

Soviet Jews and Middle-Aged Zionism

Hillel Levine

Ideology is a discredited term in some circles. The geopolitical map of the twentieth century is pockmarked with ideologies gone bad. With the utopian thinking of the Enlightenment came the conviction that "Ideals can transform reality." But ideologies that undermined one repressive order in the name of progress became the zealous gods of another. Ideologists credit their Idea with omnipotence, borrowing the techniques of medieval casuistry to reduce the more blatant discrepancies between the ideal and real.

It is true, streets plastered with slogans and millions of people waving little red books *are* frightening. But the possibility that the technocrats shall inherit the earth is also somewhat disconcerting. The excesses to which "total" ideologies lend themselves should not blind us to other aspects of the ideological enterprise; bloody revolutions and totalitarian regimes do not exhaust the possibilities. Ideology can be a salutary social agent in reformulating the relationship between values and institutions according to shifting interests and experiences. What begins as a return to ideological purity can end up as ideological innovation. Thus, in many societies the legitimacy of the Old Guard is called into question by the Young Turks, and this encounter, while not pleasant, may be restorative, if only in forestalling ossification.

A model of mid-course corrections based on ideological innovation may be developing for Zionism. Zionism has had an enormous impact on contemporary history and is now an ideology in deep trouble. Its contradictions are crystallizing in the society whose creation it inspired, the State of Israel. An ideology which once projected a lively vision is now used by visionaries-grown-old to support the status quo.

In responding to the nineteenth-century crises of

Jews and Judaism, political Zionism tapped traditional Jewish messianism and fused it with the nationalism then spreading throughout Europe. As a messianic movement it had an ambiguous relationship to history, for it sought to resolve the tensions of history in time and space beyond history, or at least beyond European history. Through the self-assertion of Jews, a past of suffering and humiliation would be ended, but, at the same time, that past was essential to the substance and legitimacy of the Zionist "golden future."

The milieu of rising nationalism was itself ambiguous. Nationalism shaped the growth of Zionism and also made expedient its program for the removal of the Jew from the Gentile world. The nation-state was beginning to betray an intolerance of diversity such as had been characteristic of the Church in medieval society.

Zionism itself was a form of nationalism made possible and even necessary by other nationalisms. Like other national movements, Zionism had both to create and to restore. But the components of nationalism—land, language, culture, and political sovereignty—were more tenuous in Zionism than in most national movements. Ideological Zionism had all these components on its agenda, but it could provide little more than a thumbnail sketch for guidance and wishful goals for inspiration. To gather together Jews from different cultures and varying standards of living, to establish a just society, to pursue peace with all people, to invest the lives of individuals with meaning—these were the goals of Zionism and its early leaders. The complex of unfolding forces and institutions, however, was to have little relation to the Zionist blueprint. The new reality could not always be shaped to fit the contours of extrinsic ideology, for history imposed its own exigencies and limitations. The leaders of a growing network of institutions lost the ideological élan of their youth, and with so much invested in what they had developed, they paid less

HILLEL LEVINE is presently a teaching fellow in the Sociology Department at Harvard. He has travelled in recent years in both the USSR and Israel.

and less attention to what had been neglected. The rapid development of the Jewish settlement in Palestine favored the selection of practical men for the second generation of leadership, men for whom the ideology of Zionism was not the primary concern.

The transition from a highly mobilized and ideologically charged society to one of structures ruled by principles of rationality has been rapid. Though some of the ideals of Zionism are still compelling, in daily life it represents to most Israelis little more than a civil religion, occasionally evoked to explain the remaining rigors of Israeli life, such as military service and high taxes. To be sure, the ideology had not been sufficiently elaborated to deal with modern complexities, but there are crucial aspects of Zionism that urgently require institutional resolution. The full agenda was not dealt with in the all too brief ideological phase of Israeli society; Israel did not come to grips with its Jewish past, nor did it forge the national identity that can create solidarity among people with little more in common than vague memories of a shared past. It did not spell out the nature of its relationship to its neighbors, nor to Jews who were not planning in the immediate future to settle in Israel, nor, for that matter, to the rest of the world that did not share the Zionist vision.

Today, many Israelis call for the reconsideration of these neglected issues. The solutions born from relentless practicality have proved unsatisfying and, perhaps in the long run, ineffective.

The reality of Soviet Jewry may now be reopening the ideological enterprise and confronting Israel with the neglected implications of the old vision. The predicament of the Jews in the Soviet Union presents in a new collage some of the earliest themes of Zionism.

Israel is the country with which we Jews are bound spiritually and historically. . . . We shall never abandon the dream of being united with our people in our ancient homeland. . . . I do not doubt for a minute that some time I shall go after all and that I will live in Israel. This dream, illuminated by 2,000 years of hope, will never leave me. Next year in Jerusalem!

Such were the final remarks of Silva Zalmonson, on December 24, 1970, at the close of her trial in Leningrad. The verdict included two death sentences (later commuted) and long prison terms for the eleven Jews convicted of treason in their abortive efforts to escape to Israel. This was hardly the show-trial which the Soviets had planned. After months of interrogation, the K.G.B. was unsuccessful in extracting the type of confessions that make show-trials worth all the bother. No one confessed to working for the C.I.A. or even being a Zionist agent. Most of the defendants boldly asserted that they had been forced into trying to escape by incessant anti-Semitism, discrimination, and being deprived of the national rights

guaranteed to Soviet citizens. Outside the Soviet Union the trials gained little sympathy for the Soviet position that Jews were getting fair treatment. Even among other Communist parties, the response to the trials and harsh sentences was marked by high indignation. Although the desperate plot of these few Jews failed in one sense, it did succeed in focusing attention on the increasing militance of Jews who wanted to leave for Israel. Far from intimidating the Jews, as the Soviet government obviously intended, the trials moved Georgian Jews, for example, to write: "The time for fear has passed, the time to act has come." "Siberia or Israel" became the motto for many Soviet Jews, particularly for those who had lived through the Stalinist years and well knew the kinds of terror with which the regime could deal with dissent. Months of uncertainty followed.

In Israel, news of the Leningrad trials was received with a strange mixture of pride and outrage. It was Christmas Eve when news of the sentences came over the radio, and church bells were ringing as Jews poured into the streets, headed toward the Wailing Wall. Older Jews remembered Christmas Eves in Europe when it had been unsafe to walk the streets, and the history of that Zionism they had tried to leave behind was now repeating itself. A feeling of helplessness—a rare feeling for Israelis—permeated the night.

The persecution in the Soviet Union, the rebirth of Jewish consciousness, the assertiveness of Soviet Jews—these struck a profound chord in Israel. For years there had been hope that a sizable immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union would come to Israel some day. Not only would their training and talents make an important contribution to Israel's development as a modern industrial nation, but (and this was a barely guarded secret) many Israelis were worried by the "Levantine" nature taking root in Israel. An immigration of Western Jews might balance the influence of the hundreds of thousands of Jews from Arab countries who had been arriving since the State was founded and whose birthrates are higher than those of European Jews. Beyond this, Soviet Jewry symbolized the limb that had almost been severed but was now proving viable. The truths of Zionism were being vindicated in Leningrad at a time when they seemed unconvincing in Jerusalem. To a tired leadership, Soviet Jews represented youth and enthusiasm, but, as is often the case with symbols, they are more easily engaged at a distance.

Since those December days, over 12,000 Jews have arrived in Israel from the Soviet Union, and more seem to be on their way. The arrival process has been routinized, but the excitement surrounding each incoming plane of immigrants continues. It is not unusual for cabinet ministers and army officers to be in the welcoming parties. The newspapers carry sensational stories of courage and hardships endured, and especially the more accomplished immigrants be-

come minor celebrities. New arrivals are quartered in comfortable centers where their needs are tended to and where they begin studying Hebrew. Every effort is made to secure them appropriate work and permanent apartments.

Israel is a country made up primarily of immigrants and is not lacking experience with the problems of absorption, but never has it offered such amenities to immigrants, a fact which is not being overlooked by earlier immigrants. Apart from the usual problems of adjustment, most Soviet Jews seem happy to be in Israel and are well aware they are receiving preferential treatment. After the initial interest and generosity, however, the new immigrants are largely forgotten and left to their own devices. Perhaps this letdown is a factor in the varying degrees of disaffection now evident among some Soviet immigrants.

There is something unique about this immigration, and its absorption problems are qualitatively different. Of course, the adjustments necessary for both the indigenous population and the immigrant group are never easy, but the encounter between Soviet Jews and Israelis is more complex. Soviet Jews are not merely more refugees whom Israel helped to save and who must now be absorbed into the labor force. For Israel and for Zionism, the Soviet Jewish experience represents a new engagement with unsettled issues of the past. Between Israelis and Soviet Jews, perceptions and reality, symbols and meanings, interact in strange and sometimes painful ways.

To understand this interaction we must trace the roots of Zionism and of many Israelis to the Jewish experience in czarist Russia. Communism and Zionism clashed long before the Soviet expansion in the Middle East encountered Israel as an obstacle. Zionism and various brands of socialism, including bolshevism, developed at about the same time and contended for Jewish support. Zionists and Jewish socialists agreed that the lot of the Jew in the Russian Pale was insufferable and called for radical transformation, but they disagreed on the nature of the transformation required. The disagreement was essentially over the nature of anti-Semitism. For the socialist, anti-Semitism was caused by the class structure and by the position of the Jew within that structure. Anti-Semitism would disappear in a socialist society, which would allow the Jews to assimilate or form national collectives supporting Jewish culture but not particular class interests. The Zionists, to the contrary, insisted there would be no solution to the problem of anti-Semitism until the Jew removed himself from the Gentile world. Jewish restoration—cultural, political, and economic—was the positive dynamic of Zionism, but the perseverance of anti-Semitism gave the movement its early impetus.

Zionism really had two beginnings, both of which involved assimilated Jews who had experienced the failures of liberalization movements. In Russia, as-

similated intellectuals lost hope in the liberal reforms of Alexander II after the pogroms of 1881. The pogroms could not be dismissed as peasant uprisings stimulated by reactionary forces, and this led many assimilationists to conclude that anti-Semitism was an incurable social disease. Leo Pinsker, the spiritual father of the Zionist movement, wrote in his essay, "Auto-Emancipation": "We feel not only as Jews; we feel as men. As men, we, too, wish to . . . be a nation. . . ." Here was a succinct rejection of the type of emancipation paradigmatic in Western Europe from the time of the French Revolution. It was not enough for the state to grant the individual Jew formal, legal rights; it was not real emancipation when Jews were the passive recipients of rights. Pinsker argued that, if emancipation involved equal rights, it must involve the right to maintain a collective existence. Real emancipation means Jews taking the initiative. Only through a revitalized collective existence could the Jew secure the rights that he sought as an individual.

Only a few years later, another assimilated Jew reacted to the situation in the West as Pinsker had reacted to that in the East. Theodore Herzl was influenced by the failure of the values of the Enlightenment and the provisions of the Emancipation in France. The failure manifest in the Dreyfus trial and the climate surrounding it provoked Herzl's Zionist formulations and actions.

The Zionist assessment of anti-Semitism today finds vindication in the plight of Soviet Jewry. The restructuring of Russian society did not solve the Jewish problem. To be sure, there were periods when individual Jews advanced themselves in Soviet society, but traditional anti-Semitism is an abiding undercurrent, and the government invents new forms to suit its needs from time to time. This vindication of Zionism has much personal meaning for Israelis who in their youth had to decide between Zionism and communism as the solution to the Jewish problem. The fact that a few old Bolsheviks who survived the various purges now walk the streets of Tel Aviv reveals the extent to which the Zionists have been vindicated; they can now afford to be generous to those who chose the wrong solution.

If Soviet Jewry has vindicated the choice of Zionism over socialism, it also supports Zionism against another nineteenth-century ideology—assimilation. Influenced by cultural positivism, Zionism saw the Jew as inassimilable. At best, assimilation or conversion could be a solution for individual Jews, but the universalized claims of Gentile ideologies would not long have a place for the Jews.

The "return" of Soviet Jews is seen as a further failure of assimilation, and the biographies of many Jews who are seeking to emigrate or who have emigrated from the Soviet Union fit this early Zionist model of frustrated assimilation. For them, and even more for their parents, assimilation once seemed to be the solution, but no matter how much they surren-

dered their Jewish ways, they were no more acceptable to other Soviet citizens. The failure of some of the liberal trends in the past few years put an end to the hopes of many Jews that the system would be reformed and anti-Semitism finally eliminated. Many Soviet Zionists received their earliest experience in underground work through participating in the liberal movement, but as their consciousness of themselves as Jews increased, their disenchantment with the Soviet Union became more explicitly related to Jewish existence in particular.

Conversion to Zionism in Siberia is a major motif among Soviet Jews, and in this their experience corresponds to that of an earlier generation of Zionists, some of whom are now prominent in the Israeli government. In a recent interview, one Soviet Jew said: ". . . In the camp—the way we were treated—I learned what it is to be a Jew in Russia. I cannot ever forget that. . . . The hardest thing is to leave the country that you were born in, your friends, the graves of people that you loved. But I do not belong here. I do not think that Jews belong here any more. Jews have always been involved in the great Russian movements, from the Revolution on and even before. But they are still despised. They are treated as inferior people. I don't want to discuss Russian problems. Only that I think it is time that we Jews left Russian problems to the Russians."

But Soviet anti-Semitism cannot receive all the credit for the growth of Zionism in the Soviet Union. Despite the unrelenting war that communism has waged against Zionism since the early writings of Lenin, Zionism was never completely eradicated. Even after its organizational structures were destroyed in the 1930's, it survived and sought expression among Jews at various times. The founding of the State of Israel stimulated enthusiasm, but the 1967 war was the turning point that intensified both anti-Semitism and identification with Israel.

The persecution, defiance, and sacrifice inherent in the Soviet Jewish experience have important valence in Zionism. The irrational and vicious nature of discrimination against Jews in the Soviet Union is reminiscent of that past to which Zionism was a response. This suffering is not part of the memory of the native-born Israeli, who is thus cut off from much of his Jewish past. Soviet Jewry serves as the object lesson in the situation of Jews without Zionism. After the recent military victories of Israel, the image of the Jew as victim has lost its plausibility, but the tribulations of Soviet Jews recall the power of that image of Jewish existence. At the same time, the risks taken by Soviet Jews in asserting their Jewishness, their defiance and courage in trying to emigrate, can be well appreciated in Israel. Defiance, resoluteness, and sacrifice were important aspects of the early Zionist experience in building the land, and at this point Zionism needs a new supply of heroes. The pioneering

spirit is on the decline in Israel, the Kibbutz is losing its position of moral supremacy, a war-weary people are less enthusiastic about the stories of military exploits. Soviet Jewry provides examples of early Zionist heroism. What Israel can do these days with heroes is another matter.

The Soviet Jewish experience is an anomaly within Zionist categories. As refugees escaping persecution, Soviet Jews evoke the paternalism of Israelis. Israel has been a haven and rehabilitation center for many refugees. As heroes sacrificing and taking risks, they evoke the admiration of Israelis. This too corresponds to the image of Israel as a country of pioneers. Yet this dual attitude of paternalism and admiration may create incompatible expectations of Soviet Jews. That many Soviet Jews have material concerns not unlike those of other Israelis is viewed with dismay by those who identify with the heroic image of Soviet Jews. On the other hand, there is little Israeli understanding of the difficulties some activists have in adjusting to quiet, private lives and material rewards. This dual attitude toward Soviet Jews also affects the reaction of other immigrants, who resent the preferential treatment given Soviet Jews. These newcomers receive immediately what many others have not been able to achieve after many years in Israel. The heroic image reduces this resentment slightly by providing an explanation within Zionist categories for the privileged position of Soviet Jews in Israel.

For Soviet Jews, too, there is a difficult adjustment to be made between the Israel of their longings and the Israel of present reality. The patterns of adjustment are related to the types of Jewish commitment in the Soviet Union and the various motivations for emigrating to Israel.

Three major groups of Soviet Jews can be identified. The first, the Georgian Jews, for example, comes from peripheral areas of the Soviet Union, where Communist control was weaker and Jews were better able to maintain their autonomy as a religious community. Traditional Jews, they come to Israel in fulfillment of messianic longings. In this they are like the Jews from Yemen who arrived in Israel in the early years of the State. They perceive the unpleasant reality of Israel as a secular state, and there are reports of particular dissatisfaction among these Jews. Some have even expressed interest in returning to the Soviet Union. Insensitive government officials settled them in different parts of Israel, ignoring their wish to preserve the integrity of their communities. It is also possible that they will come into conflict with the rabbinical establishment, which may not recognize the credentials of their religious leaders or aspects of their tradition. One hopes that grounds for reconciliation will be found and that their cultural and economic adjustment will be eased.

The second group resembles the bulk of immigrants arriving in Israel since 1948. They had made some

sort of adjustment to the difficult situation in the Soviet Union. Perhaps they maintained some positive Jewish sense and even communicated it to their children, but they were not too aggressive in asserting their Jewishness nor in demanding religious and national rights. Perhaps it was a cherished dream that they would someday be able to go to Israel, but the risks were too great to do anything about it. Now, for a variety of reasons, they may be trying to leave. Some may be responding to the intensification of anti-Semitism which has made their present and future increasingly precarious. Some are worried about the blocked opportunities and tenuous Jewish commitments of their children. Others are primarily motivated by the desire to be reunited with their families in Israel, while yet others think of advancing themselves economically in Israel. All of these are now encouraged to take a chance and apply for a visa because of the random way in which people have been allowed to leave in the past year. The situation of this second group in Israel depends on economic adjustment and the manner in which children are able to realize their aspirations. Intensification of their Jewish commitment and identification with the State will help them deal with the frustrations that they are likely to encounter in their acclimatization. Because of the lower-keyed ideological climate surrounding this second group, less attention is being paid to their adjustment; and this may have unfortunate consequences.

It is the third group of Soviet Jews whose absorption may be more difficult, but is also the most promising. They are closest to the early Zionists in their zeal. Although this zeal has important symbolic value for Israel, it is not certain that it can be channeled to the advantage of Israeli society. These Soviet Jews are the activists.

A favorite song among the early pioneers was: "We have come to the Land to build and be rebuilt." In a moving letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the U.N. in 1970, a Soviet Jew wrote: "I believe that there will come a day and the happiness which now seems to be unbelievable will come true. But while I am outside of Israel, the awareness that the Homeland is being created without my participation gives me unbearable pain." The early Zionists had the opportunity to create a new society, and the institutions they created spoke of their experiences and concerns, pointing toward the realization of particular values. In the process, these early Zionists, and waves of others who arrived after them, were rehabilitated and transformed. But those institutions now exist—some more, some less continuous with the values they originally embodied. Participating in a society where the central institutions are already shaped provides more opportunities to "be rebuilt" than to "build." A Soviet Jewish film-maker, anticipating his life in Israel, said: "I am very excited

about the future, excited to be alive at this time. The Jewish State is still new." The perception of Israel as a new society and therefore open to influence is a limited truth. The degree to which institutions and values in Israeli life are open to influence will make the difference between fulfillment and frustration for many Soviet Jews. The problem is somewhat different from that Israel had in absorbing other immigrants. Since the founding of the State and the formalization of its institutional structures, most Jews coming to Israel have been more in need of rehabilitation, and those who came to "build" could be absorbed by existing structures. Among skilled professionals and intellectuals there were, at times, surpluses and limited opportunities for mobility, resulting in occasional brain-drains. But the economy at the present time can make better use of professionals, and the rapid expansion of higher education will provide more opportunities for intellectuals. The influence these Soviet Jews want to have touches dimensions of Israeli society less open to change and participation.

The difficult adjustment for Soviet Jewish activists is evident on both organizational and ideological levels. Organizationally, their ability to shift styles of political activity will be crucial if they are to have any impact. In the Soviet Union, because of the suppression of Zionism, their activities were conducted in small, subterranean cells with loose, informal connections to other Zionist cells in the Soviet Union. Often, a group of Zionists in one city did not know another. But they all saw themselves as the local custodians of Jewish interests. If they were suspected by the Soviets of being Zionist agents, they enjoyed thinking of themselves as such. This over-identification with Israel as an undifferentiated policy may make it difficult for them, once in Israel, to adjust to the political institutions and processes by which its priorities are ordered. This can lead to sharp alienation and/or intensified political activity, neither of which may be appropriate to the political context. In a recent hunger strike outside governmental offices in Jerusalem, similar to the strikes which became an effective tactic in Moscow, a recent immigrant from the Soviet Union declared: "Our Foreign Ministry does not understand our situation in Russia." This is but one example of a combined identification and resentment experienced by some Soviet Jews in Israel. The coalitions that certain parties are making with Soviet Jews could result in new alignments within the government. The more nationalistic parties, in particular, are trying to recruit Soviet Jewish support. If enough Soviet Jews arrive in Israel, however, and group solidarity develops, they may form a new party altogether. The success of such an effort seems unlikely, since previous efforts at "ethnic politics" in Israel have failed, but politics is not always ruled by precedent.

The clash between the activists already in Israel and the Israeli government over Israel's response to

the Soviet Union's treatment of Jews may be particularly bitter. Because of the success of their activities in the Soviet Union, many of the activists consider themselves experts in ways which the Israeli government does not always appreciate. Because of their former involvements with the liberal and other national movements, Soviet Jews see the problem of Soviet Jewry in broader context. The Israeli government, on the other hand, has consistently pointed out the uniqueness of the problem of Soviet Jewry and tried to remain aloof from the broader issues of Soviet society. The activities on behalf of friends and family left behind will keep these activists mobilized and may lead them to take on issues the Israeli government would prefer to leave alone.

The most important impact of Soviet Jews may be on the ideological level. Many of these new immigrants are well-educated, self-conscious, and independent-minded. Years of isolation taught them self-reliance, and they have come to think of themselves as people in an environment hostile to their inner realities. Having vivid memories of their Zionist conversions and being highly mobilized, they will not be prepared to retire to comfortable apartments or to resign themselves to middle-aged Zionism.

The defense counsel at the Leningrad trial said of one of the accused Jews: "Kuznetsov says, 'I am a self-taught man' without knowing that this is precisely his trouble. He learns English on his own. On his own he falls under the sway of religious and other harmful ideologies. Thus, at the interrogation on 18 June, Eduard states that the 'world of religious quest' has taught him to look upon the real world 'from a somewhat different angle.' The self-taught man never as much realized that he was in the grip of error." Though the circumstances that generated the early Zionist movement may be similar to the circumstances that turn assimilated Soviet Jews into Zionists today, the content and emphases of the new Zionism will reflect dramatically new circumstances. The "Second Aliyah," the group of Russian immigrants out of which many of Israel's leaders came, were not as assimilationist as the earlier Zionists had been. Most of them were rebelling against a Jewish normative structure which was in a state of disintegration. The new Zionists have no Jewish normative structure against which to rebel.

Most Soviet Jews accept the "scientific atheism" which was an important part of their education. For others, rejecting the values of Soviet society is just that much more complete as they become interested in religion and the supernatural. Religious practices and beliefs are part of the organic whole of Judaism to which they seek to relate. While, for some, religion may be a phase of Jewish self-assertion to be conveniently discarded once in Israel, others experience a more profound engagement. Except for a very few Soviet Jews who, under the most adverse circum-

stances, were able to maintain traditional Judaism all through their years in the Soviet Union (e.g., a few Hassidim), the religion of the Soviet Jew will be similar to his Zionism—iconoclastic and syncretic. The religious virtuosi among them may even gain something of a following in an Israel which occasionally questions its secularism. Such religious enthusiasm is not calculated to please the rabbis who try to keep a closed shop and who can muster some influence in the government. Because they have no formal religious training and have absorbed diverse spiritual elements, it may be much more difficult for Soviet Jewish immigrants to submit to rituals and religious authority.

The problem is similar to that of the Marranos in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These Jews from Spain and Portugal, who had been forced to convert to Christianity, began escaping to northern Europe, Italy, and the Ottoman Empire, where they rejoined Jewish communities. While they had been several generations removed from Judaism, many Marranos made genuine efforts to accept rabbinic Judaism. The Jewish communities which received them were helpful and encouraging, but for some Marranos the new religion was too dissonant with their childhood experiences and with deeply held beliefs, making it impossible for them to become normative Jews. The tensions which developed had important consequences for the spread of certain anti-nomian movements and other forces, which weakened the influence of traditional Judaism and the authority of the rabbis.

It is not very likely that Soviet Jews will foment a major heresy in Judaism, but it is possible that some will use their peculiar experience as the basis for creating new religious symbols. There is no telling what zealous, self-taught men who view the world from a "somewhat different angle" are likely to do.

Of course, we do not know now the shape of the impact that will be made by these new immigrants. What we do know is the suitability of a segment of Soviet Jewry to be ideological innovators because of their personalities, their past experiences, and their present positions within Israeli society. Whether they turn out to be prophets at the gates, *luftmenschen* in cafés, or orators in the parliament, they will challenge Israel to confront some of the unsettled issues of Zionism.

Isaac Babel, the Soviet writer, wrote: "Passion rules the world." He chronicled the chaos and destruction of the early years of Soviet rule, and spoke of passions far removed from the wreckage of Jewish communities in the war-wasted land through which he passed. Babel could hardly have imagined that fifty years later the children and grandchildren of a broken Jewry would have passion—passion for Israel and for Zionism. For an Israel growing old before its time, Soviet Jews can help to revive the ideological passion of its Zionist youth.