

## Israel and her Diaspora

By Warren Freedman

A frequent question asked by many Jews outside of Israel is why Israel is not able to accept constructive criticism from Jews in the Diaspora. Perhaps one answer can be found in the following incident cited by H. E. Michael Comay, former Israel Ambassador in London:

"When I first went as ambassador to Canada nearly twenty years ago, I had differences of opinion with one or two of the local Zionist leaders. We were going through the difficult period of the fedayeen raids and our counteractions. Some of the Jewish leaders locally were very critical of this policy, which met with disapproval in their press.

"When I went to the Government in Ottawa and tried to explain and defend our position, I was told 'Well, one of your fellow-Jews over here, who speaks for the Zionist Organization, came to see us yesterday and expressed a contrary view to yours.' I considered this was sabotaging our own work. What I said to the Jewish leaders was: 'I cannot expect you to express opinions of which you honestly disapprove. But if you can't support our position, don't oppose it with your government, because then you are damaging our cause.'" (London Jewish Chronicle, September 21, 1973)

Ambassador Comay's delineation of "sabotaging" is a frightening concept. Admittedly, differences of opinion should preferably be kept within the family. But to silence a person who expresses publicly an opinion which is different from Israel's official policy is NOT "sabotage". It is the expression of an opinion or conviction sanctified by our democratic heritage. In fairness to Ambassador Comay, he used that invidious term specifically referring to the actions of community leaders making representations to their own Government "contradicting the representations of official Israel spokesmen on matters which directly concern Israel's policies and actions". But the term "sabotage" still dangles like the sword of Damocles, and has been given wider application than perhaps reasonably intended by its author.

Reasonable men and women can differ as to the tactics and the methodology of Israel's policy as well as her policies and actions. Are the views of reasonable men and women worth-

while listening to -- on the public stage?

The Comay story perhaps points up the need for clarification of the role of Jews in the Diaspora toward Israel. The Diaspora is not dependent upon Israel, nor is Israel dependent upon the Diaspora. But the relationship between Jews in the Diaspora and Israel is more than simply kinship or common religious and social culture bonds. Most Israelis (and some Diaspora Jews) agree that Jewish communities outside of Israel must look toward Israel for total sustenance and survival, even more today than yesterday. Many Israelis, on the other hand, have respect for the individual achievements and the personal ambitions of Diaspora Jews with whom they can identify in their own personal quest and pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.

Both sides agree that the image of Israel in the world is decisive and has a real impact upon the image of the Jew throughout the world. But Israel has not yet realized that whatever it does or does not do has a tremendous effect on the security of the Jew in the non-Jewish world. Therefore, the Diaspora Jew, as a participant in world Jewry, has a right to be consulted by Israel and to offer freely advice. However, the final decision must always be left to Israel.

It is said that the United States is a rights-oriented society while Israel is a duty-oriented society. American Jews claim an inherent right to criticize; Israelis, while recognizing individual rights, do not push their rights to the same extent, content to direct their zeal into their duties to their society. Americans are said to blame their problems on others rather than themselves; Israelis, on the other hand, are more apt to blame themselves or sense a personal guilt for their failings; but, above all, Israelis resent being told by others of their shortcomings!

The dichotomy here is obvious, and it is the task of Solomon to reconcile these differences so that both the Diaspora Jew and the Israeli can better live together in the Jewish world.

The Jews of the Diaspora are not simply "friends" of the State of Israel, nor are they junior partners. Neither friends nor junior partners can help build a country.

Jews in the Diaspora have a moral responsibility for the future of the State of Israel. But they have a moral duty not to be "super-

## IS U.S. MIDEAST POLICY SHIFTING?

NEW YORK (WNS) -- Rabbi Israel Miller, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, expressed feelings of "malaise" and "uneasiness" over recent developments in U.S. Middle East policy.

Speaking at a press conference, Rabbi Miller emphasized "the Presidents Conference has not noticed any shift in U.S. policy" in regard to Israel and that he takes Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's word that the U. S. will not decide on further steps in Mideast peace talks until meetings have been held with all representatives from the area. "There are no differences in actions that have been taken up to date," Rabbi Miller stressed.

Specifically, Rabbi Miller expressed concern that the U.S. is becoming "too friendly" with the Arabs and over the use of the term "disengagement" in the communique by President Ford and King Hussein of Jordan which promised early action on agreement between Israel and Jordan.

Rabbi Miller noted that the Cyprus conflict showed the "impotence of the UN" and that "the U.S. is not omnipotent." He said

the lesson of Cyprus is that the U. S. has to strengthen Israel militarily, economically and diplomatically.

## EGYPTIAN IN ISRAEL

TEL AVIV (WNS) -- Sana Hassan, an Egyptian writer and journalist is in Israel for a three-month visit to meet Israelis.

Ms. Hassan, a Ph. D. candidate in government at Harvard and daughter of a former American Egyptian Ambassador to Washington, is the first Egyptian journalist to visit Israel since the Six-Day War.

Her visa was granted in Boston with the support of Suzy Eban, wife of former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban. Mrs. Eban saw Ms. Hassan in a debate with Arie Eliav, a leading Labor Party dove, at the American Jewish Committee's annual meeting in New York.

Meanwhile Egyptian authorities have been threatening to withdraw Ms. Hassan's passport and sources in Egypt have called her more American than Egyptian.

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loyal" and accept everything on faith, or to be afraid to express contrary opinions which often make Israelis angry. Dr. Nahum Goldman is intrigued with his idea of creating a world advisory body of Jews with no official status but which would meet regularly with the Israel Government leaders to give advice before Israel, like any sovereign State, makes an important decision. But this permanent advisory body, it is submitted, would only stultify and "freeze" divergent opinions. There would be no fresh outlook, no spontaneous reaction, and little youthful vigor. The Goldman idea is simply a bad reaction to a continuing problematical situation.

NEW YORK -- An in-depth analysis of the needs and prospects of the American Orthodox synagogue will be one of the primary themes of the upcoming 76th Anniversary Biennial Convention of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America at the Boca Raton Hotel and Club, Boca Raton, Florida, on Thanksgiving Weekend, November 27 - December 1.

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