

## Diaspora Influence on Israeli Policy\*

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Influence may be defined as the exercise of power through direct or indirect threats of sanctions or promises of rewards by one party over another party, causing the second party to respond in a manner in which it would not otherwise have responded.

Diaspora Jewry exercises very little influence over Israeli public policy, but it is untrue to suggest that it exercises no influence. In religious policy, foreign policy, policy toward the World Zionist Organization (WZO), even economic policy, there are examples of Diaspora influence. Yet, it is fair to say that in adding up the factors that comprise the total of Israeli policies, Diaspora influence is slight.

On the surface, this is a surprising conclusion because the potential political resources which the Diaspora can bring to bear upon Israel are enormous. It is true that there is no individual political community which can be called the Diaspora, nor do Diaspora Jews perceive a distinctive Diaspora interest. It is also true that not all such communities, whether they are considered national communities or subcommunities (organizations or sets of organizations) within the national community, have enormous political resources. But there are at least a few communities which do possess these resources: their sheer size, financial contributions to Israel, and the relative influence which they exercise within their own countries (the latter being the most important factor)<sup>1</sup> provide them with enormous potential influence. First and foremost in this respect is the Jewish community in the United States.

Explanations for the absence of Diaspora influence can be summarized under three major headings.

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1. Interview with Binyamin Eliav, October 1970.

## 1. Limited Efforts at Influence

Israel is not viewed as a suitable object of influence by Diaspora Jews. As far as most of them are concerned, Israel represents Judaism. Since support for Israel is an affirmation of their Judaism, Israel has become extremely important to Diaspora Jews. However, their image of Israel and their relationship to Israel are devoid of political implications. Absent, for the most part, from the Diaspora's image of Israel is the vision of a different Israel (Orthodox Jewry does have such an image, which is one reason it has been the least reticent in pressing for changes). To most of Diaspora Jewry, Israel is functional as it exists today. American Jews, for example, give little or no thought to an alternative social or political system because it is not the particular system which is important to them. If the social system were grossly inequitable, if there were wide-scale discrimination or exploitation or abridgment of freedom, if Israeli foreign policy were suddenly to become anti-American, it would create acute embarrassment to American Jews, who are concerned, within the United States itself, with issues of social equality, minority rights and support of their country in foreign affairs. But short of such radical departures from the status quo, Diaspora Jewry is relatively unconcerned with Israeli policy.

The early Zionists had diverse visions of the state they sought to create. For some, it was to be built upon traditional Jewish law; for others, it was to be a spiritual center of Jewish culture and civilization; for the rest, it was to serve as an example to the world of how a modern state could function in accordance with principles of social justice, equality and liberty. To almost all, the vision included a universal dimension—Israel, by exemplifying a particularist vision, would also become “a light unto the nations.”

The creation of the State of Israel and the exigencies of its fight for survival have dimmed the vision Jews once had of Israel. Yet, this dimming has been caused by other factors as well. The truth is that whereas Diaspora Jews now share the classic Zionist dream of a Jewish homeland, they have no Zionist vision. Israel, perhaps, has a particularist Jewish meaning for Diaspora Jewry: it is important to the Diaspora for *its* Jewish survival. But Israel has no universalist meaning for most Diaspora Jews. It is not integrally related to the variety of visions Diaspora Jews may have of a different kind of world, a different kind of society, a different kind of social order. Hence, the

Diaspora is not driven to press Israel into doing anything different from that which it is doing today.

Related to this is a second factor. Diaspora Jewry has very few special interests in Israeli policy formation. The interest investment and the stakes which Diaspora Jews have in Israel are not related to specific policies which Israel pursues. Whenever the stakes have been high enough, Diaspora communities did seek to influence Israeli policy makers. Take, for instance, South African Jewry in the case of Israel's attitude to South Africa; or the Orthodox groups in regard to religious policy; or the American Jewish Committee in regard to Israel's relationship with the World Zionist Organization.

Third, commitments and loyalties of Diaspora Jews to their own countries of residence raise the issue of legitimacy in any intervention in the internal affairs of another country.

Finally, enormous sympathy for Israel among Diaspora Jews makes them reluctant to exercise the sanctions within their power. This is indeed a partial explanation for Reform Jewry's reticence in pressing harder to secure equal rights in Israel. It even serves to explain the behavior of the most outspoken Diaspora leader, a man who, at one time, was the preeminent political leader of Diaspora Jewry—Nahum Goldmann. Goldmann became increasingly critical of Israel in the late 1950s, and, though he had powerful friends among American Jews, he never sought to utilize his position to pressure Israel. In his own words, "I just made speeches."<sup>2</sup> Goldmann believes that even if he had invoked other pressures, he would have failed. But the fact is that he was too deeply committed to Israel to experiment with sanctions.

## 2. Israel Unwilling to Legitimate Diaspora Influence

Diaspora influence has no legitimacy in the Israeli political mentality. Though this is less true today than it was in the past, the absence of legitimacy was more important in the past when Diaspora pressures were stronger and Israel was weaker and more susceptible to them. The initial premise is also less true of some segments within the Israeli political structure than of others, but, as a general rule, the Israeli self-image and its juxtaposition with that of the Diaspora Jew

2. Interview with Nahum Goldmann, October 1970.

deny a legitimacy to Diaspora influence which even foreign governments possess. Although this alone is not sufficient to explain the lack of Diaspora influence, it does help to explain the fierce resistance to Diaspora pressure that exists on issues where one might have assumed a far greater sensitivity to the expression of Diaspora values.

### 3. Lack of Political Means to Channel Diaspora Influence

Diaspora Jewry is not organized for the expression of its political interests within Israel. Only one organization reflecting Diaspora interests—the World Zionist Organization—Jewish Agency—is incorporated, however tenuously, into the Israeli political structure, but even this body is dominated by Israelis. Furthermore, organization of the WZO along political, rather than national, lines introduces cleavages within that organization and prevents the formation of Diaspora rather than Israeli interests. Nevertheless, one does occasionally find an expression of Diaspora interests—for example, the debate between Americans and Israelis about the obligation of Zionists to immigrate to Israel or the debate over selective immigration of North Africans in the 1950s.

The reorganization of the WZO along territorial (Zionist Federation) rather than party lines has increased the potential for the expression of particular Diaspora interests. However, reconstitution of the Jewish Agency and its separation from the WZO have also reduced the latter's area of authority within the Israeli political structure, although both groups are still potential sources for channeling Diaspora interests into the Israeli political system. Neither, however, is an intricate part of that system: they operate outside it rather than within. Both confront the Israeli Government *qua* government rather than as participants in the political policy-making process. An exception to this is the standing Committees of the Jewish Agency, which, however, have functioned until now at the level of technical rather than political policy formation.

Other organizations at the international and national level—the World Jewish Congress (WJC), B'nai B'rith, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, or the American Jewish Committee—have even less direct access to the Israeli political system.

Nevertheless, one cannot disregard the fact that there are differences of sensitivity to the Diaspora from different parts of the system. Within the government, the Foreign Ministry has regular channels for conveying information concerning the Diaspora. Indeed, one function of Israel's foreign representatives is to represent Israel to local Jewry and to convey information back to Israel concerning developments within the Diaspora. In addition, there is an advisor to the Foreign Minister for Diaspora affairs. The Foreign Minister, in turn, reports to the Prime Minister and to the Government on Diaspora Jewry. In the case of the United States, however, all Prime Ministers, particularly the last two, have their own ties; and while they may ask the opinion of Israel's representative in Washington, they are likely to arrive at conclusions based on independent sources of information.<sup>3</sup> Both the Foreign Office and the Prime Minister's office are sensitive to the Diaspora but the Ministry of Defense tends to see the relationship with Jewry as less central to Israeli affairs.

Among political parties, religious parties are the only ones that actively encourage the intervention of Diaspora Jewry. Consequently, they are also more sensitive to Diaspora demands, although the National Religious Party has rarely found this to be much of a limitation. The Independent Liberals are sensitive to the demands of Conservative and Reform Jewry; in fact their leader, Moshe Kol, initiated a meeting with Reform Jewish leaders. The Liberal Party, formerly the General Zionists, was at one time very closely associated with the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), although the latter tended to reflect the policies of the former rather than vice versa. In general, opposition parties have often charged the Government with insensitivity to the Diaspora. But one suspects this is convenient political rhetoric rather than the reflection of a basic ideological position. Even Moshe Dayan, when he led the opposition party, Rafi, charged that the Government was not sufficiently open to Diaspora criticism. (Left-wing Mapam could be found, on occasion, defending American General Zionists against Ben-Gurion as in the 1950s.)

Having noted all this, we return to our basic point that with the exception of American Orthodox bodies, Diaspora Jews have no regular channel within the mainstream of the Israeli political system for conveying their interests and demands.

3. Interview with Yoam Biran, Office of the Foreign Minister's Advisor for Diaspora Affairs.

## Israel-Diaspora Relations

Within the context of widespread and enthusiastic support for Israel, voices expressing dissatisfaction with Israel-Diaspora relations have increased in number and tone in the last few years. We do not refer to the voices of the New Left—the Jewish antagonists of Israel. They are simply unhappy with Israel and with Jewish support for Israel and are not the voices of rank and file Diaspora Jews. We do refer to certain Diaspora leaders, who, for a variety of reasons (to which we shall return), have expressed their dissatisfaction with the nature of Israel-Diaspora relations.

Their criticism takes several forms, which, I would argue, are related. Some complain that the Diaspora is overcommitted to Israel: it gives too much money to Israel at the expense of its own welfare and educational needs. For example, Guy de Rothschild, President of the *French Fond, Social Juif Unifie*, charged that French Jewry gave too much money to Israel, reducing the local community to a "distress budget."<sup>4</sup> He insisted on, and obtained, a redistribution of income from the United Jewish Appeal campaign in France.<sup>5</sup>

Then it is said that Israel is too prone to interfere in Diaspora affairs, as is voiced, for instance, in the statement that "many American Jews, who opposed the war [in Vietnam and] objected to Israel promoting the view that an American retreat from Vietnam would imply a renunciation by the U.S.A. of the use of power on behalf of a distant ally and might, in turn, lead to an abandonment of Israel."<sup>6</sup>

Further, it is suggested that Diaspora concern for Israel and the centrality of Israel in Diaspora affairs may come at the price of a weakened Diaspora. Dr. Gerson Cohen, present leader of the Jewish Theological Seminary, has stressed the need for an "autonomous and self-sustaining Diaspora tradition on American soil." According to American Jewish Congress president, Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, himself a member of the Jewish Agency executive, it was unfortunate that fund raising for Israel had come to dominate the activities of the Jewish community to the neglect of Judaism which assures continuation of Jewish life.<sup>7</sup>

4. Interview with Jacob Tsur, former Foreign Affairs official and Ambassador.

5. *Jewish Chronicle*, December 15, 1972, p. 4.

6. *Ibid.*, February 3, 1973, p. 4.

7. World Jewish Congress, *Press Survey*, no. 3392, March 23, 1972. Rabbi Judah Nadich, president of the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly of America, expressed

A second set of complaints is concerned with the absence of Diaspora influence in Israel. In late 1972, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations met in Israel. According to the press, those present said that "they wanted to play a more active role in criticizing defects in Israeli society, but implied that Israeli leaders were not willing to listen to criticism."<sup>8</sup> In an address before the annual meeting of the American Jewish Committee in May 1971, William Frankel, editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, also stressed the necessity for a forum of Diaspora Jews which would advise Israeli leaders on Israeli policy directly affecting Diaspora Jewry. This opinion was echoed in a paper by the American Jewish leader Philip Klutznick, who suggested that consultations between Diaspora leaders and Israel are essential since "decisions made by the State of Israel affect the condition of all world Jewry."<sup>9</sup> Indeed, he raised the possibility of disagreement within world Jewry.

One might argue that the two sets of criticisms are mutually exclusive—one group demanding greater autonomy for the Diaspora and another insisting on the creation of a forum which, if anything, would increase Israel-Diaspora interdependence. Yet both reflect a dissatisfaction with the present balance of power between Israel and the Diaspora. In fact, Israeli recognition of, and respect for, Diaspora autonomy is more likely to be a by-product of closer ties than simply a result of a unilateral decision by Israel to be less involved in the Diaspora. The latter condition is likely to arise only if each side is completely disinterested in the affairs of the other—a condition which the critics themselves probably agree would be disastrous for world Jewry. They really want what Jacob Neusner has termed "a mature relationship,"<sup>10</sup> a relationship which would possibly emerge from a structure of interdependence different from that presently

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concern that the immigration of young American Jews to Israel would remove an important element from the American scene and would endanger the future of Jewish leadership. He said that the time had come to devote more efforts to strengthening American Jewry, *The Jerusalem Post*, November 24, 1972, p. 3.

8. *The Jerusalem Post*, November 24, 1972, p. 3. Among those cited were Rabbi David Polish, president of the Association of American Reform Rabbis, who said that American Jews were concerned about the problems of morality in Israeli society and wanted to express criticism of Israeli internal affairs. Rabbi Louis Bernstein, President of the Association of Orthodox Rabbis in the United States, said that if American Jews are to identify completely with Israel, there must be mutual criticism.

9. Philip Klutznick, "Beyn Yisrael la-Tfuzot," *Gesher*, 18, December 1972, p. 22.

10. Jacob Neusner, "American Jewry and the State of Israel: Toward a Mature Relationship," *Jewish Advocate*, March 23, 1972.

prevailing; it would probably not result from a greater sense of autonomy and independence.

## Obstacles to Proposed Solutions

The Diaspora cannot force Israel to a greater sensitivity nor, judging by all that has been indicated here, can it even "pressure" Israel to undertake basic changes against her will. What can and what should Israel do?

She can choose to ignore the problem—perhaps by confining herself to a rebuttal of charges made by her critics. Indeed, the late Louis Pincus spent considerable energy in the months before he died answering critics.<sup>11</sup> Instead of summarizing his major points, I have incorporated them into a rebuttal, sharper than any Israeli has yet offered. Perhaps this will be unjustly harsh and only exacerbate tensions, but I permit myself such a formulation because my sympathy is with the critics' sense of unease rather than with the self-satisfaction that is characteristic of Israelis. Israel's reply to the criticism of some Diaspora leaders could be stated as follows:

1. The sources of criticism may well be considered first. Critics certainly do not reflect the mass of Jewish public opinion in the Diaspora—not even the opinion of Jewry in affluent countries. Much of the criticism comes from rabbis and institutional or organizational leaders whose position of importance in the Diaspora, especially in the American Jewish community, has been displaced by the centrality which Israel has assumed in the eyes of most Jews. Some critics are people who are on the fringes of power and prestige and may be frustrated by new developments in Jewish life which have denied them greater power and prestige—who, to borrow a sociological term, are "downwardly mobile" in terms of prestige.
2. Israel has assumed an important role in Diaspora decision making, partly because Diaspora leadership is itself so second-rate. One need not be inordinately sensitive to heroic qualities to realize and appreciate that, for the most part, Israeli spokesmen in major Western countries are individuals of greater knowledge, understanding,

11. The clearest presentation of his views was his reply to Joachim Prinz at the WJC executive meetings in July 1973. I am grateful to Dr. Nathan Lerner for providing me with both the transcript of his statement and a corrected copy of that speech, which could not have been approved by Pincus more than a week or two before he died.

wisdom, articulation and sensitivity than are most Diaspora leaders themselves. It is no wonder, then, that so many Diaspora Jews are prepared to take cues from them rather than from indigenous leadership.

3. Assuming that Israel did agree to consult regularly with a forum of Diaspora leaders, who would be represented in this forum? The leaders of Jewish organizations? No one would seriously argue that such individuals could represent the wishes or needs of Diaspora Jewries. There are no representative leaders of the Diaspora. If Jews could vote for their leaders, is there any question that Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, Moshe Dayan or Abba Eban would get more votes than the paper leadership of Diaspora Jewry?

In addition to the question of representation, there are structural problems, one of which concerns the scope and nature of the forum's authority. Should these Diaspora leaders deal with all of Israeli policy—for example, tax laws, foreign policy? How are areas of authority to be delimited? Clearly, some matters ought to be left entirely to Israelis. But how does one determine the scope of the forum's authority and responsibility when it is so easy to demonstrate that decisions in one policy area affect others? However impossible it is to resolve the problem of "scope" in a theoretical sense, it may be possible to do so pragmatically.

A more serious question relates to the "nature" of the forum's authority. Is the forum to be a purely consultative and advisory body, or is it to be a decision-making body? If only consultative—then Israel does not need it. She continually consults with Diaspora leaders, and there are a number of forums (the reconstituted Jewish Agency, the World Jewish Congress, the World Conference of Jewish Organizations, or the World Zionist Organization) where Diaspora and Israeli leaders meet and exchange opinions. But if the forum's decisions are to be binding upon Israeli leaders, then one may well question the propriety of nonresidents having such power in the decisions of a foreign country. More realistically, would Diaspora leaders want such authority, or, given the law of their own countries, could they even legally exercise such authority?

Finally, there is no one Diaspora interest. Any forum of Diaspora leaders is far more likely to pit one Diaspora interest against another.

4. It is not necessarily true that Diaspora leaders are more aware of,

or sympathetic to, Diaspora Jewry's needs than are Israeli leaders themselves. No Jew is a greater "lover of the Jewish people" because he chooses to remain in the Diaspora. Despite all the criticism one may justly invoke against Israelis for placing their Israeli identity ahead of their Jewish identity, no one familiar with Israelis and American and Western European Jews could seriously argue that the American and European Jews are more concerned with the Jewish People than are the Israelis. This is true of rank and file Jews as well as of their leaders. A significant proportion of Diaspora Jewry would not be represented in such a forum—for example, the Jews of the Soviet Union—whereas other groups, such as the wealthy and the intellectuals, would in all probability be overrepresented (the former because they are the "joiners," the latter because of the deference of Diaspora Jewry to intellectuals). It is questionable, therefore, if any forum of Diaspora leaders can be trusted to represent the mass of unrepresented Jews more effectively than Israeli leaders.

5. The flow of money to Israel "at the expense of Diaspora institutions" reflects the wishes of the contributors themselves. In fact, the relative distribution of funds between Israel and the Diaspora is undoubtedly an autonomous Diaspora decision. The greatest reservation of the fund raisers represented in the reconstituted Jewish Agency concerns the share of their money which goes to the World Zionist Organization for expenditure in the Diaspora: that money is spent on education and cultural programs about which some of the critics express concern.

6. Israel and support for Israel are central expressions of Jewish identity today. Israel is the center of Jewish life because Diaspora Jews find no other form of expression which is quite so meaningful to them. It is a mistake to assume that if Diaspora Jews worked less or were less interested in Israel, they would work harder for, or be more concerned with, another Jewish institution or project.

7. A real crisis of survival is confronting Diaspora Jewry in the West, but voices from within the Jewish Establishment rather than from Israel confer a legitimacy on life patterns inimical to survival. It is not Israeli leaders who tell Diaspora Jewry that attending synagogue services or maintaining the ritual tradition is no more important than philanthropy—this was stated by an American communal and fund-raising leader in 1965 in speaking of the necessity to contribute

to local Jewish hospitals as well as to Israel. The statement was reported in the Anglo-Jewish press, but no outraged voices were raised from the Jewish Establishment against this distortion of Jewish values. It is not the Israeli establishment which condones intermarriage or argues that Judaism must accommodate itself to young couples who insist on intermarrying (this is said by a portion of the American Reform rabbinate). Israelis do not argue that day school education is undemocratic, or that it is wrong to seek government support for Jewish schools since that would violate principles of church-state separation, issues which apparently are more important than insuring adequate Jewish education to those who want it. It was mainly the American Jewish Establishment which raised these arguments, at least, until quite recently.

Israeli representatives abroad are urged to attend synagogue services, to send their children to Jewish day schools (they even get a special allowance for this purpose) and to respect Jewish tradition. It may be argued that not every Israeli representative complies with these suggestions. There are, perhaps, "ugly Israelis." (Thus, in one instance, an Israeli consul sent his children to a private Protestant school in a city which has a Jewish day school.) However, the Foreign Ministry relies on Israeli representatives abroad to observe the basic amenities of Jewish tradition. It was the Israeli Prime Minister who argued in 1970 that a particular law had to be amended (in the "Who is a Jew?" controversy), because it might otherwise encourage intermarriage in the Diaspora. Israeli leaders, highly sensitive to the dangers of assimilation, have devoted major efforts in recent years to the support of Jewish education in the Diaspora.

Thus, on the one hand, the American Jewish Establishment includes elements whose activity encourages assimilation, while Israel, on the other hand, is sensitive to, and anxious about, Diaspora survival. Quite apart from the fact, therefore, that activity on behalf of Israel is in itself a barrier against assimilation, the Jewish Establishment in the United States, for example, is no more concerned about (or is a better representative of) survivalist forces in Jewish life than is Israel.

8. Israeli representatives, one must admit, may not always adopt the proper tone in speaking to the Diaspora; they may sometimes appear abrasive and inconsiderate. Faced with enormous threats, its leaders cannot afford to be sanguine about its present military superiority. If

Israelis, therefore, sometimes put parochial above universal interests, if they tended to favor one political leader over another, or to worry about the consequences of American Jewish positions of one cast or another, they are hardly to be blamed. Why should Israelis refrain from pointing out their self-interests to Diaspora Jewry any more than Diaspora Jewry should refrain from pointing out its self-interests to Israel? In the last analysis, even Israel's harshest critics do not suggest that Israeli representatives have done more than advise American Jewry—and in a severely restrained manner at that—on various internal matters. (One suspects that what really disturbed the critics was not that Israel tried to pressure American Jewry—indeed, it did not do so—but that Israel did not share the peculiar politically liberal proclivities of the majority of the American Jewish Establishment.)

### A Personal Conclusion

The problem of Israel-Diaspora relations today must be recognized for what it is—the problem of a very small percentage of Jews, some living in Israel, others in the Diaspora, but all, for various reasons, unhappy with the present state of Israel-Diaspora relations.

I happen to be a part of that small group, but this must not blind me to the unrepresentative character of my sentiments. I could argue persuasively that the present state of Israel-Diaspora relations is in the nature of a temporary “honeymoon” and that unless certain actions are taken, relations in the long run will lead to serious estrangement. I am less concerned, however, about the future prospects of Israel-Diaspora relations than I am about the current state of these relations. It is the latter concern which leads me to suggest a new pattern of Diaspora involvement in Israel.

The problem of Israel-Diaspora relations is not one of political representation. It is, rather, the far more difficult problem of political values and political responsibility. Israel can afford to ignore its Diaspora critics as unrepresentative, their criticism as unfounded and their proposals as inept and impractical. But it cannot afford to ignore the problematic aspects of Israel-Diaspora relations if it is to remain true to the political values upon which the State was established. The problem, as I see it, is that Israel is becoming untrue to itself. Diaspora Jewry has a corrective role to play, as, I believe, some Diaspora Jews have sensed.

The founders of Israel never viewed the State as an end in itself. It was to be an instrument, primarily, for "ingathering the exiles"; in other words, it was to be an instrument to serve the Jewish People.<sup>12</sup> Ben-Gurion continually stressed a second function of Israel—to be a "light unto the nations." Whether the fulfillment of this universalist mission is or is not also the realization of a particularly Jewish value is relatively unimportant (although my own inclination is to believe, as did Ben-Gurion, that it is). The value, after all, is biblical.

These, then, are the core values and criteria by which Israeli policy ought to be guided and judged, though, obviously, they are not sufficient as policy guidelines. First, situations may arise where the application of one value must come at the expense of the other. (Theoretically, the decision on whether or not to challenge South Africa for its *apartheid* policy could have been such an example. In reality, it was not the principles of service to Jews versus ethical conduct which led to indecision but rather service to Jews versus Israel's self-interest.) Second, these values cannot by themselves necessarily guide the policy makers toward the decisions to reach in every given situation; they are not specific enough. Reasonable men will argue that the acceptance of German reparations was or was not a service to the Jewish People. Finally, other values, even if they are of secondary importance, must also be considered. Economic prosperity is an independent value which may be less important than serving the Jewish People or behaving in a moral way, but it is still a legitimate value. Yet what should one do when just a little self-interest, just a little violation in the spirit of a trade agreement, might bring a great deal of economic prosperity? Is Israel obligated to make economic sacrifices for the sake of marginal benefits that may accrue to Diaspora Jews? Was Israel, for example, obligated to build its ships in French shipyards because French Jewry asked it to do so, if it could build ships elsewhere more economically?

Israel's core political values, however inadequate for deciding

12. In leaping from Ben-Gurion's stress on "ingathering the exiles" to "serving the Jewish People," there is at least a superficial distortion of Ben-Gurion's views, though not, I believe, a basic untruth. Ben-Gurion and his associates, who stressed the value of "ingathering the exiles," were also defining "service to the Jewish People." In view of their own conception of Zionism and Galut, there was simply no other possibility for real service.

what precisely must be done, do provide a criteria for judging, in a very general way, the legitimacy of what was done. The judgmental role is not one which the Diaspora alone may exercise. Indeed, Israelis have a greater right to this role because it is they who bear the burden of fulfilling basic values. But it is also a role which they are less equipped to fulfill precisely because the burden is upon them. It is only natural that two processes should take place among Israelis. First, confronted with their immediate needs for survival plus myriad other values (for example, personal welfare, economic prosperity), Israelis are likely to forget the higher values to which their State is ostensibly dedicated. Second, they are likely to turn the State into an end in itself—to sanctify, as it were, the means. Americans, including American Jews, express a loyalty and love for their country, not because of America's mission or function, but because it is their country. Frenchmen, Englishmen and Russians do the same. Why should Israelis be different? One expects that Israelis, Arabs as well as Jews, will love their country not because it is a Jewish State, not because it is a noble State, but because it is their State. One expects Israeli national feeling to be no different in essence from American, British, French or Russian national feeling. One may consider this more or less unfortunate, depending upon one's universalistic cosmopolitan propensities, but it would be unrealistic not to expect it.

It is, therefore, important for the Diaspora to exercise a judgmental task, however restrained and circumspect. This is a necessary corrective to natural tendencies inherent in Israel to ignore, pay only lip service to, or rationalize away the basic values upon which the State of Israel was established.

A judgmental or critical role is the most appropriate political role for Diaspora Jewry, which cannot hope to become involved in the decision-making process. Decisions must be made by those who can be held responsible to a free electorate. Decisions must be made only by those who can assume the consequences for these decisions. There is no reason why Israel should not consult this or that Diaspora community, this or that individual, these or those leadership groups, and indeed it does so even now; but the decisions must be made by Israelis within the Israeli political system. Diaspora Jewry is not an integral part of that system; it cannot expect to be part of that system, nor should it be. But Diaspora Jewry's wishes must be part of

the decision-making premises upon which the policy makers arrive at their options.

To some extent, this is already true, since Israel does take account of the impact of its decisions upon the Diaspora. However, the Diaspora could surely play a more active role. Israelis ought to assume that they must be answerable to Diaspora Jewry in a far more critical sense than is true today. Israel must sense that Diaspora Jewry is primarily concerned that Israeli policies be in accord with the two major values upon which the State was created and which serve as the basis for Diaspora Jewry's attachment to it. Diaspora Jewry has a right to insist that its involvement in Israeli life (which Israel itself has invited) should focus upon the expression of these two primary values. For example, Diaspora Jewry contributes funds to higher education in Israel. It should, therefore, have a right to ask how that higher education teaches values of service to the Jewish People or teaches the development of an ethically exemplary state. This very insistence on accountability to the Diaspora for fulfillment of these political values would serve to reinforce them in the Israeli consciousness. But there is also no reason why Diaspora organizations should not initiate activities within Israel that reflect their own concern with Judaism, Jews, and the ethical imperatives in, for example, Jewish-Arab relations.

The problem, of course, is that not only has Israel become less faithful to the basic political values upon which it was founded, but the Diaspora does not stress these values in its image of Israel. Israel has become functional for Jewish survival in purely symbolic terms. Consequently, there is a tendency to reify the symbols and forget the functional intention of Israel's establishment. Furthermore, through its reward system, Israel, consciously or unconsciously, promotes a leadership group which tends to accept Israel as it is rather than Israel as it should be. An article in the Israeli daily *Haaretz* made this point in the sharpest of terms:

For Israel, interested primarily in mobilizing contributions and political pressure, it is more comfortable to make arrangements with the Montors, Schwartzes and Friedmans (past professional leaders of the campaigns to mobilize funds for Israel in the United States) than with the Silvers, Klutznicks or Soleveitchiks (American Jewish leaders with significant constituencies, who have been critical of Israel despite their basic sympathy towards the State). For twenty years, the

blessings of Ben-Gurion, Eshkol or Sapir became the certificate of legitimacy to community leadership.<sup>13</sup>

One hopes that this may change. A new foundation for Israel-Diaspora relations based upon criticism and self-criticism in the context of the mutually accepted values of Israeli society may cause greater discomfort, but in the last analysis will provide greater prospects for a long-term relationship. Not only will this help maintain Israel's Jewish identity, but it should also bring the more sensitive spirits in Diaspora Jewry to Israel to help insure that the State will continue to express those values to which they are committed and to participate in the process of their expression. Finally, it will eliminate the dangerous dichotomy of universalism-particularism which, we have suggested, is destructive of Jewish identity. The Diaspora Jew's responsibility to Israel would now, in fact, also become his responsibility to insure that Israel acts as a "light unto the nations." The Diaspora Jew would no longer have to balance his particularist Jewish obligations to Israel with the universalist-ethical obligations to which he is also committed.

Even though most Jews in the Diaspora and in Israel do not feel this way about Israel or about Israel-Diaspora relations, it does not mean that those who share a different perspective and vision, in both Israel and the Diaspora, should not act.

13. *Haaretz*, January 18, 1973, p. 12.