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**Frontier**

NOVEMBER ■ DECEMBER ■ 1998

AFTER WYE ...

*What Now?*

THE BASICS OF ISRAELI/ARAB CONFLICT

IRAQ AND ISRAEL'S SECURITY

SECULARISM DECONSTRUCTED

JEWISH ART AND ARTISTS IN POLAND

GARMENT'S "CRAZY RHYTHM"

BIO: DOV HOS

SINCE 1934 • A LABOR ZIONIST JOURNAL

# *A Garland of Poems* By Nomi Zuckerman

## A Whole Olive Tree

**A** base;  
 Knotted,  
 Convulsed,  
     With writhing shapes  
     All but ossified  
 Into a scabby  
 Solid mass  
     Topped by a triple  
 Trunk;  
     Each arm  
     Pushing upwards  
     Abruptly,  
     Contorted,  
     Rough-barked,  
         And ridged lengthwise  
         Like skeins of huge hawsers.  
         The three all  
 Branch;  
     And narrower units split off,  
     Some,  
         As angular,  
         Dead  
 Twigs;  
     And others,  
     Almost smooth barked,  
     Bursting  
         Into small candelabrams of  
 Sprigs;  
     Grouped into  
 Tufts;  
     Of dusty, spatulate,  
     Silvery  
 Leaves;  
     Tough and vital.

I wonder what the  
 Roots  
 Are like?

(1994)

## A Minute in Autumn (Jerusalem — 1933)

**I** thread round the pits of an unpaved street  
 Where high stone walls on either side  
 Corset the undulating open space  
 In cool dusty embrace.

A she-ass led by an old man picks  
 Her dainty way before me among  
 The jutting rocks all round our feet.  
 The saddle straddling her back

Is burlap, hand-stitched and stuffed with straw.  
 Long-necked milk cans fill its pockets  
 And sway in rhythm with the mincing legs.  
 The loop-handled lids, ridged

In parallel grooves, seal the tops of each can.  
 The man stops the beast and tugs out a can,  
 Up-ending its lid into which he jets  
 A sculptured measure of milk.

The ass lifts her nose, nostrils aquiver,  
 As deep, low rumbles roll from her gullet  
 Crescendoing in pitch and in volume,  
 Holding long at the top

To blare into the hazed tint of evening  
 A raucous ecstasy of noise. The climax  
 Reached — diminishing, hurried gasps  
 For breath crowd into each other,

Then a long, fading 'haw' . . . and silence rushes  
 Round. I pass the housewives, pots and jugs  
 In hand, and sniff a pepper-tree leaf  
 I'd crushed between my fingers.

(1986)

These poems are from Nomi Zuckerman's recent collection under the title of "A Whole Olive Tree", Minerva Press, London. The volume has been praised for its "solitude and peace, turmoil and war, decay and rebirth" which are "beautifully addressed and encapsulated in . . . garlands of poems. From Israel to Austria, from Bosnia to Britain and the US, the poet's eye seizes on small details and in fresh clear language extracts their essence to deliver us a message of regeneration and hope."

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## What Now?

*By Susan Hattis Rolef*

**T**he agreement initialed by Binyamin Netanyahu and Yasir Arafat on Friday, October 23, left most Israelis in a state of total disbelief. Until the very last moment the political Right didn't believe that Netanyahu would dare agree to hand over to the Palestinians another 13 percent of the territory of the West Bank, due to the high political price he is likely to pay for this within his own political camp. The political Left, on the other hand, didn't believe that after all the abuse he had poured over the initiators of the Oslo process and all his previous delaying tactics Netanyahu would agree to so generous an agreement with the Palestinians within the framework of the second redeployment.

Immediately after his return to Israel on Sunday, October 25, Netanyahu opened a major information campaign to convince the Right that he had not sold out to the Palestinians, and that the Agreement was a major improvement on anything the Left would have attained. In several interviews to the electronic media he argued that he had agreed to give the Palestinians much less territory than Labor had promised. He claimed that the Palestinians had told him that Labor had promised them 92% of the occupied territories. Whether or not the source of this "information" was the Palestinians (since when does Bibi believe the Palestinians?) this claim has no foundation whatsoever in reality. Even the Beilin-Abu Ma'azen Agreement of October 1995 — which dealt with the final settlement, not another interim agreement — did not foresee such a major Israeli withdrawal, and according to all the available information, Labor was not intending to be generous with

### Bulletin!

As we go to press we learn that there is significant movement on the ground toward implementing the Wye Memorandum. A large sector in the Jenin area has been turned over to Palestinian rule and the international airport in the Gaza strip has opened for traffic. So far there have been no disruptive incidents by any extremist groups on either side.

the Palestinians in the territorial sphere before the final agreement.

Netanyahu and his spokesmen were also inaccurate (not to use harsher words) in describing what had been achieved at Wye Plantation. They claimed that there was finally an explicit undertaking by the Palestinian side to get the PNC (the Palestine National Council) to amend the Palestine National Charter — but this is not borne out by the English version of the Agreement. There are also major discrepancies between what Netanyahu and his spokesmen reported and the Agreement on the size of the Palestinian "police force", Palestinian measures in the war against the terrorists and the Authority's obligation to detain Palestinians wanted by Israel for their alleged role in previous acts of terror. Furthermore, the Agreement includes an Israeli undertaking to prevent acts of terror, crime and hostility by Israelis against Palestinians — certainly a noble and just undertaking, but one which Netanyahu and his ministers rejected in the past because it implied reciprocity in a sphere in which they claim that the only real culprits are Palestinians.

However, what raised the most eyebrows regarding Netanyahu's report on what had happened at Wye Plantation, was his claim that contrary to reports from Washington there had been no tension between himself and President Clinton over the demand for Jonathan Pollard's release, as a *quid pro quo* for the Israeli release of Palestinian detainees and prisoners. So the bottom line is that at least in terms of his credibility, Netanyahu has won no points — either within the Right or within the Left.



But, as the saying goes, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating", and in the long run what matters is whether the Wye Plantation Agreement is implemented. On November 11, the Cabinet voted to ratify the Agreement. It was a shaky victory for Netanyahu, who faced strong opposition from the Right. Of the 17 Cabinet ministers, 8 voted in favor, 5 abstained, and 4 voted against the Agreement, mediated by the Americans between Netanyahu and Arafat.

**I**n the Knesset Netanyahu has a safety net, which has been spread out for him by the Labor Party, Meretz and the Arab parties, but it is a safety net with pretty large holes, and already Netanyahu has managed to anger the Arab MKs. The Government managed to get its 1999 budget through the plenum in first reading on November 2, thanks to the decision of five Arab members (four from the Arab Democratic Party and Rafik Haj Yibya from the Labor Party) to abstain, and this after the National Religious Party and Moledet had decided to vote against the budget. The "thanks" they got was a statement by Netanyahu — who in the 13th Knesset kept arguing that Yitzhak Rabin was dependent on the Arab votes to implement his peace policy — that major decisions would only be taken with the votes of those "not opposed to Zionism".

The Labor Party's dilemma, regarding the safety net, is that it does not really believe that Netanyahu intends to implement the Wye Plantation Agreement, but at the same time doesn't want to give Netanyahu any grounds for blaming it for non-implementation — already Netanyahu is arguing that by supporting early elections, Labor is undermining the implementation of the Agreement (See below),

However, even if the Agreement is approved in all the various forums that are being called upon to approve it, this in itself does not guarantee that it will be implemented. Several things could stop the implementation. The first is terrorist attacks by Palestinian opponents of the peace process, and already there have been three such attacks: the murder of a Jewish settler — Danny Vargas — near Hebron on October 26; an attempt to blow up a busload of children near Gush Kattif in the Gaza Strip on October 29, which miraculously ended with only one person being killed — the Israeli soldier Alexei Nakov; and an attempt

by two Palestinians to perform a terrorist act in the Mahaneh Yehuda market in Jerusalem on Friday, November 6, in which — again miraculously — only the two terrorists themselves were killed.

While Labor was in power, every time that a terrorist attack took place — and, unfortunately, there were numerous such attacks — Netanyahu and his colleagues called upon the government to stop the peace process. Now it is the activist settlers and the extreme Right which are calling upon Netanyahu to stop the peace process, and some of the posters being carried by the Jewish demonstrators against the Wye Plantation Agreement are reminiscent of posters which were seen at demonstrations just before Rabin's assassination. Though the Right wing leaders have managed to get their supporters to stop calling Netanyahu a traitor in public, the defiant mood in these circles is strong and it is not clear how determined Netanyahu is to stand up against them.

**B**ut it is the prospect of early elections which could be the most serious obstacle to the Agreement's implementation. On October 26 the Knesset Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, chaired by the hawkish Hanan Porath from the National Religious Party, voted in favor of bringing a Private Member's Bill concerning early elections to the Knesset plenum for first reading. What took place in the Committee was a rare coalition between the Labor Party and Meretz with the extreme Right, and now that the Arab MKs feel that Netanyahu has given them a slap in their face, it seems as though the Bill, which may be brought to the plenum before the middle of November, could be supported by at least 61 of the 120 MKs.

Though early elections are unlikely to be held before January 24, 1999, when the third stage of the implementation of the Wye Plantation Agreement should begin, the mere prospect of new elections could force Netanyahu — who is dependent on Right wing votes to get reelected — to freeze implementation of the Agreement. In fact, early elections are likely to push the whole political arena into such turmoil, that no one will have time for the Wye Plantation Agreement. The extreme Right — including several members from the Likud, such as Benny Begin and Uzi Landau — is already threatening to propose

its own candidate for Prime Minister. There is even no guarantee that the Likud will continue to stand behind Netanyahu, though he can probably depend on the support of the Likud Central Committee. There is reason to believe that a new central political grouping will be established — with Tel Aviv mayor Ronnie Milo, or some other charismatic personality as its candidate for the premiership — and at this point it isn't clear whether the highly popular former Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak will join such a grouping (if indeed he finally opts for politics) or join Ehud Barak in the Labor Party. Barak's status is also somewhat complicated, *inter alia*, due to what appears to be deliberate conniving against him by former Labor leader Shimon Peres, who keeps arguing that he is only interested in the peace process, not in personal squabbles, but somehow always seems to end up appearing to undermine Barak's status and authority within his party and in the eyes of the general public.

In the current situation one cannot totally exclude the possibility that at Netanyahu's invitation Labor will join a National Unity Government, though at the moment the chances for this happening look pretty small. There are several reasons for this. The first is that the price Netanyahu would have to pay for bringing Labor into the Government would be extremely high, including pushing the loyal Yitzhak Mordechai out of the Ministry of Defense in favor of Ehud Barak. Furthermore, after Netanyahu's fierce attack on Barak at the Likud Central Committee meeting on October 28 (he mentioned Barak in extremely negative terms at least 40 times), and Barak's response in kind at the special Knesset sitting in memory of Yitzhak Rabin, held on November 1, it seems highly unlikely that these two personalities will manage to sit together in the same government and cooperate.

It is also questionable whether Labor has much to gain from such a move. Furthermore, the Government's economic policy is in such disarray that one doesn't need to have a brilliant campaign manager to be able to effectively attack the Government's record on this issue (the only problem is, of course, that no Israeli election has ever been won over economic issues . . .)

But within the Labor Party there is, at the moment, fear of a totally different scenario. It is that Netanyahu will manage to placate his opponents from the Right, and stop them sup-

porting early elections by agreeing to freeze the new Agreement.

It is against the background of this highly fluid political situation that Israel commemorated the third anniversary of Yitzhak Rabin's assassination. All those who supported Rabin's policy and admired the man, and many who did not, had to note with regret that since that terrible Saturday night in November 1995, both as a nation and as a state we seem to have regressed. Unfortunately, it is not Rabin's heritage that is serving as a guiding light to our leaders, nor his absolute integrity that is serving as an example which they seek to emulate. During the initialing ceremony at the White House on October 23, only the Jordanian King Hussein and the Palestinian Yasir Arafat mentioned Rabin — Netanyahu did not. Furthermore, in the Knesset sitting in memory of Rabin, Netanyahu hailed Rabin as a great military leader, but did not give him any credit for the Oslo process, which he still claims to have been a mistake, even though through his actions he has admitted that there is no viable alternative. □

(See **Update** on Page 17.)



*As Jews everywhere  
kindle the lights of freedom,  
let us rededicate ourselves  
to strengthen peace and  
ensure the future of a  
progressive Israel.*

**Happy Hannukah!**

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# Looking at the Basics

*By Misha Louvish*

**B**y the time this article appears in print, negotiations are scheduled to have started for a permanent settlement of the conflict between Israel and the "Palestinians" — i.e., the Arabs who live, or used to live, in the area that came under Israeli rule in resisting Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian aggression in 1962.

This time it will be impossible to evade recognition of the basic facts, as many have been doing. There will be no hope of arriving at any solution based on agreement unless the basic facts about Jews and Arabs in the Holy Land are recognized. We will have to realize that, in addition to our fundamental claim that Eretz Yisrael is the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people, there are other valid claims to rights in the country.

President Clinton was wrong when, in his speech at the signature ceremony of the Wye Plantation agreement, he included Islam, together with Judaism and Christianity, among the faiths that originated in the Holy Land, although it did leave a lasting impression in Jerusalem. He would have been more accurate if he had used the national, rather than the religious, argument in this case and pointed out that the "Palestinians" trace back the presence of their ancestors in the Land well into the first millennium of the present era.

The term "Palestine," derived from the name of the ancient Philistines, is, of course, anomalous, and so is the appropriation of the name by Yassir Arafat and his people. Before the establishment of independent Israel, Zionists had no qualms about referring to the Jews who lived in Eretz Yisrael as "Palestinians" — as distinct from those, even Zionists, who lived in the Diaspora; when the State was founded we dropped the term and it was picked up by the Arabs.

For the Ottoman Empire, which ruled most of the Middle East until World War I, there was no such country as Palestine: the area was divided between several administrative units. It was recognized as a political entity after the war by the League of Nations, which entrusted its rule under mandate to Great Britain.

Sooner or later all the peoples under Ottoman rule gained their independence — with one exception: the Palestinian Arabs. And there was not the slightest doubt about the reason for the denial of their right to establish their own sovereign state or become part of another Arab state: Palestine was reserved by the League to house the Jewish National Home.

**W**ith the lapse of time we tend to forget what an extraordinary achievement it was for the Zionist movement, following on the Balfour Declaration, the League gave "recognition to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country."

Two linguistic points are worth noting: the syllable "re-" in "reconstituting," which recognized the objective reality of Jewish rights, and, on the other hand, the refusal to recognize the Jewish people's right to "reconstitute that country as their national home." The second point implied that the Jews were not the only people to have rights in Palestine.

The Mandatory power was also enjoined to promote "the establishment of self-governing institutions" (note: not for Jews alone) and to safeguard "the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine." The second provision, apparently excluding political rights, might be understood as contradicting the first.

Whatever legalistic interpretations may be given to the wording of the Mandate, there was a built-in contradiction between the Jewish and Arab views of the situation. For the Jews the Arabs were little more than a nuisance: land for settlement had to be bought from the owners who were often absentee landlords, and some provision had to be made for the tenant farmers. The Zionist authorities did not envision that the Arabs would one day constitute, not merely a collection of individuals but a national entity with whom the country would have to be shared.

Arab leaders, on the other hand, resented the influx of the Jews, which they regarded as a vio-



lation of the widely recognized right of all peoples to national self-determination. From 1936 onward there were Arab riots, which went as far as guerilla warfare. The majority of the Jewish leaders accepted the conclusion that they could not absorb the Arabs as a minority, and agreed to the solution of partition, recommended by the United Nations in 1947.

The Arabs did not accept partition, which was implemented only by the Israeli victory in the War of Independence. They regarded it as a national disaster, and they continued to fight the Jewish State by continuous guerilla warfare and three major campaigns: in 1956, 1967 and 1973. Their National Covenant, adopted in 1964, demanded a relentless struggle for the destruction of independent Israel by physical force.

**I**s there any hope for peace? I do not believe that in our generation the Arabs will accept the justice of our claims to reestablish our sovereignty in the land where it was destroyed two millennia ago. On the other hand, we who have built our lives and the lives of our children on the basis of our historical rights will never admit the right of those who were already here when our national revival began, to obstruct our right to independence.

It was Chaim Weizmann, I believe, who said that what we have here is not a struggle between right and wrong, but a struggle between two rights. These two rights, he might have added, are incommensurable: each built on a different system of values. Since we are determined to implement our rights, an agreement will be achieved only when the Arabs reconcile themselves to the fact that Jewish sovereignty in this country cannot be overthrown.

This process has already started. The late Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat offered to make peace with Israel only after a major effort to regain the Sinai Peninsula by a surprise attack on Yom Kippur under the most favorable circumstances had failed. King Hussein of Jordan, who had joined enthusiastically in the 1967 attack, made peace with Israel four years ago.

Neither Sadat nor Hussein, however, ignored the fate of the Palestinians. The former insisted on the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the West Bank and Gaza and the grant of a measure of autonomy to their inhabitants, and Hussein acted only after the Oslo agreement had offered a prospect of a solution for the Palestinians.

**I**t took ten years after the peace treaty with Egypt for the Palestinians to join the peace process. In 1988, Yassir Arafat openly recognized Israel's right to exist, offered to negotiate peace with her, and declared that the genocidal Palestine National Covenant was "caduque," i.e., obsolete. It was this declaration that opened the way for the Madrid Conference, the Oslo agreements and the recent negotiations at Wye Plantation.

Of course, the details of the agreements between Israel and the PLO are extremely complex, and the further negotiations on a permanent settlement will be extremely difficult. The two peoples are closely bound together by history and geography, and it is hard to see how a government headed by Binyamin Netanyahu and dominated by the Israeli right wing can make the concessions that will be required; even the labor leadership would find it agonizingly difficult to reconcile Israel's need for security and the needs of the Jewish settlers in the "West Bank" with the Palestinians' claim to independence.

It seems extremely unlikely that an agreement will be reached in the five months left before May 4 next year, which the Oslo agreement visualized as marking the end of the process. On that date Arafat threatens to proclaim the establishment of a Palestinian State, which would no doubt win widespread international recognition. It will take extraordinary wisdom and self-control on Israel's part to refrain from extreme reactions that will destroy the effort to reach peace by agreement.

In conclusion, one more point must be made in this grimly realistic survey of the prospects. If the Labor Party wins the elections that may be held in a few months and, against all the odds, arrives at a speedy agreement with the Palestinians, that will not be the end of the story. There are the extremists on both sides and, while the Israeli rightists would undoubtedly make life hard for the Government, the Palestinian activists would try to persevere in terrorism against the Jews. There is the Hamas organization, which defies Arafat's leadership, and it only takes a single Arab with a hand-grenade to perpetrate a terrorist attack. It will take time, probably a long time, for a real reconciliation between the two peoples, and we will need strong nerves in the months ahead. □



## Dov Hos A Stalwart Son of Labor-Zionism

*By Joseph Adler*

**T**he first major wave of immigration to Palestine in modern times, commonly referred to as the First Aliyah (1882 – 1903) took place under the shadow of Russian pogroms. It was spearheaded by a small group of student pioneers known as the Bilu (Hebrew acronym formed by the verse in Isaiah: “O house of Jacob, come ye and let us go forth”). Additional small bands of immigrants arrived from Romania and Yemen. In an attempt to coordinate this immigration the Hibbat Zion (Love of Zion Movement) in 1884 convened the Katowitz Conference.

Throughout these early years, life on the land for these pioneers was hard and frustrating. They had to contend with the hostility of the Turkish authorities, the rulers of Palestine, and with Arab attacks and depredations. In addition, malaria and dysentery took a heavy toll, and the un-generous soil and climatic conditions made life extremely difficult. Furthermore, the new settlers frequently found themselves at bitter odds with the old established ultra-Orthodox and Hassidic community of some twenty thousand souls. The latter had come to the Holy Land either to die and be buried in the sacred soil, or to devote their lives to prayer and Torah study, with the hope of thereby hastening the coming of the Messiah and the Redemption of the Jewish people. The new settlers with their modern views, rationalistic ideas, vigor and enthusiasm for work, threatened to undermine not only the pietist’s supernatural expectations, but also their means of livelihood, for a great number of them existed on charitable contributions (“Hallukah”) collected from Jews throughout the world.

Following the infamous Kishinev pogrom of 1903 and the failure of the Russian Revolution of 1905, another wave of immigration, the so-called Second Aliyah made its way to Palestine. Although not a homogeneous group, almost all of these immigrants were young, unmarried, and motivated by Socialist ideology. Many of the newcomers actually felt a sense of guilt for being alienated from the soil in the land of their birth. Their reaction was the direct result of a back to the soil movement which had gained considerable adherents among Russian intellectuals, writers, and activists. From the popular Narodniki (literally men of the people) to the universally venerated Count Lev Nikolae-vitch Tolstoi (1828 – 1910), it had become stylish to extol the peasant, the tiller of the soil, as the repository of all virtue.

**A**mazingly, in spite of the Russian peasants’ affinity for pogroms, a goodly number of the Jewish intelligentsia subscribed to this romanticized image of the peasantry. The obsession of these Jews (best exemplified in Palestine by Aaron David Gordon, 1856 – 1922) with the soil also reflected an unconscious resentment against the toll that the Industrial Revolution, which had belatedly come to Eastern Europe, had exacted upon their people’s economic status.

Indeed the Industrial Revolution had caused a radical transformation of the Jewish communities, and had unleashed against them the vicious anti-Semitism peculiar to the Russian urban lower middle class. Thus agriculture alone seemed to offer for some Jews a means to escape the hostility directed against them.

In an effort to correct the lopsided occupa-

tional structure of the Jews, and to counter the assertion of the Marxists who constantly cited the absence of a Jewish peasant class as evidence that the Jews were not a nation, some of the young pioneers of the Second Aliyah formed in 1905 a Palestinian Zionist Labor Party called Ha-Poel Ha Tzair (The Young Worker). The name of the party was carefully chosen in order to distinguish it from the "old workers" of the First Aliyah, most of whom had become overseers or independent farmers.

Almost from its inception Ha-Poel Ha Tzair found itself in opposition to the Poale Zion (Workers of Zion), a movement which had originated in Russia in the years immediately following the First Zionist Congress (1897). A loose network of Jewish worker groups, study circles, socialist clubs, and clandestine societies, the movement had early on in its existence established a branch in Palestine. In general the latter sought to combine Zionism with the class interests of the Jewish proletariat and the realization of Socialism. Poale Zion's advocacy of the class struggle irritated the supporters of Ha-Poel Ha Tzair who rejected outright the theory on the basis that the Jewish society's economy in Palestine was still in the pre-capitalist stage. The two parties also disagreed bitterly over what language Jewish settlers should favor; Ha-Poel Ha Tzair championed Hebrew while the Poale Zion leaned toward Yiddish.

An early spin-off from the general Poale Zion movement came in 1906 following a conference held in Poltava (Ukraine). Known as the Jewish Workers' Social Democratic Party it was led by Ber Borochov (1881 – 1917) who favored Palestine as a solution to the Jewish Question and advocated a synthesis between Zionism and Marxism. His ideas would influence an entire generation who would acknowledge Borochov as the patron saint of left-wing socialist groups within the Zionist movement.

Indeed, the Socialist-Zionist parties that adopted Borochov's doctrines played a major role in the creation of the State of Israel. Always volatile in their politics, they constantly split and united to form new groupings. Among the parties thus spawned by these shifts were Mapai, the Mapam, and the Achdut Ha Avodah. However, it would be the Left Poale Zion that would adhere most closely to the theories of Ber Borochov.

An active observer and participant in much of the ferment involving the Zionist labor movement in Palestine, in the years between the two World Wars, was one Dov Hos (1894 – 1940). He was born in Orska, Belorussia, into a dedicated Zionist family, and brought by his parents to Palestine in 1906 at the age of twelve. Hos was among the first graduates of the Herzlia High School in Jaffa. Following graduation he worked for a time in the settlement of Deganya. Early on in his youth he came under the influence of Berl Katznelson (1887 – 1944), the soul and compass of the labor movement in Palestine (and the editor of *Davar*).

While immersing himself in the labor politics of the day Hos found time for courtship and marriage. His spouse was the daughter of the Bilu pioneer Jacob Shertok, and the sister of Moshe Sharett the future father of Israel's Foreign Service and in 1954 the country's Prime Minister.

Upon the outbreak of World War I, Hos together with Eliyahu Golomb (1893 – 1945) and others founded the "Jaffa Group" which advocated military training in preparation for the day it might be necessary to defend the Yishuv (the Jewish community of Palestine). On the advice of the Yishuv leaders, Hos in 1915 volunteered for service in the Turkish army, and quickly reached officer rank. For helping in the defense of Jewish settlements he was court-martialed and condemned to death in absentia, but eluded capture. Following the British advance into Palestine, and the issuance of the Balfour Declaration, Hos joined the Jewish Legion to fight on the side of the British.


After the demobilization of the Jewish Legion, Hos returned to active participation in the labor movement, and was among the founders of the Achdut Ha-Avodah Party, and in 1920 of Histadrut (General Federation of Labor). He was also the driving force behind the establishment of the Public Works Office of the Histadrut which would later be renamed Solel Boneh. Dov also was active in the Haganah (clandestine Jewish self-defense organization during the period of the British Mandate), an outgrowth of the "Jaffa Group", and the precursor of the State of Israel's army.

Dov Hos undertook several missions abroad on behalf of the Yishuv's labor movement. In

1922 he was sent by the Histadrut to Berlin, and in 1927-28 to the United States. At the end of 1928 he was assigned to London as the political representative of the Histadrut, and the World Union of Poale Zion. He remained in England for several years and was a participant at several conferences of the British Labor Party and the International Federation of Trade Unions. Hos also took advantage of his stay in Great Britain to study at the London School of Economics.

Back home in Tel Aviv, Hos, a pioneer of aviation in Palestine, found time to pursue his love of flying, and to serve on the city's municipal council. From 1935 until his untimely death five years later he was Tel Aviv's deputy mayor.

At the commencement of the Second World War, Hos worked hard for the formation of Jewish military units to fight alongside the British forces. However, in 1940 his efforts were cut short by a fatal automobile accident in which Hos, his wife and daughter perished. A grieving Yishuv remembered his contributions. Tel Aviv's airport was named after him, as well as Israel's first gliding school. In addition a kibbutz was named in commemoration of his family. There is little doubt that Dov Hos' life provided inspiration to his contemporaries and to the new generation of Labor Zionists that followed in his footsteps. □



**We Extend our Condolences to**

**Sally Delson  
and  
Jehil Dobekirer**




**on the passing of their beloved son  
LOWELL ADELSON**

**and to  
AVRAM B. LYON**

**on the passing of his Mother.**

•

**Daniel & Elaine Mann  
Bethesda, Maryland**

## Photographic Memory

By Murray Gordon

Pick a photograph. Poland. Warsaw. Jewish Ghetto. Central Square. April, 1943. Roundup of Jews. German soldiers would shout and kill a few Jews at random so that the others would follow orders quickly and without question.

Look at the photograph. People are leaving an entrance and coming toward you, a young boy is in the foreground, some carry a few possessions, some hold their hands in the air. There are patches of sunlight on the bricks, on the rubble, on the people's faces — but this must be a photographic illusion — anyone can see that it is night. To the right, German soldiers. One holds a machine pistol — whose barrel needs only to be raised a few inches, whose trigger needs only to be squeezed, whose bullets will slam into the boy. The boy coming your way is about ten, wears short pants, a cap, a jacket, his hands are in the air, a machine pistol to his rear. Raising his hands is the only thing he is permitted. And that is no guarantee of survival.

*Nicht schissen mir  
Hande hoch!*

*Nicht schissen mir  
Forvertz!*

*Nicht schissen mir*

*Don't shoot me  
Keep your hands up!*

*Don't shoot me  
Keep moving!*

*Don't shoot me*

Look at the photograph. It's in black and white. Terror has no color. German soldiers would shoot and kill a few Jews at random so that the others would follow orders quickly and without question.

Look at the photograph. Poland. Warsaw. Jewish Ghetto. Central Square. April, 1943. Roundup of Jews.

Now pick another photograph — Bosnia . . . Rwanda . . . □

# Iraq and Israel's Existential Security

By Edward B. Glick

**S**addam Hussein's troops invaded Kuwait on August 2, 1991. Three weeks later, I was in Tokyo getting ready for the 1990-1991 academic year at Temple University Japan. Because I was the only faculty member with some Middle East expertise, the president of the university asked me to accompany him to a private meeting with the then-Iraqi Ambassador to Japan.

After his remarks about the invasion — which he tried very hard to blame on Israel — we were invited to ask questions. I asked whether Iraq had ever used poison gas against anyone at any time in any place. I expected him to deflect or refuse to answer my question. But to my surprise, he answered it clearly and directly.

"Yes, of course we used poison gas, and we shall use it again if we have to," he said. "And let me answer a question that you did not ask me, namely, did we use poison gas against our Kurdish minority in northern Iraq? The answer is no. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of our Kurds were killed during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq War, but they were killed by the Iranians. How do I know this? Iraq has many different kinds of poison gas, but we do not have mustard gas. This means that these unfortunates were killed by Iranian poison gas."

In short, the ambassador was telling us that both his country and Iran possessed and were not afraid to use weapons of poisonous lethality.

Later, during the Gulf War in 1991, Iraq fired Scud missiles over the heads of Israeli soldiers and civilians and into Tel Aviv and Ramat Gan. What is significant about those attacks was not that the Israel Defense Force did not respond. Rather, what is significant is that the Iraqis again were not afraid of, and thus they were not deterred by, the existence, the reputation, the numbers, or the might of the IDF.

**W**hen I was in Japan, I was shocked that President George Bush had left Saddam Hussein in power, probably because Mr. Bush saw him as a geopolitical counter to Iran. Now,

I am in despair because President Bill Clinton, impeachable or not, is so averse to military risk that he confronts Iraq only with rhetoric. As a result, Saddam Hussein has more or less dismantled the whole UN weapons inspection regime in Iraq.

[Since this article was written, it appears that Saddam Hussein has again allowed UN inspection of his lethal armory and President Clinton has put a hold on U.S. military action.

— Editor]

This is the Bill Clinton who told us in February 1998: "If we fail to respond today, Saddam and all those who would follow in his footsteps will be emboldened tomorrow by the knowledge that they can act with impunity . . . What if he fails to comply, and we fail to act? . . . Some day, some way, I guarantee you, he'll use the arsenal."

In August 1998, Scott Ritter, a former U.S. Marine Corps officer, resigned as chief UN weapons inspector in Iraq because of our failure to confront Saddam Hussein. On September 3, 1998, he told a Senate committee that if inspections are not resumed soon, Iraq would have nuclear weapons in as little as three years, and bacteriological weapons within six months. On September 9, 1998, the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* quoted Mr. Ritter as having told a closed-door meeting of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy that Iraq is hiding three "technologically complete" nuclear bombs that needed only fissile nuclear material to make them work. And on September 10, 1998, the *New York Times* reported that "Mr. Ritter was quoted as saying that the United Nations inspection committee knew where the three nuclear devices were being hidden and had information on how they were concealed and which officers were guarding them, but had not received an order to inspect the site."

**I**f Scott Ritter is right and the Clinton Administration is wrong, the first targets of these weapons will be Iran (remember the Iran-Iraq War) and/or Israel (remember the



Scud attacks during the Gulf War).

These technological and political developments, and the terrible dangers they pose for Israel, have altered the wish list of Israel's senior soldiers, regardless of their personal territorial preferences. Most of the officer corps accepted the inevitability of a Palestinian state long ago. Most of them no longer hold to the notion that Israel must keep every single square inch of the Gaza Strip and of the West Bank (or, if one prefers, of Judea and of Samaria). Indeed for the majority of Israel's professional soldiers, safety for Israel lies not in keeping all the conquered lands, but in developing and deploying new and better offensive and defensive weapons, especially anti-missile missiles that will deter the enemy if they can, or destroy his incoming weapons if they can't.

From the viewpoint of Israel's existential security, nothing else really matters. ☐



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# Secularism Deconstructed

By Henry L. Feingold

In my father's day there was little doubt about what was meant when someone was identified as secular. In the *shtetl* he was called an *Apicoyres*, an unbeliever or worse, a subverter of the faith. That was what being secular meant and there could be little doubt that the connotation was negative. But today when I hear the term used in the ongoing debate about the *kulturkampf* in Israel or the survival conundrum facing American Jewry, the word secular seems to take on a different meaning. In Israel it might mean the difference in the way life is lived in Tel Aviv as compared to Jerusalem. In America there is still another group of Jews anxious to become a new branch, which calls itself Jewish secular humanists. Clearly contemporary secularism has come to mean something both more and less than it used to.

For Jews the problem of definition is complicated because during the first phase of modernization secularists were willy nilly Bundists or Poale Zionists or any of the several parties that placed the political "movement" where the religious congregation used to be. Secularism took on a political or ideological color usually on the left side of the political spectrum. But unlike Catholics or Protestants who become secular, Jews gave a special twist to secular modernism. A Bundist or a secular Zionist assumed that it was possible to remain Jewish in the ethnic peoplehood sense, without being religious. Indeed, in pre-war Poland that possibility seemed uncontested. Few could gain entree into the majority society and Jews had developed a distinct rich language, Yiddish, in which to think and write their secular thoughts. Unfortunately the thinness of American Jewish secular culture makes such an assumption problematic. Few can still believe

that it is possible to sustain a Jewish culture and identity that eschews a buttressing Judaic component.

The original meaning, based on a division between those bound by religious law and those who lived in the worldly seculum, continues to have some resonance on the contemporary scene. But today it means something different than being an atheist or an advocate of a certain political ideology. Secularism has become a sensibility or better, a mentality. It is so pervasive in our modern lives that one can safely say there are few who do not share in it. It exists in the Rebbe's court in Williamsburg, Brooklyn as much as in the science laboratory of MIT. It is difficult to live life without awareness of its inexorableness. When occasionally such denial happens, as when a Christian Scientist rejects insulin for his diabetic child, the consequence can be tragic.

Let us return to the question of religion that continues to define the difference between the secular and the sacred. It has become meaningless to say that secular means irreligious. There are simply too many cases where secular people are intensely committed to ethical and existential matters customarily associated with religion. Secular man may outdo his religiously devout counterpart in seeking to live a moral life, he may care more for matters of social justice and worry more about the abuse of the physical environment. Moral giants like Sakharov and Scharansky stemmed from the secular world while a tyrant like the Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran came from the religious.

Then what is the great difference between the two? It lies simply in this: The modern secularist strives to take charge of his life. He

is self-commanding. The religious person seeks to be commanded by a loving God through his agency on earth, the church or the synagogue. That is the reason why new-age religion and cults are so popular among youth stemming from secular homes. Unlike the Abrahamic command faiths, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which have elaborate codes of law to order the lives of the faithful, the new age religions are more "touchy feely" and far less commanding.

What many contemporary secularists who govern themselves but also desire to be part of the religious congregation do, is simply ignore the command aspect of the religion. Most Jews are not Sabbath observers and most Catholics practice birth control. But more important, the religious spirit is individualized and internalized. They determine for themselves what their code of behavior will be. That is natural when already self-commanding, or at least aspiring to be so, one cannot then be commanded by another, especially when his presence must be imagined and is supernatural. That modification permits many of our chaverim to happily enjoy membership in the religious congregation. That does not conflict with this modern religious sensibility. Ask those who have been on a search committee for a new rabbi. Our congregations are governed by their boards. Democracy, another pervasive principle of the secular sensibility, translates into serving the laity much more than the deity. One is reminded that one of the reasons for the failure of the Jewish Center movement is that in the budgets of "the shul with a school and a pool" the money set aside for the pool and general cultural activities soon far outpaced appropriation for purely religious matters like the shul. Democracy is part of the secular spirit as is the quest for autonomy and self-realization. In fact, the way I read it, Mordecai Kaplan's Reconstructionism is precisely a strategy to keep secular Jews in the congregation by recognizing the need for democracy and a new autonomous worshipper who does not genuflect because he was commanded to do so.

So why are so many observant Jews convinced that by telling Jews they ought to be free and expend maximum efforts to become what they can be, Judaism is diminished? Clearly it is that message of the secular mentalite that has helped release enormous energy

and talent. The modern secular world is the most productive we have experienced in history. But some will point out that it is also the most murderous. Its excesses create problems. Unbound by rules, some secularists become minor Gods in their own right. (Perhaps that is what happened to Adolf Hitler and Emperor Hirohito.) It is becoming abundantly clear that the promise of freedom unlinked to a sense of responsibility and law leads to chaos.

Years ago a Harvard Professor of Sociology, David Riesman, explored the impact of excessive individualism in a popular book with a striking title. *The Lonely Crowd*. He described people who, in their quest to be free, freed themselves of all ties, national, communal and finally of family. They dwelt alone and died alone.

But I suspect that Jews will be able to draw on their rich history to find an accommodation to the conflicts inherent in modern secularism. I think I hear a hint of it in a Jewish joke that made the rounds years ago. A Jewish child is sent off to college by his proud loving parents. He returns home during the first winter recess and announces to his parents, as thousands of Jewish students before, "Parents, I have thought the whole thing through and I have become an atheist." There is a moment of silence as the puzzled parents look at each other and then comes the response: "Yes! yes! Of course my child, but what kind are you, Orthodox, Conservative or Reform?" A deconstructed secularism in which meaning comes at several levels requires such a response. Unlike the religious mentalite, secularism is tolerant and can live with ambiguity. □

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# Yom Kippur: The Sound of the Sirens

By Gustave Pearlman

*Twenty-five years ago, in Israel, on Yom Kippur at 2:00 PM, as the Musaph Service was concluding, thousands of men of all ages, hurriedly left their synagogues or their homes to mobilize for war. They did not get to hear the Shofar at the concluding service, but instead the sound of sirens reverberated loudly throughout the land. Two hours later at 4:00 pm they were approaching the Suez Canal via the Sinai Desert, in tanks and mobile military units. 2,522 of them, fatal casualties never returned.*

**T**he Arab selection of Yom Kippur for attack at first glance seemed like contempt and derision added to treachery. But the Egyptians and Syrians had not been aware at all of the Holy Day. They were thinking about the military conditions for action: a full moon, the element of surprise and the Israeli cabinet's involvement with Austria about Soviet refugees. Actually, from Israel's standpoint, Yom Kippur was the most favorable day. Mobilization was easiest. The secular reservists were at home and quickly contacted. The observant and many who were not observant were in synagogues and did not even need to be phoned — a messenger was sufficient. Jewish society contains many families, some of whose members are religious, others secular. On Yom Kippur the synagogues are attended by many whose spectrum of belief and observance varies, but the Mishpocha is held together by grandparents, children and grandchildren.

The roads were clear, uncongested by normal traffic, so mobility was much more rapid than would have been otherwise possible. As a consequence of the victory in the 6 Days War, the military were over confident. Their Intelligence was aware of Egyptian and Syrian military activities near the borders. But in May of 1973, similar maneuvers brought about a costly Israeli mobilization which proved to be a false alarm. The military and the politicians were certain that any attempt at attack could be contained.

Consequently, two days later, they were astounded to realize that despite the great heroism of the soldiers, the massive amounts of tanks the enemy deployed caused the loss of

several outposts. The Egyptians crossed the Suez Canal and advanced into the Sinai Desert. The Syrians captured Israeli posts on Mt. Hermon. They had powerful allies. The Soviet Union kept them well supplied. The Israeli military had thought that Arab soldiers were not sufficiently intelligent to operate sophisticated equipment. But the Soviets supplied them with hand-held ballistic weapons which could be fired like rifles and downed scores of our planes. After three days, the Syrian armies were 5 Km from Haifa and Safed. Israel realized that since they were losing on the battlefields, the Security Council of the UN would not offer them a cease fire, nor would Egypt and Syria agree to one as long as they thought they were winning the war.

The events which transpired next, unfolded like a gigantic chess game with diabolical consequences for the unfortunate ultimate pawns — the casualties. Compassionate persons know that in a war, everyone loses. The Soviets made the move of suggesting to Henry Kissinger and Abba Eban, at that time the US Secretary of State and Israeli representative to the UN respectively, that they would broker a cease fire in which Israel would return to the pre-1967 borders and give up half of Jerusalem. Of course, Israel could not accept this, although the losses in men, equipment and territory continued to grow. The Soviets' next move was to increase its supply of military equipment to Egypt and Syria. It now became necessary for Israel to appeal to the USA to replace the destroyed military supplies. The horrible "game" continued.

*The US had twenty-five gigantic military supply cargo planes. The Department of Defense wanted none to be sent. The Pentagon reluctantly consented to send three; they feared that more would cause OPEC to cut oil supplies to the US. To his everlasting credit Richard Nixon, despite the beginning of his Watergate troubles, saw clearly that Israel should not be allowed defeat. He said "We have 25! Send them all at once! I'll have as many problems with the Arabs for 3 planes as for 25!"*

Next move: Before the planes could be loaded and take off, the Israeli cabinet facing fur-



ther advances and invasion by the enemy, voted to accept a cease fire in place. The opponents, Egypt and Syria made once again what was for them another great mistake. They refused and prevented the UN Security Council from voting the ceasefire.

A dramatic turn followed. The supply planes took off. President Nixon obtained permission for them to refuel over Portugal. No other nation, fearing oil embargo would allow refuelling. Ariel Sharon and other Israeli generals mounted a counter attack. They crossed the Suez Canal and cut off the 3rd Egyptian Army from its supply source. Then, with defeat for Egypt imminent, the UN Security Council called for a cease fire. The final movements of what had now become a world game remained to be played out. Israel's cabinet accepted the cease fire but some of the generals in the field continued to try to completely cut off the 3rd Army. Russia then threatened military intervention. Nixon put the American armed forces on "Defense Condition III."

Fortunately everyone, battle weary, realized the chances of a little spark setting off a world conflagration. What would Israel do, spread out and in control of Egyptian territory it did not need or want? So the supply lines to the 3rd Army were reopened. 20,000 captured Egyptian soldiers were exchanged for 300 Israelis. Sadat and Assad told their people that they had won a great victory; they had withstood Israeli attack and forced the ceasefire.

*40,000 Jews from the Diaspora throughout the world, volunteered to help Israel. Only 3,000 were accepted. None were allowed to serve in the armed forces but they worked in the agricultural Kibutzim, replacing these who had been called in the reserves.*

The Geneva Conference of 1973 took place in December. They argued about the seating arrangements (no Arab wanted to sit next to an Israeli) and whether the Palestinians would be allowed to come.

The Arabs and the Soviets still proposed return to pre-1967 borders. Although the Labor party proposed a platform for peace and security and spoke about willingness to compromise, they still asserted which land they would never give up. They lost six seats in the ensuing election. In Israel a commission was formed to investigate why Israel was not prepared for the Yom Kippur War and had such heavy losses in the beginning. Yes, disengagement and cease fire occurred — but Peace — where is it and when? Yet, 2,700 years ago our prophet Jeremiah said, "Yesh tikva L'acharitaynu" "There is

hope for our future." We will return and we will rebuild. We have returned. We are rebuilding. And we must continue to hope and work for peace. □

## *Update* **Knesset Approves Wye Memorandum**

The Knesset ratified the Wye Memorandum late Tuesday night, November 17, by a vote of 75 to 19 with 9 abstentions, paving the way for the Government to move forward with the peace process with the Palestinians. In his concluding address to the plenum, Netanyahu said that although he knows that many Knesset members do not want to cede parts of the Land of Israel, "we need a political agreement with our neighbors to bring peace for ourselves and for our children."

The vote came after a two-day Knesset debate and the presentation of the redeployment maps to the legislature on Tuesday evening. The defense establishment and the ministerial maps committee concluded the final preparation of the maps in a meeting with settler leaders at the Knesset. The Defense Ministry said that of 117 reservations submitted by the settlers, 61 were accepted. The maps only showed the first phase of the redeployment; 2 percent to be transferred from Area C to Area B, and 7.1 percent from Area B to Area A.

The redeployment will now take place either Friday or next week, officials at the Prime Minister's Office confirmed on Tuesday. This delay was prompted by the postponement of Thursday's Cabinet meeting "in order to give the Palestinians more time to fulfill their commitments."

When the Cabinet ratified the agreement, Netanyahu had stipulated that before any Israeli action, the Cabinet would convene to assess Palestinian compliance with its part of the deal. The Government is now waiting for proof that the Palestinian Authority has arrested 10 out of the 30 listed fugitives, issued a decree against incitement, set up the framework for the collection of illegal weapons, and reaffirmed that the Palestine National Council will vote to cancel the Palestinian Charter articles calling for Israel's destruction. □

*(From ISRAELINE, issued by the Israel Consulate in New York)*

# Jewish Art and Artists in Poland

By David Rosenthal

**F**rom Biblical times until the closing of the Talmud, one could find in Jewish art no representations of human beings or other living creatures. Throughout this period, since the second commandment forbade the making of "graven images," art was not completely free to develop. Nevertheless, the spark of artistic creativity was never totally extinguished. The commandment, according to scholars, had a countervailing Talmudic interpretation: "Make your commandments beautiful."

This view led to the rise of a uniquely Jewish ornamentation, best exemplified in Poland and Lithuania. Though it was forbidden to decorate the home or synagogue with human figures (in order to keep Jews from idol-worship), this was no hindrance to the use of other symbols. Thus even in antiquity Jews used palm branches, grapevines, and menorahs as adornments. Later, when the fear of idolatry had receded, figures of animals were added. Thus the traditional lions, deer, and doves were carved on wooden Arks of Torah and on *bimahs* (synagogue reading platforms), chiseled into stone walls, embroidered on Torah curtains and coverings. All these objects were made by Jewish master-craftsmen who usually had not studied their craft in any formal way, but worked purely with their own native talent.

The flowering of Jewish art in Poland, embedded in religion and in handicrafts, was in no small measure due to the feeling of Jews that their future in Poland was secure. This belief in the permanence of Jewish existence in Poland led to continuing endeavors in all fields of culture.

As far as religion and handicrafts were concerned, the Jews in Poland were blessed with abundance. They also enjoyed a certain level of

religious tolerance in Poland (though only for short periods of time). They lived in a community which contained within it layers of a rich culture interwoven with a long line of tradition. All these factors made Poland outstanding in the world in art.

## Fortress Synagogues

**T**he pre-war research of Balaban, Schipper, Berson, Bramberg-Bytkowski, Feinkind, and others contains a wealth of information about synagogue art and architecture, as well as details concerning the craftsmen. The first signs of a Jewish architectural art may be seen in the synagogues in Cracow, Poznan, Vilna, and Lublin. The "high Synagogue" in Cracow was built in 1365, the same year in which the first Polish university opened. Scholars like Krautheimer believe that this synagogue was the largest Jewish landmark of the Middle Ages. In Lublin there were two old synagogues, the *Maharal Shul* (built in 1567) and the *Maharam Shul* (end of the 16th century). Also famous was the old synagogue of Yitzhok Machmanowicz in Lwow, built in 1582. (All dates are from Schipper's *Plastic Arts* ..., p. 313)

Typical of medieval Polish-Jewish architecture were the fortress synagogues, which were constructed differently depending on whether they were located *intra muros* (inside the Jewish quarter.) (See M. Balaban, *Defense Synagogues on the Eastern Borders of Poland*.) These synagogues resembled the old Polish city halls; with apertures in the roof for cannon muzzles, used to defend the towns against enemy attack. Such synagogues had high windows and thick walls and towers, and actually did serve as fortresses. In the 17th century, Polish kings and princes

permitted synagogues to be constructed only under certain conditions. The Jews had to assure the royalty that these structures would be equipped with weapons of self-defense in wartime and that the Jewish community would provide all the necessary funds for this military purpose.

The works of Jewish craftsmen and craftswomen in Poland in engraving, embroidery and woodcarving reach back to the twelfth century. Evidence of this are the coins inscribed and minted by Jewish engravers in the Polish royal courts. On these coins they inscribed Jewish emblems such as doves, palm-branches, and even a Hebrew "blessing for King Mieszek.."

Engraving was practically a "Jewish art." As far back as the eighth century, Jewish engravers were employed in the Turkish court and even introduced a new coin system into that country. Jewish engravers worked in the Russian court of Catherine the Great and in the courts of Sweden, German and France. Thus Polish Jews continued a Jewish tradition that had been widespread in other countries.

Other forms of Jewish artistic expression included the seals of patrician Jewish families. These often depicted Jewish themes such as hands held in the form of the priestly blessing, or Levite water-pitchers, or Stars of David. Other artists used similar symbols in carvings on wood and gravestones. The Jewish woodcarver expressed his talent and his ideas in decoration of features of the sanctuary: the reading stands, Elijah's-chairs, women's galleries, and Arks of Torah. Scholars have found similarly patterns in the carvings on Torah Arks and the decorations of title pages of Talmud folios and other sacred volumes. The love and sense of responsibility which Jewish craftsmen felt for their work was legendary. One folktale tells of a woodcarver who, in his 85-year lifetime, carved only three Torah Arks, spending 25 years on each one.

Almost all of these woodcarvers and engravers remained anonymous, which was expected in synagogues. The rabbis feared that signatures on the Ark of Torah might divert the attention of the worshippers. The artist was to create not in order to make his name known but purely "for the sake of heaven," to glorify the Creator. (There are some exceptions, and names have indeed been found inscribed even on Arks of Torah themselves.)

Just as artistic as the woodcarvers were the

metal-workers who made candelabras and menorahs. Some of these craftsmen were also legendary in their own time. It is told of a certain Reb Borucht that he accumulated enough metal scraps during his long working career to fashion — in his older years — a superb candelabrum which he presented to the synagogue as a gift — "the work of my whole life."

Equally famous were the Jewish goldsmiths. The Polish cultural historian Vladyslaw Lozinski states that Jewish goldsmiths were employed by a number of Polish nobles and that in some families the craft was transmitted from father to son. To preserve their trade, the goldsmiths kept their techniques secret, revealing them only to members of their own families. The Jewish historian Meyer Balaban points out that there was also a uniquely Jewish bookbinding art, although many Jews worked as bookbinders for the church, signing their initials on the covers of Catholic books.

Works by Jewish craftsmen, however, primarily served Jewish religious needs connected with traditional ceremonies: with synagogues, with Arks of Torah, and with Torah scrolls. Religious items made by Jewish craftsmen, and created with grandeur and brilliance, included the curtains for the Arks, Torah mantles, the wooden rollers around which the scrolls are wound, the silver Torah crowns with their tiny silver bells, the ornamented silver plaques that are hung upon the scrolls, the pointers in the shape of a hand, the decorated spice-boxes in silver or wood, and similar ritual objects.

The curtains for the Holy Ark were an extremely important component of synagogue art. They were made of expensive cloth (satin, brocade, or silk) and decorated with intricate embroidery and stitching, often with gold and silver thread. The embroiderers, both men and women, competed with each other in their materials and in their ideas for ornamentation. (See I. Schipper, *Plastic Arts among Jews in the Old Polish Republic*, Vol. 1 of *Jews in Independent Poland*, p. 317, Polish.) Dr. Schipper calls attention to the artistry of the curtains in the "High Synagogue" in Cracow and the synagogue in Lwow.

Because Jewish art was religious, almost every synagogue was a mini-museum of Jewish treasures — embroidered cloth, silver-



ware, copperware, paintings, and printed books. One outstanding example of embroidery was that of the Torah Ark curtain in the synagogue at Przedborz (a town in south-central Poland), of which some descriptions survive. In the center of this curtain were three white Polish eagles with crowns on their heads. The curtain in the Olkeniki synagogue (near Vilna) was embroidered with jewels which Napoleon had presented to the congregation as a gift. (In 1928, some Americans offered thousands of dollars for this curtain, but the rabbi refused permission to sell it.)

Another interesting curtain was in the ancient *shul* in Gombin. Designed to resemble a battle-flag, the curtain was embroidered with knights in armor, cannon muzzles, sword handles, banners, spear points, drums, etc. Only the lions, holding a Torah crown with Hebrew letters, indicated that this was the work of a Jewish master-craftsman. (See Esther podhoretzner-Sandel, *Yiddishe Shriftn*, No. 6, p. 5, Warsaw, June 1966.) Some Jewish embroiderers did achieve fame, however. For example, in 1627 the embroiderer Moishe of Rzeszow (Galicia) was chosen to serve as the Jewish "hetman" and together with two Christian chiefs was appointed to the military command of the city in case of attack.

Another area where Jewish craftsmen excelled was in the carving of Arks. The Torah Ark in Konin was built in the 18th century by Shmuel Zanvil of Kempno. Its mysterious carvings showed branches of a tree on which hung representations of various objects from the days of King Solomon's Temple. Other ornaments were engraved in colorful arabesques, over all of which hovered the Polish eagle.

In the Piotrykow synagogue, the decorative carvings on the Ark were the work of David Friedlander. They pictured lions standing on their hind legs, holding a three-tiered golden crown in their forepaws, as well as large eagles, birds with outstretched wings, and the symbolic musical instruments of the Levites. A Hebrew inscription read: "The work of my hands . . . to my merit, God's servant, David Friedlander." Alongside this was the Jewish date corresponding to the year 1816.

#### Precursors of Secular Art

During the 18th century, in addition to woodcarvers of synagogue ornamentation,

we begin to see the work of craftsmen in copper and brass. Thus in 1728 Moshe of Poznan did a woodcarving of a map of that city, at the request of its city council. The engraver Hershko of Nieswiedz (Hirsh Labowitz) is also known to us thanks to the Polish writer Josef Kraszewski, author of hundreds of books, and Stansilaw Wasilewski, a scholar and essayist, who dedicated to Hershko a major historical monograph.

Kraszewski and Wasilewski both portrayed Hershko as a simple, but remarkable man with an extraordinary artistic talent. The well-known Radziwill family, one of the most powerful aristocratic families in Europe, with estates in Nieborow near Lowicz (Warsaw province), invited him into their court, where he spent almost ten years and completed a collection of copper engravings of the entire living Radziwill family (as well as some of its ancestors). In 1785, these engravings appeared in book form as *Ikons of the Radziwill Family*. The accepted belief was that the engravings had been done by a famous Italian artist. Not until later did scholars come upon traces of the real creator of the Radziwill family album — Hirsh Labowitz.

Hershko was not the only Jewish folk artist whose talent was utilized by the non-Jewish world. Jewish handicraftsmen always enjoyed prominence in Poland, where Jewish metalworkers, carpenters, and painters worked even in churches. There is a reflection of this practice in a letter written by the first modern Hebrew lyric poet and painter, Mordecai Zebi Manne (1859–1886) who studied painting in Petersburg, where he won highest honors. When his fame reached the priest of the town of Radzskowitz (near Vilna), Manne's birthplace, he invited the young artist to decorate the local church. Manne wrote to his devoutly observant father asking his forgiveness for accepting the commission "because it is common practice in many Polish cities for Jews to paint in the churches."

Folk artists like Hershko were the precursors of painters and sculptors who later became renowned. In these modern masters dwelled many of the traditions and images of David Friedlander, a Yehuda Leib, or an Eliezer Zusman. The revival that took place in Poland in the field of Jewish artistic creativity happened thanks to this rich tradition. Every renaissance is a return to the past, an "expedition" into old, often even demolished worlds. The backwards



look stimulates the imagination and leads to new creativity. Jewish architects who wished to bring "a Jewish spirit" into their work sought theses in the old architectural landmarks in Poland. Metalworkers modernized the old Jewish copperpieces in the synagogues; modern monument builders adapted the ancient gravestones. Art critics have therefore pointed out that just as the basic works of Yiddish literature in Poland — such as Peretz' *Folkshtimlikhe Geshikhten* and *Hasidshe Mayseyes* — were based on simple folktales, so modern Jewish art is influenced by the old Jewish artist-craftsmen.

### Jews in Polish Art

The participation of Jews in Polish art begins with Alexander Lesser, born 1814 in Warsaw and considered by art historians to be the dean of modern Polish-Jewish painters. Lesser came from an assimilated home; socially and culturally he was a part of the Polish milieu. This sort of tradition led him naturally into the movement for Polish-Jewish reconciliation which found expression in the Jewish patriotic demonstrations of 1861–1862. Lesser is the creator of a series of portraits of forty Polish kings, noblemen, and historical personalities. His best-known paintings are "King Boleslaw" and "Vincenty Kadlubek Writing the Chronicles," both of which were based on his research in historical materials. Among his works inspired by Polish-Jewish history are "Estherke and Kazimierz the Great as He Grants Rights to the Jews" and "The Funeral of the Five Who Perished in 1861," which portrayed Polish-Jewish solidarity demonstrations headed by Archbishop Fialkowski and Rabbi Meisels.

Lesser was appointed a member of the Cracow Academy of Sciences, an honor given only rarely to Jews. This unusual distinction was awarded him because of his magnificent portraits of the Polish monarchs. Many of his studies of Polish national dress, including sketches of Jewish costumes, are to be found in the Warsaw National Museum.

Polish history is also reflected in a masterful way in the paintings of Alexander Sochaczewski (born in Ilow, near Lowicz, in 1839). He was educated in the famous rabbinical seminary in Warsaw, but the traditional subjects left him cold. He became very active in the revolutionary Polish freedom movements, and for his participation in the January 1863 uprising was sentenced to

death. This was later commuted to a life sentence in Siberia, but he was released after twenty years and settled in Vienna. He immortalized his Siberian prison experience in scores of paintings. Polish art critics counted the following among his best work: *In a Snowy Wilderness*, *Farewell to Europe*, and a cycle under the title *History of the Siberian Escapees*. In 1913, Sochaczewski exhibited 126 paintings on Siberian themes, all of them pervaded by pain and longing for Poland. He died a forgotten man in Vienna in 1923.

Another painter on historical themes was Szymon Buchbinder (born 1853 in Radzyn), a student of Jan Matejko, classicist of Polish national historical art. Among Buchbinder's best-known paintings are *King Sigmund III*, *The Court Jester*, and *Young Jew in a Prayershawl*. According to Schipper, painters like Buchbinder and Sochaczewski considered themselves Poles. They embodied all the virtues and faults of assimilationists: intelligence, education, proper manners, and a desire to be recognized as Polish patriots. Their Jewishness hung on a thin thread of sentiment and pity for their "poor brethren of our faith who are still stuck in a spiritual ghetto."

The first painter for whom the Jewish theme was both a deep spiritual experience and a reflection of an internal world rich in Jewish thought and feeling was the young, exceptionally gifted and tragically short-lived Maurycy Gottlieb (1853–1879). A particularly strong influence upon him was Jan Matejko, under whose eye he created a number of superb paintings on historical themes, such as his popular *King Sobieski Receives the Austrian Deputies*.

In those works, however, his Jewish soul was not yet evident. The breakthrough came during his Munich period, when he became familiar with the paintings of Rembrandt. To that period belong his *Ahasuerus*, *Shylock and Jessica*, *Uriel Acosta and Judith*, and *Christ Before the Court*. The pinnacle of his artistic achievement is seen in his *Jews at Worship*. Among the Jews in that painting he portrayed himself, almost as though he had a premonition of his early death. The work bears the dedication: "For the soul of Maurycy Gottlieb, of Blessed Memory."

Maurycy Gottlieb, young genius of Galicia, laid the foundations for modern Jewish painting. His role in art is comparable to that of Sholem Asch in Jewish literature. He provided the first expression in painting of genuine Pol-

ish-Jewish fervor and romanticism.

In pre-war Poland the plastic arts were not in the center of Jewish cultural interests. The Jewish painter and sculptor had to overcome many obstacles and ideas in order to receive any notice and recognition of the sort given to writers. The tradition regarded "The Word" as a holy object. When a Jewish book accidentally fell to the ground, Jews kissed it as they picked it up. It is not permitted to print a Torah scroll by mechanical means; it must be written by hand, slowly, with extreme caution and with reverence.

This influence was still strong even in the rapidly changing milieu that was Jewish Poland. Characteristic was the young man or young woman who quietly "sinned in the writing of verse" or prose or even journalism. The difficult, hopeless economic situation was not an impediment to the carrying out of literary ambitions. On the contrary, sometimes one had the impression that privation actually stimulated literary creativity. Indeed, the wastebaskets of Jewish editorial offices could have told "Tales of One Thousand and One Poems." The dream of reaching the high heavens of painting and sculpture was weaker, although deep among the people, treasures of that particular talent lay hidden. In general, however, the social climate for this field of art was lacking, as compared to the attitude prevalent about the written word.

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## Masada Branch Fetes Key Israel Bonds Supporters

The annual Simchas Torah Ball of Masada, the largest Labor Zionist branch in Brooklyn, held on October 17th, at Temple Hillel, saluted a group of its members who rendered yeoman service to the Israel Bonds drive in 1998. Those who renewed their membership in the Israel Prime Ministers Club and the Israel Presidents Club were:

Ann & Henry Dorthheimer, Lillian & Sam Fogelman, Helen & Bernard Friedman, Anna Grosberg, Sara & Iser Kruglin, Ida & Max Lubliner, Marta & Leon Perechocky, Esther & Isaac Pulvermacher, Rose & Abe Rosenbluth, and Eta & Henry Wrobel.

□

## IN MEMORIAM

### Chanan Kiel

**E**ven "survivors" eventually die. Some survivors are acutely aware that the gift of their additional time is insufficient to their self-imposed mission. Their mission possesses them.

If ever a man burned with just such a mission it was Chanan Kiel. Yiddishist, essayist, artist, family man, and holocaust survivor — he died in August. He knew he was one of our portals to a world that was all but obliterated. Chanan Kiel has drawn his last pictures and written his last words. Those last words were written through the pain of his final illness because he knew that he was one of the last bridges to a past that we shouldn't lose but too few remained to tell. Too few had his talent to allow us to glimpse that world which, though destroyed, still defines our Judaism today. So many stories to tell, so many memories of lives lost if he didn't tell of them. To the very end he had to do the telling. He had to squeeze out the most he could from his luck at having so much, but not enough, additional time.

□

FRED PIERCE

## LETTERS

Dear Editor:

Permit me to add a footnote to David Rosenthal's excellent article on Wooden Synagogues in your Sept./Oct. 1998 issue.

Those who want to know how a wooden synagogue looked, will find illustrations in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 15, panels 610, 611 and 612.

Sincerely,  
Leon Betensky  
Pittsburgh, PA

# Zuckerman Redux, or Philip Roth Reconsiders the 1960s

By Sanford Pinsker

My title is a shameless grab from John Updike's *Rabbit* books, a tetralogy that follows his local, small-town Pennsylvania protagonist from the placid, conformist 1950s to his decline-and-fall in the reasonably well-heeled 1990s. In *Rabbit Redux*, Updike forces Rabbit to confront everything that seemed destabilizing about a counterculture which simultaneously attracted and repulsed him. The result is a novel that cannot avoid America's worsening racial situation, at the same time that can never be quite comfortable with characters who are black.

Roth also tends to see blacks as cultural markers, but from a more rarefied perspective. Nathan Zuckerman is, after all, Roth's alter ego and fictional mouthpiece — a man who can ruminate about Newark's changing landscape in ways that Harry ("Rabbit") Angstrom cannot. Some wonder, then, that the following passage — from *Zuckerman Unbound* (1981) — occupies such a prominent position in Roth's canon. Burdened by the notoriety that his novel, *Carnovsky*, created, Nathan Zuckerman chronicles the woes that come with the territory of being Rich-and-Famous, but also the regrets washing over him as he ticks off the anchors that have slipped, irretrievably, into the

past. As Zuckerman surveys what his former neighborhood has become, he notices "a young black man, his head completely shaved," step out of one of the houses with a German shepherd dog and stare down from the stoop "at the chauffeur-driven limousine in front of his alleyway, and at the white man [Zuckerman] in the back seat who was looking his place up and down."

Had the fellow cared to ask [he ruminates] Zuckerman could without any trouble have told him the names of the three families who lived in the flats on each floor before World War II. But that wasn't what this black man wished to know. "Who are you supposed to be?"

"No one," replied Zuckerman, and that was the end of that. You are no longer any man's son, you are no longer some good woman's husband, you are no longer your brother's brother, and you don't come from anywhere anymore, either. They skipped the grade school and the playground and the hot-dog joint and headed back to New York, passing on the way out to the Parkway the synagogue where he'd taken Hebrew lessons after school until he was thirteen. It was now an African Methodist Episcopal Church.

As a well-traveled quip would have it, Roth wrote *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969), a novel about masturbation that made him famous, followed by a handful of

masturbatory novels about his dubious fame. Newark occupies an important part of this arithmetic, for it was immigrant Jewish Newark that set into motion the tensions his art kept exploring. Granted, Roth has found himself attracted to other places — Israel in *The Counterlife* (1986) and *Operation Shylock* (1993); Prague in "The Prague Orgy," larger cities such as London and New York; an upscale farmhouse/retreat in Connecticut — but it is finally the ghosts of Newark that his imagination found most congenial.

Zuckerman's downward spiral continues apace in *The Anatomy Lesson* (1983) where he decides to chuck the business of being a writer and to become an obstetrician instead, and in *The Counterlife*, where he may, or may not, have died on the operating table. Increasingly, Roth — or at least Roth's characters — seemed desperate, death-haunted, and emotionally/physically depleted. In *Operation Shylock*, a character named Philip Roth is bedeviled by a doppelgänger imp who passes himself off as the world-famous author and goes about giving lectures to Israelis about Diasporism, a wacky plan in which Jews are urged to return to the east European countries of their origin. Ostensibly fueled by medications gone amuck, Roth's bouts with depression and nervous breakdown began to make the rounds of insider gossip. True enough, the novel was brilliantly written (as is usual, for Roth), but the implications were shivery nonetheless. And when his marriage to Claire Bloom evaporated, tongues continued to wag — and this long before she published *Leaving the Doll's House*, her self-serving account of how and why the relationship went sour.

In short, Roth's personal diffi-



culties were increasingly bruited about in public, but this time, without being generated by his controversial fiction, much less by appearances on talk shows. Roth, after all, jealously guards his privacy and no doubt continues to think of himself in the mold of E. I. Lonoff, the elderly Jewish writer who explains — to a young, wounded Nathan Zuckerman — that the writing life consists of “turning sentences around.” Anything else — including praise or blame — is unimportant. The difference between the fictional Lonoff (many thought him modeled on Bernard Malamud) and Roth himself is, of course, that the latter is given to “explanation,” defense, and, often, a desire to shock. The last item was particularly evident in *Sabbath’s Theater*, a 1995 novel featuring a sexual outlaw and cultural monster of enormous proportion. Moreover, I was not alone in feeling that the opening sections approached (if not actually reached) the condition of pornography, while the novel’s final hundred pages — which detail Mickey Sabbath’s poignant return to the New Jersey of his childhood — were among the most moving Roth had thus far written.

Which brings me, at long last, to *American Pastoral* (1997), an ambitious work with a canvas as large as Roth’s talents. At once a continuing example of the postmodernist experimentation that was his abiding fascination during the 1980s and early 90s, the thick novel also marks a return to the socio-cultural realism of his earliest fiction. In addition, those who have followed Roth’s long trail of tears will want to compare it with *Our Gang* (1971), a savage exercise in

absurdist satire that has not worn very well over the subsequent decades. Why so? Because it looks for all the world to have been written in a white heat, and because readers tended to divide themselves into those who agreed with Roth’s politics and those who did not. In those volatile, contentious times, what mattered most about an anti-war poem was that it was squarely against the War; roughly the same thing turned out to be true of *Our Gang*. Roth provides enough examples of Nixonesque Newspeak to get the groundlings clapping, but I think it fair to say that whatever Roth might be, he is no Jonathan Swift.

The best satire is a cool medium, one that builds in as much restraint as it does raw anger. It is, in short, artful in ways that turning Richard Nixon into “Trick E. Dixon” or San Clemente into “San Dementia” is decidedly not. However, when Roth returned to turbulent 1960s, he did so with a brilliance that is a worthy rival to Updike’s taking the measure of America as it lurches toward the twenty-first century. In Roth’s case, what energizes *American Pastoral* is how the dreams so widely shared during those salad days turned to ashes during the turmoil of the next violent decade. His focus is the Levov family, and Seymour (“Swede”) Levov in particular. As the novel’s opening paean puts it:

The Swede. During the war years, when I was still a grade school boy, this was the magical name in our Newark neighborhood, even to adults just a generation removed from the city’s old Prince Street ghetto and not yet so flawlessly Americanized as to be bowled over by the prowess of a high school athlete. The name was magical; so was the anomalous face. Of the few fair-complexioned Jewish students in our predominantly Jewish public high school, none possessed anything remotely like the steep-

jawed, insentient Viking mask of this blue-eyed blond born into our tribe as Seymour Irving Levov.

Among Roth’s protagonists Swede Levov has the distinction not only of herohood, but also of being the standard bearer for such old-fashioned virtues as hard work, family feeling, and most of all, assimilated Success. He marries a former [non-Jewish] Miss New Jersey, takes the family glove business to new financial heights, and lives what seems to be a charmed life in Old Rimrock. In short, he carries the dreams of immigrant Jewish Newark on his broad, “goyische” shoulders. His “crime,” as it were, is that he is *too good*, words that carried an ironic ring when uttered more than twenty-five years ago by Sophie Portnoy, but that now earn a full measure of Roth’s sympathy. For Swede is meant to stand for every decent impulse that was trampled by the juggernaut of the sixties. If he is blindsided by history, it is his daughter, Merry, who delivers most of the blows. She moves from a spoiled adolescent with a stutter to a political revolutionary with a bomb — and in the process brings down everything that the Swede had built up. She blows up buildings — in the process killing four innocent civilians — and breaks her father’s heart. All without a shred of remorse, much less of understanding.

Interestingly enough, it is Nathan Zuckerman who pieces together the Levov family history and who tries to give its saga some narrative shaping. Rather than the self-absorbed, endlessly whining character we remember, this Zuckerman tries to convey what growing up within the protective folds of Newark’s Jewish community was like. At a fifty-



year high school reunion, one character puts it this way:

"She said to Schrim," said Alan, the two of us grinning as we clutched each other's diminished biceps, "she said, 'Why are they all Mutty and Utty and Dutty and Tutty? If his name is Charles, why is he called Tutty?' 'I shouldn't have brought you,' Schrim said to her. 'I knew I shouldn't. I can't explain it,' Schrim said to her. 'I knew I shouldn't. I can't explain it,' Schrim said to her, 'nobody can. It's beyond explanation. It just is.'"

And there, in a nut shell, is as good an accounting of a certain cultural past as we are likely to get. Zuckerman, of course, is forced to go one better as he juxtaposes an innocent time against the ravages that rolled over it. That this Zuckerman, the one who takes a stern measure of Vietnam War protest, often sounds like John Updike's Rabbit Angstrom will surely interest critics, but what may matter more importantly is the way both authors offer up dark versions of the 1960s at a time when a number of books — Steve Macedo, ed.

*Reassessing the Sixties*, David Horowitz's *Radical Son*, and Jonah Raskin's *for the hell of it: The Life and Times of Abbie Hoffman* — are busily doing the same thing. My hunch is that Roth's fictional account gets much closer to the heart of how the deep yearning for a respectable life of calm and order, optimism and achievement (especially prominent among the Newark Jews he so vividly remembers) ended in the nightmare of an American gone berserk.

The nightmare, of course, continues even though the excesses ushered in by the New Left have largely disappeared. Still, the very fact that Roth has sympathetic words to say about Swede Levov and all he stood for will generate controversy of a very different sort than that which swirled around him previously. And who knows, it may even be that the same Newark elders who attacked the Roth of *Goodbye, Columbus* and *Portnoy's Complaint* may end up as his de-

fenders. Meanwhile, those longest in the tooth will have much to chew over in Roth's latest bombshell, *I Married a Communist*. On its most immediate level, the novel pushes the cultural time line back to the days of Red scares and Joseph McCarthy witch-hunts. About these matters much has been written in an effort to get the facts straight and the meaning clear. What Roth does — and does superbly — is give a literary spin to love and betrayal, blacklists and naming names, education and miseducation. As my fashionable colleagues might put it, he deconstructs an ethos by probing more deeply into the consciousness (and complications) of individual lives than conventional scholarship usually does. In reconsidering the past, Roth has produced — at long last — a Zuckerman who listens, and whose reports of what he heard add up to what may possibly be the most ambitious, intellectually daring fiction of our time. □

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# Crazy Rhythm

**CRAZY RHYTHM**, by Leonard Garment (Times Books, Random House, New York, 1997.)

Reviewed by *Hal Denner*.

**C***razy Rhythm*, a biography of Broadway lyricist Irving Caesar who penned the classic tune in 1928? Not really. *Crazy Rhythm* is the unlikely title of the autobiography of Leonard Garment, who is probably best known as White House counsel to President Richard Nixon.

Garment arrives at the title from his early days as a jazz musician (he played tenor saxophone and clarinet) and was probably good enough to have several gigs with big bands of the Forties. In a concluding "thanks" section he states that the title is "a joint creation of Leon Wieseltier and me. Leon said that the title had to be the name of a jazz tune. I looked up one day and there it was."

Garment labels himself a "birthright Democrat and life-long liberal". Yet aside from bouncing around a few names of true Democrats and liberals like Daniel P. Moynihan and Robert Strauss, nowhere in his writing does he espouse any connection to the Democratic Party except to say that in his (the author's) youth his father played pinochle at the Parkway Democratic Club in Brownsville, Brooklyn and that he once hosted a fundraiser for Bobby Kennedy. As for his "liberal" bent, affiliations with so-labeled organizations are noticeably absent.

Growing up in the "ghetto" environment seems to have had little effect on Garment's affinity for organized Judaism. At the age of eleven (a bit late) he attended what he calls a "Hebrew school — the *cheder*" in the small apartment of one Rabbi Cohen where classes were held in the living room in the company of 8 or 9 boys. He writes warmly of the evangelical Judaic influences of a young Hebrew teacher named David Minkowitz . . . "despite

public abuse and embarrassment, the scoffing of my brothers and the acute irritation of my father who thought my sudden Jewish fervor was crazy". "After a year and a half", he adds, "the evangelical mission ended. Puberty struck, and our little group fell apart."

Garment talks about his mother's keeping a "more or less kosher home" (whatever that means), his father's disliking of the "trapping of faith" and the "severe and complicated rules of diet and daily conduct." "More important," he writes, are his father's feelings that "traditional religious observance offended his assimilationist impulses."

Neither he nor his two older brothers were Bar Mitzvahed — a source of periodic disagreement between his parents as to who was at fault. He says "she didn't press the point and her three sons didn't much care — including me." Strangely, in no less than three references in the book, Mr. Garment somewhat ruefully mentions his not having been Bar Mitzvahed — a seeming source of regret that can still be rectified.

**G**arment's undoubted need to show his youthful assimilation or to inflict shock value on the reader is revealed in his treatment of working in his father's Ozone Park section of Queens *shmata* factory. "At lunchtime," he writes, (he and his father) "we took a 15-minute break and went next door to Miller's, an old German delicatessen. It was usually a *fresh ham sandwich* (the italics are mine) and coffee."

Candidly and bravely, Garment reveals his family's chronic siege with mental illness, from his mother's being institutionalized as a "schizophrenic psychotic" at a relatively early

age (she did recover and lived to be 93 years old) to his seven-week Army career that resulted in a medical discharge that recommended "extensive psychotherapy." Through the intercession of a family relative physician he was able to avail himself of three years of Freudian analysis (at reduced fees) with a well-known Park Avenue therapist — a rarity in that era for a Brooklyn kid in his late teens. Other than referring to depression and "phobic symptoms" he is guarded in his diagnosis. He talks frankly of being "restored to the ranks of the walking wounded" and becoming "once again your average neurotic New Yorker." Unfortunately, during the height of Watergate in 1973, Garment reveals being "stretched out on a psychiatrist's couch . . . once again coping with the usual depression."

Garment's first wife, Grace Albert, daughter of two lawyers: a Christian Scientist mother and a Jewish-born father who converted to his wife's faith, was beleaguered by mental problems all of her adult life. A gifted and successful soap opera writer, Grace, despite periodic commitment to elite New York treatment centers that are harshly dealt with in the book, she ultimately succumbed to suicide under dramatic circumstances brilliantly recounted by her husband. Puzzling is the fact that, in describing her funeral, Garment writes "the *rabbi* (the italics are mine) furnished by the funeral parlor, a total stranger, gave a brief eulogy. . . ." Their son and daughter, Paul and Sara, happily, seemed to have emerged as normal, functioning adults who were in analytic treatment from early childhood. Kudos to Leonard Garment, first for having shared this very private and sad side of his personal life, and secondly, for having been able to rise to the heights he did professionally in spite of the persistent cloud that hovered over him.

Interestingly, for someone whose ties to Judaism were tenuous at best, Garment devotes a not inconsiderable amount of space to anti-Semitism.

That Garment himself was a victim of anti-Semitism, in spite of assimilationist zeal, is amply demonstrated in an incident that happened at Brooklyn College in 1945 after he reenrolled following his brief Army stint. He had been referred to the dean at Columbia College by a Brooklyn College professor, one Samuel

Konefsky, who had been impressed by a paper that Garment had written. With the quota system still very much alive, Garment was rejected, necessitating his return to Brooklyn College where, as he describes it, he was admitted to its law school after only two years of undergraduate work due to a "shortcut" granted to veterans (in spite of his short military career). There he became editor of the *Law Review* and graduated first in his class in 1949.

In writing *Crazy Rhythm* in 1996, Garment tells of Nixon's purported anti-Semitism, that Nixon was an "equal opportunity hater" — "better than most (anti-Semites), worse than some, much like the rest of the world". Prophetically, he wrote, "it is always possible that still-to-be released tapes will provide evidence of truly ugly anti-Semitism in Nixon." William F. Buckley Jr.'s piece "Nixon and Anti-Semitism", *National Review*, February 10, 1997, states that the latest tapes did, in fact, reveal that Nixon, in addressing John Ehrlichman, "John, we have the power. Are we using it to investigate . . . the Jews . . . you know, that are stealing in every direction? Are we going after their tax returns?" And five days later, to H.R. Haldeman, . . . "Now here's the point, Bob. Please get me the names of the Jews. You know, the big Jewish contributors to the Democrats. Could you please investigate some of the (expletives)?" And the following day, again to Haldeman, "How about the rich Jews. The IRS is full of Jews, Bob". The gist of Buckley's article is knowing this, why did Kissinger, (Herb) Stein, (his Economic Advisor) and William Safire, (his speech writer) agree to serve someone who was anti-Semitic. Interestingly, Garment was not mentioned. His conclusions are, in a sense as earlier expressed, that he was not so much an anti-Semite as he was a "world-class hater." "Nixon," Buckley concludes, "as a human being, was a sad mess, with his suspicions and his fears and his loose bigotry."

In another section of President Nixon's alleged anti-Semitism, Garment writes . . . "if you show me a Christian *or for that matter a Jew* (the italics are mine) who does not have some traces of anti-Semitism in his or her soul, I will show you a human being whose body contains no germs." Could Garment have been talking about himself when he writes (my parents) "do not look like typical Euro-

Wallace's career, the CBS newsman does corroborate Garment's statement that Nixon had asked him (Wallace) to be his Press Secretary.

Garment, who served on the White House staff from 1969 to 1970, first as Special Consultant and then as Counsel to President Nixon, admits, without using the term "gofer" that was, in effect, what he was for much of ~~acting as host to visiting dignitaries and doing~~ fairly routine public relations chores. In that period, Diane Sawyer, later to gain fame on CBS's "60 Minutes" was a loyal member of Press Secretary Ron Ziegler's staff. He admits

that Caspar Weinberger, then Secretary of Defense, played in the harsh sentence meted out to the Jewish U.S. Naval Intelligence analyst convicted of spying for Israel. Re: Weinberger, as to Israel's bombing Iraq's nuclear reactor, Garment writes "Weinberger soon became known as having a low tolerance for Israel and its military actions . . . Many Amer-friend of mine and of (William) Safire's, (Herb) Stein's and (Arthur) Burns', a lively, witty companion evincing no racial or religious hang-ups! (the exclamation point is mine)" Weinberger, incidentally, wrote a very positive



capsule review of *Crazy Rhythm* in a recent issue of *Forbes*, and why not?

Of course, Garment has a long chapter on Watergate. Most of the names have faded into oblivion, but do provide a nostalgic look at a turbulent era in American history. Of all the personalities Garment treats, only Pat Buchanan remains a public figure. Happily, Garment's references to Buchanan are hardly kind.

While Leonard Garment's brand of Jewishness may not square with those of us who are affiliated with a synagogue or temple, contribute to Jewish organizations and causes, have visited Israel many times *on our own*, he is to be commended for at least making no effort to conceal or minimize his Jewish background. (Regrettably, he has lots of company.) Did Richard Nixon's moving to New York and joining his law firm in 1963, his ultimate rise within the Nixon administration as its "token Jew" increase his Jewish awareness? At one point he does write that Richard Nixon "changed my life". Whether he meant that, part of it included his Jewishness — more or less, can only be a matter of conjecture.

Anent his colleague Henry Kissinger, first National Security Advisor and then Secretary of State, he warmly describes Kissinger as a "brilliant, witty, foreign-born fellow with a heavy German accent." "More important," he says, "he was a Jew, not a papier-mâché Jew, but a real one, carrying a profound historical and psychological involvement with Jewishness and all the attendant baggage."

Since 1980 Garment has been married to Suzi Weaver whom he had met when they had been "professional friends" and co-workers at the United Nations Mission. A well-known journalist in her own right, she currently writes under the name of Suzanne Garment, and is, among other things, a contributing editor to the Sunday Opinion section of the *Los Angeles Times*, and a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington conservative "think tank". Together they have a daughter, Annie, now seventeen. Garment amusingly writes of Annie's 1995 Bat Mitzvah and his agony preparing for what he describes as "reading from the Torah". Strangely, he fails to mention any religious affiliation of his wife Suzanne, but does admit

that he practiced his Torah portion "under Suzi's severe tutelage" (she had learned this stuff when she was young and malleable). One can only assume that Suzanne Garment is Jewish. Why Garment doesn't say so directly is a mystery. Never at a loss to drop an important name here or there, Garment mentions that in addition to his family members in attendance at the Bat Mitzvah were Itamar Rabinovitch, the Israel Ambassador, and Norman Podhoretz, a close friend and former editor of *Commentary* and a leading "neo-con".

Overall, Garment still evolves as an apologist for Richard Nixon, pointedly omitting or diminishing events that shed an unfavorable light on the President with a well-turned sentence or two — negatives that were extensively dealt with in other sources.

Leonard Garment, who indeed knows how to cleverly turn a phrase, has written an immensely readable book — erudite, witty and informative. Extremely well indexed, *Crazy Rhythm* contains many wonderful photographs of the Garment family, a veritable chronology of his personal and professional life, world figures and a touchingly candid shot of him playing clarinet at his daughter Annie's Bat Mitzvah. *Crazy Rhythm* provides those of us old enough to remember, with a backward glance, of the tumultuous Seventies. The younger reader should glean from it a first-hand account of contemporary history that should not be overlooked.

Leonard Garment, now 73, is still practicing law in the Washington office of the Philadelphia firm of Dechert Price and Rhoads, and resides with his wife and daughter in the Nation's Capital. □

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## Habonim Dror Today

**A**lthough the *Jewish Frontier* has often contained interesting articles about the history of Labor Zionist youth in America, there has been a dearth of attention paid to the contemporary situation of Habonim Dror North America. For current members of Habonim Dror that read the *Frontier*, the highlights of any issue are always the nostalgic first-person descriptions of our movement's history. However, as today's Labor Zionist youth plot our collective course for the 21st century, it is important for the readership of the *Frontier* to be kept up-to-date of all the latest developments in Habonim Dror today.

While many in the American Jewish community are issuing dire warnings about rising assimilation rates, Habonim Dror continues to thrive. This past summer, a record-breaking 133 Jewish youths from across North America participated in M.B.I. (Machaneh Bonim b'Israel), our five-week Israel teen summer program. The original and longest-running North American 'Israel experience' program — Workshop, our 10-month work-study program in Israel for high school graduates — is now in the midst of its 48th year. In the past five years, we have increased from five to seven machanot (summer camps), by re-opening machanot in the important Jewish communities of New York and California. Overall enrollment in Habonim Dror machanot has been steadily increasing over the past few years. In the summer of 1998, almost 2000 Jewish youth spent the summer at a Habonim Dror machaneh.

Despite this recent increase in our numbers, many ma'apilim (college-age movement members) are questioning their personal role in the movement. The question is whether we, as members of Habonim Dror, are simply educators or instruments for social change as well. Although many ma'apilim spend their summers working at our machanot, helping out in a ken (city chapter) if there is one near their college campus, and attending our annual

Winter Seminar, many other ma'apilim feel compelled to go outside the movement to actualize the ideology that they learned growing up in the movement.

**I**n September, we held a ma'apilim seminar, in conjunction with our annual *Merkaz for Roshei Kenim* (seminar for local chapter heads). The seminar consisted of peulot (activities) about the role of ma'apilim in the movement, as well as some interesting discussions led by LZA Administrator Stephane Acel about opportunities for Habonim Dror and the LZA to work together. The discussions that weekend revealed much about the state of mind of college-age Labor Zionist youth today. There was widespread agreement that historically the movement had had great potential to offer ma'apilim a framework in which to actualize their ideology. We reflected on the stories we've heard about stockpiled guns in the barn at Machaneh Galil (Philadelphia area) on their way to Palestine and about the kibbutzim that were built by movement members. The message that came out of this seminar was that ma'apilim want to continue this rich tradition of Jewish and social activism.

**T**he highlight of the ma'apilim seminar was our participation in the historic September 13th "Public Gathering in Support of Oslo," in Washington, D.C. Proudly sporting our blue movement *chultzot* (shirts), we contributed much *ruach* (spirit) to the event as we carried signs in support of peace, sang songs, and performed street theatre. In an effort to increase our profile in the Jewish world, Habonim Dror issued a press release at the event, detailing our support for the Peace Process. Inside the event, a movement member presented a letter of support to Leah Rabin moments before her speech. Judging by the attention we received from journalists covering the event, the interest of visiting members of Knesset, and photos

of us at the event in the Jewish press, it is clear that Habonim Dror was successful in making its voice heard.

This exciting example of Habonim-Dror activism in Washington is by no means an isolated incident. As part of Machaneh Galil's Fall Seminar, an annual tradition was maintained as ma'apilim and chanichim (campers) participated in the Philadelphia Aids March wearing *chultzot* or machaneh T-shirts. Habonim Dror sent representatives to the Jewish Labor Committee's October 24th-25th Convention in New York, and our movement is exploring the possibilities for participating in more JLC events. Our upcoming bi-national Winter Seminar, while primarily focused in developing individuals' personal relationships with Israel, will also include *peulot* on the Labor Zionist Alliance and its progressive political agenda. Learning about LZA's political work and ideology has already provoked some ma'apilim to consider personal future involvement in Labor Zionism.

The informal cooperation between Habonim Dror and the LZA, through the involvement of LZA Administrator Stephane Acel in programming for ma'apilim is being formalized. In early October, the Mazkirut Artzit (National Secretariat) of Habonim Dror drafted a proposal for the creation of a national Habonim Dror LZA Chapter, which would consist of Habonim Dror ma'apilim. On October 20th, LZA President Daniel Mann and the Habonim Dror Mazkirut met to discuss how to make this proposal a reality. It was approved, later that same day, by the LZA Administrative Committee.

This proposal is generating much excitement in both movements. There is tremendous potential a Habonim Dror LZA Chapter to build the long sought-after bridge between Habonim Dror graduates and the LZA, thereby allowing the youth movement to produce a steady stream of new LZA members. Habonim Dror will also experience great benefits from increased involvement with our parent movement, such as using the LZA's access to play a bigger role in Israeli and Jewish affairs.

There are many exciting activities occurring in the contemporary world of Labor Zionist youth. Rather than being satisfied with steadily increasing numbers of participants in our summer camps and our Israel programs,

we are actively involved in improving the relevance of the movement to our participants and the Jewish world. In the face of the proud legacy of Labor Zionism in Israel and America, we, as today's leaders in the youth movement, are doing what we can to ensure that future generations will be as proud of this era of Labor Zionism as we are of our past. □

JARED MATAS, *Mazkir T'nua (Secretary General) Habonim Dror*  
STEPHANE ACEL, *LZA Administrator*

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Nomi Zuckerman** is a poet residing in Jerusalem. Her parents were prominent Labor Zionist leaders. Her father, Baruch Zuckerman, was a renowned orator and ideologue of Labor Zionism; he was a founder of the American Jewish Congress and Peoples Relief. Nina Zuckerman, her mother, was one of the seven women who founded Pioneer Women (now Na'amat USA).

**Susan Hattis Rolef**, a political scientist, is our regular Israeli correspondent.

**Misha Louvish** is a historian and veteran Israeli journalist.

**David Rosenthal** is a frequent contributor to *Jewish Frontier* and the *Yiddisher Kemfer*.

**Sanford Pinsker** is Shaddek Professor of Humanities at Franklin and Marshall College. He writes about American literature and culture. His most recent book is *Worrying About Race, 1985 - 1995; Reflections During a Troubled Time*.

**Joseph Adler**, a historian, is the author of *The Herzl Paradox* and of *Restoring the Jews to Their Homeland*.

**Henry L. Feingold**, immediate past president of the Labor Zionist Alliance, teaches history at Baruch College, New York.

**Edward B. Glick** is a professor emeritus of political science at Temple University in Philadelphia. He now resides in Portland, Oregon.

**Dr. Gustave Pearlman** is a prominent dentist in Syracuse, NY, and lectures frequently on Jewish and Zionist topics.

**Hal Denner** writes from Sherman Oaks, California.



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