

# Constant Fighting Making Israeli Patriotism Wane

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JERUSALEM—Things have changed here in Israel since hoards of refugees poured out of persecuted Europe to claim the land they believed was theirs by birthright. On Jerusalem Day—the new national holiday which commemorates the Six-Day War when the Jews re-occupied the Old City, evicted the Jordanian Arab troops, and reclaimed the Western Wall—the excitement, the fierce patriotism found in earlier years was missing. Things are different.

Americans easily identified with the Israeli cause during those pioneer days. We, too, had our Ben Gurions in the form of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. We had our Moshe Dayan in the persons of George Washington, Stonewall Jackson, and Douglass MacArthur. We knew what it was like to fight uneven battles against the enemies of freedom. We had our war heroes, men who wore the red badge of courage—our Sergeant Yorks and Colin Kellys.

Enemies of freedom were our enemies too, and we found it easy to stand with tiny Israel as they reclaimed the land with pick and shovel in one hand while fighting off the Syrian and Egyptian hoards with the other. We were proud to be identified with this small David as he took on those Goliaths with little more than the slingshot of courage and faith.

But the romance of those early days has faded. Gone, too, is some of the hope and fortitude. The new Jew of Israel is unhappy and restless. He sees the rich Americans and Europeans, prompted by the Ministry of Tourism, spending money in lavish hotels, and he feels cheated. He sees the rich American Jew who moves to Israel for idealistic reasons, and who, after two years of unaccustomed spartan living, finally gives up and returns to the comforts of Miami Beach. He sees the constant, senseless fighting for the wasteland in the Sinai, along the West Bank of Jordan, and in the Golan Heights, and wonders why. He sees his children taken from him to serve in the military, daughters as well as sons. He knows that one month out of each year he, too, must leave his job to carry a submachine gun and a pocketful of grenades, and he worries. He sees fanatics on both sides bombing the cities and airports and he is unhappy, and afraid.

## Pure Bloodline

Today's Jew on the streets of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv shakes his head and mutters, blaming the right wing Orthodox leaders for the continuing strife. Of course, there is always the P.L.O., the fanatical terrorists dedicated to killing Jews and chasing them from the Mideast. But like the Israelites of old, today's street Jew is more prone to blame Moses for his trouble than the pursuing Egyptians.

And there is ample proof that Moses should share the blame. The Orthodox religious leaders apparently feel their task has not changed over the last 3,000 years. They have a holy mandate to keep the bloodline pure. This can only be done, say disgusted citizens, by keeping the nation in a constant state of siege.

There is plenty of evidence that this is true. The Jew and Arab exist side by side in the marketplace with difficulty. They have no desire to fight. Yet the religious leaders feel that to give in to peace would eventually lead to a mingling of the two groups. This, in turn, would bring intermarriage and eventually the loss



holds more precious than life itself—his Jewish identity.

The Orthodox Jew, for instance, who lives in the Mea Shearim, is not allowed to drink wine with a non-Jew. Why? Because drinking wine leads to friendship. And friendship to romance. And romance to marriage. So to keep the blood line pure, the fanatical Orthodox, who virtually controls the nation, keeps tensions at a constant breaking point. This, combined with the fanatical Arab and Palestinian on the other side who are equally responsible for instigating violence, keep the fires of war burning brightly.

"Watch out if our religious leaders ever get their hands on the bomb," one brash young soldier said. "They would not hesitate to blow up the world and justify it by saying they were reclaiming the land God gave to Joshua."

There is concern this may be closer to a reality than many suspect, for there is ample reason to believe the nation of Israel already possesses hydrogen bomb capabilities.

One interesting theory being whispered throughout Israel by some highly respectable sources is that Israel is but a pawn to be moved, and sacrificed if necessary, by the larger powers. One source holds that the Jewish embarrassment of the Yom Kippur war, when they were soundly spanked by the Egyptians, was master-minded by Washington to teach the cocky Israelis a lesson. Too many victories like too much wine can be heady, and none doubts that the Israeli soldier is one of the finest in the world. So, Daddy decided to give Junior a lesson.

Washington, so the theory goes, knew the Egyptians were planning to give Russia the boot. Therefore, a secret deal was arranged, allowing Sadat a little victory to restore Egyptian pride and at the same time force the Jews to back off.

The procedure was easy. The Pentagon, which had been supplying Jewish leaders top secret information on Egyptian movements through its elaborate system of spies and satellites, simply withheld vital information which allowed the Egyptians to stage a surprise attack.

Mr. Dayan is reported to have

admitted he held back mobilizing the Israeli forces because he did not want to keep playing the roll of the aggressor. And many Jews feel the best psychology was to let the Egyptians hit first to arouse world sympathy for the underdog Jews—once again pitting little David against the below-the-belt-striking Goliath—and so stimulate the friends of Israel to dig deeper in their pockets to help the tiny underdog.

Dr. William Wexler, former chairman of the Conference of Presidents of the Major American Jewish Organizations, told Louis Rapport of the Jerusalem Post that today's Israelis are an unhappy people.

"The middle-class is smug and complacent sitting behind their concrete walls. They have allowed the Histadrut and the parties to take over the country. It's a disaster. The people have to rebel against the political system . . . and it is supported by the money from world Jewry. It's time Israel stopped being a beggar nation . . . as a country of three million we can't survive."

#### **Wants New Economy**

Mr. Wexler, who is a strong supporter of Jimmy Carter, believes the former Georgia governor, "as an evangelical Protestant," will do more to preserve Israel as a Jewish state than any other candidate.

Highly critical of the way things are now in Israel, Mr. Wexler says the diaspora Jews—Jews outside Israel who are footing the bill right now—are not getting their money's worth. He feels there is a need to tighten down on government bureaucracy and involve all the people—Jews and Arabs—in the new economy.

Rabbi Meir Kahane, the militant orthodox leader, disagrees. He advocates that "every" Arab of Eretz Ysrael, the state and the liberated lands be offered a voluntary transfer to either an Arab, or if possible, a western country." Mr. Kahane says that those who refuse to declare their allegiance to the Jewish state and the acceptance of Jewish sovereignty should be removed from Israel by force.

A leading Jewish merchant, in response to this said, "My wife calls me an Arab, but I'm more

Jewish than those radicals in Mea Shearim. I want to see my nation preserved, but as a nation, not as a dwelling place for an exclusive group of people. The only way to exist in this world is by recognizing all men as brothers. One of the greatest Jews of history, Jesus, said that even the Samaritan was the Jew's brother. If the Samaritan, then certainly the Arab."

He added, as a sad afterthought, "If all we do is keep our bloodline pure, what makes us any better than Hitler?"

That's strong talk from a Jew. So strong that those doing the talking are still whispering. Yet, there seems to be a growing number who share this opinion, who are not any more sympathetic to the fanatical bombings of the Jewish Defense League than they are to the terrorist tactics of the P.L.O.

Such talk is only being whispered in Israel today. But the whisper is growing louder as more and more Jews cry out for peace.





**UNREST IN JERUSALEM**—Israeli border police patrol a narrow alley in Old Jerusalem as tensions mount over Israel's handling of the riots which have swept Jerusalem and the West Bank of the Jordan River. (Photo by Religious News Service)