionist leadership showed no enthusiasm for the Dominican offer nor for the whole Evian enterprise -- for obvious reasons.)

The Palestinian Arabs, being under colonial domination, were in no position to offer haven even had they been so inclined. The pressing problems of European Jewry did not await the passing of colonialism.

The bearing of Jewish history

To go back even further, the history of Jewish Palestine ended in the year 135 with the destruction and ploughing up of the site of Jerusalem by the Romans. Jews spread themselves over most of the rest of the world and only a few thousand remained in Palestine. For 500 years Palestine remained under Roman and Byzantine rule.

The history of Arab Palestine began in the seventh century when the Arab peoples left the Arabian desert and occupied Syria (of which Palestine was a part), Iraq, Persia, Egypt, the whole length of the North African coast, Spain, and the entire Mediterranean seaboard. Arab sea power commanded the Indian Ocean and contested for command of the Mediterranean. Arab trade extended from Spain to Zanzibar and beyond to India and China. Arab universities were the world's centers of learning while Central and Northern Europe remained in the Dark Ages.

In the eleventh century the Arab states were invaded by the Seljuck Turks. Then came the Crusaders from Christian Europe who ruled, off and on, for 200 years. The next 200 years saw Palestine revert to Moslem rule under the Mamluk dynasty in Egypt, during which period it, with Syria, was subjected to the devastating Mongol raids of Halagu and Tamerlane. In 1517 Palestine, Syria, and Egypt were conquered by the Ottoman Turks and in the hands of the Ottoman Sultans at Constantinople they remained, except for the few months of Napoleon's invasion and the few years of Mohammed Ali's occupation, until World War I.

Conquered, neglected and poor, Palestine remained the home of the Arabs who had lived in it for 1300 years.

Jewish history, meantime, had ceased to be the history of Palestine. About 700 years before the disaster of 135, a large and prosperous Jewish community grew up in Iraq (Mesopotamia). The Iraqi Jews maintained communal autonomy and shared in the great days of the Arab Caliphate at Baghdad until the eleventh century. In Egypt there was a flourishing Jewish community, completely Hellenized, active in all fields of Egyptian life, rising to high posts in the army and administration, participating in the cultural achievements of Alexandria. From 135 on, successive waves of Jewish emigration went into Syria, the Yemen, Greece and Italy.

It was in Spain that Jewish life attained its highest point since the loss of Palestine. Rural life as well as urban was open to the Jews. When Arab Spain led the world, Jews were viziers to the Caliph, diplomats, financiers, scientists, physicians, scholars. There was a great revival of Hebrew literature and learning. Moses Maimonides (1135-1204), born in Cordova and later residing in Cairo, was considered the greatest scholar of his age. Spanish Jews, like the Egyptian, assimilated in everything but religion. They spoke Arabic, took Arabic names, adopted Arab ways.

The era of persecution of Jews began not in the Moslem but in the Christian world.

By the beginning of the 13th century, the Crusaders drove the Arabs out of Spain (except Granada). Jews who had migrated to England, France and Germany were expropriated, massacred, and finally expelled. In 1492 the Inquisition expelled all Jews who refused conversion to Christianity. Jews went to Turkey, to the Balkans, to Salonika, to Central Europe where they were kept rigidly apart from Christians, confined to ghettos, obliged to wear yellow badges. More than half the world's Jews eventually were expelled to the eastern fringes of Europe -- Lithuania, Poland and Hungary. This region fell, by the mid-17th century, first to Cossack and then to Russian conquest. A territorial ghetto - the 'Pale of Settlement' - was established from the Baltic north of Warsaw to the Black Sea near Odessa to keep Jews from per-

meating Russia. Throughout this area the urban ghetto system was imposed.

Jews had been reduced from perhaps four million in the early days of the dispersion to about one and a half million by 1700. The ghetto system made the 'peculiar people' more peculiar. Separated from the land in feudal Europe where the populations were mainly on the land, the gulf between Jews and the native inhabitants widened. Herded together within ghetto gates, the Jews clung passionately to their tradition, ceremonies and customs -- and now to their artisan and mercantile urban occupational tasks.

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic era brought emancipation to Western European Jews. But pogroms in Eastern Europe and anti-Semitism in West Europe (dramatized by the Dreyfus Case) led to a Jewish migration to America. (Something like 4.5 million Jews came to the United States between 1870 and 1930.) These causes also led to Zionism.

Early Jewish immigration to Palestine

The few thousand Jews who had always lived in Palestine spoke Arabic only, and there was no apparent schism between them and the Moslem and Christian peasants among whom they lived. They were equally exposed to marauding tribesmen from the Lebanon and from across the Jordan. By the middle 1800s there were not more than 12,000 Jews in Palestine.

The bulk of European Jewish refugees went westward, but a minority made its way to Palestine. Zionism originated in Russia but was backed by Western Jewry. In 1860 the Alliance Israelite Universelle was founded in France for the assistance of persecuted Jews and some years later it opened an agricultural school near Jaffa. A similar Anglo-Jewish Association was created in 1871. But the most effective aid to the settlement of Jews in Palestine was rendered by Baron Edmond de Rothschild who between 1883 and 1900 made himself responsible for a group of seven pioneer colonies and established a fund for maintaining and extending the process of colonization. As a result the Jews in Palestine grew from about 25,000 in 1881 to more than 80,000 in 1914. Most of them settled in Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa and their suburbs but nearly 12,000 were on the land, distributed among 43 colonies.

There was a difference between the newcomers and the old Jewish residents in Palestine -- a difference which was to become more marked in later years. The old residents, especially in the 'holy cities' of Hebron, Safed and Tiberias, had long since adapted themselves to life among the Arabs. But the new immigrants brought with them a new idea. They were not going to merge themselves in the life of Palestine as they found it. They were going to make a distinct life of their own, to build up a Jewish society and to make it the vehicle of a revival of Jewish culture and the Hebrew language.

Zionism entered the field of practical politics when in 1897 Theodor Herzl, a Viennese playwright and journalist, spurred to action by the Dreyfus Case, convened a congress of world Jewry at Basle and founded the Zionist organization. As its first President he set himself to obtain a charter for Jewish colonization in Palestine from the Sultan of Turkey. But as the Turks disliked the increase in Jewish immigration, Herzl realized the necessity of obtaining the backing of a powerful European government, and for that he turned to England. The idea of re-establishing the Jews in Palestine had attracted more attention in England than elsewhere. As early as 1840 Lord Shaftesbury had proposed a scheme of Jewish colonization as a means of utilizing the 'wealth and industry of the Jewish people for the economic development of a backward area.' (It might be surmised that another motivation was to rid England of Jews.)

In the critical days of World War I, England issued the Balfour Declaration (stating sympathy for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine) in order to enlist Jewish support, particularly in the US, for the Allies. About two years earlier in a series of documents called the McMahon Correspondence the British committed themselves to recognize Arab independence in the entire Middle Eastern area then ruled by the Ottoman empire excepting Lebanon, the northern coast of Syria, and certain areas in southern Arabia. In exchange for this pledge the Arabs, under the leadership of Sharif Husain, revolted against Ottoman rule and assisted the British military effort in the Middle East. The Arabs had every reason to include Palestine within the area of Arab independence defined by the McMahon Correspondence. Such an interpretation was further confirmed by the Declaration to the Seven issued by the British Government in 1918.

The effect of Jewish immigration on Palestine

The British Palestine Royal Commission Report of 1937 showed considerable insight into Jewish immigration to Palestine:

If the Jews had come to Palestine willing to fuse their life and culture with Arab life and culture, to accept the language of the majority, to contemplate the possibility of being some day ruled by that majority, then it is conceivable that they might have been as welcome and successful in Palestine as their ancestors in Iraq or Egypt or Spain in the early days of the Diaspora. But it would have been wholly unreasonable to expect such an attitude on their part. It would have been the direct negation of Zionism, both on its social or political and on its cultural side. The Zionists came back to Palestine, on the one hand, to escape from an alien environment, to shake off the shadow of the ghetto, to free themselves from all the drawbacks of 'minority life'. On the other hand, they came back inspired with the faith that the Jewish genius, restored to its old home, could do things comparable with the things it had done in ancient days. Necessarily Hebrew had to be the language; necessarily Jewish nationalism was intensified by the foundation of the National Home. Enlightened immigrants might take a highly sympathetic interest in Arab life and culture but there could be no question of a Jewish fusion or assimilation with it, still less of a subordination.

In pre-war (World War I) days the Jews in Palestine had formed an unobtrusive minority; individually many of them were dependent on charity for their living while many of the remainder - in particular the colonists - brought direct and obvious material benefits to the inhabitants of the area in which they settled. The Jewish immigrant of the post-war period, on the other hand, is a person of greater energy and initiative. He represents a movement created by an important international organization supported by funds which, judged by Arab standards, seem inexhaustible. To the Arabs it must appear improbable that such competitors will in years to come be content to share the country with them. These fears have been intensified by the more extreme statements of Zionist policy and the Arabs have come to see in the Jewish immigrant not only a menace to their livelihood but a possible overlord of the future.

Though Jewish immigration and enterprise have been of great advantage to Palestine, the direct benefit to individual Arabs, which alone is likely to be appreciated, has been small, almost negligible, by comparison with what it might have been had the pre-war methods of settlement been continued. When trade depression and unemployment followed the period of heavy immigration the indirect benefits which Jewish activities had brought to many parts of Palestine were forgotten and everywhere among the Arab people the Zionist movement was regarded as the cause of the economic problems of the country. The sale of the Sursock lands and other Jewish land purchases in districts where the soil is most productive were regarded as showing that the immigrants would not be content to occupy undeveloped areas and that economic pressure upon the Arab population was likely to increase. In other words, those consequences of Jewish enterprise which have most closely affected the Arab people have been such that the Arab leaders could use them as the means of impressing upon their followers that a continuance of Jewish immigration and land purchases could have no other result than that the Arabs would in time be deprived of their livelihood and that they, and their country, might ultimately come under the political domination of the Jews.

The 1937 Commission Report continues:

The Arab peasant has at present neither the capital nor the education necessary for intensive cultivation. The Jew has. But the lack of these two essential requisites does not justify the expropriation of the Arab to make room for the richer and more enterprising colonist, even though the Arab's conservative methods, and in some cases his system of land tenure, may delay development... The Palestine Government are confronted with the prospect of repetitions of the situation now existing at Wadi el Hawareth and of further calls upon the police to carry out evictions of large bodies of Arab cultivators with no alternative land to which they can be moved or upon which they can settle. In the past, persons dispossessed have in many cases been absorbed in the neighbouring villages; this process, though it may have been possible four or five years ago, is no longer possible today; the point of absorption has been reached. The plain facts of the case are that there is no further land available which can be occupied by new immigrants without displacing the present population. (This, note well, is in 1937!)

The Commission Report brings out a number of additional facts worth noting. Although Jews constituted less than 8% of the agricultural population they possessed almost 50% of the best agricultural land. As of 1930, 30% of the 86,980

Arab rural families were landless. Although some families were presumably landless prior to the post World War I Jewish immigration, these figures suggest that pauperization of the indigenous population was a major consequence of the influx.

The Hope Simpson Royal Report of 1930, while indicating that Arab unemployment was 'serious and widespread' and that it is 'wrong that a Jew from Poland, Lithuania or the Yemen should be admitted to fill an existing vacancy while in Palestine there are Arab workmen capable of filling that vacancy who are unable to find employment,' added an interesting rider to its judgment:

Jewish capital will not be brought into Palestine in order to employ Arab labour. It will come in with the definite object of the employment of Jewish labour and not otherwise. The principle of 'derived demand' would justify the immigration of Jewish labour even when there are Arab unemployed in the country if the newly-imported Jewish labour is assured of work of a permanent nature, through the introduction of Jewish capital to provide the work on which that labour is to be employed. It is clearly of no advantage to the unemployed Arab that Jewish capital should be prevented from entering the country, and he is in no worse position by the importation of Jewish labour to do work in Palestine for which the funds are available by the simultaneous importation of Jewish capital. In fact, he is better off, as the expenditure of that capital on wages to Jewish workmen will cause, ultimately, a demand for the services of a portion of the Arab unemployed. (With a little patience the Arabs could hope to become shoeshine boys in their own land.)

Nonetheless, on the basis of this report, the Colonial Secretary, Sydney Webb, issued a White Paper calling for an ultimate ceiling of 100,000 additional immigrants, only 50,000 of them to be Jewish. Under Zionist pressure, Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald repudiated the White Paper in 1931.

With all its insight, the conclusion of the 1937 Report was of a typical colonialist nature:

The Arab charge that the Jews have obtained too large a proportion of good land cannot be maintained. Much of the land now carrying orange groves was sand dunes or swamp and uncultivated when it was purchased. Though today, in the light of experience gained by Jewish energy and enterprise, the Arabs may denounce the vendors and regret the alienation of the land, there was at the time at least of the earlier sales little evidence that the owners possessed either the resources or training needed to develop the land.

(A similar case could be made for white settlers in Africa or, for that matter, for a group of 'enterprising' Iowa farmers who might today set out and intensively cultivate backward regions of Mexico and thereby claim political hegemony.)

Paths toward the future

But what about the present and the future? Is Israel now legitimate and how is legitimacy established? Is the United States legitimate after several hundred years (because no-one challenges its legitimacy) and Israel not so after 20 years? (It is not possible to equate a 20 year old claim of Arab refugees from Palestine with a 2000 year old Jewish irredentism -- in the former case the perpetrators of eviction are still alive and the victims still unsettled.)

Did the UN partition decision - voted with US and Soviet support but with few African and Asian nations yet in membership - establish Israel's legitimacy? How does one compare that decision with, for example, the Geneva decision on Indo-China? And how does the UN partition decision, motivated largely by the problem of the Jews in the European DP camps, jibe with an earlier resolution unanimously adopted by the UN General Assembly to the effect 'that the settlement of displaced persons should not be undertaken in any Non-Self Governing Territory without the consent of the population of that territory'?

Can Israel survive indefinitely in the Arab world by force of arms and with the help of big powers? To show how transitory such dependence on big-power support is, it is only necessary to recall the positions of the French government in 1956 and in 1967. Is Israel's situation fundamentally different from that of the whites in Rhodesia, Angola, South Africa and, formerly, Algeria?

It may seem absurd to speculate about possible ways for Israel to guarantee its long-range survival while its armies sit

throughout the Arab world in complete mastery. Yet Israel's eventual survival is by no means assured, even if it should prove able to force peace treaties upon some of the present Arab regimes in their weakened conditions. It is possible for an advanced small people to dominate its much larger neighbors for a good long time. But not forever and not even with nuclear weapons -- a weaponry to which Israel is much more vulnerable than her adversaries. Eventually Arab numbers will tell. The Arab nations are certainly going to develop economically. According to the Economist of 10 June 1967: 'Egypt has a reasonable future. It has got oil and the Aswan dam is nearing completion. Its rate of growth is likely to accelerate (indeed its rapidly mounting food deficits are one sign of an industrializing society). A large part of its imports are capital goods.'

Israel can become a garrison state, nurturing only martial values in its people, and attempt always to stay stronger than the Arab states. Israel can hope that as the Arab states develop they will become progressively less hostile to the Jewish state (although I have never heard anything other than unpersuasive hypotheses as to why this should be expected to occur in the absence of any fundamental changes on Israel's part). Thus this hope may be futile and Israel may one day face inundation or migration out of Asia.

I take the position that the creation of Israel was an injustice perpetrated against the native Arab population of Palestine and that the policies of Zionism and of Israel have been largely reprehensible. At the same time I regard the Ottoman Turks and the British as the chief criminals for imposing themselves as rulers of the Palestinian people and for opening up the Palestinian lands to permanent settlement by another foreign people. It is very difficult, though, to fully condemn Zionist designs upon Palestine. The incredible Jewish suffering in Christian Europe culminating in the Hitlerian climax, must serve as explanation if not as justification. Because of the dynamics of this unique catastrophe, Zionist colonization of Palestine must be viewed in a different context than the conquests and colonizations of Africa by settlers from the European imperialist countries, no matter how similar in character they appear.

Thus the Jews of Israel, at least some of whose roots go back 90 years in Palestine -- not 2000 years -- should have a right to survival in their present land. This does not necessarily mean that Jewish political statehood must be assured. Nor does it mean that Jews outside of Israel should be regarded as exiles who may acquire automatic Israeli citizenship upon request. I believe that Israel should carry out policies that will one day make feasible some sort of a federated existence in the Arab region.

What is to be done?

There remains the complicated question of how Israel, as a state, can act so as to bring about the eventual federation which I regard as the best, if not the only possibility for long-term peace.

The steps proposed below have been thought out in terms of Israel's situation prior to the June 5 war. The territorial, refugee, political and psychological consequences of this war make an analysis much more complex. Nevertheless, the proposals will remain valid in broad outline whatever the immediate outcome.

A significant step would be reorientation of Israeli diplomacy in the world beyond the Arab region. Israel's voting record in the UN is often, although not always, more like that of a Latin American client state than of an independent Asian nation -- note, for example, its 1967 vote against Peking's admission to the UN. Israel must disavow such pro-colonialist policies and actions as previously mentioned and must, instead, use as a model its successful diplomacy with Ghana and Burma.

What might continuation of the policy of the 'ingathering of the exiles' eventually mean? Ben Gurion told the Israeli parliament (22 October 1967): 'This country was not meant solely for its inhabitants but for every Jew throughout the world.' This idea of unlimited Jewish immigration is a fundamental part of the elan of Zionism. Arabs fear that unlimited immigration into Israel will build up population pressures that will call for expansion beyond Israel's (June 5th) boundaries. Such expansion is the policy of Herut, as mentioned, and sometimes of the Ahdut Ha-avoda and General Zionist parties. As of now the big sources of potential Jewish immigration (Russia and the US) seem unproductive. But there were hints in Israel, in the last months before the war, about the possibility of a Soviet relaxation of its emigration policy towards Jews. It is not certain what might happen in the years ahead. Where, outside of the newly-occupied lands, would a large new wave of immigrants be settled? According to the Times of 10 February 1958:

If and when Jordan River water becomes available, it is hoped that an additional 250,000 acres can be tilled. Much of this lies in the zone a few miles south of Beersheba. It will be expensive to farm it and

difficult to live in it. Beyond this area are many miles of the Negev, but they are true desert, and all the water in the world would not help.

(It might be wondered what would have happened if the Palestinian Arabs had not left, or were not driven out, in 1948. How would the present Jews have been accommodated?) After projecting the 1958 Israeli population figures to 1965, General Burns states:

This in itself would not produce irresistible pressure for an adventure to increase Israel's Lebensraum. But if, combined with population increase, it were not possible for the present standard of living to be maintained, then a mood for military adventure might develop.

This question of living standard is vital. The Israeli living standard is very high - akin to much of Western Europe - and sustained artificially from abroad. This abnormally high living standard separates Israel from her neighbors. (It is 'abnormal' in that the resources of that Levantine part of the world cannot presently support such a standard.) Today the artificial level of life is maintained primarily by American Jewish wealth, which leads directly to the question of Israel's political orientation. How can Israel offend the nation of its benefactors?

Nevertheless, Israel's long-range interests require that it consciously bring its standard of living more nearly into line with its resources and its natural trading outlets. This means, again, building for the day of normal relations with the Arabs. Although it is difficult for a people to reduce its living standard, even gradually, it is in this case a worthwhile sacrifice for real political independence and long-range security. Such a gradual reduction is certainly preferable to the quick and drastic reduction in living standards that would surely occur should America or American Jews lose interest in Israel. An Israeli political reorientation could produce just such a loss of interest.

(The prospective trend, unfortunately, is not towards normal relations with Arabs. Foreign Minister Eban in his book Voice of Israel states:

What we aspire to is not the relationship which exists between Lebanon and Syria... (but) to the relationship between the United States and the Latin American continent... of economic interaction, but across a frankly confessed gulf of historic, cultural, and linguistic differences... Integration is something to be avoided... (There) is the danger lest the (Oriental immigrants) force Israel to equalize its cultural level with that of the neighboring world... (We) should infuse them with an Occidental spirit, rather than allow them to draw us into an unnatural Orientalism.)

I question the right of Israel to pursue a policy of open immigration for all the world's Jews while Palestinian Arabs remain displaced. (I refer here to the old refugees.) The Arab exodus began because there was no quasi-government in the Palestine Arab community, no organized Arab body to manage essential services, because the few Arab national figures had left, because there was no longer an Arab press, no authoritative voice to inspire confidence or to check fear (in those cases where fear was not warranted). Neither the British nor the UN provided the conditions for implementing the UN-established independent Palestinian Arab state.

The exodus was given great impetus by the Irgun massacre of the Arab village of Deir Yassin, by atrocities perpetrated by the official Jewish army, the Haganah, upon the villages of Khissas and Sasa, and by Zionist 'urgings' and 'encouragements' to flee in the Arab towns of Lydda and Ramle and the villages east of Tel Aviv -- 'urgings' of the kind that the New York Times has described in occupied Jordan in 1967. There were, of course, Arab outrages against Jews such as the Hadassah Hospital ambush near Jerusalem, let alone anti-Jewish riots in such distant places as Damascus, Baghdad and Aden. But the question here is the flight of the Arabs. While the Jewish leadership did not give much publicity to Arab atrocities, the Arab radio dwelt on and exaggerated the incidents of Jewish atrocities. Instead of inflaming the Arab masses, this increased their readiness to take to flight.

Thus the flight carried away nearly the whole of the Arab community from the partitioned Jewish state, and Trans-Jordan took over what was left of the partitioned Arab state after Israel had won its new boundaries. (The myth that the only Zionist atrocity was that of Deir Yassin was dispelled by the French writer Rony Gabbay in his A Political Study of the Arab-Jewish Conflict (1959); just as the myth of Arab radios urging the exodus was disposed of by I. F. Stone in the 3 August 1967 New York Review of Books on the basis of broadcast monitorings. Both myths are dealt with in the 1965 work Crossroads to Israel by Christopher Sykes.)

Whatever the reasons for their flight, the Palestinian Arabs are entitled to their former homes. (And what can be said

of Israel's treatment of those Arabs who stayed -- the 'good Arabs' by Israeli reckoning!).

Writers sympathetic to Israel (Peretz, Ellis) attest to the fact that Israel's position has become increasingly inflexible on the question of repatriation, even on a token scale. In 1949 the UN obtained a promise from Israel to permit the return of 100,000 of the refugees but the promise was withdrawn shortly thereafter.

Israel should accept, in principle, the right of the Palestinian Arabs, and their offspring, to return to their lands. The practical application of such a policy is another matter, but the principle is vital. It is gross arrogance to urge settling the refugees in other Arab countries against their will by arguing that they would be 'among their own'. The primary attachment of many an Arab peasant is to his village, to his home, not to a political label called 'Palestine' or 'Iraq'. His further identification may be with a familiar region, and only then to a national state. This argument would be akin to telling a displaced Argentinian peasant to settle in Venezuela since both peoples speak Spanish.

The refugee question is tied in closely with the issue of Arab border raids and Israeli reprisals. The terror raids of the Fedayeen in 1955 and 1956 and the more recent al Fatah terror activities are well known, as are such Israeli actions as the shelling of the Gaza marketplace and the destruction of the Arab villages of Kibya and es Samu. It is less well known that human tragedy lay at the root of many acts of infiltration.

Harry Ellis, in his 1957 book Israel and the Middle East, recounts the story of the Jordanian village of Qalqilya. The 1948 armistice found Qalqilya cut off from its lands, its only source of livelihood. In July 1950 the Jewish Kibbutz Nir Eliahu was set up on Qalqilya's lands. Perhaps more raids were made from Qalqilya than from any other spot surrounding Israel. Ellis describes the poverty, the disease, the swarming flies, the despair of Qalqilya and goes on:

Those pillars marked the boundary between Jordan and Israel, and those fields of dull green olive groves and the brighter green of orange trees, wherein lay the former livelihood of Qalqilya, now belonged to Israelites, the farmers of Nir Eliahu... Impoverished and embittered by the loss of their fields, many of the men of Qalqilya had taken to infiltrating across the border, at first to steal fruit from their own fields, later, as the weary months dragged on, to commit sabotage and in some cases - though they would not say this - to kill. I spoke to one villager who had crossed the border with his 17 year old son. The son was killed, and the father made it back with a small cache of oranges. One week later, when the flour bought with the oranges was gone, the father went back to Israel. He was shot in the legs and crawled back to Qalqilya. He vowed to me that he would cross the border again as soon as he was well. To these men, the police of Jordan and the soldiers of the Arab Legion were enemies second only to the Israelis. The government of Jordan had clamped down hard on infiltrators, seeking to halt the Israeli reprisal raids which infiltration brought. Thus infiltration had been made a crime by Jordan, punishable by prison terms up to three years, and dozens of Qalqilyans had been arrested by Jordanian police and soldiers.

It would have been humane for Israel to return Qalqilya's lands after the 1948 fighting. Failing to do that, Israel also failed to deal with the underlying dynamics of the infiltrations and failed to recognize the role of responsible Jordanian authority in trying to stop the incursions. Israel responded, as it has time and again in other similar situations, with systematic large-scale reprisal attacks for the purpose of 'teaching them a lesson'. That the lesson is never learned in no way leads these single-minded Israeli teachers to revise their teaching methods.

With regard to refugees of the recent conflict, the New York Times of 12 June 1967 reported:

There seems to be little doubt that the 60,000 inhabitants of the three big United Nations camps around Jericho were attacked by planes on the second day of the fighting... Senior UN officials believe that a pattern of expulsion is emerging. They say the Israelis appear to be concentrating on pushing out inhabitants of such frontier villages as Qalqilya and Tulkarm as well as the inhabitants of the big refugee camps... Israeli loudspeakers warned the inhabitants, 'You have two hours to leave. After that we can not guarantee your safety.'

On 23 June the Times stated:

Israeli Army officials acknowledged that 40% of the buildings of Qalqilya had been destroyed... Requests by newsmen to visit Qalqilya were refused... 'Qalqilya is dead,' the Israeli Army spokesman said.

The 29 June Times contained an article (very sad and moving to anyone who regards Arabs as human beings) titled 'Despairing Arabs Return to a Ruined Qalqilya'. It quoted an announcement by General Dayan that 'at least 50% of the buildings had been destroyed'. The article continued:

The destruction far exceeds that in any other town on any of the three fronts of the war... The Mayor was taken to the city hall (by an Israeli colonel) for what was described as a news conference. Despite protests from the press, the colonel insisted on answering himself most of the questions put to the Mayor. The colonel (at last was persuaded to permit) two questions to be answered (directly), but he balked when the Mayor was asked whether there had been any damage to the town after the fighting was over. 'You may not ask that question,' the colonel said. 'The Mayor is busy. This is the end of the press conference.' A howl of protest rose from the correspondents, and after several minutes of noisy confusion the question was put to the Mayor. Mr. Sabri listened, smiled diplomatically at the colonel and replied with a single word, 'Some'... Many residents took one look at their shattered homes and then wandered dispiritedly back to the center of the town, where the Israelis were distributing water and bread.

This, then, was the resolution of Qalqilya. But it is pathological to think that peace can be built on these terms, or on the terms of Dayan's theory of reprisals as reported by Burns:

We can set a high price for our blood... If the Egyptians did not declare war after the Gaza clash, or the Jordanians after Nahhalin, it is an indication that they and the other Arab countries were unable to defeat Israel.

This is simply begging for a war should the day come when the Arabs can defeat Israel. Burns comments:

With such a man (Dayan) at its head, offensive spirit was rife in the Israeli Army... Every act of violence had to be repaid... with heavy interest. The result was that the Israeli Defense Forces were a very fine fighting organization, but one which was always looking for trouble, from the viewpoint of the UN Truce Supervisory Organization.

The reprisal policy is poorly calculated to bring peace. It is seldom reprisal in kind. Generally the reprisal vastly exceeds the transgression which occasioned it, and never gains for long the desired results. Often the reprisals have followed incidents that were a consequence of direct provocation by Israel -- such as patrolling right up to the Gaza Strip Demarcation Line; such as marching a company straight towards the Jordan Demarcation Line leading the Arab Legion to think themselves under attack and thus to open fire; such as setting up the fake Kibbutz Ketsiot in the demilitarized zone of the Negev which the Mixed Armistice Commission later discovered to be entirely a unit of the Israeli Army; such as the 1954 Israeli intelligence operation in Cairo which resulted, among other things, in the bombing of a theater, a trial and execution, and the removal of Israel's defense minister, Pinchas Lavon, a protege of Ben Gurion.

It is important to understand that Israel's general stance at any given moment determines in considerable measure the Arab stance. Under the hard, unyielding leadership of Ben Gurion, the borders were in constant turmoil. But under Moshe Sharett, and even under Eshkol for a good part of his prime-ministership, the borders were relatively quiet. It was the famous 'Lavon Affair' that dealt the death blow to the Sharett government and all the promise of conciliation that died with it. In the wake of the outcry over the execution of the Israeli agents in Egypt, Ben Gurion came back as Defense Minister (and re-assumed the premiership after the impending elections) and a large scale 'retaliation' assault under Gaza was launched. Only after the Gaza attack did Nasser organize the Fedayeen and negotiate the first arms deal with the Soviet Union.

To condemn the reprisal policy is not to applaud the raids and, at times, murders committed in Israel by infiltrators. But the actions of, say, a Qalqilya villager can be put in context and viewed with some understanding of their motivation (just as the motivation for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine can be appreciated). What can be said of the Qalqilya villagers can also be said of the Fedayeen. While the Israelis called them 'cutthroats and murderers' the Arabs called them 'commandos'. The meaning of the Arab word 'Fedayeen' is 'a participant in forlorn hopes, a person ready to give his life for his companions'. Certainly the Fedayeen did cutthroat activity of a revolting nature. But they were Palestinian Arabs with a burning sense of having suffered injustice at Israeli hands. I believe that anyone who passes judgment upon them must examine his attitude toward the American Indian, the Mau Mau, the Algerian rebels and countless guerrilla forces past and present.

ON ISRAELI ATTITUDES

The essential point is that the problem of border incursions cannot be solved without tackling all the other problems that grew out of Israel's establishment. Today the general Israeli attitude is not one likely to find many solutions. There exists an Israeli arrogance, nurtured by the successful campaigns of 1948, 1956 and 1967, which produces an inability to see that Israel should yield anything for peace. It is this attitude which on two occasions has tempted Israel to seize upon provocations and go to war in an attempt to force a settlement on its own terms -- terms that would liquidate boycotts, blockades and border violations without coming to grips with the unresolved and fundamental aspects of the conflict. It is this attitude that allowed its army to act in a way described by Charles Mohr in the 18 June 1967 Times:

It was possible to see the bodies of several hundred Egyptian soldiers along the roads. Most of them were cut down by strafing Israeli jet planes. Many had thrown away their helmets, their weapons and even their shoes as they abandoned their ruined vehicles and tried to flee westward... Much of this destruction was done after the army had become a fleeing mob lacking discipline or the means to defend itself.

(This is not to say that the Israeli army acted in an unusually cruel manner or even approached the outrages of some contemporary armies -- it employed what is probably the usual cruelty in combat and, with the exception of the early weeks, the Israeli army is apparently a more benign occupation force than most.)

Symptomatic of the Israeli attitude after the recent war was the speech given by Abba Eban at the 'Stars for Israel' rally in New York:

We feel that we have fought and won this battle not for ourselves in Israel alone but for Jewry everywhere, and in some small measure, perhaps for the vindication and reassertion of Western democracy.

The meaning of such 'reassertions' requires no explanation in contemporary Vietnam or Santo Domingo.

The fact that foreign colonizers establish certain democratic structures is completely irrelevant to the question of the indigenous people's rights. The communal nature of the Israeli kibbutz and Israel's tolerance of Communist parties (one Arab, one Jewish) neither reflect the essence of power in Israel nor, more importantly, do they serve as measuring rods for an appraisal of Middle East realities. The reactionary nature of most of the present Arab regimes is also irrelevant. What is bound to be on the agenda in that part of the world is the question of ending imperialist control, of preventing its re-establishment, of the development and productivization of the Arab peoples through their utilization of their own resources and talents. The crucial question for Israel is how it positions itself in relation to these struggles.

It may well be that the price of the continued existence of a state that was born unnaturally is extreme patience in the face of threats and provocations, and great political skill in the face of hostility. It is an historic sorrow that such difficult efforts should be required of the Jews, of all people. It was with great emotion and deep feelings (which I shared) that the survivors of the European horror viewed the birth of Israel only three years later. But only such patience and skill can possibly lead to the survival of a Jewish community in Southwest Asia.

