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In *The Longest War*, Jacobo Timerman "is the conveyor of bad news" to an American Jewish community complacent and proud of Israeli military prowess. "He argues convincingly that power in and of itself does not guarantee security." Our reviewer notes that Timerman's not-so-sanguine tidings have ruffled more than a few feathers in the Diaspora.

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Introduction

IT is over a year since Israel launched "Operation Peace for Galilee" and much is the same in the troubled Middle East. Israeli troops are still in Lebanon. Syria still holds sway over the multi-ethnic Mediterranean state. Civil strife continues to explode between Moslem and Christian Lebanese, now involving the previously nonpartisan Druse as well. And Israel has yet to resolve its relationship with the territories occupied after the Six Day War and with the 1.3 million Palestinians living in the West Bank. Though the tragedy of the Middle East conflict has essentially remained the same since two summers ago, the outbreak of hostilities in Lebanon in June 1982 marked a watershed in Israel's military and moral history.

This was the first war Israel fought where there were serious arguments about alternatives, political options far less costly in human life and in political and economic resources. It was the first war to shatter the moral and spiritual consensus within the Jewish State. Most significantly, this was the first war that divided the Jewish Army as its soldiers wrestled over whether and when to fight.

Diaspora-Israel relations were also strained by the War in Lebanon. For the first time, Israel failed to create a solid base of American Jewish support. Although many American Jews loyally endorsed the War's objectives during the height of hostilities, there was a palpable and pervasive feeling of discomfort among many American Jews throughout the Lebanese campaigns. Ads supporting and condemning the war appeared in major national newspapers. Demonstrations disrupted the speeches of visiting Israeli diplomats. While all of Israel's other wars led to a dramatic

increase in UJA and Israel Bonds donations, the Lebanon War did not significantly raise the level of American Jewish charitable support for Israel.

Response asked several writers and thinkers—here and in Israel—to reflect upon the impact of the War. Even a cursory reading of their disparate thought reveals a single unifying concern: the propriety of the use of Jewish power.

The establishment of the Jewish State in 1948 gave Jews the opportunity to collectively exercise real power—political, economic, and military power, in short, the tools of statehood—for the first time in nearly two millennia. Israel's fifth war demands that we examine the consequences of this sudden, in historical terms, empowerment.

How and when is that power to be exercised? Will Israel judiciously use or unwisely abuse this newly emergent capability, thus becoming like all other nations? Will Diaspora Jewry resist the wielding of Jewish power or use Israel's might as a substitute for its weakening identity? Will the availability and use of Jewish power sustain or destroy Jewish life here and in Israel?

These are some of the underlying questions that many of the articles in this issue address. Whether the authors are writing from the front in Lebanon, speaking from a lectern at a political forum, or representing the established institutions of the American Jewish community, they are all grappling with the meaning, the legitimacy, and the consequences of the most controversial exercise of Jewish power in recent history—the ongoing War in Lebanon.

The Editors

Revenge and reconciliation: The aftermath of the war in Lebanon

STEPHEN P. COHEN

This is an edited version of a talk given in August 1982 at the National Havurah Summer Institute at Rutgers University. A year later, it remains a prescient and insightful analysis of the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

EARLY in June, Israel launched its longest and perhaps most important war. Brilliantly planned, implemented in the most masterful way, Israel achieved strategic objectives far beyond those even its most important advocates had suggested, not to speak of its critics. It achieved such great strategic advantages that one would think the top leadership of Israel, which planned and executed the war, would have some feeling of triumph.

But in Israel there is a deep malaise because with all of the strategic objectives achieved, the only objective for which such a massive loss of life could have been possibly understood—even if not justified—was not achieved and indeed could not have been achieved. I would argue further that the fact that this objective could not be achieved may turn out paradoxically to become *the*

redeeming thing of this difficult summer. What could not be achieved was the solution of the Palestinian problem through the force of arms. It could not be solved through strategic means because it was not and is not a strategic problem. It is a problem within the identity of Israel, and within the identity of the Jewish people.

PLO's Military Defeat

First, we must look at these great strategic advances because we should not close our eyes to what this war accomplished from the point of view of its planners. PLO forces sustained a major military loss and they have been dispersed in many countries. In Lebanon the PLO had achieved very close to its own state power. From my own experiences in Lebanon, one could spend days entering and leaving the country without reference to any authority other than the authority of the PLO. They achieved this through social institutions; they achieved this through economic institutions and economic independence; they achieved this through military power. They had achieved very much the kind of entity they were beginning to think of forming somewhere else, somewhere they cared about much more. This has all been destroyed.

From the point of view of strategic objectives, this destruction was an achievement. From the point of view of what we will talk about soon—the larger goal of Israeli-Palestinian peace—it may have turned out to be a very sorry achievement. In the development and growth of these institutions, the Palestinians had begun to move from what they called revolution to institution. They had begun to consolidate an image of themselves other than fighting a revolution, other than fighting a military campaign, to the building of a society. But they fell prey to the temptation of building a large military capability and they sank under the weight of their own army.

Lebanese Opportunities

The second strategic achievement of the war is perhaps more lasting and more important. Lebanon now may become a state, independent and unoccupied by any foreign forces. Already we have seen the emergence of a new coalition of forces under [Amin]

Gemayel, and a decisive coalition not only of Maronite Christians but of Shi'ites, some Druse, some Catholics, some Greek Orthodox. It is one of the tragedies and ironies of this conflict that just as the Jews, from their own suffering, were so unable to understand the suffering of the Palestinians, the Palestinians in turn were so unable to understand the suffering they brought upon Lebanon, and not only upon the Christians. When I was last in Lebanon the group that was having the most severe conflict with the PLO were Shi'ites in the south and in the Beirut and Shufa areas. They found they were losing control over their own lives. In the growth of power of the Palestinian movement not only was institutionalization taking place in one element, but also growth of the feeling that they could do anything with their military power, an attitude we have come to fear in other places as well. This new opportunity for Lebanon constitutes another major strategic achievement and, in my opinion, a moral achievement. If Lebanon can emerge from this past summer as an independent state, unoccupied by Syria, by PLO armed forces, or by Israel, that will have been one significant, positive achievement.

American Involvement

The third strategic achievement has to do with the Soviet-American relationship. For Israel it became very important to show that the United States was the only serious superpower with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. In many ways one could argue that the Soviet Union has abdicated a central role in the Arab-Israeli conflict altogether and has moved its influence into other areas: into the Iran-Iraq conflict and, in what could turn out to be a very important and serious development, into Ethiopia where the head-waters of the Nile are, and where serious conflict between Egypt (through the Sudan) and Ethiopia may not be far from us.

It's important for us to realize that the United States played a very complex role in this conflict. Some of us believe, and I think it is a very wrong belief, that during July and August, and especially since Alexander Haig left office, the United States has been the party that has prevented Israel from military action and Israel has been the one who has wanted to engage in it. I can tell you from personal experience that many times during the negotiations the

United States invited Israel to exert a little more military pressure, sometimes indicating what kind of pressure they thought would be effective. When Haig was in power in the first days of the war, he was quoted as saying "Oh, we shot down another one of theirs," identifying strongly with Israeli military prowess. But as the problem wore on, the United States began to position itself as the broker between Israel and the moderate Arabs (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and to a lesser extent Egypt). The use of Israeli military pressure became one of the bargaining chips the United States used. It's important for us to be honest about that—it was not only Israel that was interested in using military pressure.

Arab Disunity

The fourth strategic achievement of the war is the one that has had the deepest effect on the Palestinians. Until now the Palestinian guerrilla movement understood its function in two ways. In the short run, it could create difficulties for Israel by keeping the Palestinian cause at the center of attention. But more important, in the long run it felt that through the actions it took and Israeli retaliation it could bring about a situation in which the Arab world would go to war with Israel, Arab unity would express itself in that kind of response. The fact is that in this war there was no serious Arab response from a military point of view. This is a very important change in the situation in the Middle East and one that should not be lost upon us. Indeed, not only did the Arabs *not* go to war on behalf of the Palestinians, but they were, and still are, very reluctant to provide a safe haven for them. In those places in which they are providing a safe haven, they are making that haven safe *and* sterile, turning the Palestinians very much into hostages in some of those countries.

Egyptian Isolation

The fifth strategic achievement has to do with Egypt, which found itself in a very difficult position throughout this war. It was under tremendous pressure both internally and from the Arab world. After the first few days of the war Egyptian diplomats began to scurry around to find some way to salvage something from this disaster. They decided to move toward two complementary ideas.

One was to get the PLO to accept the idea of mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO. The other was that the PLO would accept Resolution 242 in return for acceptance by the United States of the principle of self-determination for the Palestinians. In this way the Egyptians put terms both to the PLO and to the United States. How the Egyptians tried to convince the PLO during the summer to come to some open recognition of Israel and acceptance of 242, and how they tried and failed to get the United States to look beyond the summer in order to make some possible move toward the Palestinians is a long and very interesting story. The United States refused to make such a move. The Egyptians were faced with a very serious kind of ultimatum on the part of the Arabs and it was quite a strange summer where the PLO was talking openly with the Egyptians more and more as the summer went on, while the boycott by the Arab states of Egypt continued in the name of the Palestinian cause.

The Arabs insisted that Egypt do one of three things, and at various points insisted on all three. They wanted Egypt to withdraw its ambassador from Tel-Aviv, to break relations with Israel, and to declare that Camp David was dead. With a great struggle Egypt refused to do each of those three things, and in my view it will continue to do so.

Today Egypt finds itself in a position of even deeper isolation than it was in before. Previously it had hoped that through the rising of the Palestinian issue the Arabs would find it necessary to reconcile themselves with Egypt. Instead they have found that the PLO is willing to do so even though other Arabs continue to keep Egypt out in the cold. Israel should recognize a major strategic achievement: under the most severe test that was possible, coming after Israel had withdrawn from Sinai, the Egyptian-Israeli official relationship did not end. One should not, of course, speak any more about issues of normalization and so on. Those things are going to be very hard to maintain at all at this point, but I think this is a very important part of the situation. Egypt finds itself in isolation and in a strange situation, recognized only by the PLO.

Sharon's Failure

Strategically, Arik Sharon, who has become the new symbol of Israel, has achieved far more than either his critics or his

advocates had imagined. But he still failed and he failed in his central thesis. This failure not only of Sharon but of a whole generation of Israeli leadership in the long run (if not in the short run) will probably overshadow all of these successes. Sharon believed there was a military solution to Israel's Palestinian problem, that somehow the Palestinian will could be broken. He believed that Palestinian identity was not so fully formed that it could not be transformed through enormous military pressure, and that the PLO could be destroyed as a political entity by destroying it as a military entity. It seems to me that this set of strategic assumptions has been shattered; but, before I get to that, I want to point out a number of problems for Israel in what it has achieved strategically.

Strategic Problems

First of all, if we ask ourselves today what are the chances of the Arabs turning toward revenge, there is one clear line of thinking. It is a line of thinking not intended toward radicalism, or any move toward the left. The Soviet Union has been severely discredited, and leftist politics in the Arab world today are not popular even among the most determined leftists. There is an idea of a move toward the extreme fundamentalist right. The thinking is that perhaps the only way of mobilizing after this defeat is a turn toward fundamentalism of a Shi'ite or a Sunni variety since they see Khomeini's success.

That would be the worst disaster for Israel because it would bring down the very Arab world into which Israel was finally finding its way. That world, represented first of all by Egypt, is pro-American, interested in modernization, and trying to restrain religious fanaticism. Egypt is also trying to move toward some kind of normalization of the Palestinian problem, what I would call the attempt on the part of the Arabs—far more than on the part of Israel—to remove from the Palestinian flower its radical thorn. This attempt to develop an Arab world along these kinds of statist lines very much in the American camp is what has given Israel some acceptance in the Arab world; and it is this defeat of the Palestinians that still may defeat that Arab world itself. This is indeed what the threat is in Egypt. If you ask me why the

Egyptians, in the last analysis, did not allow any substantial number of Palestinians into Egypt, the bottom line reason was the fear that this would enhance the opposition to the regime that is already emerging again from the fundamentalist right.

PLO Weakness and Israeli Power

Israel has shown that it has an unassailable military superiority. But what has it shown about the Palestinian question? The key is to look at what did and did not happen during this war. For about six weeks there was a very serious threat that the Israelis and the Palestinians would come to a kind of apocalypse about their future relationship. Between them they would find a way to end it with a military slaughter. Perhaps Israel would go into Beirut and destroy the Palestinian movement house by house. If not by armed force, many Israeli military planners hoped that by threatening that force they would bring about an abject Palestinian surrender.

In the great paradox of the Middle East, it is precisely Israel that gives great power to the Palestinians just at the moment that the Palestinians are powerless from the military point of view. The issue of the Palestinians is not a strategic one; it is one of internal identity. Any time the Palestinians raise their issue before the world and any time they engage in any military action, no matter how minor and unthreatening to Israel's basic survival, Israel's enormous sensitivity produces a major response that lends Israeli power to Palestinian powerlessness. The PLO was no military threat to Israel before this war. With all that it had done in building a conventional capacity, the PLO was nothing militarily compared to Israel. But just at the moment the PLO could no longer bring the Arab world into a war with Israel—and thus no longer get the benefit of the international attention that such a war or threat of war would bring—the PLO was able to bring about the longest war precisely because of enormous Israeli sensitivity to the Palestinians.

The cease-fire that had existed in Lebanon for the last year could have continued on the part of the Palestinians; they had other fish to fry. But Israeli sensitivity creates such an enormous response that the Palestinians once again become central to the politics of the Middle East and the world. The paradox continues as today, even though the Palestinians and the PLO are dispersed

again and their military power seems broken, we ask ourselves: What can they do?

Let us take just one example. The PFLP (the Popular Front, George Habash's group) is sending about 1,000 men into Yemen. What can they do in South Yemen? It's so far from Israel, what can they do? Well, Israeli shipping goes down the Red Sea through the Bab-al-Mandab Straits. Imagine the response of Israel if one of its ships is hit by one PLO rocket from South Yemen. Israel's military response will bring another country into the war and again there will be an international incident. So even in the Palestinians' moment of greatest weakness, they know that an Israeli response can make them a central issue in Middle East politics. They can take some small action against the Saudis and create such a response on the part of the United States. Or let us say that there is some breakaway group of Palestinians who have gone to Tunis who decide to attack Jews, will we let that be a minor incident? We will not. The Jews, the Israelis, will make it into a major international incident; and so we harness our strength to their weakness, or they harness their weakness to our strength, they are inseparably linked.

During this war, the military logic was almost brought to its final point. This war came very close to testing the idea that we could end the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis through military means by ending the political existence of one of the groups. The twin fantasies of Israelis and Palestinians were brought very close to the testing point, very much to the gates of realization at the gates of Beirut. For Israel the notion was that the PLO at the moment of great threat would surrender its identity, would give up, or if it did not give up that somehow a military solution could be achieved by destroying its leadership. Somehow at the last moment this was not done. That it was not done is not just a matter of American pressure; it has to do with basic elements of internal life in Israel. Israeli society proved in this case that the military solution—the destruction of the Palestinians and their identity—is not possible for Israel to do. It is not possible for Israel to do this even in a situation that was maximally likely to make it possible. Due to its own losses, to the losses of the civilians in Beirut, or for all of the reasons (whichever ones you prefer), Israel could not do it. The brink was reached by the Israelis and they could not do it.

Steadfastness

There were two things I heard a thousand times in the last three months from Palestinians at every level from the top to the bottom. One word they always used was steadfastness. It was used so frequently and with such devotion that it was almost a religious term: steadfastness. Not victory, not the ability to defeat the Israelis, but steadfastness, the ability to stand fast, to live. Indeed, many Palestinians were very disappointed when the PLO decided to leave Beirut because they wondered what had happened to steadfastness; but steadfastness is the answer the Palestinians gave to Israeli military power, not to be victorious, but to stay.

The other thing I heard had to do with surrender. In many of our imaginations is the concept that the Palestinians under great pressure will give up the idea of Palestinian nationhood in order to survive as individuals. This too was put to the test in Beirut. There was every reason for the Palestinians to surrender. They were offered defeat not only by Israel and the United States, but by the Arabs who did not want this moment of truth to come (for their own reasons, it had nothing to do with their interest in the Palestinian cause). But they always said the same phrase; they talked about it, they wanted "something in the hand."

What did "something in the hand" mean? It meant that they were not going to stop unless they had a future. I feel we came very close to that great apocalypse where we played out the fantasies of both Palestinians and Israelis. The Palestinian fantasy that the Jews could commit genocide against them is now over, and that's a very important thing to be over. Many Jews this summer feared that could happen. And it's over. Both sides, at the moment of the brink, stepped back. As a result of that, the idea that there is a military, strategic solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem has been tested and has failed.

Only Peace

My conclusion is that after this summer, it is not as if peace is one alternative among many for Israelis and Palestinians. It is the *only* alternative left. In the next few months we will have a period of revenge. There is tremendous anger on all sides: the Lebanese against the Palestinians, the Palestinians against the Israelis, the

Israelis against each other and against the Palestinians and against the Americans and so on and so forth. And we are going to have a lot of posturing in the next few months and I am sure we are going to hear all kinds of statements from the Arabs of moving toward some kind of confrontationist position. But that Emperor has no more clothes; there is no military solution. As a result of that we may be able to begin to look at whether there is a political solution.

Over the last few months, in a way, the essence of what each side wants has become more and more clear. For the Israelis the key thing is to have a peace they know is not a stage toward some later confrontation, but an end to it. That is what security must mean. It means that there is no longer a next step, that there is an end to the conflict. For Palestinians what has become clear is that there is an enormous hunger for some kind of control over their own lives, some form of sovereignty. That hunger has come to supersede all their other needs. It has led them to many mistakes including their terrible, tragic mistake with the Lebanese; it means now that their hunger for sovereignty is no longer a hunger for a whole territory but for some piece of land in Palestine. We are very close to what constitutes a solution, if we seize the chance.

In my view, the Palestinian state with border modifications for Israeli security would become acceptable to the dominant leadership in Fatah and could become acceptable if it were so understood by the dominant leadership of many elements in Israel. Recently we took a poll among Palestinians, Egyptians, Israelis, and American Jews about many options to the conflict and we included this option, which is not much talked about. It was the only option of all the options offered to Israelis where more said yes than said no. Israelis and American Jews are extremely divided about this, but this option had at least some support.

Revenge and Reconciliation

If I ask myself—at the end of this frantic summer of discussions with every kind of leader and every kind of follower—what the balance sheet looks like, I must say it is not entirely negative. I expect to hear the noise of revenge, and I expect to hear it loud. But I will also listen for another noise, the much lower sounds of reconciliation. They can also be heard. There are Palestinians, there are Israelis, there are Americans, there are Egyptians, there

are Jordanians, who know that there is no longer a military solution. We must give them our support in every way we can.

Questions that followed Professor Cohen's talk, with his responses, are reprinted below.

Expulsion of the Palestinians Rejected

Question: To what extent does the Israeli government share the perception that the military option to the Palestinian problem is over?

Cohen: To a much larger extent than it did previously. In early June I had a number of conversations with the top leaders in Israel about the Palestinian problem. Just before the war I was at a meeting between the Israeli foreign minister and the former prime minister of Egypt. It is precisely this notion, the military option, which was offered by the Israeli foreign minister as a solution to the Palestinian problem at the time. I don't think he has that view anymore. I also don't think he has been convinced that there is a solution other than that. In other words, he hasn't been convinced that there *is* a solution; but he is in that place where, in my research, I find that most Israelis are. They find that there is no solution for them.

There is a small minority, about 25 percent of Israelis, who feel there is a solution to the Palestinian problem, a solution that basically annexes the West Bank and throws the Palestinians out. It is the only group that has a confident solution. Everybody else doesn't and that group is overwhelmed by those who don't want that solution. I would say there is at least a chance that the present government has abandoned this notion.

The PLO's Peace Research

Question: In the Palestinian society in Lebanon, as it were, a lot of their resources were given to military development. Would any Israeli accept that in the West Bank and Gaza?

Cohen: No, and no one should. My experience in talking to the Palestinian leadership is that none of them expects they can get anywhere with such a proposal. Those who maintain that the armed struggle should be the primary option of the Palestinians as

a serious strategy rather then as a rhetorical strategy are not interested in a solution of Palestinian statehood.

Before this last war, the PLO was doing a research study among its own fighters as to what they thought it meant to be a Palestinian state. The PLO was very interested in making sure they had articulated the message that there was an endpoint to this struggle. They had to be realistic enough to know they were going to come to a point that if they were going to get anything, they would have to give up something. They were actually doing research. They asked me some questions about how to do certain kinds of survey research. Now, the research is dead. But, the PLO was studying its own fighters' attitudes as to whether they had learned that the Palestinian state meant that they were going to make peace with Israel.

Palestinian Identity Solid

Question: Are there differences between West Bank and PLO leadership?

Cohen: The Palestinians in the West Bank often complain bitterly that the policies developed by the Palestinians living in Beirut do not sufficiently take into account the concerns they have in the West Bank and Gaza. So the answer is there are differences. But if you ask the question does somebody in the West Bank of serious political significance want to say that he is going to establish the anti-PLO, the answer is definitely no. The PLO has a significance that is not involved in policy but is involved in the symbolic statement that there is a Palestinian people that extends beyond borders.

Right now there are going to be a lot of challenges in the West Bank to the PLO. There are, for example, people on the West Bank who are pro-Syria. There are also people who are pro-Jordan. They don't like the policies of Fatah, now the leadership of the PLO, which is not pro-Syrian nor pro-Jordanian. But are they going to say today that they are going to establish an organization against the PLO? I am willing to bet it won't happen. There will be cracks, there will be differences of opinion, and so on. Arafat's leadership is going to be very hard to challenge because he came

out of this siege. So, if you ask me would the people in the West Bank like Arafat to be their president, I will say no. They would like somebody from the West Bank to be their president. But will they say something against Arafat and in that sense challenge the unity of their own group? No they won't, and so it depends on what question you are asking. The key question is, do Palestinians perceive themselves as one group, as one people, whether they live here or there or the other place? That unity has not been broken by this and it will not be.

American Jews for Reconciliation

Question: Are there effective ways of supporting those people who think the military option is exhausted?

Cohen: Well, let me answer that obliquely by giving you an example of a current problem. It has to do with the American Jewish community. During these last few months I attended a number of sessions of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, which is the leadership of the Jewish community from an official point of view. Now, it's one thing when there are public meetings and they show support of the military option. We can all understand that politically. It makes sense; but, what happens when the doors are closed? What is the American Jewish leadership capable of doing and saying? The one Israeli leader they severely criticized, Shimon Peres, was saying almost nothing, but he did say that the Palestinian problem had to be solved. Peres showed great courage in speaking his mind, the only leader to do so, and for doing this he became the target for much criticism.

In my view this is a very serious problem. If you look at the percentage of Jews who feel that way it no longer represents the only view that is held in the American Jewish community. I don't even think it's the majority view, and yet it's the only view that gets expressed.

I used to believe that the military option was a minority view just on the basis that it seemed to fit my own political perspective, but recently we have actually done some research comparing American Jewish attitudes toward the conflict with the attitudes of

Israelis. We have found out that American Jews are more supportive of the idea of annexation than Israelis, and by a substantial difference. On the other hand, we also find that there is a very sizable group of American Jews who favor the idea of a Palestinian state with border changes. That group is not heard.

It would be a significant thing to get that group together, not on some radical platform, but in a forum focusing on reconciliation. If their ideas were expressed in those forums it would make a difference to the perception of Israelis as to where the American Jewish community stands.

In Israel people can express a variety of opinions and in the American group they cannot. I am sure that many of you here express such opinions but, frankly, your opinions have not counted for very much, and that is putting it mildly. Those opinions have not been expressed in any politically effective place, neither with regard to the American government nor with regard to the Israeli government. I believe that it's time to get out of the situation where these kinds of groups see themselves as acting outside of the framework of political action of the Jewish world.

Palestinians: The Enduring Question

Question: Aren't there other problems, other groups of refugees around the world who were stateless but who became absorbed?

Cohen: There are other groups and there are even greater numbers of refugees. Therefore, we have to ask ourselves why it is that this issue has such power. I have been trying to suggest that it is precisely the nature of the link between Palestinian identity and Israeli identity that has created the power of this issue. The Palestinian problem is linked to Israeli power. They have become inseparable one from the other. The problem continues because it is a linked problem.

There are many other refugee problems that get solved because the people become absorbed in the societies into which they have fled. Let us ask ourselves about the small number of Palestinian refugees who are going to be created by this conflict in Lebanon (later on it's going to be a larger number as the families leave after the guerrillas). Now, are they going to become absorbed into the

countries to which they go, let's say, like the Pakistani refugees were absorbed into Pakistan? What do you think? They won't be. That's right, I am agreeing with you. I really agree with you. Other refugees are absorbed and the Palestinians are not absorbed and that's precisely our question: Why not? It's a problem, maybe it's "artificially created" as some say, but the point is that it is a problem that becomes linked up with our problem.

PLO Terrorists

Question: Are half of the PLO from aboard?

Cohen: There are certainly international guerrillas in the PLO and there is no question that the PLO has engaged in terrorism. Nobody is denying that. The PLO will continue to engage in terrorism, and I did not and do not pretend otherwise. I said there is going to be revenge, not only reconciliation. There is going to be a lot of revenge and a lot of terrorism. And I also did not say there is no distinction between the PLO and the Palestinians. I said the PLO is a symbol to the Palestinians of the idea that there is a group that represents the Palestinians as one entity. That is what the PLO means now. Maybe somebody else is going to come up with the idea of a Palestinian government in exile that will come to represent them; but if it does, it is going to embody the same ideas. It will comprise a very wide range of political options. Among its constituents will be a lot of people who engage in armed struggle, terrorism, and so on.

Jordan and the Palestinians

Question: Is Jordan a Palestinian state?

Cohen: Well, perhaps. It's an interesting question as were it not for the war of 1967, Jordan would have turned into a Palestinian state. At that point Jordanian identity was very problematic. There were serious problems with Hussein's authority in the West Bank. The East Bank was also in a difficult situation.

I don't know whether Hussein would have survived if the 1967 war had not happened, but something has happened to Jordanian

identity in the last 15 years. The people in the East Bank have become strongly attached to their own society. Even though there are many Palestinians in the East Bank, there are also many people in the East Bank who are not Palestinians. Those other Jordanians are very attached to their state and they want it; they want their own state. Now, I am sure that in the long run the Palestinians on the East Bank and the Palestinians on the West Bank will want to have a strong relationship with each other.

Will the Palestinians in the East Bank want to overthrow Hussein? I would be surprised. My contention does not have to do so much with the love of Hussein, but because Hussein is very important in preventing conflict between the two major population groups in the East Bank. Both groups realize they don't want to have a civil war. They can see enough of what happened in Lebanon and Syria. One of the ways in which civil strife is prevented is by having a symbol who is neither of this group, nor of that group, but who represents the different interests. Here is where I think Arik Sharon, by accepting the idea that there is a Palestinian state, may have created a problem for us. He has legitimated the notion that there is a Palestinian national identity. The question then becomes why shouldn't those Palestinians who have such a national identity in the West Bank become linked to those in the East Bank? There is no justification for not doing it if you accept the idea of a Palestinian state and of Palestinian nationalism. I think Jordan is not going to go away quickly. I am not sure it would be to anybody's benefit to propose the notion that Hussein should disappear in favor of some Palestinian leader as a solution to the Palestinian problem. Even the Palestinians do not propose that today.

Every U.S. President Needs a War

Question: Do you anticipate major diplomatic moves in the Middle East?

Cohen: Yes, I see a lot of activity in that area over the next several months. I think the American administration is very determined to do something about this for the first time. It recalls to me something Sadat said the last time I saw him before he died. He said to

me that each American president needs a Middle East war and that one of the reasons he went to Jerusalem was that he didn't want Carter to have to have a war in order to learn that the Americans had to take the Middle East seriously. Sadat thought that each American administration starts off thinking that it can get around the problem of the Middle East; they think they can avoid it and at a certain point a war happens that wakes them up. I thought a lot about Sadat's statement this summer because that's what happened. If you listened to the talk of the people in the American government in the first few days of the war they were enjoying themselves; gradually their attitude changed. I think that theirs is a determined attitude now and there is a lot of support for it.

The Best Standards for Israel

Question: Why can't the Palestinians live under Israeli rule like other minorities in the Middle East?

Cohen: I think you miss the point of what it is that the Israelis deny in Palestinians, that for example Moslems in Egypt do not deny in Copts, or Lebanese Christians do not deny in Shi'ites in Lebanon or, yes, in Jews in Syria. They do not deny the right of their group existence in that place as a legitimate right. Five years ago, Palestinians in the West Bank would often tell you if the Israeli occupation were just to be measured on its terms, comparing it to the British occupation, it wouldn't be so bad. They wouldn't say it anymore because a lot of things have happend since then. But there is the additional problem, which is that the Israelis claim that the land is theirs, and that it does not belong to the Palestinians. That claim means the Palestinians are not rightfully there on their own terms. The persistence of the Israeli claim to the land as solely theirs makes life for the Palestinians under Israeli control different than for other minorities in other situations.

The second thing is this: What standards do we want to use? Do we want to use the standards of those groups in the Middle East who are trying to improve those conditions for minorities? Or the standards of those who are trying to maintain the kinds of discriminatory practices that exist? Terrible things go on in the Middle East in terms of treatment of minorities; we know that. But what

standards do we want to use? The standards we have for ourselves should be the standards of the best groups in the Middle East, of those people who are trying to achieve some kind of reasonable status for minorities.

Israel is now beginning to realize that its possible role in the Middle East could be very great if it were not for this problem. There are many things that have come in the communications between Egyptians and Israelis and other communications, both public and private, with other Arab societies about possible futures for Israel in the Middle East. They could become possible not with some grand solution to the Palestinian problem, which is not even what the Palestinians want, but just with what the Arabs want. The Arabs want to do something to institutionalize the Palestinian problem by taking out its radical thorn. This is making its impact on many Israeli analysts. In my view, Begin is interested in solving the Palestinian problem, much more interested than many of these questioners have indicated that they are, because Israel's future depends upon it and the other way is not working.

The empty chair: Jordan, the war in Lebanon, and the American Jewish Community

This interview with Donald Feldstein was conducted before King Hussein's rejection of the Reagan peace plan. Nonetheless, it remains valuable because it centers on the policy Israel should undertake, and American Jews should support, to achieve peace in the wake of the Lebanon War. This is a real question regardless of the current positions of Israel's neighbors. At the time of this interview, Feldstein was Executive Vice-President of the American Jewish Committee. His views are representative of many people in positions of responsibility in the Jewish community. He makes clear, I think, both the current possibilities and limits of an independent stance on Israel on the part of established Jewish agencies.

GARY RUBIN

Rubin: Let me begin by asking a broad question: What is American Jewish leadership—both top professionals and lay leaders in organizations like the American Jewish Committee—thinking about Israel in the wake of Lebanon?

Feldstein: I think the changes have been both overstated and understated. From the outside, there are always people, especially in the press, who are looking for the "Shattering of Jewish Unity." I don't think that's happened. If there were, for example, a concerted effort in the last month to cut foreign aid to Israel, I

think everyone who cares about Israel would have locked hands, and there would have been a strong united front. I don't think that fundamental support for Israel's security has been diminished at all. You'll occasionally get a Schwartzchild[1] who says "O.K., I quit, I'm turning off." But that's very rare.

On the other hand, there are some people who are fearful of disagreement or dissent, who try to pretend that everything is just fine and nobody has any questions. But all you have to do is talk to people in the corridors of national meetings, livingroom conversations, etc. to know that Jews all over America are troubled, are concerned about specific policies of Israel and are not sure where they're headed. So I think there's something very real, but it has to be taken for what it is, not for what it isn't.

Rubin: When you say some things are troubling: are these issues that had been evident before, that Lebanon pushed to the fore, or did Lebanon raise some particular new concerns?

Feldstein: I'm not sure to what degree Lebanon was the watershed that some people would make of it and to what degree it continues a process.

I would remind you that despite all this talk about new dissent, most of the people whose names you saw in ads[2] are the same people who have been dissenting from time immemorial, though there are some significant exceptions. And it is not so much the war in Lebanon as the aftermath—the Reagan initiative, the Beirut massacre— that have created some movement toward dissent.

In the last two weeks of August, the American Jewish Committee did a survey of American Jewish attitudes. In fact Steven M. Cohen conducted it. This is when Israel looked best: Beirut was being evacuated, their policy had apparently worked, and it was before the Reagan initiative. At that time, the survey indicated a strong move toward a more hawkish position on the part of American Jewry as a whole. There was a lot of support for Begin, and 25 percent or thereabouts even said that Israel hadn't been hawkish enough; they should have gone right into West Beirut. Some of this support may have been a backlash to what was perceived as unfair media treatment of Israel, but not all. There was strong support of Israel among the masses of American Jews. Most of the people who were uneasy or dissented from the Lebanon War were people who had been dissenting from Begin government positions for some time.

But I think the concerns about the war, that it was at least partially political in objective, left a certain amount of gnawing uneasiness, so that when it was followed up by the Reagan initiative and the Beirut massacre, then you began seeing new movement on the part of some people, such as Alexander Schindler,[3] the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) a little bit, B'nai Brith a little bit, some of the things the American Jewish Committee did, and even the American Jewish Congress to some degree.

Rubin: On that point: What precisely did the massacre or Reagan initiative do? Was there some fuzziness over what could have been Israel's objectives? Did the Reagan plan force people to make clear choices?

Feldstein: Let's start with the Reagan plan. I think certainly most Jewish organizations and leaders were unhappy with the process of the Reagan initiative, especially the lack of consultation with Israel, the shortcutting of the Camp David transition period, and the announcing of what U.S. objectives would be at the end of negotiations. We at the American Jewish Committee joined with the general consensus of Jewish organizations and said this is no way to get movement.

But, after all was said and done, there it was and it had to be reacted to. And privately, there was a great deal of dismay, certainly, with the tone and character of the Begin response. When the spotlight could and should have been on the Arab governments—are you or are you not coming to the table—the Begin response took the spotlight away from them and put it back on Israel as the recalcitrant one, the intransigent one. I and many others felt that this was at least very poor tactics. Beyond the tactical consideration, once you're angry with the unfairness of the process, you're left with the plan and you have to react to it. There is some disagreement in the American Jewish community as to how much there is in the Reagan initiative that could be the basis for some workable movement.

Then the Beirut massacre came and you got into the moral issues. That wasn't tactical stuff. There were a number of Jewish

organizations who said, for their own self-respect, they had to go on record, not blaming Israel, not prejudging the issue, but instead saying there had to be a judicial inquiry. I think those organizations that did take that position during that terrible week felt they were vindicated by the Israeli peoples' own response: establishing an inquiry the following week.

Rubin: I want to ask about your statement that people who have been dissenting have always been in that camp, although some new concerns may be rising. There is an argument made, that I would like you to react to, that there is a real security concern on the West Bank and other places that is not adequately addressed in American government or the press. But the effect of blind support for the Begin government is to identify these real security needs with Begin policy and therefore to obscure what would be consensus position on true security objectives.

Feldstein: Yes, that is a very real question. One of the positives of the Reagan initiative is that it was one of the more forthright statements by an American President which suggested that Israel's security needs had to be a major consideration in any settlement.

But as long as there is no Arab government ready to negotiate, it's very hard for American Jews—probably for Israeli Jews, too—to separate security questions from general questions of what an accord might consist of. That's why I've supported our organizational position of the last couple of months which says let's take that damn spotlight and put it on Jordan where it belongs. If Jordan won't come to the table, then the supposed intransigence of the Begin government is irrelevant. There's nobody to talk to.

One might even argue that the policy of the Begin government, whether intended or not, is the best tactic for bringing Jordan to the table. The clock is running and if they don't act, they could lose.

If Jordan were to come to the table, unequivocally, I think that would create a dynamic here and in Israel for dissent that would really bring the argument to the forefront. All the polls in Israel and of American Jews indicate that a majority would support territorial compromise in the interests of real peace. If Jordanian participation were to become a possibility, I think a lot of us would be counted on the side of compromise. But, absent that, it's hard to proceed with the debate.

Rubin: But is Jordan's position the only major problem? Can one really say at this point that the Begin government's position on the West Bank or on security is really tactical? Is there any evidence that they don't mean it when they say they want Judea and Samaria?

Feldstein: No, I believe that the Begin government is quite sincere and Begin's faith in the Jabotinsky vision is a very deep one. But it may also turn out that the settlements policy is the tactic which brings Arabs to the table. I think that Jordan unequivocally at the table would create a dynamic in Israel, just as did Sadat's coming to Jerusalem. I truly believe that if Jordan were to come, the hunger for peace would take over and there would be a major shift in Israeli politics. As long as Jordan doesn't come, it's hard.

Rubin: Can one say the opposite is also true? If the Israeli government were to say that it is willing to negotiate on the basis of the Reagan plan, wouldn't that put the same kind of pressure you are talking about on Hussein and the so-called Arab moderates? Hussein has used the settlements as an excuse for not talking. Could one ask for a Begin gesture toward Hussein in the same way that you're asking for a Hussein gesture toward Israel?

Feldstein: The Begin government would argue, with some correctness, that after 1967 there was a long period when peace was possible and no one responded. Whether that situation is different now, as a result of the smashing of the PLO power, I'm not sure.

Some people have said, and personally I have sympathy for this argument, that a temporary moratorium on settlements might lead to serious negotiations. Then, if Jordan doesn't come, get off Israel's back! That might be a wise move.

On the other hand, the Israeli government is afraid that such a gesture might lock them into continued extensions and deprive them of the settlement weapon. I'm not sure Jordan has a good case in that regard, though I might support such a move.

This takes me back to Lebanon, too. There are two standards. There's the standard of what we would advocate for Israel in the Lebanese War. But there is also the standard of the world in international warfare by which no one has a right to criticize Israel.

Rubin: Well, I understand that. But, again, that cuts both ways. If there really is a consensus on Israel's needs and the world's

misjudgment of them, then can't one argue that focus ought to be on true security issues and moral concerns and not on holding to the Begin government line? Isn't it more effective to say this government is wrong, but there are some real issues?

Feldstein: But the Begin government is the democratically elected government of Israel, so all you can do is argue with them, and I'm in favor of some freedom to argue. But I'm saying it's particularly difficult to make that argument now, when the Arab states have been so recalcitrant and unmoving. That was the basis of the unhappiness with the Begin response to the Reagan initiative. He turns himself into the bad guy when there are two parties to the conflict.

Rubin: I wonder what the institutional effects of all this are on American Jewry, especially established organizations like the American Jewish Committee. Is there going to be a clear public or private expression of concern about what you just said, on Begin's response to the Reagan plan?

Feldstein: Private concerns about that reaction have been made by many groups. The only concern is public expression and there is no way to be a little bit pregnant on that. You can't send a letter to the *Jerusalem Post* rather than the *New York Times* because if it's a good letter, it will be picked up. You have to assume that once you're going public, you're doing it because it's a tactic to exert pressure.

I think that after the Reagan initiative you saw some hedging on the part of establishment groups. I'm not talking about American Friends of Peace Now or groups to the left of them. AIPAC and B'nai Brith said about the Reagan plan that there's a lot bad about it, but it should not be dismissed out of hand. There are possibilities in it worth considering.

American Jewish Committee went a little bit further. We were more specific. We said that we have twice in the past years called for restraint in establishing [West Bank] settlements during the course of negotiations. If Jordan were to come to the table, the chances are we would once more make that call. We keep putting the onus on the empty chair—Where is Jordan?

I think one of the missions in the next few years of the

American Jewish Committee, with its history of independence, is to be the group which is clearly within the establishment, which is very careful, which voices any public criticism only with great reluctance, but which is prepared to do so and which may in fact devote itself in the next couple of years to developing ground rules for how and when that dissent can be expressed. One way or another there are going to be people who are going to dissent, and we've got a choice. We can increasingly read them out of the community and narrow the circle of wagons, or we can try to enlarge that circle. It's a dangerous game because it can be misunderstood as lack of support for Israel. I recognize all the dangers. But the up-side is we may be able to train even the media and the American government to recognize that criticism of policies does not equal lack of Jewish unity. I guess the ideal would be that if there were an attack on some fundamental security need of Israel, such as foreign aid, there would be a big rally and Americans for a Safe Israel and Friends of Peace Now would march together and maybe we could teach the media what it's all about.

Rubin: Given that, how do established organizations relate to groups like Peace Now? In their own conceptions, people associated with Peace Now believe they are part of a security consensus, and that when it comes to things like an AWAC sale or foreign aid they can be counted among the supporters of Israel. How do established groups relate to them?

Feldstein: There are a number of supporters of Peace Now who are in the American Jewish Committee, both on the lay and professional levels. But we are much broader than that. We also have people far to the right of Peace Now. One of the contributions I think we made during the past summer was specifically being one of the few places where that forum could exist.

Rubin: That's a function AJC performs as it's constituted now. But when you were talking before, were you envisioning something different, possibly bigger—beyond serving as a forum?

Feldstein: We don't know yet. I would like to think so. One of our new arms is an Institute on American Jewish-Israeli Relations. One of the projects it might consider would be something that would try to study the parameters of the debate. Part of our

mission is educating Israel about us. We have several projects on this. We want to make exchange a two-way street.

Rubin: Does this include what we're talking about in terms of the sources and rationale of American dissent?

Feldstein: Only in part. But take, for instance, some of the problems we had this summer with press coverage. Some of the problem was third world bias and some of it was anti-Semitism. But some of it was also sheer ignorance and mismanagement on the part of Israelis who were running the public information effort. That's correctable. That we can contribute to.

Rubin: But, again, we come back to the question: If in addition to everything you say—anti-Semitism, third world bias, lack of familiarity with the press—one also has a problem with the Begin policy itself, don't you eventually have to deal with the real issues?

Feldstein: Yes, I think that's true. But most of us in the established organizations did not have serious problems with the policy of Israel in the Lebanon War itself. I think at the very least some of us felt we could go along with that. Some of us were more hawkish.

Rubin: That includes up to the Beirut seige?

Feldstein: Yes. Most American Jews and Jewish organizations felt that you've got an enemy that's engaged in an armed struggle by their definition, and if you've got a chance to go out and get them, you go out and get them. If they're hiding behind hostages, that's ultimately their responsibility. Of course one can argue that the likely benefits were not worth the price. But I don't think there was as much dissent on the American scene as some people on the Left would like to imagine.

Rubin: Nevertheless, if it turns out that the basic problems come down to the West Bank—and the process of disengagement from Lebanon is about how you relate to the West Bank and the real questions become Jordanian and PLO involvement—then how does one have a fair chance of separating out the issues you mentioned of distorted or unfair reporting from disagreement with actual policy?

Feldstein: With great difficulty. We have to tool up to that moment

by the projects I mentioned: the building of relationships, the defining of the parameters of dissent, etc.

But I think the issue really becomes engaged when an Arab government is ready to talk. I'm not sure you could convince many people that further concessions by Israel after thirty years would be more likely to bring an Arab government to the table. So I think at the point where you get an Arab government that's ready to negotiate, then you've got an issue. At that point you choose up sides and you fight it out and then you can separate it.

Rubin: I think it's important to push that point. Is it only when an Arab government would agree to change the situation by saying it would be willing to talk that we could see movement? Or is it also in Israel's power now, possibly, to change the situation by saying they are willing to talk? If the goal, as you see it, is to put the spotlight on Jordan, wouldn't the best strategy, from an Israeli and American-Jewish point of view, be to have Begin say that if Hussein is ready to talk then we're ready to sit down with him? The current line only serves to promote the perception of Israeli intransigence.

Feldstein: Begin usually talks about negotiations as the tag-line of all his statements. As a matter of fact, we had a conversation with him in mid-October about this very point—the response to the Reagan initiative—and he pulled out his response and it said I'm willing to negotiate at any given time. Except it was at the end of the statement. We said we think it would be much wiser to make that the first part of the statement. So, we would favor pushing Israel today to emphasize that if an Arab government will come to negotiate, a lot of things are possible. But we are not prepared yet, and I'm not personally prepared, to put the onus for refusal to compromise on Israel's shoulders until there's somebody on the Arab side ready to negotiate.

Rubin: Let me try to put it at a basic level. Are these essentially tactical debates that don't go to the center of the issue? Whether Begin says something at the beginning or end of a press release, one of the major things that is now happening is continued settlements. You said before in the interview that you think he is sincere about the West Bank. So when all these tactical considerations are

solved, is there really a basic policy issue at the bottom of it? After arguing whether Israel or Jordan should go first, is there down the line going to be a difference of opinion on the West Bank? And then isn't saying that we're waiting for Arab governments simply postponing that real debate?

Feldstein: I think anyone who is going to answer that question honestly has to confess that there is a chance that by postponing the debate one contributes to a fait accompli and there's nothing left to talk about.

Rubin: Then one would have to ask whether in concentrating on the Hussein statement or Begin statement we really stop short of considering the real, basic, serious questions.

Feldstein: Yes, but this is not a reluctance for dissent or disagreement so much as an honest belief that it doesn't contribute to the peace process now, for the following reasons:

First, if an Arab government doesn't come to the table, then the policy may not be as wrong as it would be if someone were ready to come. What is the future of the West Bank if there's no one to negotiate with? If no one will come, Begin might be right.

Second, even though Begin may not be doing it for that reason, his policy may be the best way of forcing Arabs to the table. I believe that is a very real possibility.

Third, I'm not sure that even from a point of view of lining up your forces to be effective, one can mobilize a constituency for territorial compromise unless there's someone to compromise with.

If Jordan will come to the table, there will be a great debate. This may never occur or it may come tomorrow. But I think it's only a relevant great debate when there's something to debate about.

Rubin: I would like to ask you another series of questions, on American dissent from Israeli policy. There is a great deal of discussion on how people who have genuine questions can best voice them. Some opt for a mass strategy, with a large mobilized constituency, while others favor an elite approach with the emphasis on careful statements and credibility.

Feldstein: I think the only meaningful difference is between totally

private dissent and all other. Once you get into a public arena, whether it's a letter from thirty-six intellectual leaders or a mass rally, I think it's almost totally irrelevant.

I do not think that those of us who have policy disagreements with the government of Israel can dismiss out of hand concern that the government raises about dissent possibly harming Israel's security interests. I know the other arguments. I'm very much aware of Likud leaders having toured the United States when they were not in power, talking of the religious and moral responsibility of American Jews to dissent from policies of the government. In that case, it's whose ox is being gored. Nonetheless, I think one has to be very wary about expressing public dissent in any form. You have to examine the moral and strategic necessity for it.

Once you answer that question affirmatively, I don't set any limits on whether you have a letter to the editor or you have a mass rally. Generally, I have the bias that if the American Jewish community can expand the parameters of acceptable dissent and train the American public to learn that when there is dissent on issues this is not a falling away from Israel, then that in the long run is our best shot. If we can separate the security consensus issues from the specific policy issues, in the long run I think we will be doing Israel a service.

Rubin: There are those who believe that there are meaningful distinctions within the general category of what you call public dissent. One consideration centers on credibility. Some think that carefully chosen people, in an elite strategy, are more likely than mass organizations to be effective with the Israeli and American public and will more likely know what to say in a way that doesn't hurt. On the other hand, others say that mass protest has more credibility since it comes from a wider base. In addition, there's a question as to how much Israel should be an organizing issue for the American Jewish community. Some say Israel would be a most effective concern around which to activate and organize masses of caring American Jews and should be used in that way. Others feel they may do more harm than good and we should organize around other issues. That seems to me to be a major division.

Feldstein: Well, you've raised two questions. The first is really tactical. It's not whether there should be a leader or a mass approach, but which will be more effective. At different times and

places it might be one or the other. That becomes a tactical decision, not a moral one.

On the second question, I think there are inherent weaknesses and difficulties in trying to organize a mass constituency, even among caring people, around the flag of dissent from Israeli policy. I may be biased here out of my own organizational affiliation, but I think it is more possible and effective to get people involved in a large establishment organization devoted to a lot of other things, especially when that organization from time to time will show its independence and own point of view by saying on this we part company, we don't agree.

Rubin: But for people who aren't in those organizations, what is the average American Jew being offered in terms of participation in the experience of Israel? He or she can give money, support, but what about the opportunity to make an intelligent comment?

Feldstein: That's a very legitimate question. There was a major contributor in New Jersey who came to me about a year ago, before the Lebanon War, and he just didn't like Begin. It may have been over the religious pluralism issue. He said, "Give me a forum. You tell me I shouldn't withhold my UJA gift because I'm hurting social welfare programs for poor people in Israel and the U.S. You tell me not to write a letter to the *Times*. You tell me not to join New Jewish Agenda. Give me a forum! What should I do?" It's a legitimate question. I would like to think that if American Jewish mainstream organizations—the B'nai Briths and American Jewish Committees and others—begin to develop the ground rules and are free, then one or another of these groups can provide this forum, at least a place to debate.

Rubin: There are, however, a number of other organizations that have possibly larger constituencies in the community, especially the Federations. They may be in touch with people, such as the man you mentioned from New Jersey, who care about his issue. What are they doing to provide people a forum for intelligent discussion?

Feldstein: I don't think that's a function of Federation. First, I think we would be kidding ourselves if we thought that any major segment of the Jewish public is really interested in being critical of

Israel, except on specific issues. If B'nai Brith, for instance, were to have taken a vote among its membership before it issued its statement on the Reagan initiative, I'm not sure how it would have come out. Second, I think the Federation's function, by its very nature as an umbrella group, is to be rather *pareve*. You need to keep the umbrella broad.

Rubin: I understand the need for an organization like that. I guess my concern is that there are people interested in the issue, who would be assets to the American Jewish community, who could be brought in probably on this issue more than on any other, and who are not in established organizations. Is there anything in the Jewish community that speaks to their needs?

Feldstein: Well, not specifically, no. Only to the extent that organizations like ours make opportunity for them. So that a Federation director could say, "Well, I know your point of view is being debated in the American Jewish Committee and if you really give a damn about it you ought to go and contribute and see whether your voice will carry." At least he would have a place to stand.

Rubin: I have a final series of questions about the considerations that American Jewish leadership takes into account in taking a stand on Israel. One could imagine a number of things. There has to be responsiveness toward Israel, toward the American government, what's best for organizational needs, etc. What are the major sources for decision making on this issue?

Feldstein: I've been learning this past year about that question. I'm impressed by the fact that the historical position the American Jewish Committee has always taken has been to refuse to accept that these various pulls exist. And even though in part that's myth, it may be the most helpful myth on which to operate. Otherwise, you get hung up in dual loyalties. We operate as Americans and we address our government in terms of what we think is in the best interests of our government. We have always rejected any connotation that there are dual pulls on our loyalty. It's good Americanism to criticize the American government when you think it's wrong. I think that's probably the only stance with which one can survive.

Rubin: There is a perception in some quarters that since Begin and

Reagan, there has been an increasing divergence about what's conceived on both sides as common interest.

Feldstein: I've heard it expressed by some of our laity, primarily the older people, who were touched more deeply by this issue in another generation. I think it's an unhealthy thing. I think it's one of the more nasty things that comes out of TV and press treatment that it's Begin versus Reagan, it's America versus Israel. Happily, I can avoid the issue because really in my gut I don't think it's true yet at any point. I think that it's in America's interest to be supportive of Israel. At the point where there is some divergence, I hope I would follow what I thought was right, as I am given to see the right, whether that at that particular moment supported the position of the current government of Israel or the United States.

Rubin: Something Begin himself has been saying speaks, at least to me, very much to the issue, although it's probably not how he means it. Increasingly I find his statements or actions based not ultimately on the political needs of Israel, but on the world-historical position of the Jewish people. He is speaking from the vantage point of the leader of the Jewish people, after what's happened in the twentieth century, and that surely has implications for Jews everywhere, including the U.S.

Feldstein: That is, at least in part, domestic politics in Israel. But whether it is or not, it is a question of some concern. I won't even use an American example. He might some day call upon the Jews of France to defend themselves. I think a number of our people are troubled by this, and I am. I think that's why an honest look at American Jewish-Israeli dialogue has to be a two-way look.

Rubin: But there might be two ways to respond to that. One would be to say he's wrong, that Begin is the head of a government and doesn't speak for the Jews of France, the Jews of America, etc. Or, one could say we agree with him on the principle but not on how he applies it. That is to say, it is important to think of the world-historical position of the Jewish people, but we have our own right to comment on what we think the position is, what our historical necessity is, and what stance we ought to take.

Feldstein: Well, yes and no. Certainly one can't pretend that Israel

is for Jews a government like any other of the governments of the world. Its centrality and importance to us is very unique, very special. One has to take seriously the concerns of Israel, its government and its leaders. Nonetheless, in the same way we must, as concerned Jews, maintain our special interest and our right to criticize; in the last analysis Israel is a government. The people who vote in Israel will determine its policies. Ultimately, it's up to them.

Now, the same thing is true in reverse. I can't say that Begin or Israel should not be concerned about the Jews of France or Argentina or the United States. Israel is special, the central resource that nourishes us. But it should not automatically speak for the Jews of France any more than we can tell Israel how to vote.

Now you get to the second part of your question, on disagreement with a specific world view as well as with the right to intervene. I think Begin has a right to intervene, not quite as automatically or forcefully as he has, without consultation, let's say, from the French Jewish community in that case. The world view does trouble me. I can't speak for Begin who speaks very well for himself. Let's take a more extreme example, the Rabbi Kahane world view, that it's only a matter of time until a Holocaust occurs in every country. If you take that world view, it's hard to criticize any confrontational approach. That's not the world view of the American Jewish Committee. It's not my personal view of the world. I think we start from the assumption that the world is redeemable, that we should not be simpleminded about it or fail to defend Jewish interests vigorously, but that there are friends who are winnable, there are battles to be won, there is life to be lived in the rest of the world, as there has been at least since the Second Commonwealth, for Jews. And ultimately if all the Jews in the world moved to Israel, and the world were an implacably hostile, irredeemable place, then Israel could never survive. That's the perspective I perceive.

Rubin: It seems to many that that position is not shared in Israel, that in Israel there is a real question about the legitimacy of Jewish life in the Diaspora. That, of course, has major implications for hearing what American Jews have to say about, for example, Lebanon.

Feldstein: Absolutely, I think that is a very real problem that needs to be one of the topics of dialogue between Diaspora Jewry and Israel Jewry. It may be one of the places where we will honestly disagree for a long time.

Rubin: Let me ask one final question, by way of summing up and tying some of the threads of this interview together. It now seems in the wake of the Reagan plan, continued negotiations, and increased comment by world Jewry that Lebanon is a watershed event, or at least a very important event, in both Israeli history and in relations between Israel and the Diaspora. Do you think that if one were to look back at it in five years that it will still be seen as a key event that made people see things in a new way, or do you think it will simply be seen as another crisis in a series in which we lurch from one crisis to another and nothing much changes?

Feldstein: Neither. I think that there is developing a new generation of American Jews, who didn't in their lifetime experience the Holocaust, for whom support of Israel financially as well as otherwise may not be so automatic. They'll be asking questions. The Lebanon War and its aftermath, the Reagan initiative, are all steps in the development of a strategy of Jewish organizational life in America, and how it should proceed and engage American Jews. I think each of these will be important steps. It's one more step in the process of our understanding Israel and Israel understanding us and maybe getting together.

I would like to add one other point. I think some of the illusions about effecting change in Israel have to be modified by some of the realities of the Israeli electorate and some of our misunderstandings about it. The kind of stuff I see in articles about Sephardic Jewry is really racist. They would not publish it about a minority in the United States. Some of the attitudes toward Sephardim which I pick up from my friends on the Left and Labor Party people in Israel are unbelievable and untrue. They ignore the fact that young people in Israel, Ashkenazic and Sephardic, are voting in the majority for the Likud. I think if you want to correct your problems, you have to recognize them for what they are. I found very little on my recent trip to Israel that would encourage me to believe that there are forces there that are prepared to

challenge the present government, forces that have the sophistication, the know-how, the charisma, or the understanding to do it.

Rubin: Which means what for American Jewry?

Feldstein: Which means we're going to have to learn to live, perhaps for an extended period, with a Likud government, and learn how to influence that type of government to the extent that we are able.

1. Rabbi Steven Schwartzchild, former editor of *Judaism,* is Professor of Philosophy at Washington University in St. Louis.
2. Advertisements signed by prominent Jews that appeared in the *New York Times* and elsewhere and were critical of the Israeli action in Lebanon.
3. President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.



And if not Peace Now, what then?

N. LEARSI

THEY tell the story of a report that reached the British secret service, indicating that the polar ice cap was melting. Within three months England was to be under two hundred feet of water.

At the Queen's invitation, the Archbishop of Canterbury took to the airwaves, urging Church members to do penance, receive the sacraments, and return to the Church in anticipation of Heaven.

He was followed by the Moderator of the Presbyterian synod of Scotland, who called on all true Christians to repent, place their souls in Jesus' hands, and believe in salvation through faith, for the end was surely near.

Last to speak was the Chief Rabbi. "Well," he said, "we have three months to learn how to live under water."

* * *

For sixteen years now, Zionist doves have been calling on Israel and the Jews to heed the dangers of unending occupation. We have pointed to the rising tide of violence and reaction within Israel and the West Bank as a mortal threat to the soul of the Jewish state. We have warned against the flood of international

opprobrium that comes as a reaction—often an overreaction—to Israel's policies. And I believe we have been correct.

In the meanwhile, the Israeli Right has been learning to live under water.

Now, the galloping pace of Jewish settlement on the West Bank seems to be leading toward some form of annexation—to the obvious dismay of a great many local Arabs. This could be called an improvement or a deterioration in the Mideast situation, depending on your point of view. We will not discuss this here. We will begin with the assumption that annexation would be a disaster for the Jewish state, and that territorial compromise might bring real peace. If you are still with us, read on.

There are a great many objective reasons why the Right is ascendant in Israel. There is an element of Arab policy toward Israel that plays a venal and insidious role. There are failures of the labor movement; there are internal Israeli social tensions unrelated to the conflict with the Arabs; there is a Jewish religious revivalism that may not be unrelated to similar Islamic and Christian revivals around the world.

Is there anything we as American Jews, we as Zionist doves, we as the peace camp in Israel and the Diaspora, can do about it?

To Win, You Have to Want to Win

The greatest failing of the Zionist peace movement in recent years has been its utter lack of concrete, strategic thinking. Those who have been in opposition since 1967 are locked into a mentality of powerlessness, almost reminiscent of pre-Emancipation galut Jewry, which places great faith in the magic of *logos*—The Word. Somewhere, we feel, there is a mystical combination of words that will unlock the pent-up forces of reason and goodwill on both sides of the Armistice line. The right statement, the balanced phrasing, the correct analysis of final peace conditions, and peace will descend upon us.

When we are able to think concretely at all, it is in terms of the next meeting, the next demonstration, the next issue of the journal. There is no sense of how to get from *here* to *there*. There is no sense of how to obtain and use increments of power—which is, or should be, what politics is about.

These remarks hold, I believe, for doves both in Israel and in the Diaspora. As for those who have been in opposition only since 1977, whom we shall call *moderates* for this discussion, there is clearly a difference between moderates in Israel and the Diaspora, but they have a common thread: where the doves seem to think only of Torah and never of flour, and have no concept of effective action, the moderates haven't quite seemed to grasp the idea that they are *out* of power.

In Israel, Labor Party leaders show absolutely no desire to try to understand why they lost two elections. By refusing to take the minimum step required of any political party that falls from government in a functioning democracy—dumping the losing leadership and putting on a new face—they show a contempt for the public that makes one think they deserve to lose. It has been said many times, by a great many moderates, liberals, and leftists, that Labor does not deserve to return to power.

Unfortunately, that is a very shortsighted attitude. There are only two potential ruling parties in Israel, by any analysis not rooted in schizophrenia. Of the two, Labor is willing to make compromises toward peace, and the Likud is not. The question, then, is not, "Does Labor deserve to rule Israel?" but rather, "Does Israel deserve to be ruled by the Likud?"

In the American Diaspora, the failure of the Jewish leadership to adjust is more ominous because the individuals have not fallen from power—only their consciences have. After thirty years of working hand in glove with an Israeli Labor leadership motivated by the same core values of humanism and liberalism that inform most of American Jewish life, the pilots of American Jewry kept their footing through the earthquake of 1977 without so much as blinking an eye.

It was not a value-change that caused diaspora leaders to embrace the Revisionist irrationalism they had once reviled. Nor was it personal greed, ambition, or self-interest. It was a simple abdication of moral and intellectual responsibility. America's Jewish leaders do not want to know what is going on in Israel. I think they want to love Israel very much, and they are afraid that if they don't like it, they won't be able to love it.

A worn-out, once glorious Israeli political movement that has lost its will to fight. A timid diaspora leadership (so what else is

new?) that clings desperately to a fading love. An extra-parliamentary peace movement—on both sides of the ocean—made up largely of young people who want to make politics, but don't trust the political process.

What a sorry lot we are.

Where Were You During the War?

The Lebanon war of 1982 may have touched off the first stirrings of change. To be more precise: there is scant evidence that change has begun, at least in two of the three groups mentioned above. A desire has been evinced to change tactics and move in the direction of effectiveness. And desire to change, so my therapist tells me, is the first step toward change.

The most important innovation is the phenomenon of mainstream diaspora leaders taking issue with the government of Israel. Given the scope of the moral dilemma—mass murders under Israeli army jurisdiction, settlers running amok in the bantustans of Judea and Samaria, murders of Arabs going unprobed for years while entire Arab families are rounded up for a teenager's stone-throwing—we might be forgiven for wishing the protests were louder and more forthright. But there is no denying that a certain mood-change has taken place in the American Jewish community. For reasons that will be discussed below, the very fact that there is dissent at all may be considered remarkable, and indicative of a deep moral revulsion.

During the High Holidays of 5743, immediately before and after the massacre at Sabra and Shatila camps, Peace Now spokesperson Mordechai Bar-On came to America on a speaking tour. In the course of two and a half weeks, he addressed more than ten thousand Jews in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. He spoke from the pulpits of eight congregations on Rosh Hashanah, Shabbat Shuvah, and Yom Kippur. He addressed leadership forums of the Los Angeles and San Francisco Federations, the American Jewish Committee, and gatherings of top Jewish community professionals on both coasts.

After the tour, disappointment was expressed in Peace Now circles, both here and in Israel, that little concrete organization had come out of Bar-On's trip. The American press, too, was disappointed in the appearances: they were looking for evidence of a new mass movement, angry demonstrations, or anything else the editors could call newsworthy. What they got was a quiet lecture tour.

Yet in moderate Jewish circles and among liberal Federation leaders, the excitement over Bar-On's visit is still vivid six months afterward. The reason is deceptively simple: in the American Jewish community, the fact that an Israeli dove could speak against Begin's policies in the most central forums, as an honored guest, during the war itself, was unprecedented. The thousands of worshippers who heard Peace Now sermons during the High Holidays constituted, by their very presence, a mass demonstration.

What happened during the Lebanon war was that an older generation of Jewish liberals, unaccustomed to mounting barricades and protesting, began to recognize an affinity between their Allon Plan/Jordanian Option views and the more radical views of a younger generation of doves. Contrary to appearances, there was no shift to the Left in Jewish opinion. But since the center of gravity has shifted so far to the Right, those Laborite positions that were once the highground of the hawkish establishment have become the battle cry of the opposition. The moderates in the diaspora have begun to recognize this.

In the fall months the doves tried to follow up on Bar-On's trip by attempting to enlist the newly unearthed moderates into the ranks of Peace Now. The disinterest was as resounding as the enthusiasm for the tour had been. The moderates had shown a willingness to cooperate with the doves, not to join them.

If a working alliance is to be forged between moderates and doves in the hopes of unseating Beginism on either side of the ocean, it will have to be based on a principle that the doves ought to be familiar with by now: mutual recognition.

The Parameters of Possible Dissent

If we in the Diaspora want to help to change Israel's policies, we must begin by recognizing the severe limits to our power. We do not vote and we do not fight. For all our elaborate academic opinions about Israel's defense needs and the precise nature of the desired peace settlement, the fact is that nobody is asking us.

What we can hope to do, perhaps, is to effect some shifts in policy, or in Israeli public opinion, by focusing on the Diaspora Jewish hinterland, which is Israel's second line of defense. Even in that limited framework, there are sharp constraints on our ability to dissent. There are certain inherent, structural factors militating against dissent in the Diaspora. Ah, but not against all dissent.

Let us remember that there has always been a tradition of dissent within Diaspora Zionism. From Begin's Betar camps in Poland in the thirties, to Ben Hecht, Peter Bergson, and Samuel Merlin (who is at it again, bless his soul) and their Hebrew Committee for National Liberation in the forties, to Meir Kahane's ravings in the Brooklyn *Jewish Press* in the early sixties, to our own Americans for a Safe Israel and Friends of Gush Emunim, the Right has never hesitated for a moment to voice its misgivings over aspects of moderate Israeli policy.

Why should they hesitate? Nobody could accuse Gush Emunim of lending aid and comfort to the enemy.

We are in a different position. We are calling on the Israeli government to be more, not less, forthcoming toward Israel's enemies. In any simplistic We/They portrayal of the situation, we can very easily be portrayed as They. And, of course, there is some justice in it. Our critique may well be a comfort to Arab propagandists.

And lest we forget: most Arabs do wish that Israel would disappear.

There is a second constraint, peculiar to the modern diaspora, which might be called the centripetal character of a voluntary community. Because of the voluntary nature of contemporary Jewish life, one is associated with the community only to the extent that one wants to be. Since the primary bond holding most Jews to Judaism today is a form of loyalty or nationalism, it follows that the more nationalistic one feels, the more one feels bound to participate in communal affairs.

The result is that Jews whose disagreement with Israeli policy is nationalist—those who want Israel to be more ethnocentric, more anti-Arab—will want to stay and fight about it. They have nowhere else to go. Jews who wish Israel were less ethnocentric, on the other hand, can just as easily shrug their shoulders and walk away.

Paradoxically, the one sector of diaspora Jewry to whom this

axiom does not apply is the professional leadership. Those thousands of Jews who work for the organized Jewish community, and hence constitute a sort of nine-to-five captive audience, seem to be significantly to the left of the active lay community as an overall study.

Happily, we can report that a surprising new phenomenon has come into play since the war, militating in the opposite direction. There seems to be a significant growth of interest in Israel among liberals and leftists who previously kept their distance. Perhaps it is a stirring of ancient ethnic memories, or maybe just another example of the American Left's morbid fascination with losing causes, but Peace Now has struck a definite chord among many Jews who were heretofore apathetic to Zionism. It is too early to tell how widespread the phenomenon may be, but it is worth watching—and nurturing.

Part of this growth of dove sentiment is the result of a new perception of Israel's vulnerability. Now that Israel seems to have proved herself invincible from a military point of view—for the time being, at least—it appears that the greatest threat she faces is not to her body, but to her soul. And universalists, as we know, love a good moral fight. Borochov would have loved it.

There is, then, a shifting, uneasy, and highly sensitive spectrum of opinion in the Diaspora regarding Israeli policy and Israel's future. The question is, how do we mobilize for change?

Choosing a Strategy that Works for *You!*

To paraphrase Lao-tzu, every journey of a thousand miles begins by selecting the appropriate vehicle, mapping out a triptik, and checking the oil. For too long we have been agitating ourselves to do something, anything, without a clear sense of what we could and should be trying to accomplish.

The first question that must be asked is what the peace movement hopes to achieve in the next few years. This actually is becoming a divisive question: the mounting evidence that annexation is already a fait accompli, some say, makes the issue of withdrawal moot.

The logic goes like this: it appears that no substantive negotiations over the fate of the West Bank will get underway before the

1984 U.S. presidential campaign starts up. The campaign is already in progress, in fact. It will be early 1985 before any American administration is in a position, politically, to exert unpleasant pressures on Israel. By then, given the current rate of settlement activity, there will be nothing left to give back.

Thinking in terms of effective strategy, rather than satisfying self-expression, our real problem may well be to learn how to live with the binational state that the Right, ironically, has handed us.

Working for territorial compromise is correct and moral. But if it is quixotic, then it is a waste of time. Should we be gearing up instead to unravel the apartheid regime that is being imposed on our cousins in Ramallah?

When we have answered that question to our own satisfaction—and I do not propose to answer it here—then we can begin to ask the next essential question: Where can our pressure be most effective? Whom are we trying to reach?

We have a finite number of target audiences: U.S. government policymakers; U.S. public opinion; American Jewish leadership; American Jewish public opinion; Israeli policymakers; Israeli public opinion. If we were to decide, for example, to go for an anti-Begin impact on U.S. policy, we could pretty well kiss off any further credibility with Jewish community leadership (leaving out the deeper issues implied by such a choice). If we want to reach Israeli public opinion, we should be taking ads in *Maariv* and *Yediot Ahronot,* the papers that reach those Israelis who don't agree with us already, and not the *New York Times* or the *Jerusalem Post*.

Experience shows that mainstream Jewish leaders can be influenced. Federation leaders and donors around the country, on the local level, are deeply troubled by Israel's current course. But the way to reach them is quietly, through lobbying and networking. The media tend to scare them off. On the other hand, by staying away from the media we limit our ability to reach out to those marginally Jewish liberals who represent a potential base for growth. Our medium-range goals must determine our short-term choices. Strategy defines tactics.

Parallel to choosing a vehicle is the problem of choosing an image. It is a fact widely ignored that Israeli politics differs as widely in its Hebrew- and English-language versions as Arab politics does in translation from Arabic to English.

The spectrum of legitimate Zionist opinion in Israel today runs roughly from the Israel Council for Israel-Palestine Peace, on the Left, through Sheli, through Peace Now/Mapam/Labor Party dove wing, to the centrist Labor Party wing that is close to the moderates of the Liberal and National Religious parties, through the more kid-gloved Herut annexationists surrounding Begin, through Gush Emunim and Tehiya, to Kahane and Kach on the Right. We note that in their English-language presentations for foreign (including diaspora Jewish) consumption, each of these blocs tends to present itself in terms about one step toward the center from their true, Hebrew-language opinions.

These are the rules of the game as English-language public opinion has been trained to understand them. To be effective, we should play by the rules. It does no good to take Peace Now statements and translate them into English, because they sound further from the center—and scarier to the Jew on the street—than they actually are.

What is the center? The center of the spectrum, the center as understood by public opinion in this country, is somewhere between the Labor Party hawks and the Liberal Party doves. The center of power, on the other hand, is a step or two to the right, in Herut.

All of us must examine our feelings on Israel-Arab relations to decide where we stand on this spectrum. I would argue, though, that what we believe and what we say should be two different things. Related, but different. We must overcome our urge to be ever faithful to the truth—that belongs in philosophy classes, not in politics—and get down to the work of convincing people of that which they *can* be convinced.

In short, the further to the left we place ourselves on the spectrum, the more we limit our potential allies and our potential impact.

Living Under Water

In closing, three examples will be offered of possible strategies for the Zionist peace camp in America.

The first, and certainly the most in vogue this season, is to organize support in this country for Peace Now. In practical terms, this entails raising funds to support their work in Israel, publicizing

their views wherever we can gain an audience, and, as a consequence, lending them moral support in their struggle.

It is indeed important for the peace camp in Israel to know that they are not alone. The existence of Friends of Peace Now chapters around America could well lift their morale. More important, publicity in the American and Israeli media could have an impact on Israeli public opinion, which is to say, the electorate.

There are, however, two important drawbacks to this strategy, as essential as the work is. One is that we do not have the resources to launch a significant national organization in this country. If our goal is to show mass support for the peace camp among American Jews, we may well achieve the reverse. As has been argued, much of our potential support for peace work in the community consists of Jewish moderates who simply will not join an activist dissenting organization because of their fears for Israel's position in Washington—and for their own positions in the Jewish community.

A second drawback is the problem, alluded to above, that Peace Now itself has no clear strategy for altering the course of events. Peace Now is in large measure an outcry of anguish, perhaps even despair. It is led by people who mistrust the political process. It is made up of our friends and comrades, and in a very real sense they are us. How can we hold back? But must we follow their lead? Is that the most effective channel for our efforts?

Strategy two, which has not received the attention it deserves in America, is to work to get Labor back on the track. Now, I can almost hear your collective groan as you read this, but in the final analysis Labor must lead Israel out of this mess—if things are to improve in our lifetimes—as surely as the Democrats must follow the Republicans.

As distasteful as is the prospect of pitching in with that old tired workhorse of the Second Aliyah, for many doves, the Labor Zionist movement is the vehicle that offers itself for your consideration in this country. Many are the activists who have burned themselves out trying to work within the Zionist and Labor Zionist establishments over the years. Many have given up. But, at the risk of sounding like a Pete Seeger singalong, what would be the result if scores, hundreds of earnest young Jewish doves joined the Labor Zionist movement—or the Reform or Conservative Zionist

movement—in force, formed independent chapters, and demanded to be heard? The impact would be felt, in due time, in bodies from the Presidents' Conference and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council to the World Zionist Executive—perhaps even in the halls of the Labor Party.

I merely offer it for your examination, *Response* readers. It is a path to action. Impact could be had on Zionist policy, and thence on settlement budgets, and perhaps beyond.

The third strategy is a project-oriented one. Its point of departure is the observation that many of the successes of the American Left over the last decade have been achieved, not by mass action, but by research and lobbying. Picture, if you will, not an organization, but a task force.

An example: hundreds of millions of dollars flow every year from the United Jewish Appeal, through the United Israel Appeal, to the Jewish Agency for support of social and educational work in Israel. This cash flow frees hundreds of millions of other dollars to go from Keren Hayesod and elsewhere to the World Zionist Organization, for its settlement work in the occupied territories.

Because of its tax-deductible status, legal control of the allocation of this money lies in New York. While thousands of donors around America are undoubtedly pleased with the way their money is being spent, thousands more would be distressed to learn that despite all their efforts, Israeli education is in extreme financial crisis and Israeli health care is bankrupt. They might be interested to know that doctors are paid minimum wage and patients are bedding down in hallways and cafeterias, as Israel is bled white to provide highly subsidized housing to settlers in sunny Samaria. They might want to insist on new priorities for their money.

It does not take much imagination to think through the mechanics of such a project. It involves fact-gathering, statistical analysis, and a mapping out of the decision-making flow within the UJA and the Council of Jewish Federations. Both their staffs and their lay boards—particularly on the local level—are riddled with liberal Jews who feel the pain. The system is vulnerable.

It is time, then, to stop holding our breath and start doing our homework. We may not see the results, but as Rabbi Tarfon used to say, neither are we free to desist.

In forthcoming issues . . .

"Sisterhood is Ecumenical: Bridging the Gap between Jewish and Christian Feminists," by Rebecca Trachtenberg Alpert

"The Handicapped and *Klal Yisroel,*" by Martin Kroessel

"Jewish History for the Masses," by David Weinberg

"Visiting Danny Timerman in Jail," by Eugene Weiner

"Angel Wings," a story by Mike Comins

Poetry by Ghita Orth

and more . . .

Covenant beyond sorrow

My soul, hunted, defiled
pulls from its house, finds you
waiting on the bridge. I cross
in wind and darkness at dawn
wearing the last light
of dream on my skin, my body
shoved toward the open door.
They say you died.
In the basin of water, first
you, then I, wash hands.
I read your name in the book
written with mine.

ANNELIESE WAGNER

Processional

All day the fumbling with tenses,
The awkward conjugation of death—
A time bereft of grammatical solace.

At the graveside spring
Buffets the still faces.
Age stalks us like a blind man,
Rattling his cup,
Measuring coins against our lids.

As we ride back
We age a generation.
Our parents hear the kaddish,
We price caskets and shrouds.

By evening our spines curve
An inch closer to the earth.

ELLEN FRANKEL

I hold you responsible for everything you do in my dreams

It is the moon's prerogative
to crank open the night.
The heart gives no permission.
The sheets on the bed are cock-eyed.
I don't need to know how much
you love me, just how.
Boats move out of the harbor
each morning like parents
leaving for work. These murders
rise out of the waters like waves:
It is July, hot, and across
the ocean bombs crack over
people's homes. Blood
in the fire. The sky turns
over. No turn of phrase
can turn it away. No
tongue can give it up.
We can paddle across the lake.
We can sail to the village.
We can turn the motor and go faster.
We can sit on the wooden raft
watch the shadows drop
like a hand over the mountain
and imagine unknown tribes on the other side.
But how can we talk to each other?
An expensive silence fizzes
between us. Just let it go
you always say. We investigate
a nest of swallows. I don't
believe that everything wants a name.
Apple blossoms infuse the air
breaking the path. What is the
geography of this language we live by:
country, city, other? Where does one
locate: homelessness,
too many dead

to count, or name?
The canoe takes two: one paddle
for each embracing the water,
dipping down, unlearning borders.
Treeshadows elongate as dusk hits.
What time is it? There? Another bomb.
If only we knew a way
in the country of our untrained voices
with their disparate clamor
to stop this war.
Mosquitoes suck in the blood of night.
Where there is heat and trees and water.
Children. We fill in pink slips
to visit a man in prison who tried
to stop a war in his country.
He is far from home
without boat or paddle.
Where there was heat and trees and water.
His name rests there in duplicate
like a gravestone, for protection.
Children. The lake is ink
and we plunge in.
Let it go you always say.
We learn to travel in water,
growing stronger arms,
far-reaching.
The moon is insistent
outside my window.
My sisters write: we want to go
to Beirut, to be there
in that peril our monies
helped create, to be there
in that destruction. If only
we knew a way. Words slung
across our backs.
There is one star.
One hour left.
There is one night like this night:
We be of one blood, you and I.
I won't let it go.

KATHY ENGEL

Limits and intentions: A letter from Israel

EUGENE WEINER

SEPTEMBER 8, 1982

DEAR KATE AND CAROL,

I am presuming to write to both of you together instead of separately. The reason is that quite frankly I don't know if I can deal individually with the issues that you raise (where does one get the strength?) and besides there is a great deal of overlap in all of our concerns.

First, the bare facts of personal experience that inform my attitudes. When the war broke out on June 6 I was in a kind of summer doldrum. Or more precisely a Haifa-induced summer calm that is filled with clear colors, breezy days, and Carmel chirpings. David was around, Carolyn's presence was a pleasant addition, and things were wonderfully sleepy.

Danny, Mindy, David, and Carolyn went to see the movie *Gallipoli* on Saturday night. I have always regarded the historical happenings of the Battle of Gallipoli as fascinating. Here one has Churchill of all people sending tens of thousands of men to die in a

useless, stupid battle fought with incompetence and ill-defined goals, and yet Churchill the politician and statesman survives. He not only survives after being discredited and going into an exile of sorts, but is called back to do service for his country. The Hitler period required an English leader who didn't flinch and could send men to their death over goals that he defined to be in the national interest.

They came back from the movie minus Danny. When they got out they saw groups of guys on street corners waiting for transportation to report to their units. Danny didn't wait to be called up to his paratrooper unit and was dropped off at his base. After the Argov shooting in London, the Israel bombing attack, and the PLO shelling of Nahariya and the Galilee it was inevitable that something big was going to happen but it was not clear what. And here it was, Danny was gone. Danny always tells us not to worry about where he is if there is any military action . . . his unit will be the first in on the front line.

And indeed that is the way it happened. Danny's unit went through Ahuza early Sunday morning. Tanks, personnel carriers, and thousands of beautiful guys and all. It was quite clear that this was going to be a very big affair.

The juxtaposition of mothers with infants in carriages and this machinery of war was overwhelming. Not once, but a number of times, I saw guys waving to their wives or ex-neighbors as they went by. There was a melodramatic pathos to the scene that was unforgettable. The thing that was especially powerful to me was that the age spread of the guys going was very great. It was approximately from 18 to 40. War in Israel has a kind of "comprehensive" quality to it. In addition, because of the size of Israel there is no space between the military and the civilian. The tanks go through your neighborhood to get to the front . . . and the front is only an hour away.

By Sunday night Danny was in Lebanon fighting his way up the coast. All day Sunday we sat around in a kind of stupor with the radio on all the time, reassuring each other that somehow it wouldn't be too bad. Not believing a word of what we were saying to each other. I slept with the radio on all night. By Monday morning the battle reports started to come in and it was clear that a lot of people were getting killed. I reported to the psychological

unit and asked to be sent into Lebanon to work with the units with severe casualties (work that I did in the Yom Kippur War). One of my closest friends, Reuven Gal, is the Colonel in charge of the unit and he said he wanted to work in the field doing this kind of work as well. Tuesday morning he picked me up in an army car and we headed into Lebanon.

In order to get in we had to go through Kiryat Shemona. The population of Kiryat Shemona was in the streets in front of their shelled houses throwing candies, cakes, and drinks of all kinds into the army cars. There was a lot of weeping. After the events of last summer, when many of them had to leave their homes because of PLO shelling and were in shelters for days, they were finally getting the protection that they had been begging for. Any soldier who went through Kiryat Shemona during those first days of the war went into battle with a sense of certainty that he was fighting a *just war*. The relief on the faces of the civilians was too palpable and real to be faked. Their joy wasn't the joy of war hysteria but more like "I am so glad you are here to protect us now."

It turned out that the car we were in was considered by army standards to be a "soft vehicle" and there were standing orders that they were not allowed into Lebanon. And so we left our car and hitchhiked for the next week on personnel carriers and trucks all over Lebanon. We went with the troops wherever they were going and so we had a chance to see the war very close up—sometimes too close up for comfort. All along we were doing our thing, which basically was to talk to the guys. Asking questions all the time: How do you feel about what you are doing? What have you been through? How are you holding up? We spoke to dozens of soldiers of every sort in a great variety of circumstances. After a number of days of this we reported back and found that we had information that individuals in the highest levels of the army desperately wanted. And so Reuven and I felt that in addition to speaking to the soldiers in the field we were also having an impact on the planning process of what was to be.

What emerged from our talks with the guys in the field was that there was anxiety over the question of *limits*. The Israeli military machine is so powerful when you see it up front that it seems to be capable of doing almost anything. When the London Institute of Strategic Studies listed us fourth in the world in

military capability behind the USA, Russia, and China it didn't come as a surprise to anyone who saw what we are capable of. It is awesome. Frightening as hell, but awesome. Israelis by temperament and socialization are always prepared to "go to the end" in any confrontation. Well here was a war with no natural end and it was very anxiety provoking. Where do you stop the damn thing? Concretely, the soldiers in their dark humorous way talked about signing up for a world globe instead of for the secret coded maps that field units have of the area in which they will be fighting. Older reservists nicknamed Sharon "Gringo" as in that *Viva Zapata!* movie. Fast on the draw and itching for a fight. Everyone knows and acknowledges that Sharon is a military genius, but there is great suspicion that he is a guy that knows no limits. Or rather that he has no self-imposed limits.

On one of our trips back to Israel to report in we were called to meet with the psychiatric and psychological staff of a very large hospital that was receiving the Israeli army wounded. It was midnight. The emergency room was the size of a basketball court. There were 200-300 doctors and nurses working in teams to save the lives of scores of soldiers who had been helicoptered in because they were badly wounded. One of the troubles with language is that it is intrinsically euphemistic. "Badly wounded" means without legs, arms, and the rest. The guys we were with had been whole, healthy young men in the flush of youthful exuberance and now they were wrecks and hulks, pathetic, helpless human beings trying to preserve a semblance of humanity.

The psychological staff that was there to deal with the shock of the soldiers, of the doctors and medical personnel, of the parents, spouses, and siblings of the wounded, of the friends of the guys wounded were on the verge of collapse. Reuven and I spent a good part of the night and the next day just trying to keep the shock of the staff within limits so that they could continue to function and give the support that was needed. Again, all that was needed was to talk and listen. In a situation like the one I am describing, people search to locate anyone in the group who is not overwhelmed by anxiety. And if you are relatively composed for whatever reason that may be, and I mean *really* composed not just faking it, that communicates. And it seems that just as there is a contagion effect in regard to panic and hysteria, there is also one of composure,

especially among people who have socially defined roles as helpers and support people. Reuven and I spent as much time as we could in the hospitals with the wounded because in many cases we were bringing regards from guys in their unit whom we had met in the field.

I was in a position to know at all times exactly where Danny was fighting. The casualty and killed lists were available to me at most times and I, of course, looked as often as I could for Danny. Thank God, I never found his name. But names there were. And some of them were names of people I knew and from families that I know. Three hundred and fifty dead in the war, and I know three of them . . . and their families. That "knowledge" makes all the difference between a statistic and a deep personal experience. That "knowledge" makes it very difficult for the Israeli to relate seriously to the world of "TV images" that constitutes "knowledge" for the American (more on this point a bit later on).

All in all we spent two months in Lebanon through all phases of the war. The situation changed over the period and the soldiers' attitudes changed. Strangely enough, my basic attitudes didn't change. In contrast to both Danny and David who emerged rather critical about this war and ambivalent about the part they played in it, I didn't. When David came back, having been with an artillery unit on the Beirut-Damascus road, and Danny had been sitting on a hill overlooking Beirut observing his assignment in case the IDF should move on Beirut, it was very, very difficult for me as a father. As the weeks went by I kept asking myself: Would you be so sure that this is a just war if something happened to Danny or David? Is what we are gaining by destroying the infrastructure of the PLO worth anyone's life? That is the bottom line question. Is it worth it?

At no point in the whole business did I ever feel in doubt about whether it was worth it. For me that is a "first" in my life because I always see the other side and the other side frequently seems plausible—at least somewhat plausible. Here I was participating in something about which I had and still have moral certainty. I think it was the right thing for us to go into Lebanon given the circumstances, I am glad we did it and furthermore I think that the long-range effects are going to be positive. (For us *and* the Palestinians!)

My reasoning:

This whole operation can't be judged simply by the intentions of the principals. It is clear that Sharon and Begin are interested in removing the military threat of the PLO so that they can have a freer hand in the West Bank. Their position is the Israel version of the Gunboat Diplomacy-Monroe Doctrine-Dominate the Bastards-A good Indian is a dead one of American precedents. But, as Hegel has taught us, people's intentions when they are in positions of power and the outcomes of their actions are separate entities. Unintended consequences, paradoxical effects, ironies, counter-productive dynamics, and the like all have their impact. In the moral calculus the outcomes of actions have to be considered. I don't say that intentions count for nothing in the evaluation, but I don't think they are the primary factors. Does anyone who has anything to do with psychology have to be reminded that "Love is Not Enough"? Not in child rearing, marriage, or even a love relationship between one's children. My general reaction to someone who wants to do something good for me is to run for my life. That good intention usually is the beginning of disaster. Can anyone doubt that today, three months after the war, a Palestinian state is nearer to being realized than at any time in the past? That Begin and Sharon's policy has given greater legitimacy to the plight of the Palestinian people than at any time in the past?

Begin and Sharon have transformed American policy from passive participation to active involvement on the PLO issue. I am happy about the outcome of this war because I think that the stage is set for an evolutionary process that will bring peace to the Middle East. As long as the PLO was as powerful militarily as it was in Lebanon, then there was no possibility for any compromise with them. Why should they compromise as long as there was a possibility of dominating Lebanon and the West Bank by the use of the military threat? Right now their political influence is the PLO's primary appeal and strength by virtue of their moral superiority as victims to Israeli "ruthlessness." If they play that right, and all signs seem to point in the direction that Arafat is cooling the hotheads, they will begin to have more confidence in the political solution. The world wants a solution to this problem in ways it never has before, and the PLO is finding friends everywhere. It is Israel's responsibility to demonstrate to the PLO forcibly and relentlessly that they can't have the whole cake but will have to

settle for less, and that they can't *take it* but will have to negotiate it in a give and take.

I believe that if Hussein would come to Jerusalem now he would get the same kind of reception that Sadat got. I also believe that if Arafat unilaterally renounced the use of force and led a peace march to the Israeli frontier using passive resistance that he would get the West Bank. The stage is now set, in my estimation, for a grand gesture by a master statesman. Israel under military threat is one Israel, but an Israel convinced that the other side genuinely is willing to live in peace will react differently. Oh yes, there are the ideologues that want the West Bank and more for historical and religious reasons, but I think they constitute the minority in this country. The West Bank is important to most Israelis because of the security issue. The PLO which renounces violence is a PLO transformed and thereby a PLO that even Begin and Sharon will have to recognize.

Now, to respond to your statement, Kate, that American Jews feel betrayed. I have long felt that the perception of Israel by people outside of Israel, and particularly by Israel's friends, suffers from strong doses of idealization and mystification. What do these concepts mean? An unwillingness to accept the reality of things. For some reason, Israel in the minds of many, including its most intimate supporters and friends, is still not an accomplished fact. Israel's existence is regarded as shaky and tenuous. There is something about the Zionist accomplishment which defies easy, unquestioned acceptance. There is a direct connection between the perception of the Jew, due to the influence of Christian theology over the centuries, and the current perceptions of Israel.

In regard to Israel, most people feel (including many Jews) that essence precedes, and is morally superior to, existence. All this is simply not so. Israel exists and will continue to exist. She will not "go down the drain" as the current bathroom (or is it kitchen?) metaphor has it. The country is relatively united about most of the fundamental issues. The Eli Geva controversy, the reluctance of some army men to go into Beirut and their willingness to say it publicly during a time of war is an important indicator of Israeli democracy. The fact that Israel was determined not to let the PLO use civilians to hide behind has been a consistent policy of all of Israel's governments and it hasn't mattered whether

those civilians are Jews or non-Jews, adults or children. One simply cannot let an adversary attack using innocent people as a shield. There is no way out of that moral dilemma aside from going in after the adversary "no matter what."

But for the people of the book, the prototypical humanists, the idealistic, pioneer socialists, to bomb Beirut to get the PLO is a moral scandal. And in a certain sense the bombing of Beirut was a moral scandal if judged by essentialistic criteria. A good country doesn't do such a thing.

But what Israel is all about is the simple fact that the Jew has entered history again. We finally have to be responsible as Jews for collecting our own garbage and running our own jails. For 2000 years we have let the *goyim* do that. We have been alternatively the *luftmentshen* and the small capitalists, sitting back and criticizing, projecting utopias while our hands remained pure, and left the grimy, nitty gritty for the others. And so it has been that Jews have been relatively innocent of atrocity for 2000 years. There is no Jewish Grand Inquisitor, no Attila the Hun, no bloodthirsty bastards that have succeeded in doing terrible things to large groups of people. But it wasn't because these types didn't exist, or the sentiments not publicly declared. All one has to do is read the Jewish prayerbook or the Passover Haggadah or the Book of Esther to see how the anger at the *goyim* was there all the time. It just was that it was so dangerous to let these sentiments escape into the realm of action. For the most part these sentiments remained just sentiments.

Now, the Jew is right smack in the middle of history with all sorts of ways to express anger that can really hurt people. The distance between responsibility for actual happenings and moral evaluation has narrowed, that is, for the Jews of Israel. For Jews in the Diaspora are still only part-time Jews. The *goyim* fight the wars in Vietnam and commit the terrible crimes but it is the Jews who are the guardians of values. One can have this bifurcation as long as you, yourself, are not responsible for everything. One always has an "out." The Indians? Killed before my grandfather came to America on a steerage ticket. The exploitation of dependent foreign countries by multinational American corporations? What do you want from me, all I have is a few hundred shares of stock in IBM, and besides I'm selling them, that makes me an exploiter?

The CIA's involvement in El Salvador? Whoever heard of a Jew in the CIA?

As you know there is no "out" for the Jew in Israel. We are smack right in the middle of history where we have no place to go to evade the full responsibility for everything. We are embodied in a particularly lethal institution—the nation-state—which, for better or worse, is the current epidermis for our ragtag religious-cultural-ethical consciousness. It is our current way of BEING-IN-THE-WORLD. That is, for some 20 percent of the world's Jews. Nationhood requires acts that aren't always gentlemanly. America is so big with enough booming, buzzing confusion going on all the time that many Americans don't have to face the brutal facts of nationhood. In Israel there is no way of escaping the brutalizing costs of an ongoing, accomplished nationhood and of nationalism. Especially in the dangerous situation in which we find ourselves. It is a dirty, brutal world out there and many people out there don't think well of us, to put it mildly. So the big question is how to stand up to brutality without being brutalized oneself.

It has become increasingly difficult for me to engage in the discussion of this central question with American Jews. American Jewish consciousness is so contaminated with the images of the media, and the internalized evaluations of that all-important reference group "the non-Jew," that I sometimes feel that there is no person in the States to talk to. And by person I mean someone who is willing to confront reality as it is lived in Israel. When American Jews come here to discuss Israel's problems, they are really talking about their own problems of maintaining self-respect. But they are just calling it Israel's problems. Do not think it is so easy to find people here to discuss these issues with. As you know, it isn't. Here, we are so close to the hard reality that one can't move away from it to see it. It is so close, like a book held up to one's nose, that it is hard to get one's eyes to focus. That is why dear friends I loved your letters, for even if you are seeing things from "there" you are trying, as we all are, to see them empathetically.

I guess the bottom line of what I am saying to you both is that after three months of this hell . . . it hasn't been that bad—it may even turn out to be good, who knows?

Gene

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Consider: "The death of a man is like"

DAVID TWERSKY

I CAME back from a trip to the States last May rather ambivalent about being in Israel. I had reestablished old friendships and family connections. And saying goodbye again to all my American friends and relations was like reopening an old wound, feeling the familiar pain again.

Three weeks later, back in my kibbutz but still rather undecided as to my (immediate) future, I went to war. The drums did not beat, we heard no martial music, no hysterical inflammatory radio appeals, saw no long lines of young men tramping through the cities, no pale women left behind tossing flowers.

No. It happened this way.

It was a bad spring, you might recall. Plenty of what Israelis call "action" on the West Bank. Plenty of American television shows about the West Bank. Some of us in the kibbutz movement became increasingly frustrated, outraged. A nationwide meeting was called at Kibbutz Ma'ayan Zvi, near Zichron Yaakov.

By the time we drive back to Gezer it's dark. We stop in Ramla to tank up. A long line of taxis is parked across the street from the gas station.

Shit, somebody says, we're going to war.

No way, man, they're gassing up, the driver puts in. The rumors start. We are a nation of rumors.

Home, we eat in the dining room. A couple of guys on the kibbutz have been called up already. It is a warm Saturday night.

There is to be a kibbutz general meeting, an *asefa klalit*. I can't recall what was on the agenda: price of wheat, wine harvest, glue factory, kibbutz movement politics. A taxi pulls up outside. I walk out to meet the man. He is holding a computer printout sheet. On it is my name. And Michael's. Michael wanders out of the dining room too. The man says, I'm looking for David Twersky. I smile weakly. This isn't an exercise, he says, misinterpreting my smile. This is for real *(al emet)*.

War, ha, all that history stuff, the whiff of old books, films, images. I swirl in a dream—go home, pack, people come over to help me. I don't know what to take exactly, I forget a towel, I take a slim book of poems by Czeslaw Milosz, *Bells in Winter*, the latest copy of the *New York Review of Books* and *Godel, Escher, Bach*. (Later, I moan and groan because I have no towel and nothing to read except the personals in the *New York Review*. "Israeli soldier SJM wants peace home for life love and the pursuit of happiness.")

I tell K.: If I'm not back by a week from tomorrow call my parents. She chickens out. Eight days later, she phones our friend P. who in turn breaks the news to my family.

The taxi returns and Michael and I get in. The night sweeps by, the taxi fills with men from neighboring moshavim. We speed to a Ramat Aviv "collection point" and sign in with a senior officer who turns out, in civilian life, to be the supervisor for building projects on the kibbutz. He and Michael break into broad smiles of recognition, grim smiles of this particular night. We get on a bus. We drive north.

Michael and I stick together, cold comfort on a sweltering, sticky night. At the base we approach our respective units together until we are finally separated. Michael's knee is fucked up, torn cartilage, or some other sort of basketball injury. He doesn't know if they'll take him and feels ambivalent about it. After all, he might be able to avoid what is sure to be a terrible experience. On the other hand, how can you let the guys down? I envy him his dilemma. I have no choice whatsoever about this, hero/coward/

johnny marching off to war. No choice. I can't get out of it. My choice was in coming to live in Israel and accepting the possibility? inevitability? of this fate. To be an Israeli, whatever that may mean (existentially and not by virtue of socialization and upbringing), and not to go to war? Unthinkable.

We get our "army stuff." It's late, maybe three or four in the morning. I see guys I've been in reserves with for a couple of years, nod hellos, smile thinly. A lot of them have been through it before. For some of the guys my age, this will be their fourth war—1967, 1970, 1973, and now 1982.

We spend that first night, what's left of it, catching 45 minutes of dream time, nodding out, or getting wired up, nerves working overtime. Exhausting either way.

We get teamed up, eight or ten guys to a truck and gun and sergeant ("team commander"). Lior, one guy I'm close to, and I decide to cut out for an hour, make some calls, get something to eat. It's very hot. We'll need an orange soda or a Coke. We leave the base, we're out on a city street. Other guys had the same idea, lots of green on the street, a long line at the public telephone. We're standing in it, waiting. A car slows by and stops. The woman driver asks us if we want to go home with her to use the phone, she lives nearby. Three of us get into the car and take off. Inside, her kids are playing in the living room. We make our calls. Uh, I'm going "up," get it, "up." I don't know when I'll be back. I become expert at interpreting one-voiced telephone conversations, I can imagine the two sides. The voice unheard.

She serves us iced drinks and sandwiches and her look is sympathy, pain, solidarity, uncertainty. Israelis know how to go to war.

Back to the base. Nothing's happened yet. We're going to set out tonight. Our commanding officer makes a speech. It's very quiet. No "give 'em hell." We're going into hostile territory. Be careful. Now I give up all foolish illusions that we're stopping at the border. Action.

Night falls. We climb on the truck, little room for us amidst the clutter of army and personal things.

We are the last truck-gun in a long procession, a motorized caravan, an armed wagon train. I fall asleep jammed in between cannon shells and duffel bags, a minor second-string part in my

very own, technicolor, dolby stereo, academy award-winning war movie.

* * *

A few hours later (I am told) I awake with a start. I can't see over the sides of the truck. I hoist myself up. We're in a village. The stars shed the only light. We've been driving blind. We've lost the caravan. We are the only truck I see.

What happened? I ask Ozeri, a religious Yemenite Jew from Bnei Brak. He tells me to get the hell down and to put my helmet on. What's going on? Where is everybody? We're lost. We took a wrong turn.

Now we're driving blind through an anonymous Lebanese village. I quickly compute the various permutations and conclude that I can best contribute to our situation by returning to my just-abandoned state. I sleep.

In the morning (ha! I wake up, I'm alive! There *is* a morning!) we are in a field of wheat, half grown, a harvest of 155 mm. self-propelled cannons (not our group, but our side), aimed over the ridge and down to Tyre by the sea.

We are here because the water-pump in our truck quit. An NBC crew arrives to film the 155s. From the deck of our truck I eye one of them who nods in return. He swings an invisible bat, mimicking Reggie Jackson. We know each other, slightly, from the Israel Softball League. He plays for BBC—Bernie's Bottle Club, the team that was originally composed almost exclusively of (foreign) journalists and was called "The Tel Aviv Typos."

Hey, I yell down from the truck, happy to see a familiar face in a strange land.

Hey, he yells back.

Give Ed a call for me, OK?

Sure.

All war I will be sending messages back down, using German journalists, other soldiers, field telephones at two in the morning. Hullo? Sylvia? It's David. I'm all right. I don't know when. Call New York for me, OK? Love ya too.

That evening I meet an officer attached to the batteries of 155s manned by 19-year-olds surrounding us. He is from Kibbutz P., a fellow Peace Now activist. We talk for several minutes. The 19-

year-olds clear out. Tyre, at least, is over, that's what we hear. It's night. We are alone.

There were around ten of us. The rest of our guys knew where we were . . . we were waiting for a water-pump.

We waited until Friday in that wheat field. Above us the road wound its way into the Shi'ite village of Chema, crusader fortress and all. Every morning the village children came and played with and around us.

There are three Dutch UNIFIL soldiers under the crusader fortress. Kids themselves.

Some of us feel strange that the war is passing us by. I curse myself out for forgetting a towel and can't read the Godel book, but Milosz is beautiful. Consider "The Fall":

> The death of a man is like the fall of a mighty nation
> That had valiant armies, captains and prophets,
> And wealthy ports and ships over all the seas,
> But now it will not relieve any besieged city,
> It will not enter into any alliance,
> Because its cities are empty, its population dispersed,
> Its land once bringing harvest is overgrown with thistles,
> Its mission forgotten, its language lost,
> The dialect of a village high upon inaccessible mountains.

Even now, eight months later, the bottom corner of the page where I left off reading is folded over.

We discover a sharp canyon one-quarter mile behind us, and across it, a giant cave. We decide that the cave is occupied. For a day we set watch over it, from our side, machine gun and all. Nothing moves. We grow tired. Someone drags the gun back.

Friday we leave Chema. Mixed feelings. Got to like the place, actually; especially considering the alternative.

We ride along the coastal road. We cross the army-built bridge over the Litani. The truck stops. Rabbi Goren is signing copies of *Tehillim,* little green volumes Tom Thumb could stick in his pocket. We load up. I mean, what could it hurt? I still have mine. A Gideon's Bible for travellers of the war kind.

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We move on to the Zaharani river. Above us to our left are a group of oil storage tanks, round against the skyline. At the entrance to Tapline, still below Sidon, we turn in. Up a hill and onto a . . . golf course! The Tapline Oil Refinery kept a green for its executives. Now we settled our 155 near the sand trap. The other guys goofed on us: where you been? The war's over!

We set up shop, get into it. Gingy's truck, one over from ours, has the TV and at night, if we aren't working, we watch Maradona running through the World Cup Games, losing to Brazil.

A few hundred meters above us, there are still PLO fighters hiding among the giant oil drums. At night we establish a perimeter defense. The night before we arrived Yona, a driver, caught one. The PLO fighter had walked up the hill from the highway passing the snoring army, until he had the misfortune to run into Yona. Yona gets the weekend off as a reward; the first of us to go home.

Sunday. Second week. Guess I won't get back in time to call New York. We go to work. For a few days we can't fire off shells fast enough. We are like moving parts in a terrible machine. Our boys are taking Rashadiya and Ein el-Hilweh. I try not to think about what I am doing. My world revolves around staying alive, eating, sleeping, boredom, loneliness. I have a bad feeling about the PLO—the Chema kids taught us to take anti-PLO charges seriously. And a strange voice is talking within myself: this is *my* war. I didn't get '67 or '73. I want to feel good about *this* war.

But something is very wrong.

My friend Lior is called to the communications officer's tent. He is leaving: his stepbrother was just killed and the IDF has a policy of trying to limit casualties in any one family.

We fire shells. Eat. Sleep. Guard. Try not to get sick. I understand that most casualties in most wars up to this century were from disease. Understandable.

On the radio there were reports that all reservists were to be relieved and sent home. Of course, we believed these reports. We are not "relieved." But our battery commander calls all the team sergeants to his tent. We can begin a rotation for people to go home. You get twenty-four hours, actually around twenty, including travel. We draw lots to establish an order. I am third.

Meanwhile we get flooded with parcels sent by "committees to help our soldiers." Millions of sticks of gum. Cigarettes. Cakes.

Towels and toilet paper. A refrigerated truck comes by and you buy beer, Coke, or ZIP.

Guys also get parcels from home. They get letters from their wives. But while they read avidly and smile over something clever their children said, there seems to be an absence of sexual tension, as much as we talk about it. Energy is going elsewhere. We are used up, empty. But some guys say that when they get home they're going to open the two arms of the 155, insert a shell into the barrel, and fire away. So the borders of our worlds begin to blur.

My night off arrives. There's no bus. We walk down to the coastal road to hitch. S. stops. He is a lawyer and a liaison officer to foreign press. I can't get into the car. (Months later he apologizes.) Finally a bus arrives.

In Haifa we switch to a regular bus to Tel Aviv. People stare at us—we are the first soldiers returning from Lebanon they have seen. Now, as I write these lines, a "soldier returning from Lebanon" has become *almost* passé. An obscenity, this.

They speak to us gently, as if we might shatter.

By 10:30 I am home in the kibbutz. A group of friends comes together. Two cook up a hot meal: steak and chips. I tell them, what? As much as I can get out. It is unbelievably good to touch base with the home port of reality. They tell me more guys were called up. I'm the first one back. (Michael, also on the golf course but a hill away, gets home the following night.)

I call my parents in New York. I decide to tell them everything—that is, not to lie to them. Weeks later, near the end, I come home for an entire weekend (!) and find Steve, Sam, and Debbie in from the States. They are full of Peace Now, demonstrations, what to do. By this point we are up near Beirut. I cannot connect my position to theirs. I don't mean politically; it's something else. I need to listen carefully, to start thinking about this. But I am up there and I want it to end. I call my parents and Steve calls his. His conversation goes like this: Hi, ma! I'm at Kibbutz Gezer . . . visiting David Twersky . . . he's fine . . . he's home for the weekend . . . he's up in Beirut, shelling . . . a cannon . . . yes, *our* David Twersky . . . yes, his mother knows.

I feel radically estranged from that image of myself. I see myself in Brooklyn hearing this report about some stranger. But the serious political discussion helps me. Up there we listen to

Israeli Army Radio, *Galei Zahal,* and read mostly *Yediot* and *Maariv*. The fact is that most of the antiwar stuff is in the morning papers, which we don't get. Thank God for Amnon Abramovich in the Friday *Maariv*. He wakes me up from my deep army sleep. Abramovich is a leftish dove, badly burned in his tank in '73. This summer while saving my sanity he was, I later learned, receiving death threats on the phone. You don't have much left to finish off, he told his would-be assassins. Modern Hebrew is full of aggression and hostility.

One of my officers is from a Hashomer kibbutz. One day he calls me over and says, why did you come here? *Meleh* me, I was born here, nothing I can do. But is this what you were looking for?

How can I tell him I came looking for him?

As we shell West Beirut one day, on a slope above the sea again, I ask Shimon, our battery sergeant-major, do you feel OK about this? He looks down to the ground and shakes his head, no. And then gives me the line about precise aim at specific military targets. Which is true. But, we find out, there are still 100,000 civilians in there. We begin to debate among ourselves what we are doing, what we still may have to do.

Fuck 'em, I am told. If you knew how much they hated you, you wouldn't care about it. Later Yona who caught the PLO guy says to me: just so you understand, I've had it up to here, his hand reaching for the sky. This is my fourth war. But fuck them.

We shop in a local grocery store and improve our menu. The flies (day) and mosquitoes (night) are too much. We find tents, mattresses, and tins of canned food left by some PLO affiliate that used to camp here. Our Habadnik and Ozeri won't share the nonkosher foods.

At night at least one shift on guard opens fire at a *wadi* above us because cats scamper through and rocks fall—it sounds like someone coming at us.

One day a white puff of smoke, a small cloud, floats by above us. B., our kibbutznik officer, tells us to put on our helmets and flak jackets. It may be a Syrian officer/scout signalling our position back to his artillery. Once some shells went over our position and hit an Arab building to our south. Others hit positions in front of us. We weren't shot at again until the evening we pulled out; as we got on the bus, the trucks-cum-guns having pulled out already,

three or four shells hit the water below us. We froze, everyone in his private bunker. Then three shells hit the hill above us.

B. yelled: get off the buses. Helmets, flak jackets, roll into a ball around a rock, laugh it off, you aren't there, this is a dream you will walk away from . . . nothing happens. They never straighten out. It is July 11. (When we got up to Beirut we never thought it would last this long. We'll go in and get it over. Or they'll leave. Won't still be here. Someone came back with what turned out to be a true rumor: we'll get out by July 15. No way, too far off.)

I saw buildings knocked out and some with only one apartment shot out. Life went on. Where we set up near Beirut, an Arab professor from the American University came to reclaim his apartment in the building in which our brigade command was housed. He admitted PLO sympathies. They let him move his family back in. One of our officers said: OK, it's nice to be nice. But it's a war. I mean, we could have told him to come back after it's over. What if he signals them or something?

Two faces of the IDF. Things happen that help us feel good about ourselves—not exclusively, not in the main, but enough to make it worth remembering here.

I hear a Dan Fogelberg song on *Galei Zahal* and start weeping. It strips away all of the defenses I've built up.

* * *

Hitching back up I ran into David from my Kibbutz, I couldn't believe it. As I climbed into a jeep which stopped to pick me up, I told him in English, "Hey, when we get out I'll open this bottle of bourbon." The two officers in the front seat crack up and hand me what's left of a cold 7-Up.

I want to write about my "team." Two Yemenites, one Habadnik. Two Russians (they were very down on the Habadnik who often missed work because of a variety of *mitzvot* that are time-bound). There were two Americans, one Rumanian, one Ashkenazi Sabra (the battery medic), and one Iraqi.

How two Russians, two Americans, one Rumanian, two Yemenites, one Iraqi, and one WASP won the war. By David Twersky.

We played RISK, conquering the world on a board under our tent, in between shelling West Beirut. We joked about women, about buying up Walkmans and Betamaxes cheap in Lebanon. We drank and sang Russian songs and juice commercials. We washed

our dirty underwear in public. We got on each other's nerves, fought, made up, shared salamis, gum, cigarettes, vodka, looked out for number one and for each other too.

So it ended one day. We gave everything back and went home, each to his own private world. No, not everything. The memories we keep, forever. What else can I say? How I drank that Bourbon one night in late July with David and Alan and Edna and Ellen to remember—not to forget—as much as I could. The need to understand, to put it together, to make things fit, to reestablish an equilibrium, an equation that balances. How I wrote, and wrote, and wrote, for *Partisan* and others, a therapy of self-understanding. How my dreams of home, friends, love, were replaced by an endless night service, how I return over and over to see the bright sky flames darting upward like a lizard's tongue, how I watch this movie over and over again, looking for myself in the rubble and the songs ascending and descending the heavenly ladder. How the day I get out, I ride down to Tel Aviv, walk up the block to my cousins', they're out on the balcony, I wave and yell as loud as I can, free at last, free at last, great God almighty, I'm free at last.

But, who said it?: freedom is the recognition of necessity. I still believe in Israel—and in Jewish power. I am horrified by its abuse, but its abolition is no solution. And its existence requires a human carrier.

Afterwards: the public noise, the politics, the bitter divisions in Israel. Vietnam memories. The shame, down to the depths, of those massacres just before Yom Kippur.

I meet A. at a party in Jerusalem. She wrote *Tin Soldiers on a Jerusalem Beach,* a book about how war marks the singular parameters of our life here. So I have become an Israeli, in this perverse sense, at least. An accomplishment? A success? We get on. We survive. In the morning . . . in the morning I will let it go, like a bad dream I must not forget, I will send it to you, dear reader? hypocrite lecturer? and go on with the other wars, and the great works of peace making, of reaching out for love, private and public, which are our life's work.

Consider: The death of a man is like the fall of a mighty nation.

Peace for Galilee?

SARAH KREIMER

On June 4, 1982, at the time when Operation Peace for Galilee was launched, I was living with five other Interns for Peace in the Arab village of Tamra in the Western Galilee of Israel. Interns for Peace (IFP) is an independent, nonpartisan organization of Arabs and Jews (from both Israel and the Diaspora). Since 1978 IFP has been using community work to bring the Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel into closer contact with one another through activities in sports, education, scouting, and economic development. Intern teams work and live in certain Arab and Jewish towns in Israel's Little Triangle and in the Western Galilee.

For the year and a half before the war, I had been living and working in Tamra and the neighboring Jewish town of Qiryat Ata, being sponsored by the local councils and by IFP to build a network of Jewish/Arab cooperative activities in the region. What happened among Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel during the war in Lebanon? Continuing with my fellow Interns to work for Arab/Jewish cooperation throughout the war, I experienced the reactions from both sides. And my own.

JUNE 6, 1982

WHEN I think of the politics of this war, I find only frustration, anger and confusion—an oppressive feeling of being caught in a tragic drama, in which everyone is destined to play out some role that someone else has written. I see alternatives, but I feel as powerless as a member of the audience to tell the actors what script to follow. One day I was living my life, planning the two final school projects of the year. The next day I heard on the radio the announcement of the war. Suddenly, two-thirds of the adult male population disappeared from the face of the earth, and every plan I'd made is now just so much fiction. I was starting to mend the wall and the house came crashing down around me.

JUNE 7, 1982

MY first taste of Jewish Israel in wartime. It is a society in shock. Millions of people are just stumbling through their jobs, through the streets—walking bundles of pain, bodies filled with short circuits all triggered back to earlier wars and wounded.

The most distressed among them cannot see the PLO as an organization of people, only of murderers. They cannot see the true relative power of Israel and the Palestinians. They are simply terrified by seeing pictures of the PLO arms caches and hearing of 12-year-olds with burning eyes sent on PLO suicide missions. For these Israelis the war is almost a relief—the breaking of an intolerable build-up of tension. Regardless of political perspective, the overwhelming feelings among Israeli Jews are shock, fear, and anger. No lists of dead or wounded have yet been released, so no one knows if the death toll is running in the tens or hundreds. Government leaders tell us the operation's objective is to clear out the 40 kilometers north of the border.

JUNE 9, 1982

PEOPLE in Tamra are undoubtedly traumatized and frustrated in the same way. Yet, they carry on outwardly with normal daily patterns: going to work, baking bread, having weddings. An outsider walking through Tamra would never sense there is a war on.

For Israeli Arabs are damned if they do and damned if they don't. If they identify with the Palestinians, they are traitors to their state; if they identify with Israel, they are traitors to their Arab nationality. In any case, they have no power to change what is happening. So, for most Arabs in Israel, the best survival tactic is to ignore the war as much as possible.

Of course, it is not very possible. I ask Nazhdiye, a friend and mother, with whom she identifies in the war. She looks at me in sorrow, and says: "You know, I am the same age as the State—34 years. I have never lived under any government other than Israel. This is my home; I am happy here. I just wish there were peace."

Everyone expresses his opinion about the war. Although most Arabs don't listen to the news hourly, as do the Jews (they drink in the news like barbiturate addicts, knowing it will bring them down, but not being able to stop themselves), some nights we've sat with friends in Tamra to watch the Israeli evening news together and talk. No one is in favor of the invasion, but some see it as the inevitable next step in the cycle of violence created by both the PLO and Israel.

By far, the most devastated are those who have family in Lebanon. Close to one-third of Tamra's population is made up of "internal refugees." These are people who fled from their own Galilee villages during the fighting in 1948, taking refuge temporarily in quiet villages like Tamra. When they tried to return to their original villages after the fighting stopped, they found their villages destroyed or cordoned off by the Israeli army, who did not allow them to return. Later, their lands were declared abandoned, and confiscated by the Israeli government, even though these people never left the borders of Israel. Many of these families have relatives in Lebanon and Jordan, for when they fled to neighboring

villages, brothers, sisters, and parents fled to neighboring countries.

Most of Tamra's internal refugees have relatives in Sidon and Tyre and other towns along the Lebanese coast. In the last two days these towns have been heavily damaged by fighting and Israeli bombing. So far, there's no way to know what the situation is—if relatives are dead or alive, homeless or not. All that can be seen is the television news shots that show streets of bombed out houses and thousands of refugees camping out on the shores of cities the size of Haifa. Like Jewish families, Tamra's internal refugees wait and worry, with no news of their loved ones.

Underneath the "normal" surface, pain and anger are seething. This is the first time Israel has entered a war directly against the Palestinians, and not against other Arab countries. For Palestinian Israelis the sting and the contradictions are direct this time.

JUNE 10, 1982

I WALK into the "Ghetto Fighters" elementary school in Qiryat Ata to check whether or not the teachers are going ahead with the meeting planned next week with elementary school Tamra "Gimmel." I am warmly received by the principal, Moshe, an older man. The day before, when he had been away, the Tamra principal had called to ask if the school get-together was still on. As I wait to speak to Moshe, one of the teachers, Kathy, informs him of their decision yesterday not to receive the Tamra fifth graders now.

"Why not?" I ask. Kathy turns on me. "My husband is in the North, and God only knows what's happening to him. Do you expect me, at a time like this, to receive kids of Tamra into my home and be hospitable to them? I can barely concentrate on normal teaching. Everyone is under pressure. What if one of the kids, or one of the mothers, in their tension, lets out some remark about Arabs? It would destroy everything you're trying to create. No, we can't possibly carry out this meeting now."

The look in her eye, the fear in her voice, silence me. There is no sense in arguing in a moment of such intense anxiety. I watch

the kids walk, and then run, through the air raid drill. Six- and seven-year-old kids being told: "You'd better take this seriously because you may need it." The clenched faces of the teachers, for whom this is their fourth or fifth war.

Tamra schools, ten miles away, have no bomb shelters, and no air raid drills.

I meet up with my fellow Interns, Lani and Dina, to report what happened. They nod in unsurprised depression. We still have to go to the Sprintzak School on the other side of Qiryat Ata. The fifth grade there is due to have its final get-together of the year with the fifth graders of Tamra "Bet."

As we sit in the school's main office, sweating from the summer heat, the secretary, a kindly older woman, offers us cold juice and explains their situation:

"The principal and vice-principal are in the army. All of our teachers are distracted now. Why don't you wait a week and see what happens. The principal may return. We've requested that the army release him, since it's the end of the school year. We'll know in a few days."

The teachers responsible for planning the activities with Tamra come in. They want to know how their partners in Tamra are reacting. After being assured that attitudes have not changed, the people are ready to go ahead with the event. Leah, one of the teachers, responds:

"I hope it works, because, after all, we're still neighbors. The war isn't here, between Tamra and Qiryat Ata, and certainly not between the kids."

JUNE 21, 1982

WHY were the teachers of Tamra, who like the educators in Qiryat Ata had relatives in Lebanon and were worried and shocked by the war, still willing to go through with the get-together?

Why, indeed. During "normal" times in Israel, most Jews and Arabs have mixed feelings about each other. In a survey done a few years ago it was found that about 15 percent of Israeli Jews

fully accepted Arabs as equal citizens and were actively in favor of increased cooperation between Arabs and Jews. An additional 15 percent were opposed. The remaining 70 percent had mixed feelings, willing and able to accept Arabs in certain aspects of the life of the State, unable in others. Feelings among Arabs toward Jews were found to be roughly parallel.

I call it the "onion effect." People have layers of often contradictory emotions and experiences related to those from "the other" group. No one layer is more real than the next, just as no layer of the onion is more essentially "onion" than the next. The existence of all these layers at one time makes for incredible inconsistency in people's reactions. So it is that a Jewish teacher, who in quiet times is willing to try trusting Arabs, was not able to do so when her husband was in Lebanon fighting Palestinians.

It is the third week of the war, and the 1981-82 school year's final get-together is being held between the fifth graders of Tamra "Bet" and the Sprintzak School. Kids teach each other songs and dances in Arabic and Hebrew, put on skits in both languages, and generally have a great time together. For the kids it all seems perfectly natural. Only the teachers and principals realize what a positive breakthrough this is. During the final exchange of thanks, the two principals, Yaakov and Khalil, sit next to each other, smiling with their victory; they've maintained their relationship, and that of their schools, through a war.

JULY 11, 1982

MANY Tamra residents have begun receiving letters and news of relatives in Lebanon from whom they haven't heard in years. Druse soldiers, or doctors in the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces), bring messages and notes across the border:

"We are all fine. Your cousin, Layla, had a baby last month. Our house was not badly damaged; we hope to move back soon. Ahmed's sons, Aaziz and Mohammed, were taken for questioning."

Thousands of Palestinian youths from the camps in Lebanon are being held within Israel for questioning. Sometimes people in

Tamra know where their relatives are being held. But they assume they are not allowed to see them, and are afraid to try lest the Israeli Security Services (Shin Bet) harass them for attempting to contact a suspected terrorist.

Periodically, from the shores of the Mediterranean now edged by the rubble of Sidon, Israeli television broadcasts the greetings of Palestinians from Lebanon to long-separated relatives in Israel. Women in Tamra sit in front of their TV sets, watching the parade of refugees stepping up to the cameras, and weep quietly.

Families begin to arrive for visits from Tyre, Damur. They bring with them stories, not only of the recent fighting, but of their experiences over the last eight years of civil war. They are fascinated to see the changes which have come to family and old homestead over the intervening generation since they left.

It is the irony of this war that there seems to be more contact across the border now, in a state of belligerence, than in 34 years of relative peace.

JULY 19, 1982

ABOUT sixty kids from Tamra and Qiryat Ata spent a day of summer camp together today. They played sports, did handicrafts, played games, and ate together without any sense of oddness or difference.

From the planning stages this camp-exchange went smoothly. Both the Qiryat Ata Youth Department and the Tamra Community Center agreed enthusiastically to the suggestion. The two camp directors got together a week ago to plan the day's activities. They really seemed to hit it off, since both of their focuses were on the enjoyment and development of the kids. Once that was held in common, the rest was easy.

JULY 30, 1982

HIGH school kids from Jaffa and Haifa, from Qiryat Ata and Tamra, from Kfar Kara and from Tel Aviv sit on the grass on the beautiful grounds of the boarding school, Hadassim. We've all come for eight days of standard camp

activities—swimming, discos, sports—as well as group human relations exercises. This one is on self-identification. Everyone chooses from a list of about twenty words those with which they most identify. The list includes: Palestinian, Israeli, Jew, Arab, religious, artist, sensitive, immigrant, daughter . . . human being.

One boy, George, a Christian Arab from Jaffa, a fairly quiet Arab neighborhood, identifies himself as a Palestinian (a term highly politicized these days) and an Israeli.

"Why not 'Arab,' or 'Christian'?" asks Gershon, one of the counselors.

"Well, usually, I do think of myself as an Arab," says George, "but at times like these, when the Palestinians are being run over by everyone, like in Lebanon, I think of myself as a Palestinian."

AUGUST 2, 1982

YESTERDAY, Israeli troops captured the north side of the Beirut airport. The noose tightens around Beirut. Israel periodically cuts off the flow of electricity and water to 500,000 residents of West Beirut. Will Israeli troops enter? A war of nerves.

Tonight, the counselors from Qiryat Ata's summer camp had the Tamra counselors over for their final party. It was a normal party. People sat around in the apartment of the art counselor, Eitana, played party games, ate, joked. It was striking in its uneventfulness. How natural to have fun together—Jews and Arabs—during the war in Lebanon.

AUGUST 12, 1982

ISRAEL bombed Beirut for 11 hours today. When will it end? How?

AUGUST 19, 1982

VICTORY! Today is the finale of one of Interns for Peace's most intense actions in the Western Galilee: the last day of our four-day work camp with high school kids from Qiryat Ata and Tamra, and Arab and Jewish students from Hebrew University. Originally, there were to have been many more participants from both communities, and participants were to have slept at each others' houses. But most Jewish families, although willing to host Arab kids at their homes, were not willing to let their kids sleep over at widely scattered houses in an Arab village.

So, we arranged to sleep as a group at schools in the two towns. During the mornings everyone worked together. Two days in Tamra, building the town's first public park; two days painting and cleaning up in a Qiryat Ata park. Kids ate at each others' houses, met mothers and brothers, saw bedrooms and photo albums, and glimpsed a day in the life of the other kid.

In the afternoon we split up into mixed groups to explore the towns. We spoke to people on the street, toured carpentry shops and cheese factories, housing projects and the local council. In Tamra our group was invited into the *diwan,* or communal sitting room, of a family clan, to drink coffee with the family elder. He told us of what it had been like in Tamra in 1948 when the Jews came. He described it as one of the many events in his life, like the winter of '32, or the coming of the British in '18.

Today, we're smelling out Qiryat Ata. We stop at a sidewalk bench to chat with a group of older Jews. They describe their life in the 1950s as they came from Iraq into the transit camps of young Israel. They find it difficult to express themselves in Hebrew, so the Arabs in the group continue the conversation in Arabic, translating for the Jews.

After introducing ourselves we ask a religious couple of Moroccan origins what they think of Arab-Jewish cooperation. They answer: "You should ask the Ashkenazim that, not us. We've lived with Arabs for years and never had any trouble. Of course, the Moslems are a lot more primitive than the Christians; they're like animals if you hurt their honor. Yes, I know, you're a group of

Arabs and Jews; I'm just telling you what I think. Good luck to you."

As we walk off, Yaron, a Jewish kid in the group, puts his arms around the shoulders of Yasser, one of the Moslems from Tamra. Our group closes ranks. In these four days we've become a unit. We've come to the beach at Kiryat Yam, to have some fun together before we part. As we lie around in the long rays of the late afternoon sun, I realize that on the same shore 200 miles north of us Beirut is still under siege. Yaron sits down next to a group of the kids. He clearly wants to share something with us, but doesn't quite know how to start:

"Just now I saw some friends of mine and they asked me who this group was. When I told them, they said, 'What are you doing wasting your time hanging around with Arabs?' I told them they don't know what they're talking about. When the people from IFP first asked me to join this work camp, to tell you the truth, I didn't particularly want to. I didn't see the point. But now I see that we're on the right path—working together—and nobody's going to move me from that path."

AUGUST 26, 1982

THE siege is over. PLO fighters are withdrawing from Beirut peacefully. Tentative relief.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1982

THE first day of Rosh Hashanah. I am in Dimona with friends for the holiday. We turn on the news after a day of religious and family celebration. We hear on Israel Radio: "Three thousand Palestinians believed massacred in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps." My stomach drops. I had thought the most horrible had already happened, but clearly we all have more to suffer.

SEPTEMBER 20, 1982

I WAS sickened by news of the massacre, but not prepared for the mood in Tamra. Although I've heard of no one with blood relatives in those camps, the whole village has absorbed the horror and the mourning as if it were their own. It is the same level of overall shock I had sensed among the Jews the first week of the war. People in Tamra are simply stunned, depressed, angry, and afraid. Many draw analogies between Begin and Hitler. At first, I tried to rebut them. Now, however, I see that I am dealing with raw emotion. Historical argument is irrelevant. On an emotional level, every massacre feels the same to the survivors. The pain is exacerbated by the fact that most of the Arab radio stations are broadcasting that Jewish soldiers had actually committed the massacre. Most Tamra residents believe this on some level.

I am hurt and confused. Could it be that soldiers of the IDF would do such a thing? How much was the IDF involved? It is impossible to find out the truth from the official statements of the government. Were there precedents to such action by Jews?

I begin to look through my history books and I find four previous incidents since 1948 of Jews murdering Arabs. One was in the nonhostile village of Deir Yassin, near Jerusalem, in 1948. Without provocation the Stern Gang and the Irgun, headed by Menachem Begin, attacked the village. Two hundred and forty men, women, and children were slaughtered. Begin later defended the massacre against bitter criticism from the majority of Jews in Israel.

A second was an overly bloody retaliatory raid on the Palestinian village of Qibya in Jordan in October 1953. Sixty-six men, women, and children were killed. The raid was implemented by an Israeli special unit lead by Arik Sharon. A similarly overly zealous retaliatory raid took the lives of 48 villagers in the Jordanian village of Qalqilya in 1956.

Most disturbing was an incident which took place the same year inside the borders of Israel in the Arab village of Kfar Kassem. There, 47 Arab citizens of Israel were killed by Israeli border police when they arrived home from their fields after the

curfew. The curfew had been imposed on all Israeli Arabs that morning but after they had already left for their fields.

So, in great sorrow and shock, I realized that Jews are not only capable of such acts; we have committed them in the recent past. Given that two of the four involved Begin and Sharon, and given recent shootings of demonstrators on the West Bank, my study gave me a little more understanding as to why Israeli Arabs felt that their State placed no value on their lives or the lives of their people. The decision to call a general strike by the Arab population of Israel on September 22 to protest and mourn over Sabra and Shatila seems totally understandable.

SEPTEMBER 23, 1982

I AM alarmed by the profound drop in the level of trust toward us (IFP). Suddenly, people who had known us for almost two years begin questioning what we are contributing to Tamra. They charge: "Why didn't you take part in the demonstration in the village?" "I heard that you agree with Begin. Is it true?" "What do you think of what happened in Sabra and Shatila?"

We've gotten heckled on the streets a few times lately, something that never happened before. I feel horrified and sad that after a year and a half, living in their midst, giving these years of my life to Arab-Jewish relations, I have not gotten through enough to the people of Tamra that they feel they can trust me now.

Of course, it is totally unreasonable to expect that we, too, would not be victims of the onion effect. Still it is tremendously gratifying when those who are with us on a deep level come through in this time. Close friends took us into their homes the night before the strike. Others came to visit us the day of the strike. Mohammed, the deputy mayor, assured us that nothing had changed, that we were as welcome as ever in Tamra.

We are listening. Scores of people talk about how they feel as Israeli Arabs. Some women speak of how they sense that the Jews hate them more than ever now. They have recently heard more explicit comments from Jews in shops and health clinics about

hoping to wipe out the Palestinians. On the other hand, Rafaa, one of the few owners of a workshop industry in Tamra and a man with tremendous range and depth of personal contacts with Jews, speaks differently. After expressing his horror at the massacre itself, he begins to analyze what's going on in Israeli society: "I see a hopeful sign. Never before have so many Jews spoken of, or thought of, the rights of the Palestinian people. In the past twenty years I've never heard as much acceptance of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian State as I do now."

Today, there was to have been a meeting of the core group of businessmen, entrepreneurs, and public leaders of Qiryat Ata and Tamra to discuss how to set up a regional factory to be equally owned and run by Arabs and Jews. Mohammed, Tamra's deputy mayor, practically explodes when I mention it: "People were shot in Nazareth yesterday for protesting; they are still in the hospital in uncertain condition. I have no time for a meeting about industry."

This time, both Jews and Arabs agree in their sentiment that this is not the time for an initial meeting.

"The mood is not right," warns Moti, a factory manager from Qiryat Ata. "Believe me, if we go ahead now, everyone will blow up and the whole project will get off on the wrong foot. Wait a week for feelings to die down." What Moti doesn't say is that he is scared to enter Tamra after rocks had been thrown at police in Nazareth and main roads had been blocked by angry Arab villagers in other parts of the country. And he is angry. These people couldn't be his partners if they do not accept the State of Israel, and if they torment their Jewish neighbors in this way. My heart sinks. I've been organizing for months for this meeting and now everyone wants to call it off. Will we ever get together now? But I trust Moti; I wait.

SEPTEMBER 28, 1982

THE onion effect is still in full operation. Gabi, a Qiryat Ata principal, who worked all last year with a partner school in Tamra, is ready to call off the second year of get-togethers because she heard that the Israeli flag had been burned in Tamra. She says, soberly: "I won't jeopardize 90 chil-

dren under my care by taking them into a hostile place. And what would the parents say?"

She calls in Miri, the dynamic teacher who'd organized last year's events with Tamra, and asks her, "Miri, as a citizen, a mother, and as the wife of a soldier, how do you feel about continuing the joint activities?"

Miri studies Gabi's face. Cautiously, she replies: "As an educator I see these activities as very beneficial for the children."

After an emotional discussion on how we see Israel, on the future of its democracy, on the disturbing development of some anti-Arab attitudes in her sons, on the fear within the Arab community, Gabi looks at me without emotion and says, "I envy you your idealism."

SEPTEMBER 29, 1982

THE core group of ten Arabs and Jews met in the chambers of the Tamra local council tonight to discuss the possibility of a regional enterprise. Although they did not agree on all their goals and approaches, the meeting itself was a success. In the midst of a war and less than two weeks after the massacre, businessmen from Qiryat Ata came, for the first time in their lives, to the neighboring village of Tamra to discuss not Jewish development, not Arab development, but cooperative regional development. It is a new kind of thinking, and has emerged during one of the most critical times in Arab-Jewish relations.

OCTOBER 19, 1982

BEFORE a meeting with Abu Saleh, principal of their partner school in Tamra, Gabi takes me aside. She informs me that the parents from Ha Tsvi Israel had spoken about the Arab-Jewish activities at a PTA gathering and had asked to continue the program this year. The kids had enjoyed and learned much from last year's meetings, and their parents were pleased with the experience.

But, Gabi is still nervous. Abu Saleh arrives to plan the year's program. He responds to Gabi's questions on the attitudes in Tamra: "Of course, we were horrified by the massacre. So was Itzhak Navon, President of Israel. If he could express his anger and condemnation of the act on television, the least we could do was to take one day out from work to do the same."

Gabi looks visibly relieved and impressed at this explanation.

NOVEMBER 17, 1982

YESTERDAY, Ha Tsvi Israel and Tamra "Vav" carried out their planned event, the first in this year's series of meetings on the theme of "Your Town, My Town." One hundred and seventy sixth-graders and some mothers took part in a day's walking tour of Qiryat Ata. It was a grand success, deepening relations begun last year. Kids went right to old friends, and for the first time began to ask each other about family, friends, hobbies, and habits. Kids came up to me or the teachers, asking for words in Hebrew or Arabic to talk with their friends. When they returned from eating lunch at the homes of the Qiryat Ata kids, everyone was chattering unreservedly.

Today, ten schools from Qiryat Ata and Tamra took part in a day of in-service training for teachers and principals doing education toward coexistence. One exercise was a nonverbal communication through drawing. Teachers sat in pairs—one Arab, one Jew—and took turns drawing to each other on a single sheet. Mohammed and Tsiona grinned when one drew a house and the other, a red carpet extending from the door.

DECEMBER 12, 1982

OVER the last six months Jews and Arabs in Israel have shared contrapuntal pains and tragedies, through the final bizarre accident in November, when the Israeli military headquarters in Sidon collapsed, killing 45 Israeli soldiers (many of whom were Druse), and Palestinian POWs. Then, many

Tamra residents visited the families of the dead in the Jewish town of Tsfat and in the Druse village of Yerka.

How has the war affected Arab-Jewish relations? Certainly, the mutual pain has risen and cut through some of the common mythology, revealing present reality with sharpened clarity. Perhaps, now, the mutual suffering has become great enough that people are more willing to search for solutions than for victories. Militarily, Israel won the war in Lebanon; with the IDF it could hardly have turned out otherwise. But many Israeli Jews, especially those who went to Lebanon, found that this victory has not solved the problem that prevents peace. In fact, more Jews than ever are seeing the legitimacy of Palestinian national urgings, and the price of remaining an occupying power—in Lebanon and on the West Bank.

Those who were in favor of Arab-Jewish cooperation within Israel before the war are still in favor; those who were not, are not now. And for that great majority of people who both hoped for, and feared to trust in, better relations, the bile brought up by the war is now beginning to recede. The burning it has left in their throats is painful. But it is not keeping either Arabs or Jews from taking positive steps to achieve on a human level within Israel a true peace for Galilee.

Timerman and taboo

DAVID M. SZONYI

The Longest War: Israel in Lebanon, by Jacobo Timerman. New York: Knopf, 1982, $11.95; Vintage paperback, $3.95.

WHY do the writings of Jacobo Timerman so raise the hackles of the Jewish community? First, there was *Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number,* his memoir of imprisonment, torture, and anti-Semitism in post-Peron Argentina. Now there is reflections on *The Longest War: Israel in Lebanon.*

From the time each book originally appeared in *The New Yorker,* it was received with volleys of denunciation by numerous Jewish communal leaders, and not a few intellectuals. Timerman, his critics charged, was prone to unfounded generalizations; he rushed to judgment on the basis of insufficient evidence for his point of view; his rhetoric was overwrought and he was simply wrong on a number of important matters of fact.

As *The Longest War* demonstrates, there is considerably more than a grain of truth to this critique. Not two full pages into the book, Timerman delivers himself of his first vapid generalization: "Only when enraptured by their songs, drunk with them, only then

can you see the Israelis relaxed, outgoing, sentimental, dreamers all. I would not, however, go so far as to say they are happy." His claim that Israel's June 1982 invasion of Lebanon resulted in "the systematic destruction of Tyre, Sidon and what was left of Damur" is unintended hyperbole at best, outright misrepresentation at worst. His insistence that "For the first time, Israel had attacked a neighboring country without being attacked" is contradicted by the history of the 1956 Sinai War (which Israel helped plan and coordinate with France and Great Britain) and, arguably, by that of the 1967 Six Day War as well.[1]

Near the end of *The Longest War,* Timerman's rhetoric simply becomes hysterical. He accuses Menachem Begin of being a "Fascist," argues that Israel "is South Africa," and, only four days after the Beirut massacre, asks, "What is it that has turned us into such efficient criminals?"

Throughout this book, as in *Prisoner Without a Name,* Timerman takes upon himself the prophet's mantle. As such, he is perhaps entitled to a certain amount of prophetic license. What one cannot justify, however, is his carelessness with words and facts. For in an age devoid of divine interventions to confirm the prophet's argument—Timerman is certainly no Elijah facing the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel (courageous but ostracized minorities of one do not get their work published in *The New Yorker*)—words and facts are all he has.

What interests me here, however, is not so much what Timerman wrote as how many of his readers responded to *The Longest War,* and why. For even given the many serious flaws of this book, the reaction to it was unusually vituperative on the part of several Jewish organizations and in a number of American-Jewish newspapers and periodicals. Not only Timerman's views and his facts were (quite rightly) challenged, but so were his right to speak out at all, as well as his loyalty to the Jewish people. Even the incisive Israeli journalist Amos Elon, who favorably reviewed *The Longest War* on the front page of the *New York Times Book Review,* was caught up in the furor.

Why? I suspect that a large part of the reason has to do not with Timerman's specific observations and points, but with the whole tone that pervades the book. To put it simply: Timerman writes in a way that most of the Jewish community is neither

accustomed to, nor desirous of, hearing. He is a moralist, someone who looks at the Lebanon War through the lens of ethical behavior and who feels "guilt" for unnecessary suffering inflicted on civilians. He believes that the war "erodes the moral idea of ourselves," and that it has led to "the degradation of the ethical values of our society and nation." To some of Timerman's readers, this kind of prose must sound quaint, like something out of the impassioned, if at times slightly *luftmentshik,*[2] Zionist rhetoric of the 1920s and 1930s. They might argue that Timerman's writing is too "moralistic," that is, insufficiently "hard-headed."

Besides, "Israel acting 'immorally'—how could that be?", the state's staunch defenders might ask. How could a Jewish state act other than morally, particularly one imbued with *chalutz*[3] ideals, one whose early settlers and army long practiced *havlagah,*[4] one built on the ashes of the Holocaust (and who, after the Holocaust, would dare accuse Israel of immorality)? As for guilt, that is an emotion appropriate to the ethos of the Diaspora, where the Jew's position is inherently compromised anyway. Guilt may be a leitmotif of Malamud novellas or, more whimsically, of Woody Allen films—but can it really be a category for assessing Israeli policy?

And when not acting morally, the defenders might add, Israel is, at worst, engaged in *a*moral and not *im*moral behavior. Its policies are dictated by pragmatic, survivalist considerations, for it remains in a state of siege, and is calumnied at the United Nations and throughout the world.

Much, possibly most, of this "defensive" perspective on Israeli policy is justified; Timerman sets the teeth of Jewish communal leaders on edge by focusing on that which is not. For example, he challenges the stereotype of Israel as encircled, besieged, and fighting only for survival—a stereotype clearly confirmed by the geopolitical realities of 1948, 1967, and 1973, but far less so by those of 1956 and barely, if at all, by those of 1982.

Timerman recalls the doubts about the war's whole rationale, which overwhelmed him as he toured the front in Lebanon for the first time:

> Only once did I lose control. We were commenting on the impressive display of Israeli military might. Camp after camp, supply and communication bases, engineering and communication posts, field hospitals and

columns of tanks moving endlessly along with mammoth artillery trucks. I ask: Can anyone in the Middle East oppose or present any opposition to the Israeli armed forces? Nobody, they reply. From a military viewpoint, we can seize all the Arab capitals.

If nobody can stop us, that means that nobody can threaten us. If Galilee was quiet up to a year ago when our air force bombed Beirut, I ask in simple and banal terms, in the least politicized way possible, what are we doing in Lebanon? If we have such a powerful army, why couldn't we do what we wanted without destroying cities and massacring thousands of civilians?

In a passage such as this, as in many others, Timerman breaks one of the prevalent taboos that constricts Diaspora discourse on Israel: he observes that Israel not only is not relatively powerless; it is fairly *powerful*. Israel, while geographically and demographically surrounded, its security never firmly assured—the Arabs may yet join ranks against the Jewish state; the Soviet advanced military technology they purchase may match, even overtake Israel's some day—nevertheless appears to be, for now, *the* dominant military force in the Middle East.

Of course, military power also carries in its wake political responsibility. Power may mean that Israel must initiate its own peace policies, rather than waiting for U.S. mediation or for Jordan's Hussein to be overtaken by a courageous impulse to chart a new diplomatic course, of which he seems incapable, or for Syrian and Palestinian "Sadats" to replace the Assads and Arafats. Israeli and Diaspora Jewish leaders are oriented toward, and comfortable with, an Israel whose diplomatic posture is essentially reactive. Along comes Timerman with the unsettling suggestion that there is no real justification for this defensive stance, no reason that Israel cannot be "pro-active" rather than reactive vis-à-vis the Arabs in general, and the Palestinians in particular.

In the short run, Timerman is not against the use of power per se; he only insists that such power be used in proportion to the actual threat confronting Israel. Concerning "Operation Peace for Galilee" (a misnomer as obnoxious as it is unwieldy), he contends that "The operations were excessive and not justified by the fighting capacity of the Palestinians, which was inflated by the official propaganda."

Timerman thus demythologizes the actual power of the PLO,

which was overwhelmed by the Israelis, its huge cache of arms notwithstanding, and whose members are, as of this writing (late July 1983) scattered and warring among themselves. And in the same sentence, he smashes another taboo by speaking openly of Israeli "propaganda," which is sometimes characterized by half-truths, and sometimes even by outright prevarications (and why not acknowledge this—what else could one expect from a state that strives to be "normal" and so is guided by the dictates of *realpolitik;* from a state which is itself the object of so much anti-Zionist propaganda and Soviet- or Arab-inspired "disinformation"?).

Timerman is concerned about the use of gratuitous power not only because of the suffering of the Palestinians, but because of what it does to, and demonstrates about, the Jews. Near the end of *The Longest War,* in a passage that may make his readers the most uncomfortable of all, he notes that the Lebanon campaign, conducted "without objective and without pity," has convinced him that Jews too have a "capacity for cruelty." I don't agree with the "without objective and without pity"—Arik Sharon had very definite objectives in mind in initiating the war, although, as Arthur Hertzberg has argued, they may have had to do more with the Palestinians on the West Bank than with those in Lebanon. As for "pity," the soldiers of *Zahal*[5] often demonstrated it at considerable risk to themselves, and to their great credit. But I believe Timerman is correct in pointing out that we Jews, now that we have a state, an army, and the other trappings of power, can act all too "normally" in disregarding the suffering we cause others, that we are hardly always *rachamim bnei rachamim.*[6]

Given the relative ease of Israel's victories in 1956, 1967, and the pre-Beirut part of the Lebanon War, it is tempting for many Jews to romanticize the use of military might, to believe à la Clausewitz that war can accomplish diplomatic objectives by other means, and that "this" Israeli-Arab war will be worth the price because it will obviate others. In the headiest days during and after the Lebanon War—and even, to some extent, now—some Jews sank into the easy self-assurance that the war had "finished" the PLO and, with it, the kind of militant Palestinian nationalism that could jeopardize Israel's survival.

In contrast to this, Timerman is the conveyor of bad news. He argues convincingly that power in and of itself does not guarantee

security; it only enables a country to confront its dilemmas from a position of strength.

Israel's prime dilemma, of course, is how to achieve coexistence with the Palestinians (or, if not coexistence, at least some relatively stable, if uneasy, modus vivendi). Timerman acknowledges that the PLO has been miserably led, that its nonrecognition of Israel has been self-delusory and self-defeating, and that its use of terror has been "criminal." Yet unlike so many Israeli and Jewish leaders from Golda Meir (who questioned the very existence of a Palestinian people) on, he refuses to stop thinking about the Palestinians or, worse, to one-dimensionalize them intellectually and verbally.

So much of the rhetoric emanating from the Begin government, and particularly from the Prime Minister himself, suggests the extended equation: Palestinians = PLO = terrorists (whose sole *raison d'être,* apparently, is the destruction of Israel). In contrast, Timerman breaks the taboo against thinking about, and even empathizing with, Palestinians who have "humane" qualities, who are homeless, who feel despised—if pitied—by their Arab "brothers," who live as "strangers" in their own Diaspora, and who are possibly even furiously envious of the Jews, with their proud, youthful, resilient, and powerful state.

And Timerman knows that the Palestinians (if not, necessarily, the PLO) will be like the man in the famous limerick:

> As I was going up the stairs
> I met a man who wasn't there;
> He wasn't there
> Again today—
> Oh how I wish he'd go away.

For the Palestinian problem won't "go away"; if anything, the Lebanon War, the Beirut massacre—and perhaps even the internecine fighting within the PLO—have dramatized its urgency.

The two people who were supposed to divide Palestine between them according to the U.N.'s November 1947 partition resolution never did, thanks largely to five invading Arab armies and, particularly, to the territorial aggrandizement of King Abdullah of Jordan. So Israel and the Palestinian Arabs still face the question of whether each will be willing to compromise, to partition the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea and, ultimately, to formally recognize each other and settle for peace in lieu of ultimate claims.

The bitter news for the parents and siblings, the wives and lovers, of those killed and maimed in Lebanon is that the war—while perhaps opening a few diplomatic "windows of opportunity"—solved nothing in the long run. And nothing will be solved unless and until the Israelis and the Palestinians both recognize the other's humanity—and the other's centrality in enabling each side to fulfill at least some of its deepest aspirations. As Timerman puts it, simplifying somewhat, "From now on, our tragedy will be inseparable from that of the Palestinians."[7]

The suggestion of an Israeli-Palestinian compromise brings Timerman full circle, for it implies an Israel that will, with justifiable fear and trembling, break with the traditional nationalist ethos of military strength, of *realpolitik,* of "creating facts," of survival ensured largely by power alone. As befits its name, such an Israel will "God-wrestle," ever struggling to balance the need for strength and power with the desire for a just peace with the Arabs in general, the Palestinians in particular.

To those who would view Israel in terms that are inherently strategic and self-justifying (such as the editors of *Commentary*), a stance such as Timerman's must seem naive or hopelessly idealistic. Timerman's moral vision, as badly articulated and overwrought as it sometimes is, seems to me right in at least one thing: it looks to an Israel that chooses *not* to act *k'chol hagoyim,*[8] that tries to think in terms of practical idealism, and to act with restrained power.

The ultimate taboo Jacobo Timerman breaks, then, is voicing the belief that with Israel, Jewish history and Jewish life have, at long last, become "normal." For Timerman, Israel continues, rather than resolves, the state of Jewish abnormality, and *that is the way it should be*. He thus wants the Jewish state to offer a self-consciously, distinctly *Jewish* response to even its seemingly most implacable, violence-prone enemies. How annoying, how infuriating, he is to those for whom Jewish or Zionist politics is reduceable

to fundraising for Israel, lobbying on its behalf, calling for the near-oxymoron of "Jewish unity," and denouncing those who "dissent."

I am convinced that *The Longest War* makes many Jewish leaders so uncomfortable not because of its simplifications and flaws, then, but because of its unseemly moral cry. Timerman's sharp unease with Zion suggests that even for us who are only sporadically involved with Israel, the state may never let us be; it will not offer the easy comforts of the unrestrained use of power (like the USSR) or of grandiloquently evasive rhetoric (like France) or of periodic moral posturing (like the United States).

Timerman's tone must most anger those Diaspora Jews who feel secure and complacent in their relationship to Israel, for its anguish itself represents a kind of taboo, an emotion that we, living in the tolerant, comfortable, good-to-the-Jews democratic West, aren't supposed to feel anymore. And emotional taboos, being the most deep-seated and, potentially, the most searing, are the kind one is most prone to keep repressed.

1. While Israel had not been formally attacked, a *causus belli,* sufficient legal provocation to go to war, did exist on June 5, 1967, the day Israel struck back.
2. *Luftmentsh* (literally, "air-person"): someone who lives on ideas and ideals, who isn't "realistic," doesn't have his "feet on the ground."
3. *Chalutz:* early pioneer/settler.
4. *Havlagah* ("restraint"): the policy adopted by the Haganah of not firing on Arab adversaries unless and until fired upon.
5. *Zahal:* the Israeli army.
6. *Rachamim bnei rachamim:* merciful children of merciful parents.
7. The simplification is that there are some distinctly Jewish and Israeli tragedies that have little, if anything, to do with the Palestinians.
8. *K'chol hagoyim:* like the gentile nations.

Contributors

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Abraham's Children

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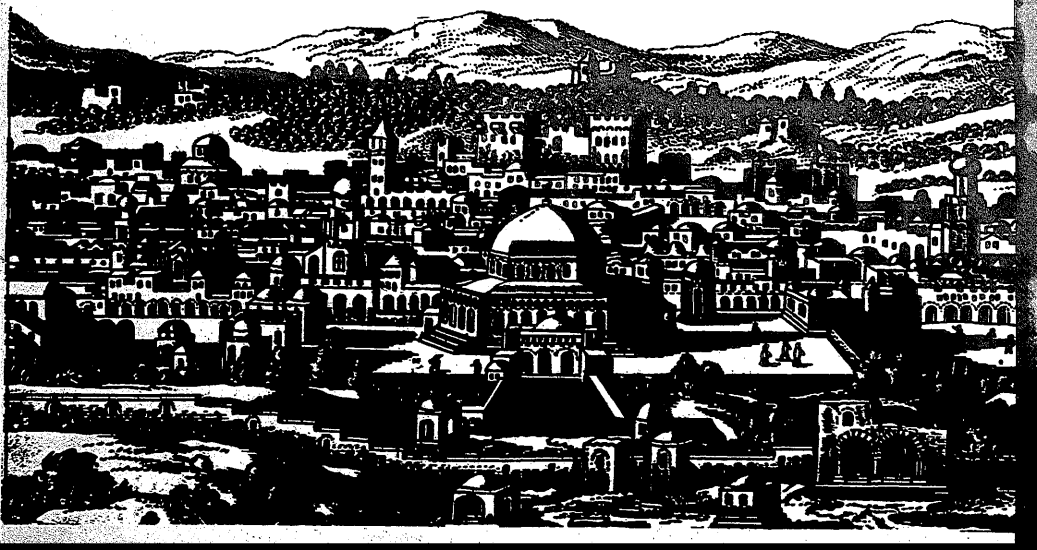
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A Film on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Currently in pre-production, ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN is a documentary film about the tragic encounter between the Israeli and Palestinian nations in the Middle East. It is the first jointly produced Jewish/Arab film that seeks to promote understanding and the reconciliation between both peoples. The film was conceived in the months following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon by Jacob Bender, former Audio-Visual Director of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, and Kamal Boullata, an internationally known Palestinian artist and poet.

ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN will chronicle the life stories of three Israelis and three Palestinians from the 1940's to the present, utilizing interviews, historical footage, family photo albums, and Jewish and Arabic poetry and music.

The ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN FILM PROJECT has already received unprecedented support from Israelis and Palestinians, and American Jewish and Arab community leaders, and is seeking further assistance to complete the film. For further information about ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN, please contact JACOB BENDER, 41 WEST 87 ST., NEW YORK, NY 10024, 212/595-0214.



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