

Bauer and many like him are not opposed to being personally decent. He is, for instance, in favor of voluntary charity. He just does not think there is a very precise analogy between voluntary charity and government assistance. Nor is there one, at least not in the sense that "charity" is associated with noblesse oblige. Assistance is something demanded by justice and compelled by compassion. But after sifting through Bauer's arguments, some of them quite leftist in tonality, and after agreeing with him that the argument from morality is the crucial one, it all comes down to a very elementary disagreement. "The moral obligation to help one's fellow man," writes Bauer, "rests on persons who are prepared to make sacrifices. It cannot be discharged by entities such as governments."

It seems like a classically conservative statement. But conservatives such as Edmund Burke and Emile Durkheim understood much better than Mr. Bauer and those who agree with him the connection between moral purpose and governmental legitimacy. I believe that, were Burke and Durkheim alive in the latter part of the twentieth century, with its massive and inescapable realities of world poverty, they would recognize that any state that failed to evidence plausible concern for the alleviation of such suffering would be inviting a challenge to its own legitimacy. And if they didn't recognize that, they would need instruction as much as Mr. Bauer does.

Richard John Neuhaus

Senior Editor, Worldview

EXCURSUS III

The New Face of Israel

Ten years ago James Parkes, an English clergyman and scholar with a distinguished record of combatting anti-Semitism, published a pamphlet, "The New Face of Israel," in which he made several original points of considerable polemical and psychological value. Arab hostility to Israel, he observed, is based on the view that Israel is a European settler-state, a colonial outpost, whose establishment resulted in expelling about a million native Palestinian Arabs and in expropriating much of their wealth. Parkes called on both Arabs and Israelis to recognize that this view is only partly correct, and insofar as it is correct it is relevant to the perpetuation of their mutual animosity.

For one thing, Parkes argued, the establish-

ment of Israel also resulted in the expulsion of over a million Jews from the Arab states and in the expropriation of the greater part of *their* wealth. Without denying the moral culpabilities of either side, Parkes urged both to recognize that a population exchange had taken place and to assume, as is reasonable, that the spoliation of Jewish wealth was probably equal in magnitude to that of Arab wealth.

More important, Parkes went on to argue, this population exchange has resulted in a fact which the founder of the Zionist state had not foreseen, and which most Arabs and Israelis seem determined to ignore—namely, that the majority (and it is an increasingly large majority) of Israel's *Jewish* population is of Middle Eastern origin.

In view of this incontrovertible fact, Parkes urged, the Arabs are hardly justified in regarding Israel as an alien intrusion into the Middle East to be eliminated at whatever cost in human life and global instability. What, for example, could be less alien to the Middle East than the large Iraqi Jewish community in Israel, the members of which to this day refer to themselves as Babylonian Jews? Or, to refer to a more recent tragedy: The great majority (maybe all) of the victims of the massacre at Kiryat Shemonah two months ago spoke neither English nor French nor German nor even Hebrew in the homes where they were murdered. They spoke Arabic.

It is not altogether surprising, Parkes remarked, that the Arabs continue to view Israel as an outpost of Western colonialism. Although Israel is not, demographically, a European settler-state, it often gives the impression of regarding itself as one. Parkes cites a statement by Yigal Allon (then Minister of Labor and subsequently Golda Meir's Deputy Prime Minister): "The Jewish people have returned not only to the land which was theirs in history but also to the continent from which they once sprang and to the nations among which they once dwelt." To this Parkes replied: "The fact is that the majority of the Jewish inhabitants of Israel have never, in the more than three thousand years of their recorded history, lived in any other continent or among any other nations."

In fact Allon's stated intention of living "among" the Arabs places him in the more liberal band of officialdom. More typical is a remark by the highly influential Finance Minister Pinchas Sapir: "Israel belongs to Europe culturally, politically and economically despite her being situated in the Middle East." In view of such statements it is not surprising that Arabs do indeed view Israel as an alien bridgehead in their region. Were Israel to present itself as a society that feels at home in the Middle East, Parkes suggested, a

major source of Arab antipathy would abate and finally disappear.

Parke's proposals were enthusiastically received ten years ago by certain Israeli intellectuals and leaders. They were struggling, primarily for domestic reasons, to correct the disparity between Israel's public, official face—which is almost unequivocally Western—and the Middle Eastern identity of the majority of Israel's population. The prejudice directed against the "Sephardim" (as the Middle Eastern Jews are called in Israel) by the dominant European minority, and their feelings of alienation and anomie, could only be countered, some thought, by validating the Sephardic identity through the organs of the Israeli state. They urged that the state make it its business to shape the emerging Israeli identity along primarily Middle Eastern lines, that the school curricula, the programs broadcast by radio and TV (government monopolies), the aesthetics of public architecture and design, the events and individuals commemorated as heroic—all should reflect the Middle Eastern nature of Israel's demography and geography. The Middle Eastern Jew, as a *Middle Easterner*, should be able to feel at home in the Jewish state. Indicative of the depreciation of the Middle Eastern identity is the fact that at the time Parkes wrote, less than 2 per cent of Israeli high-school students were studying Arabic rather than English or French as a second language. . . .

Official Israelis, then as now overwhelmingly European, dismissed the Parkes thesis outright. They offered a number of counterarguments: Israel can maintain its military superiority only by Westernizing its population; the Arabs themselves, as any visitor to Beirut could at once tell, are enthusiastically pursuing a Western identity themselves; Arabs would hate Israel no matter *what* its identity, among other reasons because they hate Jews; the Sephardim do not in any case have an identity worth preserving. "They are too much like the Arabs," Ben Gurion once said.

Ten years later the controversy might be usefully revived. The effortless and arrogant association of "Western" and "superior," or the even more silly association of "Western" and "modern" has, at least in the military context, suffered considerably in Vietnam and, closer to home for the Israelis, in the Yom Kippur War. The Israeli occupation of heavily populated Arab territories after 1967 gave most European Israelis a new experience, that of seeing, working among, and even living with large numbers of Arabs. While the results of this experience may not be unambiguous—we do, after all, interpret experience through our prejudices at least as often as we

permit experience to challenge our prejudices—the Arabs will at least have been demystified for many European Israelis. Many of them will have discovered that there could be a worse fate than becoming a bit more like them. European Israelis may have come to recognize the boorishness of their former belief that the Arab Jews (as we may call them) "have no culture."

Even more important, a new spirit of introspection is sweeping Israel today. It has already resulted in a change of government and may, before long, lead to more basic changes in the Israeli political system. Israel's new rulers will undoubtedly be of European origin (although most of them will have been born in Palestine), but in many respects their attitudes are likely to be different from their predecessors'. They know something rather fundamental has gone wrong in Israel during the past two decades or so. Maybe new perspectives will include the recognition that the *image* Israel presents, both to its own citizens and to its neighbors, needs to be changed. "Image" is an elusive and much abused concept. Clearly the problems that now beset Israel will not vanish by the acquisition of a more Middle Eastern image. Just as clearly, there is a subjective, psychological component to these objective problems that makes them as intractable as they now appear to be. Changing Israel's image is relevant to breaking down the ghetto walls which isolate Israel from its neighbors and the two main sections of its population from one another.

Michael Selzer

Political scientist teaching at Brooklyn College, currently at work on a psychoanalytic study of Benjamin Disraeli.

EXCURSUS IV

Portugal After April

Portugal, where some say the Virgin once appeared at Fátima to warn mankind against the Communist threat, has now become the first NATO country with Communist cabinet ministers. Extinction of the hated political police, implementation of freedom of speech and of the press, the prospect of ending seemingly endless colonial wars and the promise of free elections suddenly released pressures weighing heavily on the politically conscious population and induced a wave of euphoria which temporarily obscured