



# THE LINK

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## AMERICAN JEWRY AND THE ZIONIST JEWISH STATE CONCEPT

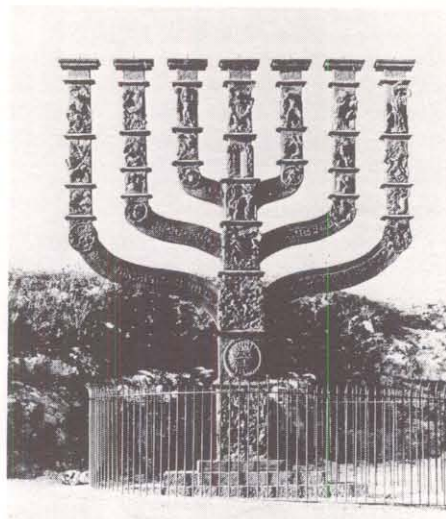
By Norton Mezvinsky

That American Jewry has largely supported the Zionist Jewish State concept and reality since the creation of the state of Israel is clear. This support was steadily built in the United States in earlier years, but actual creation of Israel solidified support. Some American Jewish supporters of the Zionist Jewish state have at times criticized certain Israeli state policies, but they have done so within the context of Jewish state advocacy.

### Concept of Zionist Jewish State

The Zionist Jewish state concept is predicated upon a specific definition of Jewish nationalism, which has been solidified by Israeli legislation, public policy, and court decisions. Elmer Berger recently pinpointed succinctly this definition:

"The criterion determining the constituency of this nationalism is religious. Only a 'Jew', according to stipulations put down in Israeli law, qualifies as a Zionist national. Every Jew is automatically—and many of them involuntarily—included in the Zionist nationality entity, officially designated 'the Jewish people.' According to Zionist claims 'the Jewish people' is recognized in international law to possess national rights in, and national obligations to, the present Zionist state of Israel. The precise language of the Israeli courts in the *Eichmann Case Judgment* puts it that 'the State of



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This large Menorah, symbol of the State of Israel, is located in the Knesseth Garden in Jerusalem.

Israel is the sovereign state of the Jewish people.'"<sup>1</sup>

This Zionist Jewish state concept fixes Israel as the state of the Jewish people and lays the bases for granting Jews in the state privileged positions and for maintaining in the state a Jewish majority.

### Motivations for American Jewish Support

Why American Jews have so supported this concept in a variety of ways is difficult to assess. Assessing motivation is problematic. Many of these supporters, moreover, actually oppose analogous non-Jewish positions and thus put themselves into a hypocritical position. The motivation still can perhaps be indicated:

A great pride in the materialistic achievements of Jews in the state of Israel is most probably one motivating factor. For a smaller number of these American Jews a great pride in the military achievements of Jewish armed forces in Israel is possibly another

motivating factor. Indeed, some Anglo-Jewish newspapers in the United States stated editorially after the June, 1967, war that Jews around the world now stood ten feet tall because of the feats of the Israeli army.

Yet, the above are at best secondary factors. Primary is the concern about anti-Jewish anti-semitism, about persecution of Jews, about the need for Jews to have a state of their own wherein they constitute a majority. The major argument for this concern is that when Jews are persecuted elsewhere, they will have a Jewish state—a demographically Jewish state—to which to go and in which to settle. This concern is and has been for some time deep-seeded among many Jews. Even so, the evidence is fairly clear that only a minority of American Jews accepted the whole of this concept until the Holocaust, the killing of millions of Jews, in Germany and Central Europe by Hitler and the Nazis in the late 1930's and early 1940's. The effect of the Holocaust was phenomenal; Jews did not regard it merely as one isolated example of Jewish persecution. It was seen rather as the worst part of a pattern of expressed hatred of Jews by non-Jews, a hatred that has a long history.

Michael J. Rosenberg, a young Jewish writer in the Department of Contemporary Jewish Studies at Brandeis University well sums up this view in an essay he wrote and had published in a recent book, *The New Jews*:

"There is only one Jewish state, without allies, unique and ultimately alone. And that is why all the analogies are invalid. Israel is the Jewish State, the one Jewish state. And she is threatened with extinction, and thus Israel is the ultimate reality in the life of every Jew living today . . . In dealing with those who oppose Israel, we are not reasonable and we are not rational. Nor should we be . . . One

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wonders what would have become of the remnant of European Jewry had there been no Israel . . . There was no alternative to the creation of a state for the European Jewish refugees . . . No Jew need rationalize his support of Israel and if the existence of the Jewish state is a thorn in the side of the 'Third World', then so be it. If the fact of Jewish self-rule in the Middle East serves 'imperialist' interests, let it. If the survival of Israel complicates matters for Soviet and American cold war strategists, that is their problem. It is not ours. After Auschwitz, it is not in our province to lighten the burden of the super-powers. They can continue their struggle over relative spheres of influence; Israel's struggle is for survival . . .

"One thing in the terrible apocalyptic vision of what must never happen but might be with me. On a hill in Israel, just outside Jerusalem, is a memorial museum called Yad Vashem. It is shaped like a crematorium. On its floor, starkly illuminated by flames, lie six million black tiles in which white tiles spell out the names 'Auschwitz', 'Dachau', 'Bergen-Belsen', 'Buchenwald', 'Treblinka', and the others. On that day when the progressive liberation forces of the anti-imperialists defeat Israel and succeed in 'de-Zionising' Palestine with the encouragement of all the revolutionary, anti-Zionist, emancipated Jews, what will happen as the conquerors climb that hill in Jerusalem to liberate the Yad Vashem? One imagines that the universe would shake. One imagines that all life everywhere would stop. One imagines that it would mark the end of the world. But then one knows it wouldn't."<sup>2</sup>

### A Minority Objects

For over two decades after Israel's creation American Jews who opposed the Zionist Jewish state concept were in a striking minority. Most were bitterly attacked as self-hating Jews, Jewish anti-Semites, and even as worse human beings. Most often, the substantive positions of the most thoughtful dissidents, who ranged in their political philosophy from Noam Chomsky on the Left to Elmer Berger, were disregarded by large numbers of American Jews and their leaders.

Interestingly, many members of the American Council for Judaism, who rejected the Zionist Jewish state concept on classical Reform theological grounds, were attacked personally in the above manner, while certain ultra-Orthodox Jews, who opposed the Zionist Jewish state concept on traditional theological grounds, were dismissed but not so attacked.

### New Developments

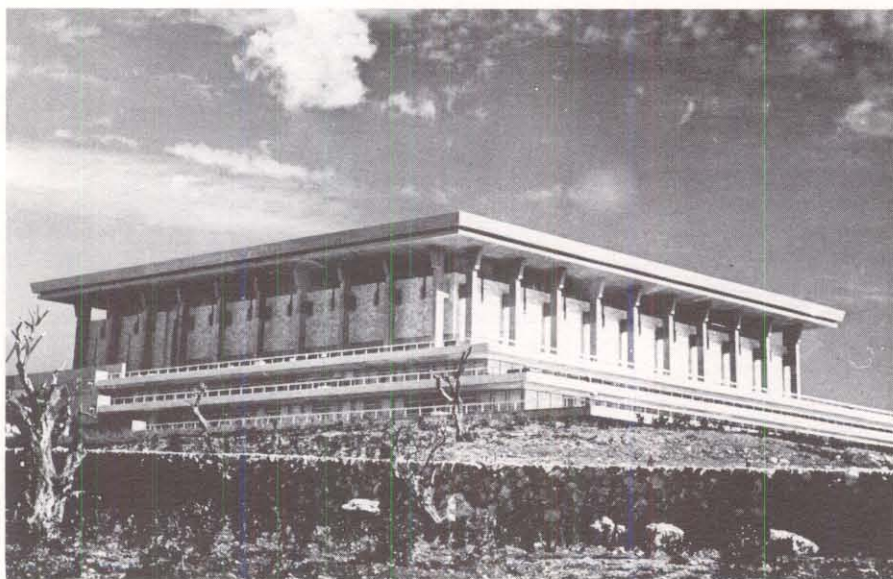
In the past three to four years, a change seems to be developing. Increasing numbers of American Jews, mostly younger ones below the age of forty, have publicly and substantially opposed many Israeli state policies. They have done this by individual and group expressions. Many new groups have been formed; many new publications of these groups have appeared. Confiscation of Arab lands, retention of territory captured in and occupied after the June, 1967, war, non-recognition of Palestinians, and treatment of Arabs in Israel have been the major items in this opposition.

The opposition often came only after much questioning. As Miriam

and Henry (sic!) wrote in 1973 in *Chutzpah*, a new Jewish publication in Chicago: "As children we were painted a picture of Israel as a perfect, non-sexist, egalitarian, crimeless society. Discovering deep faults in Israeli society was in many ways more confusing for us than discovering contradictions in American society . . ."<sup>3</sup>

The questioning led to reexamination, to opposition, and to the leveling of responsibility for propagandistic distortion. Arthur Waskow pinpoints this in his book, *The Bush Is Burning*, published in 1971: "In short, the feelings of solidarity and love—together with constant skeptical reexamination—which would have been widely felt; and legitimately so, within American Jewry toward the Jewish community in Israel, have been warped into blind hysterical support for not only the Israeli state that has been created, but for the particular policies of a particular government of that state. The responsibility for this distortion must lie upon the American Empire, the American Jewish Establishment, and the Israeli government. Its victim has been the Jewish people in America."<sup>4</sup>

Some of those who have opposed these specific policies have done so as critics from within who still basically cling to the Zionist Jewish state concept. Others, however, have put their specific objections within the broader base of opposition to the Zionist, Jewish state concept. They disagree with one another on this concept, but they largely respect one another; they have begun to work together, moreover, in opposing on many levels and in many ways the apologetic, Israeli, Zionist, propaganda line in the United States. This cooperation, together with the numbers of people involved and the substance presented, have challenged as never before the almost blind backing of Israeli state policies by the American Jewish Establishment, made up of organizational and rabbinical leaders, fund collectors, professional propagandists, lobbyists, and politicians. Name-calling and ad-hominem attacks upon the dissidents still appear, albeit in far less abundance and with far less effectiveness than previously. The Zionist Jewish state concept is clearly a major, dividing issue for these dissidents. As such, it divides those who stand politically and philosophically together in many other ways. A case in point here is the socialist faction in the dissident camp. Almost all of the socialists agree that Western imperialism is responsible for many of the problems and much of the oppression in the whole of the Middle East; yet,



The Knesset, Jerusalem, Israel's Parliament.

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some of these socialists argue for and within a Zionist, Jewish state concept, while others argue against this concept.

Those dissidents who still favor the retention of the Zionist Jewish state do so mostly because of their concern about the unique factor of anti-Jewish, anti-semitism. In his unpublished and uncompleted novel, titled *Holocaust 2*, Amos Kenan, the Israeli journalist and writer, illustrates this concern, shared by many American Jewish dissidents. *Holocaust 2* occurs after the destruction of the state of Israel by war, after the killing of many, but not all Israeli Jews, and after the disappearance of Jews around the world has begun to occur. The destruction of the state of Israel in the novel came from the unresolved Arab-Israeli conflict and from the conflict between Third World revolutionaries and a major power. The Arabs used oil as a factor; revolution threatened a ruling class; a scapegoat was needed and was found in the form of Jews. Not all Jews were killed; some were left alive and put into a camp from which they could be sent to the front lines. Amos Kenan wrote in the novel's synopsis that his was not a story only about Jews and Israel. Perhaps not, but in some ways the story is uniquely about Jews and Israel. Why were Jews picked as the scapegoat for the Third World Revolution? Why, as Amos Kenan asked in his novel, did Third Revolutionaries pick Lod Airport in Israel to further their revolution? Why not Kennedy or some other airport? The answer, suggested in his novel by Amos Kenan and believed by many of the American Jewish dissidents, discussed above, is that unique hatred of Jews by many non-Jews exists in this world. For this reason a Zionist state primarily for Jews is needed.

### Division Among Socialists

The socialists in the dissident camp, who favor the continuation of the Zionist Jewish state even though they oppose many state policies, may have the greatest problem. Most socialist theory, certainly Marxism itself, is international and universal. The exclusivist features of the Zionist Jewish state stand against the international and universal aspects of socialist theory. Some socialists in the dissident camp have attempted to reconcile the almost irreconcilable here in a number of ways. Some have argued that a Jewish state is necessary for a while in order to establish a real Jewish working class that will then be able to make the Jewish contribution to the revolutionary struggle.

Other socialists have argued more broadly. A fairly typical argument in this regard is put by J. Jonathan Goldberg in his 1970 article "Is Zionism Compatible with Radicalism":

"To be a Zionist does not mean to support the Israeli government. What of the idea of a democratic, united Palestine with equality for people of all faiths? Well, first of all, we're not a 'faith.' Nor are we a class of colonies, or an army of occupation. We are a people, a nation with workers, students, writers, garbagemen, exploiters, exploited, movies, dope. Jews from Europe (although not "white"), Jews from the Middle East (although not Arabs), Jews from Ethiopia, Liberia, and Bedford-Stuyvesant. They are all Israelis, with an economy, class conflicts, revolutionary movements, and a shared determination to be allowed to exist as a nation.

"But the idea of giving up separateness is an attractive one—a cosmopolitan one-world brotherhood and unity. Many Zionists are willing to work toward that goal. When the United States, or Russia, or England (or maybe Vietnam?) voluntarily gives up its right to exist, we volunteer to go second. We're tired of being told to go first. And those Jews who have begun to disband in our name—the rulers of the American Jewish community who speak of the 'Jewish faith', the Uncle Jakes—are being fought. Fought at the fund-raising drives, fought in the Hebrew schools, fought on all levels where they try to make us what we are not. Jewish kids who are tired of tomming to the goyim [non-Jews] are learning from Israel, from the Blacks, from the Vietnamese that it's better to extend the hand in solidarity than in charity. The radical Zionist movement is getting its shit together again, and we won't be denied."<sup>5</sup>

The Law of Return specifically gives the socialists trouble, as it sets up one citizenship basis—the preferable one—for Jews and another for non-Jews. Jews may become citizens of Israel by going there and so opting. Non-Jews must go through a complicated process of applying for citizenship. The non-Jewish application is then accepted or rejected. In this manner the non-Jewish citizenry can be controlled and limited. In typical fashion, David Mandel, currently the most prolific Radical Zionist Alliance person, attempts specifically to reconcile the Law of Return with his Marxism:

"It is just this dynamic of nation-building which explains the need for

the Israeli *Law of Return*, which grants any Jew who desires it immediate citizenship upon 'returning' to Israel, instead of a normal citizenship adoption process, which exists in most countries (and applies to non-Jews in Israel). This law has been harshly criticized by those anti-Zionists who point out its obviously discriminatory attributes. A parallel with the Palestinian case is illuminating, however: After becoming refugees in the war of 1948, a large part of the Palestinian people found homes in neighboring or distant Arab countries, or even in Europe and the Americas. Only in recent years has the movement of *Palestinian*, as opposed to *Arab*, national consciousness taken root in the context of the struggle for self-determination against Israel and the Arab countries. When true self-determination will be achieved, the idea of a *Palestinian* law of return will make perfect sense. It is indeed ironic that the Palestinians have now become a wandering, stateless people, the 'Jews of the Middle East.'"<sup>6</sup>

Mandel's argument basically affirms a Jewish Law of Return by affirming the legitimacy at some future time of a Palestinian Law of Return. Not only is the argument vague, e.g. the exact locale for the Palestinian Law of Return is not stated, but it hardly reconciles exclusivism with Marxism.

### Specific Policies Build Opposition

The American Jews who registered their opposition to specific policies of the Israeli government and also oppose the Zionist Jewish state concept do not all agree on state (or non-state) advocacies; most of them do, however, stand consistently for one form or another of a multi-national, democratic secular state. Elmer Berger, not one of the younger breed but rather an elder statesman among Jewish anti-Zionists, has consistently and often in profound manner, argued against an exclusivist Jewish state and for a state in which all people, Arabs as well as Jews as well as others, have equal rights and equal opportunities. Not a socialist, Berger takes the cornerstones of his position largely from classical Reform Judaic theology and from the American constitutional system. Berger has in some of his writings and speeches attempted to show that certain negative and oppressive policies of the Israeli state, opposed by all those in the dissident camp, are best understood by seeing them within the context of an undemocratic, exclusivist, Jewish state structure.

Noam Chomsky, who opposes the





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The rock fortress of Masada in Israel.

Zionist Jewish state concept and favors a multi-national secular, democratic state, has in recent writings also shown well how negative and oppressive policies grew out of the undemocratic, Zionist Jewish state society. In his lengthy article, published in *The Holy Cross Quarterly* in 1972, "Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs," Chomsky argues:

"If a state is Jewish in certain respects, then in these respects it is not democratic. That much is obvious. If the respects are marginal and merely symbolic—the color of the flag, the timing of state holidays and the like—the departure from democratic principle is not serious. If the respects are significant, the problem is correspondingly severe. The problems of achieving democratic goals in a multi-national or multi-ethnic society are not trivial ones. It is pointless to pretend that they do not exist.

### The Problem of a Jewish State

"It has frequently been suggested that the Jewish state is to be Jewish only in the sense that France is French or England is English. This is patently impossible, however. An immigrant who receives French citizenship is French. If there is some form of institutional discrimination against him, if he is not 'truly French' in the eyes of the law or administrative practice, this will be regarded as a departure from the democratic ideal. A citizen of the Jewish State, however, does not be-

come Jewish. This is a matter of principle, not a departure from some ideal norm towards which the society strives. Since it is a matter of principle within a Jewish State, there will be no remedy through slow progress.

"The respects in which Israel is a Jewish State are not trivial or merely symbolic, and there is no indication that this situation will change. A non-Jewish citizen suffers various forms of discrimination. He is not permitted to lease or work on state lands or lands owned 'in the name of the Jewish people.' He is not able to reside in all-Jewish cities, such as Karmiel, built on lands confiscated from Israeli-Arabs. To mention a recent case, a Druze, formerly an officer with 20 years service in the Israeli Border Police, was denied the right even to open a business near Karmiel by decision of the Israel Land authority (*Yediot Aharonot*, Feb. 8, 1971).

"According to a publication of the Israeli League for Civil and Human Rights (August, 1971), there are tens of thousands of stateless Israeli Arabs, unable to satisfy the requirements of the Israeli Nationality Law; and the number is increasing, since statelessness is inherited. Arabs born to parents without citizenship, who may not even be aware of this fact until they apply for passports or other documents, do not acquire Israeli citizenship by virtue of the fact that they are born in Israel in villages where their families may have lived for generations. Arabs do not receive benefits from laws that remunerate families of members of the Israeli Armed Forces, i.e., virtually all Jewish families and, apart from the Druze, no others. In myriad ways, Arabs will not enjoy the full rights of citizenship. It is for such reasons as these that left-wing elements in the Zionist movement were always wary about the idea of a Jewish State, which did not, in fact, become official Zionist policy until 1942, at the time of the destruction of European Jewry by Nazi terror."<sup>7</sup>

### Youth Reacts

The younger breed of American Jewish socialists who oppose the Zionist Jewish state concept are far more consistent in their advocacies than are their fellow socialists who favor or attempt to rationalize this concept. Sharon Rose of the Middle East Research and Information Project and Chil Spiegel of the Jewish Labor Bund show this greater consistency in their stated positions, which are similar in political philosophy but different in Jewish cultural concern.

Sharon Rose is a secularist who cares little about Jewish culture. Her following argument from her 1970 *Win Magazine* article, "My Vine, My Figtree," indicates not only her own position but a fairly representative position among a growing number of like-minded socialists:

"The question is not whether the state of Israel has a right to exist. People have rights—states only responsibilities. Whatever might have been my position on the partition of Palestine in 1948 . . . it seems clear now that the state of Israel has not met its responsibilities towards its own people and towards finding a response to the legitimate demands of self-determination of the Palestinian Arabs.

"The revolution will come to Israel. There are indications that some left wing Israelis have learned they must help build it. The Palestinian Arabs will gain self-determination, despite the best efforts of the present regimes of the Arab states and their American oil company supporters. I believe that a bi-national, democratic, secular state, encompassing the entire area of the original mandate, will provide the best environment to carry out such revolutions, to create a truly just economic system for all the peoples of the area."<sup>8</sup>

Chil Spiegel favors international socialism and is a declared anti-Zionist; he opposes the Zionist Jewish state concept. He stands opposed to many Israeli state policies that he sees as oppressive and discriminatory. Yet, one of Spiegel's major concerns is for Jewish cultural development in various places of the world. His advocacy here is that the Jewish Labor Bund. He favors the maintenance and development of diaspora Jewish communities, i.e., those outside of and other than the Jewish community in Israel. He believes Israel has failed to solve the problem of the diaspora, where a great majority of world Jewry still resides. Indeed, Spiegel believes and argues that the state of Israel has actually presented newer and greater problems to world Jewry. In a recent unpublished paper, delivered at a late spring, 1973, conference of Jewish leftists in New York City, Spiegel said:

"Before Israel can begin to play a positive role in Jewish life, Israel and her Zionist leaders must recognize the reality, the validity, the inherent worth and basic right of independence of every Jewish community, and the value of every expression of Jewish culture. Israel and the Zionist leaders must cease all efforts at destroying or demoralizing the Diaspora. Israel must



relinquish her neo-colonial hold on World Jewry, drawing from it the materials—dollars—to fuel her machinery. Israel must stop denigration of the Yiddish language and culture and make a concerted effort to restore Yiddish as a national language of the Jewish people. Israel must stop all cultural chauvinism.

"If Israel is to become a cooperating member of the World Jewish community rather than setting herself above the interests of World Jewry, then her first priority must be the needs of World Jewry; she must place the people ahead of the land. In short, before Israel can become a positive factor in Jewish life, she must forsake her dangerous, delusory, diversional, nationalistic Zionist politic."<sup>9</sup>

### Conclusion

Those mentioned above who oppose the Zionist Jewish state concept, together with many others mentioned herein, reject the idea that the Zionist Jewish state is necessary as a haven, real or potential, for persecuted Jews. They argue that anti-Jewish anti-semitism should and can be fought wherever it exists, that Israel is not necessarily a safe haven for Jews, and that the Jewish state itself could continue to breed, as it has bred, some anti-Jewish anti-semitism.

As previously mentioned, a change in attitude concerning the Zionist Jewish state concept seems to be developing within American Jewry. This change in attitude, if it continues to develop, will most likely steadily erode the standardized propaganda line of the Israeli and American Jewish Establishments.

### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Elmer Berger, *Report #15 of American Jewish Alternatives to Zionism*, June, 1972, p. 38.
- <sup>2</sup>Michael J. Rosenberg, "Israel Without Apology," in *The New Jews*, ed. James A. Sleeper and Alan Mintz (New York: Vintage, 1971), p. 82, 83, 87, 88.
- <sup>3</sup>Miriam and Henry, "Editorial", *Chutzpah*, February-March, 1973, p. 17.
- <sup>4</sup>Arthur Waskow, *The Bush Is Burning* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p. 59.
- <sup>5</sup>J. Jonathan Goldberg, "Is Zionism Compatible with Radicalism", in Porter and Dreir, eds., *Jewish Radicalism* (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1973), pp. 80-1.
- <sup>6</sup>David Mandel, "A New Look at the Jewish Question", unpublished paper, pp. 22-3.
- <sup>7</sup>Noam Chomsky, "Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs", *The Holy Cross Quarterly*, Vol. 5 (Summer, 1972), pp. 16-17.
- <sup>8</sup>Sharon Rose, "My Vine, My Figtree", *Win Magazine*, June 15, 1970, as reprinted in Waskow, *The Bush Is Burning*, p. 71.
- <sup>9</sup>Chil Spiegel, "Israel, Zionism, and the Diaspora", unpublished paper, Jewish Labor Bund.

## BOOK REVIEWS . . .

**Abdullah Schleifer, *The Fall of Jerusalem*. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1972. 247 pp. \$7.50. Our Price \$2.50.**

Abdullah Schleifer's search for identity is scarcely less interesting than Fawaz Turki's, although he speaks of it only very briefly. He is an American journalist of Jewish origin who visited Tangiers in the fall of 1962 and there "an atheist and beyond thought of faith . . . became obsessed with roots, with the grace and mysteries of the Semite, and held on to this for some sort of sustenance," discovering "in Arab-Islamic thought and gesture the quintessence of the Semitic." On his return to the United States he converted to Islam in a Brooklyn mosque, then took up residence within the walls of the old city of Jerusalem, where he remained for three years, before, during and after the war of June 1967. His vantage point is therefore unique from several points of view, not the least of which is the location of his former living quarters, above a Moslem school overlooking the Harm al-Sharif. The ill-fated Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin, lived in these very rooms during the turbulent thirties. Directly across from the same house, towards the south, he could see the house in which Yasir Arafat lived as a youth. It was on the author's roof that the victorious Israeli paratroopers raised their flag above the Wailing Wall when the city fell. And from this vantage point he could witness the demolition of the adjacent Bab el-Magharaba district, which began shortly after sunset on the following night—the eighth of June, the occupants evicted on one hour's notice and one old woman, deaf and alone, buried alive beneath the ruins. Within a few days more than 130 buildings, including two mosques, had been eradicated, the equivalent of three city blocks. This had been "a pleasant and architecturally distinctive quarter of freshly whitewashed roof terraces, gardens, and neat unattached houses built in the North African style several hundred years ago to house Moroccan soldiers garrisoning Jerusalem for the Ottomans." And the author continues:

The day the bulldozing began, the Quarter was described in the *Jerusalem Post* as a slum; two days later it was reported as having been by and large abandoned during the siege. I expect in time that its existence will vanish altogether from the pages of developing Zionist history.

It may be added that, on June 15th, 1969, when archaeological investigations along the base of the wall began to undermine more houses, these too were demolished ("for public safety"), and when their demolition provoked a bomb explosion in the same area, still more houses and a school were torn down for "security" (*N. Y. Times*, June 16, 1969; *Christian Science Monitor*, June 28, 1969).

After a poetic introduction to the city ("the beauty of massed faded gray austere stone catching the white Palestinian light"), and two illuminating chapters dealing with the history of the Zionist-Palestinian confrontation, Schleifer takes up the events that led more immediately to the debacle of 1967 and the fall of Jerusalem, following the chronological sequence in increasingly greater detail. Chapter 5, covering the events of 1967 down to May 23, describes how Egypt was maneuvered into implementation of the joint defense agreement signed with Syria in November of the preceding year. Schleifer compares the Egyptian reaction to Israel's attack on al-Tawafiq in February 1960, and suggests not only that the reaction was similar, but that the Israeli military establishment counted on its recurrence and on the possibility of exploiting it. In this they were helped by U Thant's insistence on withdrawing the UN troops totally if they were to be displaced at all. A great deal of attention is given to the circumspect maneuver (little heeded at the time) in which the Egyptians stated their request for withdrawal; they clearly desired a provisional or temporary restaging such as Hammar-skjöld had previously agreed to. The necessity of reoccupying Sharm el-Sheikh on May 23 and the inevitable re-imposition of a blockade of Tiran provided Israel with a *causa belli* that was of doubtful legal weight but became weighty indeed when immediately endorsed by President Johnson. The Israeli attack had become a foregone conclusion, however, when Eshkol, at the very moment of the U.N. withdrawal on May 19, declared full mobilization (publicized as "partial"); given the pressure exerted by Dayan and the other militarists, as well as the strain which mobilization imposed on the badly sagging Israeli economy, this action was virtually irreversible. Although the author does not specifically make this point, one cannot but feel that the Israeli hawks were embarrassed by the British and American efforts to remove their *causa belli*, and



embarrassed as well by Pentagon information that belied their own reports of an imminent Egyptian attack. What their own pre-emptive attack of June 5th sought to forestall was not an attack from Egypt, but the efforts of their allies and—as in 1956—Egypt's attempts to negotiate a compromise; had those diplomatic efforts succeeded they would have lost their opportunity. As Azar Weitzman, the Israeli deputy chief of staff in 1967, said in *Haaretz* (March 20, 1972): "Had we not done that [i.e. attacked], the State of Israel would have ceased to exist according to the scale, spirit and quality she now embodies." This interpretation of the events makes the attack on the *Liberty* much more understandable—and that attack can hardly be regarded as an accident, as Schleifer seems willing to believe (p. 199, n. 6); the U.S. naval court of inquiry concluded that the attack was unprovoked and that the Israelis had had "ample time to identify the *Liberty* correctly" (*New York Times*, June 29, 1967).

The siege and fall of the city (Chapters 8 and 9) are described almost hour by hour, and in many cases on the basis of personal observation. As Schleifer puts it, "the feeling was distortedly medieval, the ludicrous sense of an old-fashioned garrison under siege in a war fought with supersonic jets, napalm, and tanks." Hopelessly undermanned and pitifully ill-equipped, the defenders fought gallantly. But this is a description, not a eulogy; self-interest and stupidity are as much a part of the picture as is courage. The aftermath of the battle is described in "Games" (Chapter 10)—the games used by the Israelis to circumvent attempts to make them repatriate the new wave of Palestinian refugees—some 560,000, of whom only 14,027 were permitted to return. Gaza was under the most intense pressure to disgorge its Palestinian refugee population. The cruel measures applied there were justified on the grounds of "security", but at the time "resistance had been no more intense than in most parts of the West Bank in those first shell-shocked months following the war." Today "Gaza seethes with a visible hatred for the occupier, and if a visitor asks an Israeli why, he will be told about the 'twenty years of Egyptian propaganda.'"

The final chapter is—to the reviewer, at least—the most interesting of all, for it convincingly argues that "Israel cannot hope to become an industrial power until she first achieves the modern equivalent of empire," and:

The silent Israeli retail boycott of West Bank manufactured goods at the very moment that a flood of Israeli consumer products replaced no-longer-available imports on the shelves of Arab retailers, and the steady decline of local Arab industry in face of these and other competitive measures, prove that Israeli publicists had a grim point when they observed, shortly after the June War, that "Israeli-Arab collaboration" in the occupied territories would serve as a shining example of future possibilities for the entire region.

A "reasonable" peace, of the kind envisaged by U.N. Resolution 242, would mean the end of territorial expansion and the end of the threatened-hostage situation which preserves Israeli unity and brings in contributions from abroad. To Dayan this is an "unacceptable state of unwar;" there can be no peace without full access to Arab markets and resources. As dovish Abba Eban phrases it (for on this point both hawk and dove find themselves on the same bough): "What we aspire to is not the relationship which exists between Lebanon and Syria; it is far more akin to the relationship between the United States and the Latin American continent."

The book is somewhat loosely, but instructively, documented with footnotes, and the author draws on a wide range of sources including an unexpectedly interesting item—the final chapter by "Colonel Orientalist" in *The Six Day War*, published by the Israeli Ministry of Defense. There are few details indeed that can be questioned; apart from the question of the *Liberty*, one might mention the frequently repeated assertion (p. 224) that the mayor of Haifa appealed to Arabs to remain in 1948; he did so, but only after the exodus was beyond recall (see Erskine Childers in *The Transformation of Palestine*, ed. Abu Lughod, p. 188). It may also be helpful for readers to note that, on p. 142, "Saturday May 26" should read "Saturday May 27."

Schleifer's book is warmly endorsed and highly recommended.

HENRY G. FISCHER

**Fawaz Turki, *The Disinherited: Journal of a Palestinian Exile*. Monthly Review Press, New York, 1972. 156 pp. \$5.95. Our Price \$3.70.**

"If I was not a Palestinian when I left Haifa as a child," writes Fawaz Turki, "I am one now." And he adds:

"Living in Beirut as a stateless person for most of my growing-up years, many of them in a refugee camp, I did not feel that I was living among 'Arab brothers'."

There have been many accounts of how it feels to belong to an outcast minority, and this one quite consciously falls into a familiar pattern, complete with four-letter words and their lengthier Arabic equivalents. Despite the familiar aspects, however, the present account offers some very new insights. For one thing, most maltreated minorities are several generations old, at the very least; it is seldom that one has an opportunity to perceive the entire evolution of a minority attitude within a single generation. Then too, as Tolstoy said, each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way, and one might describe the Palestinians as an unhappy family within an unhappy family.

As the opening quotations indicate, Turki has little sympathy towards the unhappiness of the other members of the Arab family. The Palestinian consciousness is keener and more powerful than theirs, and may, in fact, be considered the nether side of the Zionist coin—the side that has lost by the same token that the other has come out on top. Turki tells, for example, how it feels to be without a passport; he might have compared the condition of the typical Western Israeli who has two—the one he brought with him and the one he denies to the native he has displaced. Looked down upon by the French-oriented segment of the Lebanese (for whom "espèce de Palestinien" is a popular insult), the author has "fantasies of the day when we would return to Haifa, where no one would say two-bit Palestinian because everyone would be a Palestinian."

Turki confirms the truth of the fact that the Palestinians have resisted assimilation or permanent settlement in the Arab countries where they have taken refuge, and recognizes the difficulties that absorption of the refugees would have imposed on these countries in 1948. At the same time, he finds much to blame in their relations with the refugees. Indeed, no one is spared in this small volume—Arabs, Israelis, Americans or the Big Powers collectively. In the end, Turki is solely on the side of the oppressed, whether Palestinians, Jews, Vietnamese or Kurds.

While he is not happy at the prospect of accepting the "backyard of Palestine" as a homeland, Turki thinks that it should be accepted if offered.



He also hopes that contacts with the "New Israelis" will gradually break down old ideas and lead to a multi-racial state. The second of these hopes has recently been dealt a severe blow by the courts of Israel, in the form of a judgment that specifically outlaws such contacts. The first will depend on the pace of Israeli settlement and acquisition of land on the West Bank, and whether Moshe Dayan has his way in these matters.

HENRY G. FISCHER

**Robert St. John, EBAN. Doubleday, Garden City, Long Island, 1972. 542 pp. \$10.00.**

This is a well-written, journalistic account of the life and service in the cause of Israel and Zionism, of Israeli Foreign Minister, Abba Eban. It traces Eban's life from his birth in South Africa (1915) down to the date of publication. We learn something of Eban's development in early youth in England, of his student days at Cambridge University, his development in the Zionist movement, his work as a British intelligence officer in the Middle East, his advent on the Zionist political stage after World War II and, finally, of his work as an Israeli diplomat and Foreign Minister.

Yet this is not a critical biography at all—as suggested in *Foreign Affairs* recently—it is really a premature exercise in hagiography of a mortal who is something less than a saint, however eloquent his rhetoric, especially when expounding the official Israeli-Zionist position in the Arab-Israel conflict. Even in childhood and early manhood—in his student days—we learn of a man who never made a mistake and who, in one way or another, always scintillated. Small wonder that, in the author's consideration, Mr. Eban became the world's best known diplomat and foreign minister!

The book makes very interesting reading, even if it is not always accurate as to the facts of the Arab-Israel conflict. Mr. St. John accepts at face value the Eban and Israeli claim that the United States, in its demand that Israel withdraw from occupied areas in the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip, committed itself to support of the right of Israel commercial vessels to transit the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba. Yet the Dulles aide mémoire of February 11, 1957 made no such commitment. Mr. Dulles indicated that the United States considered that the Gulf of Aqaba comprehended international waters and that no nation had the right to "prevent free and innocent passage in the gulf and through

the straits giving access thereto." The United States "on behalf of vessels of United States registry" was prepared to exercise the right of free and innocent passage and to join with others to secure general recognition of this right. There was no specific commitment to Israel (see St. John's Ch. 20).

Mr. St. John, a well-known correspondent and radio commentator, is the author of a number of books which treat of the Middle East—*Ben-Gurion, Shalom Means Peace, The Boss (Nasser) and Tongue of the Prophets*. All are written in journalistic and popular style. This book has all the accoutrements of scholarship. This book, the author tells us, rests on some years of research, interviews with hundreds of Eban's friends, colleagues and critics on three continents, and on full cooperation with Mr. Eban. The book is well-annotated and has a brief one-page bibliography. Someday, no doubt, some biographer will bring the subject down to earth. Mr. St. John does not.

HARRY N. HOWARD

**Larry Collins and Dominique LePierre, O Jerusalem! Simon and Schuster, New York, 1972. 637 pp. \$10.00.**

Larry Collins and Dominique LePierre—the one an American and the other a French journalist—were already well-known as co-authors of *Is Paris Burning?* They have now produced a best-selling journalistic play-by-play account of the struggle for Jerusalem during 1948. The volume is divided into four distinct parts, all centering on the Holy City, sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims alike—the fate of which may well prove to be the key to peace in the Arab-Israel, or Palestine, conflict. The first two parts provide something of the backgrounds of the problem, although there is little in the way of examination in depth. Part 3 treats of the "siege" of Jerusalem during the 1948 conflict, and Part 4 discusses the "city divided" after the armistices of 1948-1949.

In many ways the book is brilliantly written. The reader moves easily through its more than 600 pages. It is based on almost countless interviews over a period of five years and evidently on wide, if not very profound, research. The value of the book lies in the brief vignettes of people and things, in the record of memories of those who lived, fought and suffered during the so-called "War of Liberation" of the Jews. In these pages one meets both the great and near great, along with the rank and file of Jews,

Arabs and others, who recall where they were and what they thought, said or did during that tragic period a quarter of a century ago. With all its "flashbacks" to the history of the problem of Jerusalem, the book lacks historical background. Despite the effort of the authors to be "objective" in their presentation, the work appears definitely biased in behalf of Israel, whatever the specific issue or problem under discussion. The slipshod reference to Loy W. Henderson, then Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs in the Department of State, whose opposition to the partition was well known, is inaccurate. (Note: Henderson maintained his position on the partition of Palestine (see his memorandum of September 22, 1947, now published in *The Foreign Relations of the United States 1947*, Volume 5, pp. 1153-1158.)) He was not exiled as American Minister to Katmandu, Nepal, but became Ambassador to India and held the Katmandu post concurrently. He then was appointed Ambassador to Iran and ultimately became deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration.

Despite its notes and bibliography, the book does not appear well based on very solid documentation. Fortunately, we have Eugene Bovis' *The Jerusalem Question* (Stanford, California, Hoover, 1971) and Evan Wilson's *Jerusalem: Key to Peace* (Washington, Middle East Institute, 1970), to say nothing of other works, which are helpful on this complicated problem. *O Jerusalem!* should be read for what it is—a journalistic assessment of the struggle for Jerusalem in 1948. The reader should then get into other works for better perspective and understanding. The reader might also study the vast amount of documentation which is now available, and especially the post World War II period, now down to the year 1947, of *The Foreign Relations of the United States*.

HARRY N. HOWARD

## IN BRIEF

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## Christmas Cards

Beautiful Christmas cards which support the work of UNRWA can be purchased at \$1.25 per packet of ten from the UNRWA Liaison Office, Room 1801, United Nations, New York. Cards are available with or without printed greetings.

## New Organizations

*The Mount of Olives Foundation Inc.*, an organization which is both international and ecumenical in character, has come into being to:

(1) To create, maintain and preserve a Garden on the Mount of Olives, in Jerusalem, to be a place of spiritual rest and refreshment for the inhabitants of the city and for visitors.

(2) To acquire land on the Mount of Olives for the purpose of establishing the Garden, and so to landscape, develop and plant the Garden.

(3) To establish an endowment, the income of which will be used to maintain the Garden in perpetuity.

For further information, write to Rev. Maurice A. Coombs, Executive Director, 298 Hicks Street, Brooklyn Heights, New York, N.Y. 11201.

The *Lebanese Association for Information on Palestine* (P.O. Box 7037, Beirut, Lebanon) is a new entity whose objective is "to consolidate a union among the Arab Women's Information Committee, Fifth of June Society and Friends of Jerusalem". Mr. A. B. Zahlan is President.

## Lecture Tours

Father Joseph L. Ryan, noted educator, lecturer and Middle East expert will be returning to the States from the Middle East this fall. He will be avail-

able for lectures in October and November. Those interested in having Father Ryan visit their community are asked to write to John Cummings, P.O. Box 25, Tufts University Station, Medford, Massachusetts 02153, for full information.

## Plan to Attend

The Middle East Institute's 27th Annual Conference at Georgetown University Law Center, 600 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., September 28-29. The theme is "The Arabian Peninsula, Iran and the Gulf States: New Wealth, New Power". For information, write to the Conference Office, Middle East Institute, 1761 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 22036.

The Sixth Annual Convention of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc. at the Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington, D.C., October 19-21. The theme is "National Liberation and Settler Regimes: Africa and the Middle East".

These annual meetings provide excellent opportunities for renewing friendships and broadening one's understanding of contemporary problems. Superior leadership and speakers are traditional features of these conferences.

## Willard Jones

Willard Jones, 79, distinguished educator and director of relief for Palestine refugees for many years, died at his home in Waverly, Ohio, May 29, 1973, after a brief illness.

Many readers of *The Link* will remember Willard Jones, who served as headmaster of the Friends' Boys' School in Ramallah (1922 to 1940; 1944 to 1954). In 1953 he became Executive Secretary of the Near East Christian Council Committee for Refugee Work, where he served until his retirement in 1962.

## THE LINK

aims at maintaining contacts among Americans who believe that friendship with the people of the Middle East is essential to world peace, who would contribute to this goal by spreading understanding of the history, values, religions, culture and economic conditions of the Middle East, and who would—in this context—press for greater fairness, consistency and integrity in U.S. policy toward that area.

It is published by A.M.E.U. (Americans for Middle East Understanding, Inc.) whose directors are:

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All correspondence should be addressed to Room 538, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10027.

## Tours

Before you go to the Middle East, be sure to seek guidance from AMEU in making your arrangements. Our travel consultant, Miss Helen Cassile, is well informed about the current situation in the travel field.



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