

Israel—the Years Ahead

We put the following two questions to a variety of spokesmen and scholars: "Is this the time for the U.S. to change its policy toward the Middle East, and, if so, in what directions should it be changed?" "What should Israel do differently in order to look forward to its next twenty-five years with confidence?" We asked participants to respond to either or both questions—or, if comfortable with neither, simply to comment as they thought appropriate to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the State of Israel. The result, we believe, suggests something of the range and depth of differences that mark current debate about the Middle East.—Ed.

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Unpredictable and potentially inflammable, the Middle East is currently experiencing an unusual degree of tranquillity and stability. For the United States this is a moment for satisfaction, if not yet of optimism or rejoicing.

The U.S. has played a major role in producing a climate of greater realism in which some Arab states are prepared to recognize Israel, if certain conditions are met, and in which the desire to resort to armed force to obtain a solution has been significantly reduced. It was the chief force in achieving in August, 1970, a cease-fire, now over thirty months old, between Egypt and Israel. It has reached an understanding with the Soviet Union on the need to prevent acts of hostility in the area and to localize any conflicts that occur. It has maintained the balance of power in the area by its supply of arms and aid to Israel without forfeiting all relationships with Arab states.

The starting premise of the United States is that the provisions of Security Council Resolution 242—a cease-fire, Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and acceptance by all of Israel's sovereignty and security—form the basis on which a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict must be reached. But the U.S. is now more aware than it was in 1969 that any general solution cannot result from the intervention of the Great Powers or the U.N. but only through the parties concerned actively participating in, and agreeing to, a solution. The U.S. accepted the view of Israel that, after three wars, it is entitled to secure negotiated borders with which it can defend itself.

Since the time when the Arab Higher Committee refused to begin discussions with the Jewish Agency or other organizations in Palestine, the Arabs have been unwilling to negotiate with Israelis. But it is not to the long-term advantage of any nation to maintain unduly the present situation of "no war and no peace" with its high state of risk.

It is difficult at the moment to envisage any rapid move to an overall settlement. The present U.S. policy of urging the contending parties to reach an interim agreement as a step toward fulfillment of Resolution 242 is an unheroic but pragmatic approach. The task is to find limited areas of agreement, both substantive and procedural. This would allow the reopening of the Suez Canal and the perpetuation of the cease-fire. It would indicate on the part of Israel a willingness to withdraw a certain distance, probably twenty-five miles from the Canal, and on the part of Egypt a virtual recognition of Israel and a demonstration of its interest in peace.

The U.S. must leave the parties themselves to decide the nature of the Egyptian presence in Sinai—a small military force or a civilian, police-type, force—and the relationship of an interim agreement to a more general, final settlement. Clearly, if the U.S. would welcome a greater Israeli withdrawal in Sinai and a broader interpretation of the Egyptian presence there, it cannot accept the Egyptian view that entrance into talks and the reopening of Suez must wait until total Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories.

Nor can the U.S. accept as final the rejection by

President Sadat on September 28, 1972, of any partial settlement and of direct negotiations. To meet the procedural problem the U.S. has proposed proximity talks in which an intermediary would shuttle between the two sides. But, though Israel has approved such talks as an acceptable second best, Egypt has rejected the idea. As a helpful intermediary the U.S. might induce Egypt to accept a peaceful settlement, which inevitably will weaken the present security position of Israel. Yet, though it is salutary that the U.S. no longer insists on its own plans, such as those outlined in Secretary of State Rogers's speech in December, 1969, and urges the parties to negotiate a settlement, it cannot force them to do so.

U.S. policy toward Israel has been influenced by a variety of factors and motives: its support for, and commitment to, Israel, its refusal to yield to Arab pressure, its desire to contain and later to reach a *détente* with the Soviet Union, its aim to reduce tension with the whole Middle East and to foster stability in the Persian Gulf, its eagerness to control terrorism, its concern for oil supplies.

U.S. support of Israel has also been the result of mixed motives: approval of the moral mission and legitimacy of Israel in the land of the ancestors of its people, admiration for the remarkable economic success and military prowess of an embattled democracy while surrounded by implacable enemies, logical response to internal political forces and pressures within the U.S. and desire to see Israel as a friend of the U.S. policy of containment of the Soviet Union after that country began its military support of Egypt.

The United States has become since 1962 the principal supplier of arms to Israel—though it has not stopped the flow of weapons to pro-Western Arab states—and its main political and diplomatic defender. Yet it has never approved a blank check for supplies and aid to Israel; it has only ensured the existence of a balance of power sufficient to deter aggression and ensure stability. It was in response to the 120 MIG 21-J fighters and 12 Sukhoi-17 fighters that the Soviet Union sent to Egypt, other weapons sent to Syria and French Mirages to Libya in 1972-73 that the U.S. kept open its supply of weapons and aid to Israel. Currently the supply includes not only F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers, A-4 Skyhawk light-attack planes, helicopter gunships and missiles but also technical and manufacturing assistance for the arms industry of Israel and for its Super Mirage, an advanced jet fighter of its own design powered by the General Electric J-79 jet engine. This supply of arms and aid has been the basis of deterrence of Arab aggression and has enabled Israel to retaliate against Arab terrorists.

The ability of Israel to defend itself has enabled the U.S. to resist Arab pressure and allowed it to bolster up the moderate Arab regimes. Sadat learned



that he could not play off the superpowers against each other when the U.S. did not immediately offer aid or military support in the summer of 1972 after his expulsion of Russian advisors. Indeed, the position of the U.S. in the area has become stronger as a result of its alerting of the 82nd airborne division and other units and its evident support of Hussein against the three hundred Russian-made Syrian tanks invading Jordan in September, 1970. Hussein emerged from this incident with greater authority, suggesting he will not allow himself to be pulled along by Egypt in any future war of attrition. And the U.S. has re-entered the Arab world with the resumption of diplomatic relations with Yemen and the Sudan in 1972 and the establishment of an office in Iraq and the increase of economic aid to Arab nations.

The USSR has been persuaded by a combination of U.S. policy and Israeli action to assist in the search for a peaceful settlement. The real possibility of the Soviet Union being caught up in hostilities became apparent in 1970 with the downing of Soviet pilots of MIGs and the Israeli attacks on Egyptian missile sites. The Soviet military support, including surface-to-air missiles (SAM-6), accompanied by Russian advisors and automatic approval of the Arab political position, remains. But the Soviet Union has exercised restraint in its arms shipments and has not sent to Egypt the MIG 23 fighter-bombers and medium-range surface-to-surface missiles that can strike deep into Israel.

The Russians learned through the dramatic actions of the U.S. in September, 1970, that Russian-supported Syrian aggression would not be tolerated and, accordingly, reduced the number of its ships in the area. Diplomatically they have responded to the policy outlined by Nixon in his February, 1970, message that the Soviets can play a role in the Middle East but that the effort to seek predominance would be viewed "as a matter of grave concern." At the Moscow Summit Meeting of May, 1972, the Soviet Union seemed to accept the conclusion of Nixon's State of the World message of February, 1972, that "injecting the global strategical rivalry into the region is incompatible with Middle East peace and with *détente* in U.S.-Soviet relations." The USSR has

now urged on its Arab clients the desirability of a peaceful solution to the conflict.

The U.S. has been, and must continue to be, interested in maintaining stability in the Persian Gulf area as in the rest of the Middle East. By its stimulation of a regional approach for the resources in the area and its friendship with Iran and Saudi Arabia, the moderate Arabs, including Jordan, have been encouraged to play a more active role. The concern for stability has also led the U.S. to condemn the activity of the Palestinian terrorists, both as undesirable in itself and as an obstacle to a peaceful settlement. This concern logically led to the U.S. veto in the Security Council in September, 1972, of the resolution which unilaterally condemned Israel for its reprisal raids against Palestinian guerrilla bases in Syria and Lebanon after the Olympic murders but did not condemn the murders themselves.

The argument most recently used for a change in U.S. policy to Israel is the "energy crisis." The dimensions of the oil problem are disputed, but it is evident that the U.S. in the 1970's will need to import from the Middle East far more oil than the current 3½ per cent of its consumption. It is argued that this oil need, trade and strategic interests, the drain on the dollar and the possibility of large sums in the hands of Arabs who might disrupt the international monetary system will lead the United States to look more favorably on the Arab position in the conflict.

But this view is based on an exaggeration of the problem for the West and on an implicit view that appeasement of Arab states will benefit the U.S. It may well be that it is the oil companies themselves,

in their desire to raise prices and to overcome the opposition of environmentalists, who have produced "the energy crisis." Nonexistent oil crises have already been declared—in 1919-20, 1940 and 1947-48.

Appeasement today, as in the past, has not succeeded. French refusal to criticize Arab actions and end the supply of arms did not prevent the nationalization of French concerns in Algeria in 1971 and in Iraq in 1972, nor allow it to escape from the special agreement by which France pays a higher than market price for Iraqi oil. Collective action by the West, particularly in OECD, might ensure there will be no undue increase in the posted price of oil by OPEC nor any attempt to hold up supplies to the West as in 1956 and 1967.

The response of the U.S. to the energy problem should not be to renounce the commitment to Israel, but to formulate a coherent energy policy and crash program. This should include the development of production in Alaska's North Slope, with its known reserves of about fifteen billion barrels, an increase of imports from Canada and Latin America, the stimulation of oil and natural gas fields in Holland and the North Sea and the more rapid internal development of technology appropriate for other fuels, such as offshore oil, oil shale, tar sands and coal. By 1980 the development of other energy supplies should end any fear of dependence on Middle East oil even if consumption rises dramatically.

The U.S. commitment to Israel must remain. The task now is to persuade the Arabs of the desirability of a negotiated settlement on the lines of Resolution 242.

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The question is: What must Israel do differently if it is to look forward with confidence to its next twenty-five years? Israel has undoubted military superiority among the Middle Eastern nations. This is the principal source of its national security not only in the immediate physical sense but also psychologically. What might be described as a siege mentality pervades the land. This arose from the historical plight of Jews and from the embattled birth and history of Israel as a nation. Today, however, this response to predicaments and approach to future needs is inappropriate and increasingly self-defeating.

It would be folly for the Israeli government to rely over the longer run on military superiority for its security. Western powers, including the United States, are doubtful allies in the event of Arab-Israeli

hostilities that could threaten a confrontation with the Soviet Union. In the post-Vietnam mood of American society it is extremely unlikely that U.S. forces would be committed to the defense of a foreign nation. This would hold also for Israel, at least in the foreseeable future, whose political support in the United States Congress and influence on successive administrations has, moreover, often been exaggerated. It is unlikely that the dictates of conscience, or the financial and political power that might be rallied to the support of the State of Israel in an emergency, could lead even to a limited U.S. military commitment, such as naval support or air cover.

The Arab powers are developing more disciplined military forces and are achieving a higher level of sophistication in weapons technology. Their com-

bined forces and geographic position could give them military superiority in a few years, and this could be made effective if there is also substantial political unification among them. Genuine unity among the principal Arab powers seems unlikely; they may nevertheless achieve this sufficiently for the purpose of vanquishing the common enemy and the source of grievances and insecurity.

Conceivably, then, the viability of the State of Israel might be seriously threatened ten years from now or even sooner by the combined Arab neighbors. While heroic and honorable, the siege mentality is of doubtful effectiveness even as Israeli military supremacy is eroding. To this observer it appears that the time is at hand—from an Israeli standpoint, may now be most propitious—for serious negotiations that might gain for Israel her long-sought principal goals.

To achieve recognition and a place among other nations in the Middle East and to eliminate the harassment of frontiers will require compromises that also permit Arab leadership to satisfy aggrieved populations. Negotiations from strength make sense only if a power is prepared to utilize its superiority to achieve settlements that are mutually satisfactory or mutually unsatisfactory. There are Israeli-occupied territories which will not be essential to the nation's security if Israel is granted recognition. Above all, the Sinai Peninsula should be restored. Current evidence of Israeli settlement of the Sinai raises the

specter of a Middle Eastern Alsace-Lorraine.

Embittered generations of Palestinian refugees hovering resentfully on the borders in desert ghettos are antithetical to peace in the area. More efforts can be made to permit foreign Arabs to visit their relatives in Israel in order to spread the word that Arab citizens may lead prosperous lives there. The resettlement of some Arab refugees on the land or in jobs for which they qualify in Israel would further reduce hostility. For others, some measure of compensation could be undertaken without the label of indemnification which would imply Israeli guilt for the exodus at the time of partition. An Israeli initiative to internationalize Jerusalem as an "open city" controlled by neither side might present a positive opening to negotiations.

In sum, in the event of a major crisis the Israeli government must realize that neither the Western powers nor the African nations it sought to cultivate can be regarded as dependable allies. Further, Israel should realize that the principal usefulness of its current military superiority is as a means to initiate negotiations for the achievement of its principal and rightful goals. Finally, such negotiations must permit Arab governments to satisfy the aims of significant sections of their population. Without this satisfaction the Arab nations cannot be dependable neighbors inasmuch as their governments would continue to be led or threatened by coalitions of angry insurgents.

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Is this the time for a change in United States policy toward Israel? The question is predicated on a huge assumption: that there is such a beast called United States Policy toward Israel. I strongly suspect that this is not the case, but, rather, that there exist alternating currents of policy—indeed, contradictory formulations. This is inevitable given the fact that foreign policy emanates not simply from the Department of State and not simply from the advisor on foreign policy to the executive branch but also, lest we forget, from congressional sources as well. As a result, we should first try to distinguish who is making what sorts of policy toward Israel and toward what end.

The State Department seems riddled by contradictory factions, but I do believe it is an open secret that the Arabist faction holds the upper hand at this moment. The reasoning used by this faction, which favors changing United States policy toward Israel, is based on the "even hand" concept that the United

States should cease foreign military aid to Israel. Failing that, it argues that equal amounts of military favors to Arab nations should be supplied in exchange for neutrality or support by the Arab nations of U.S. foreign policy goals in a non-Middle East context and for a far more neutral Arab standpoint toward Soviet foreign policy. The general reasoning goes that the United States needs a stable, neutral Middle East and all of the oil supplies that would flow from such stability; and that they need this far more than they do an Israeli deterrent or even its rhetoric about democracy.

The Arabists further declare that current United States policy is destined to compel Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and the other Arab nations to accept Soviet hegemony over the region: thus the U.S. will lose an enormous chunk of the cold war by default. The argument further goes that Israel at no point can really be counted upon to support American policy initiatives elsewhere in the world; and that it is doubtful



that this support, even were it to be forthcoming, would be worth much to begin with. The various State Department initiatives undertaken during the first Nixon Administration by Joseph Sisco and William P. Rogers, and their support for the Jarring Commission, clearly indicate that the United States interprets the United Nations cease-fire formula of 1967 far more in terms of an Israeli territorial roll-back than in terms of a guaranteed sovereignty and legitimacy to be provided by secure boundaries for Israel.

The Israelist faction in the Department of State is far more amorphous and seemingly less well organized than the Arabist faction. Indeed, it is not so much a group favoring Israel as it seems to be a coalition in support of "balance-of-power" politics. Old-line anti-Communists based at European desks, and many people of humanistic and democratic persuasion, somehow feel that the existence of Israel provides a counterforce in the Middle East that no amount of overt United States military aid could possibly equal. In effect the argument is that historical conditions are such that the Arab nations, whether of the more traditional bourgeois variety or newer socialist variety, cannot be expected to support U.S. policy initiatives or roll back Soviet penetration, except where the latter becomes excessive and overly interferes in the domestic affairs of the area. Hence, the theory goes, Israel provides a balance and leverage for United States foreign policy at a minimal cost in men and matériel.

The Israeli faction in the State Department is primarily supported by congressional figures ranging from Henry Jackson to Jacob Javits. The makers of politics, unlike the makers of policy, are acutely sensitive and responsive to the large so-called Jewish vote; and indeed more so with the vote at present evenly divided between Democratic and Republican figures. Now that this bloc is up for grabs, declarations in favor of even greater economic and military aid to Israel serve the natural constituency of many congressional figures—especially from the industrial Northern and Western states, where there is a large and influential Jewish population. Insofar as effective initiatives must themselves reflect legislative currents, one can expect United States policy to remain

firmly anchored in limbo. That is to say, it will provide guarantees for Israeli survival and even overt military support on a modest scale for that one nation in the area which clearly represents an isomorphism with American democratic society. Even if the formal structure of Israeli politics differs sharply from that of U.S. politics, the need in both societies to represent the "will of the people" distinguishes them from the Arab states.

On the other hand, one can expect the State Department *realpolitikers* to become increasingly concerned about demands emanating from the OPEC oil-producing countries and increasingly willing to sacrifice Israeli ambitions in favor of Arab neutrality. The popularity of this position with militant minority groups and so-called anti-imperialist groups in the United States should not be discounted as a factor lending a certain constituency of its own to this Arabist posture within the State Department.

My own feelings are that the question of changes in United States policy toward Israel is far less urgent now than it was even six years ago when the cease-fire was declared. For during this period Israeli military might has grown considerably and, far more important, so has the capacity of Israeli society to generate hardware of its own. Indeed, Israel produces enough military supplies to make it one of the leading exporters of small hardware ammunitions. This fact alone is enough to shrink the significance of U.S. policy initiatives in the area. While Arab dependence on the Soviet Union grows deeper, despite current ambiguities about Soviet military personnel and their presence in Arab lands, the Israeli potential for military self-management, for an independent deterrence, has grown enormously.

The real gulf between Israel and the United States on foreign policy questions is over the matter of diplomatic initiatives. Israel increasingly considers itself to be a major small power in the Middle East, and would infinitely prefer direct negotiations with the Arab states to settle claims arising out of the 1967 war and out of the 1948 resettlement of the Palestinian Arabs. Thus Israel's impulses are to minimize big-power initiatives in general; and, insofar as the United States initiatives are part of that syndrome, to curb its propensity for unilateral big-power settlement of the area's difficulties. Israel is certainly unsure of the contents and substance such initiative could provide; but far beyond that, she considers that the very act of direct negotiations would go a long way toward providing the sort of legitimacy that would establish her security—and tranquilize the area for years to come, if not indefinitely.

What must Israel do differently . . . ? If the burden of this question is survivalist in character, then the answer is that Israel should do more of the same in the next quarter century: high modernization, high militarization and high mobilization. These three "m's" may not make as pretty music as the three

"B's," but the effectiveness of this policy can hardly be faulted on power grounds. From a scant beginning—with scarcely a decent road connecting Tel Aviv to Jerusalem; with Israel itself divided by a wall; with a population of barely one million Jews; with only the faint hint of the ancestry of a common language—from those bare beginnings Israel has become the pivotal military force in the area. A country united—at least with respect to external threat—having defensible borders and boundaries, demonstrating a reunification of ancient and modern capitals and with a population of approximately three million Jews. Israel is, after all, a nation-state with muscle and might and a national homeland for millions of displaced Jews from throughout the Middle East, the Soviet Union and Central Europe. And beyond that, for disenchanting Jews who prefer a Jewish state to a simple Hebrew consciousness and who much prefer the center to the diaspora.

Thus, at one level to say that Israel should do something different is by implication to ask this nation to turn its back on the sources of its success. And I daresay that this has become a commonplace among well-intentioned commentators and critics from other nations.

And yet there is a sense in which this question is of paramount importance and deserves serious response—because Israel is, and has always claimed to be, more than a typical nation-state with typical acts of barbarism permitted to the nation-state in the name of law, wisdom and tradition. So the real question comes down to what Israel must do differently if it is not to be despised and hated by members of other despicable and hateful nation-states. That is to say, the hidden agenda behind that question is what Israel must do if it is to prevent any deterioration in world opinion and world sentiment.

In an earlier article carried in *Worldview* ("Israel and the Third World," September, 1972) I outlined a minimum series of conditions for Israel's moral, not just economic or military, survival. The *first* was a bold recognition on the part of Israeli authorities of the multinational, multiracial and multireligious nature of Israeli society. This would have great benefit

for world Jewry, no less than for the inner dynamics of Israel. *Second* was a profound change in Israeli political leadership to reflect better the demographic and economic role of the oriental Jews and the Christian and Arab populations of Israel. The continuation of East European Ashkenazic leadership is akin to the persistence of the Virginia dynasty after the start of the United States Republic. The breakup of that dynasty strengthened and did not weaken American society. The same could be expected if Israel makes a similar opening to presently excluded or suppressed sectors within its own society.

The *third* condition I mentioned is the unfinished business of the first twenty-five years—and that means an end to the theocratic state. The process of secularization is irrepressible and is the last stage in the modernization process. At a time when Arab nations have dangerously turned back toward theological justification and rationalization for political behavior, Israel should serve notice that it does not intend to emulate this turn away from modernism and toward fanaticism. The threat of a "holy war" can best be met by Israel with a firm determination to maintain its identity and its national character without pushing to a new stage of escalation in the current tragedy of Middle East conflict and terror.

To look forward with confidence is thus not to look forward to an anxiety-free situation but, rather, a morally worthwhile situation. Before imposing solutions in the name of futurology, it should be carefully noted how frequently the Christian world, the Third World, the democratic world, all somehow expect less hypocrisy, less charlatany, less bellicosity from Israel than from their Arab neighbors or, for that matter, from any other nation. This is both a blessing and a curse, for, having assumed the burdens of being *both* the moral vanguard of the Jewish people and the military vanguard of the Jewish state, Israel is attempting a difficult feat indeed. It must in effect square a circle, a feat rarely, if ever, performed by a modern nation. Even the miracles performed from Prince Moses to Prince Metternich have not yet included the great wonderment of fusing universal moral goals with national political claims.

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The State of Israel is an unwelcome intruder in Arab lands. Its intrusion was made possible by the disintegration of the Ottoman empire during the First World War and by the Hitler terror during the Second. During the First War, while the eyes of Europe were fixed greedily on the

treasures of Near Eastern trade and control, Britain and France offered contradictory promises of political independence to Arabs and a homeland to Jews in exchange for their aid against the Turks. During the Second War Hitler perpetrated the extermination of millions of Jews while the Western world did

virtually nothing either to alleviate the wholesale slaughter or to provide a refuge for Jews. The guilt created by this Western passive complicity in Hitler's crime led to the narrow margin of victory for the vote in the United Nations in 1947 by which Palestine was partitioned. That vote for partition, against the will of the vast majority of the native occupants of Palestine, opened a wound in world peace that has not healed. The State of Israel exists today as much in consequence of the Western world's avarice and guilt as in consequence of the determined efforts of those who believe in the necessity for a Jewish state and have worked for its establishment in what is euphemistically called the "Promised Land."

Against this somber background Israel now celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of her existence. No one can deny that many Jews in all ages have considered Palestine to be their God-given homeland or that many have expended herculean efforts to realize there a Jewish state. What cannot be glossed over, however, are the tremendous toll in human suffering the Jewish dream has entailed and the threat to world peace posed today by continuing conflict in the Middle East over the realization of that dream. The State of Israel was founded with the support of the Western world, against the wishes of Arabs; and it is sustained today primarily by massive aid from the United States. These are the facts with which any assessment of Israel's future must reckon.

Israel's major problem thus centers in the legitimacy of her existence as a state. This lies at the heart of the Arab refusal to negotiate directly with Israel. Israel's neighbors properly object to the world's creation of the Mandate in 1922 and the U.N. partition of Palestine in 1947. They point out that the Western world had neither the moral right nor the legal authority to create a Jewish territory in Palestine.

The Israeli state likes to brush this objection aside as a quibble, but it will not go away. People whose families owned land in Palestine for generations are dispossessed, dispersed and unable to return to their homeland, while any Jew in the world is welcomed to a land neither he nor his family for generations back ever saw. Some seek legitimacy for the state by claiming God's promise of this land to the descendants of Abraham, but such a dubious claim will not be seriously accepted even by thousands of Israelis themselves.

Israel's legitimacy as a state rests in part on the decisions of the powers and in part on Israel's military strength, and the world is presented with a demonstration of the despotic principle that might makes right. This is not a foundation on which to build an enduring state, as Israel knows to her sorrow. The inescapable fact is that the Israeli state endures less as a matter of right than of sufferance. A major step toward peace in the Middle East will have been tak-

en when that fact is soberly accepted and seriously pondered. An Israeli stance of accommodation and possible retreat in 1967, for example, could have produced peace in Palestine. Such an attitude could still arouse Arab and world sentiment for Israel, which continued arrogance and self-righteousness will not.

A second problem, related to the first, is the Israeli insistence on being a Jewish state. The meaning of the phrase is unclear, involving as it does the question, "Who is a Jew?" The problem of being a Jewish state is an Israeli problem, about which the world can say little. A strict application of the principle, however, that only Jews can be first-class citizens of the state, is central to the conflict in Palestine. It legislates all non-Jews out of the state unless they are content with second-class status. There is little evidence that Israel is struggling seriously with this problem; indeed, Israel finds itself in the awkward position of asking secular America, which Jews are the first to insist should remain a secular state, to maintain Israel as a Jewish state.

Also disturbing is the widely held belief that Israel need be in no hurry to make peace with her neighbors. Preemptive, precautionary and punitive raids into surrounding areas underscore Israel's military might, but the diplomatic process stalls. So long as the United States will supply enough war machinery to keep Israel militarily superior to her neighbors, the status quo can be maintained. The Middle East thus becomes a test point in the struggle between the Great Powers.

The arms race in the Middle East is one of the ominous events of our time, where the opposing wills to domination on the part of the major powers, inflamed as they are by Arab-Israeli counterclaims and armed conflict, can lead to Armageddon. Israel's primary need is to be accepted as an equal partner in the Middle Eastern community of nations; what Israel's intransigence and military successes have not yet been able to accomplish an Israeli attitude of compromise and conciliation might quickly achieve. Her uncompromising position on Jerusalem is by itself an effective barrier to peace.

The United States pursues what is officially called an even-handed policy in the Middle East and accordingly continues to pour millions of dollars in aid



into Israel and Jordan. We maintain a consulate in the Arab sector of Jerusalem, refusing to sanction Israel's claim to the entire city, and we keep our embassy in Tel Aviv, even though Israel has made Jerusalem the capital city. Nevertheless our government has not effectively insisted that Israel renounce the fruits of military conquest or cease her development of the West Bank as a process of its annexation and incorporation into Israel. The U.S. imposes a solution on Vietnam but refrains from doing so in the Middle East where the problem is largely one of our own making.

This policy of indecision has brought the Soviet Union massively into the Middle East and has embittered great segments of the Arab world. Furthermore, when national might proves to make right, what effective reproach remains against the terrorism of misguided fanatics for whose legitimate grievance no redress seems remotely possible? The world cannot accept or excuse such terrorism, but neither should it accept or excuse its precedents in national terrorism. Instead of selling military hardware to

Israel, therefore, the United States should be working to remove the causes for that necessity. The initiative in slowing the arms race in the Middle East might well be a first priority of U.S. policy if we are genuinely interested in the peace of the Mideast.

The first twenty-five years of Israel's existence have inflicted a political, moral and military crisis of worldwide proportions on a formerly peaceful part of the world. The prospect for the next twenty-five years is for continued war, terror and misery unless the United States and Israel, by exemplary attitudes of conciliation and with concrete proposals of political and economic accommodation, awaken Arab generosity and desire for peace. The only security possible for Israel or any other state is the security that rests on mutual good will among nations. All people in the Middle East know this, but their governments have thus far been unable to admit it. A firm position by the United States, supported with effective sanctions, might finally help to resolve a presently hopeless impasse and achieve that reconciliation of political values in Palestine which alone is justice.

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Twenty-five years after its founding, Israel remains one of the few success stories in the era of postwar liquidations of colonial regimes. It has continued to develop economically, politically and culturally without undergoing the revolutionary upheavals that have plagued so many of the new nations. It has experienced three major wars in its short history, developing in the process military forces which enjoy an enviable reputation. This has been achieved without becoming militaristic. It still attracts immigrants in large numbers and has been partially responsible for the awakening of the millions of Soviet Jews. These are achievements of great moment. There are, of course, flaws in Israeli society. Israel is not the messianic state. However, it is, on balance, an amazing phenomenon.

Much of what has been accomplished has been the result of the devotion and generosity of the world Jewish community. But a major share of the credit goes to the United States, which has extended generous support to the Jewish state. This support has been accelerated in recent years. The resulting consolidation of Israel's position has been one of the reasons for the relative tranquillity of the area. Though the United States has so agonizingly arranged for a cease-fire in Indochina, at this date actual peace is still not achieved and the hostilities have not completely stopped. The cease-fire arranged in the Middle East some years ago is relatively stable. Desperate terrorists try their best to upset the situ-

ation. But there is hardly a shot being fired across the truce lines. The reason for this, it seems clear, is that the Israeli military forces have proven themselves superior to their adversaries, and the United States has been unequivocal in its support. Here, as in other trouble areas in the world, firmness results in peace; vacillation results in hostilities. Let the posture of firmness and strong support be somehow weakened and the possibilities of hostilities are immeasurably increased.

Professor Bernard Lewis, testifying for the Subcommittee on National Security in March, 1971, said: "In the Middle East as elsewhere it is not small power quarrels which inflame great power conflict, but rather the reverse." Lewis asserts that in the Middle East it is the encounter between the USA and the Soviet Union which is the major threat. This threat has been greatly diminished by the withdrawal from the area of most of the Soviet personnel. This was brought about, in the main, by the realization of the Egyptians that the U.S. meant business when it said it backed stability in the area and that Israel would not have to stand alone if it were attacked by Soviet arms.

Once again firmness lessened tensions rather than increased them. The results are salutary for both contending parties. Therefore the continued support of Israel by the United States and its clear expression of intentions in the area are the best guarantee we have for what passes for peace in that troubled area.

Though the Arab states are understandably unhappy, the major oil-producing governments are the staunchest friends that America has in the Arab world.

As far as Israel itself is concerned, its policy has been to insist on direct negotiations. This condition is not made because there is some magic in face-to-face talks. But it is born out of the conviction that real peace can be achieved only where there is mutual recognition and acceptance. Without this, arrangements might work for a time, but they would not be permanent. Therefore face-to-face negotiations are a form of acceptance of the existence of Israel and its place in the area. Israel has felt that it is not the problem of the refugees or of the boundaries which prevents peace but that the reverse is true: In the absence of peace these issues remain. Whatever the human suffering of the refugees has been, they are not the only refugees created in the postwar upheavals. When peace was established, the problems of the German, Indian and Pakistani refugees were solved. There is no reason to believe that this would

not be the case in the Middle East as well.

The same reasoning applies to the boundary question. There is no doubt that the old boundaries are not viable. New ones can be worked out between the principal parties. Israeli policy seems to be to wait until the adversary sees that he has no other choice than to negotiate. The great desire is peace. But a peace which is merely an interval between wars is no peace. *Shalom* in Hebrew means wholeness and wholeheartedness as well as peace. Real *shalom* comes when both sides to a conflict want *shalom*. In order to bring this about, Israel feels that it must remain strong and thus deter military adventures. Out of this can come a real meeting.

The Israelis' policy seems to be basically correct. Another position might make things easier for the other side, for whom "face" means so much. However, out of strength comes peace. This is what the Psalmist meant when he asked that the Lord give strength to his people and grant them *shalom*. First strength—then *shalom*.

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Israel has reached the second of two periods in her struggle. At first Israel had to turn outward, using political and military power to bring the state into being and to sustain herself in face of the external threats to her existence. Now Israel must turn inward: serious economic and spiritual problems must be met—yet the face of Israel remains turned outward.

For centuries the Jewish people have been at the mercy of others; the real and spiritual toll of anti-Semitism has been staggering. For a millennium Jews have fought to survive, and now that freedom has been secured, it is hard to perceive that the struggle has been won. Israel's anniversary marks the transition of the Jewish people from the ruled to the rulers, from the dependent to the independent, from the powerless to the powerful.

If there had been any doubt about Israel's overwhelming military capacity to preserve her security, there is surely none in an era of East-West rapprochement from which the United States has emerged as the leading force in the Middle East. External threats to Israel's future are no more than a figment of political egos. As Golda Meir noted on her recent visit to New York City: "Our neighbors still hope they will throw us out of the area. I say hope—they don't believe it." Despite this acknowledgment Israel remains totally absorbed in a military policy prolonging the tedious state of no war-no peace. Israel has

security—without peace. The question Israel faces is "what will be the cost to Israel of a failure to attain peace in these coming years?"

It is essential that Israel find the stability necessary to grapple with the problems of identity of a Jewish people reunited. What does it mean to be "a Jew," "an Israeli"? What is the relationship of Israel to world Jewry and of the world to Israel? What is a "Jewish state; a state like no others"? These ultimate concerns are moot so long as Israel perceives her energies as being required for military potential.

Under this pressure the economic future of Israel cannot bring greater material security. Her defense budget has grown so that it now accounts for a quarter of Israel's gross national product; accordingly her dependence on, and her debt to, the U.S. grows. The tightly run economy needed to sustain these pressures exacts its due through high taxes. The needs of immigrating Soviet Jews do not leave room for the poverty suffered by oriental Jews who have lived in Israel since long before its creation. The grave problems suggested by these factors help to undermine the stability of Israeli society.

A number of social questions plague the status quo. For the military to have a leading role in Israeli society is at odds with the traditional human values of Israelis. Stratification of society, as evidenced by the differences of European and oriental Jew, is now taking political shape. There are serious questions



about whether a Jewish state can offer justice and equality to all of her non-Jewish inhabitants.

The first priority is for Israel to stabilize herself in order to avoid the deterioration of society implicit in these challenges. Israel's ultimate spiritual concerns are meaningless until she can find the stability to consider them. And a precondition of that stability is a peace sufficient to make possible long-term social and economic planning. The *quality* of Israel's survival is directly dependent upon the nearness and the quality of the peace that must be made. Moshe Dayan expressed this old "guns versus butter" argument well when he noted that Israel could not hold up the flags of defense and of social reform at the same time.

Conditions are anything but onerous for the pursuit of peace initiatives. Forty per cent of the Palestinian people live under Israeli sovereignty, either in Israel or in the occupied territories. Israel's anniversary also marks close to six years of living side by side with her fellow Semite Palestinians. If anything, these years have been marked by peace and by the fact that such violence as has taken place has been distant from the everyday realities.

Israel has selected one option: to abide by time and the status quo. Israel has made permanent settlements in the occupied territories while integrating the Palestinians into the Israeli economy. This policy of, at best, benevolent colonialism is built upon the hope that one day the Arab world will "see the light" and emerge as a partner of Israel. This option does not do justice to the future of Israel. Above all, it is based on a belief that there is no Palestinian people.

While only time can reveal what will happen, recent human experience indicates it is a poor gamble for a state of so particular a character to absorb another people. Israel's fiftieth anniversary could be marked by the emergence of a new Palestinian identity and a Northern Ireland situation in the Middle East. In any event, a political fait accompli is an unlikely foundation for a lasting peace settlement, and Israeli society cannot afford to carry the burden of this prospect for that many years.

Within Israel the voice of another option is being heard with increasing strength. The former head of Golda Meir's Labor Party, Lyova Eliav, has called for a Palestinian state, while Yitzhak Ben-Aharon, Secretary-General of the Histadrut, has broached the prospect of Israel's unilateral return of portions of the occupied territories. Israel's potential for forging

hope into reality must not stop short of peace. In failing to assume initiative in the pursuit of peace, Israel in the long run does herself permanent spiritual harm.

It is time for the Israeli government to declare that "there is a Palestinian people," a people possessed of a need for justice and rights, including national rights. Palestinian leadership must be able to coalesce free from the military government now ordering their future. Unless Israel can deal with the Palestinians, any settlement with Jordan or Egypt is hollow. There is a button proclaiming boldly **ISRAEL MUST LIVE**. Israel *does* live, although the quality of that life demands peace with the Palestinians. The future of Israel is on a button yet to be printed: **THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE MUST LIVE**. And living together they must work together to seek a disengagement of the big powers from the Middle East and a demilitarization of the Mediterranean to ensure that their future is the result of their choice and not outside manipulation.

It is rightfully observed that there are two Middle East conflicts: one in the Middle East, the other in the United States, where polarization of opinion is far greater than in the Middle East and where those who harbor hopes for a peaceful settlement are far fewer. The concerns of those of us in the United States should stimulate us to help Israel to move from security to peace *and* security. The prevailing argument is that our failure to agree with Israeli policy necessarily undermines Israel's future. With Israel's security underwritten, this argument now lacks validity. Peace anywhere in the world is difficult enough when we are all agreed on its need; the obligation we *do* have to Israel is an imperative for us to help make peace possible.

If Israel is to be written down in "The Book for Greater Health," Israel must encourage creative, open dialogue on her future. Jewish-Christian dialogue is empty if the Middle East must be divorced from our exchange. The same must be true for the diaspora. Our great love for Israel, our commitment, should not be exploited by making it seem as though we must choose between the future of Israel and a particular political candidate or political issue we support domestically as a matter of personal conscience. And in this new dialogue it would be well to shun the tiresome labels to which Jews should be particularly sensitive. One is not an "anti-Semite" merely because one is not a Moshe Dayan; nor is the "New Left"—a group that has always defied definition—easily identified as "anti-Israel."

At twenty-five years all of the hopes, all of the prospects, are still before us. Now the real struggle begins, the struggle to build a whole Jewish and Palestinian people. This cannot be done without setting aside outdated fears and diverting our courage to new efforts at dialogue and initiatives for peace.