

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

WWU - 37
EMBARRASSING ALLY

Hotel Eden.
Jerusalem, Israel.
November 15, 1959.

Mr. Richard H. Nolte.
Institute of Current World Affairs.
366 Madison Ave., New York 17, N.Y.

Dear Dick:



ISRAEL'S JERUSALEM: Mt. Scopus & Old City wall (left); new Hebrew University (right)

Israel is neutral in today's world of military blocs only because it can't help itself. Israel has political halitosis. As much as it would like to increase its security through a firm pact with the West, in toto, or in part, the West won't have her. An alliance with Israel would prove too embarrassing for relations with the UAR and the other Arab states. Israel's working example of a democracy in the highly undemocratic Middle East is appreciated all right, but from a distance. This little umbrella-shaped country with an area of almost 8000 square miles -- the size of New Jersey -- and a little over 2 million in population has had only one real place to turn to in its 11-year history, the United Nations. And even though it is without allies, it does not even call itself neutral. It once referred to its policy as one of "non-identification." Now it just doesn't bother with any definition or self explanation. But as for being a neutral between East and West in the terms of Switzerland or Sweden, the Israelis say nonsense. All of their country's historical, cultural and economic ties come from only one side, the West. And Russia, on the other side, has been busy arming the UAR to help, in the view of many, to destroy Israel.

There were two periods when Israel feared that the West was about to form a military alliance with Egypt: First with the Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO), which never materialized; then with the Baghdad Pact, which managed to include Iraq, but which was rejected by the other Arab States. At

the rumor of both, Israel began to seek some military quid pro quo. But since the Egyptians didn't line up, the Israelis lost their argument. Now for the past three years, Israel has worked out an increasingly pleasing arrangement with France for her supply of arms. There is no formal alliance, so France isn't forced to add this to Algeria in her lack of appeal to the Arab and African worlds. But the arms, particularly the Mystere planes, have been coming in at a sufficient rate to give Israel assurance against the arms Russia has been supplying the UAR. And, supposedly, the contributions of individual Jews in America, have had a big share in financing Israel's arms purchases.

But arms are for security, not for a permanent preoccupation with war (at least so the Israelis say) and now Israel is reaching out for long-standing cultural and economic agreements. To date, she has had particular success in Ghana and Burma. (In WWU-8, I wrote you that Burma was welcoming Israeli technicians at the same time she was sending home Americans and Russians.) Israel feels she can bring Western techniques and democratic methods to the newly-independent underdeveloped nations without reminding them of their unhappy history with Big Power colonialism.

Yaakov Tsur has just returned to Jerusalem after serving six years in the key post of Ambassador to France. He now has become Director General of the Ministry of External Affairs. Tsur is 53, a native of Russia but reared in Israel (then called Palestine). Since he is an expert on French relations, let me start there. But one word first. Even though France had the anti-semitic blemish of L'Affaire Dreyfus at the end of the last century, it also had the French House of Rothschild. Baron de Rothschild poured great sums into Palestine to settle Jewish families in miniature French farms there. The Rothschild largesse has continued ever since. And with the notable exception of L'Affaire Dreyfus, the French in general have been considered to be pretty well disposed toward their own Jews, as well as toward the resettlement of Jews in the Holy Land.



"no alliance in view"

"In 1950," Tsur began, "the U.S., Great Britain and France issued a declaration for the inviolability of frontiers for all the states in the Middle East. It was for a status quo, an equilibrium of arms. Then (1955) Russia declared with Egypt. We had trouble proving to the West that we stood alone. The U.S. and Britain and France, with a standing committee in Washington, were still sitting down and saying how many tanks they sent to Egypt and to Israel -- as if Russia didn't exist. The whole thing became completely senseless. The change came with France saying one day, 'To Hell with it. We will give arms to Israel because Israel is in danger.' This was in the Spring of 1956. The U.S. already had agreed Israel had to have planes yet said, 'We won't sell, but we will view with favor Canada and/or France selling.' Canada said, 'OK, if the U.S. will tell us to.' The U.S. said it couldn't say that. Canada said, 'We don't want you to be favorably inclined; we want you to tell us.' Eventually, a contract was signed with Canada. But in the meantime we got 12 and then 24 Mysteres from France, and then we went into 'higher' figures. We never did get planes from Canada. Now we have a close relation with France, but no alliance in view."

And what does Israel do at the UN in the way of reciprocating? "There are sometimes when we have not gone along with her, sometimes on the Cameroons. But most of the time we go with France, and always on Algeria and the Sahara nuclear tests."

What about your earlier history with U.S. and British military help? "The Baghdad Pact was more an anti-Israel pact than an anti-Russian pact. The fact that they brought in not only Turkey, but Iraq, made it a horrible mistake by the West." Tsur explained both countries turned much more anti-Israel to balance up their relations with the rest of the Arab Middle East. What about the Eisenhower Doctrine promising U.S. aid to countries menaced by international communism? "I think we joined, but we considered it much too little and too late (1958). We agreed to this doctrine only because not agreeing would have meant an invitation to the Arabs and the Russians to attack in full knowledge that since we had stayed out America would do nothing to help us."

And your experience with Russia? "Russia supported us in the first stage because they wanted to get rid of the British. They found we had more chance to do that than the Arabs ever had. But very quickly, at the end of 1949-1950, their attitude toward us changed. The climax of hostility was in 1953, before Stalin's death, the trial of the doctors who were considered Zionist agents, and the trials in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. They broke off relations with Israel completely. After Stalin's death, we resumed relations, but never as good as before. In September, 1955, there was the arms deal with Egypt. After Suez (1956), they called back their Ambassador, and we ours. And it remained this way for six months. Now our relations are on the whole normal, but far from cordial."

Regarding Israel's East-West position in general, Tsur said: "We aren't a member of any military bloc and we don't intend to be. We don't believe in any military blocs in the Middle East and we can't afford to believe in them. Secondly (note the priority), nobody wants us in a military bloc. I think the Western Powers are wrong, but they think they have to choose between us and the Arabs. And thirdly, in economics, we are closely connected with the West. We have U.S. help. In trade, our natural market is Western Europe, the British Commonwealth and the U.S. England is particularly important because of our orange exports. But as things go now, we can't remain for a very long time alone. I don't think we'd be accepted as a member of the Common Market (composed of the "Six": France, Germany, Italy and Benelux). But we are negotiating just now for multilateral trade agreements with most of the OEEC's 15 members. We also are trying to establish trade relations with other countries in Asia and Africa."

Prof. Y. Leo Kohn, the permanent Political Adviser to the Minister of External Affairs, expanded a bit on the Afro-Asian ties: "We are giving these countries technical assistance. We've had their trainees in this country and we're sending our technicians increasingly to their country. They need technical help. We are small. We are no danger to them. And our smallness is far more suitable to their problems. There is no superiority, no color complex. What we are trying to do is build bridges between Israel and these new countries, economic ties, mutual understanding, sympathy. We hate to see them go the way of the Arabs with their inferiority complex. But we



"They ruined us."

are not doing it from the point of view of security and alliances. We are doing it for mutual good will. We show them it is possible to achieve great economic advance without giving up democracy. It is very, very important that we should be part of the new world of Africa and Asia." Kohn said the list of Israeli programs in Afro-Asia now includes not only Burma and Ghana (where the Black Star Shipping Line is 60 per cent owned by Ghana and 40 per cent owned, as well as managed, by Israel), but Guinea, Nigeria, Liberia, India, Ceylon, Viet Nam and the Philippines.

Kohn is one of those joyful philosophers who loves to talk and to be asked questions to talk further. He was born in Germany, later spent 20 years in England where he became secretary to the late Dr. Chaim Weizmann, Israel's first President, and then moved to the Holy Land 25 years ago as political secretary of the Jewish Agency. When Israel was established in 1948, it was Kohn who went to the Island of Rhodes to negotiate with Count Folke Bernadotte, the UN Mediator. For one six-month period, he was Jewish Agency representative in Washington. And for the past six years, he has been teaching international relations at Hebrew University here in Jerusalem. Hence the title of "Professor." I saw Kohn in his home, where he had been confined by gout. But apparently the ache was going because he kept hopping up and down and finally hopped right into my taxi with me, hitching a ride as far as the home of Minister of External Affairs Golda Meir where an official reception required his presence.

Kohn recalled some of the events which preceded the Israeli invasion of the Sinai Peninsula in 1956: "The Russians sent vast arms to Egypt and a big Egyptian army was poised against Israel in the Sinai Desert. Then, in the summer, there were the Fedayin raids. Next, military alliances were signed by Egypt with Syria and Jordan, putting their armies under Egyptian control. Finally, they made speeches they were going to attack us. Then we walked in there. Then the French came and gave us their Mysteres. But there never was any alliance." What about the actual French and British troop intervention in Suez? Would you have preferred that they had not come in? "Absolutely. They ruined us. We had to withdraw. They aroused the whole UN. We would have gone ahead anyway."

But why don't you have an alliance with France today? "For us, help is more important than alliance. The French gave us help and they might be embarrassed if we were to ask for a military alliance. That would put them in the bad books of the Arabs -- even worse. And we don't need it. And the French people have us as the only reliable democracy in the Middle East." Shouldn't the British be equally interested in that? "They have vast oil interests in the Arab world. They need the freedom of the Suez Canal."

Kohn also had these comments vis à vis East and West: "Our line was not neutrality, but 'non-identification' -- a more positive step than neutrality, which is a negative concept. Later on it became clear to us that we are part of the Western world. Now we say we are part of the Free World. Originally, we didn't want the Russians to persecute those several million Jews in Eastern Europe as a result of any identification with the West. In the UN debate in 1947, the Russians voted for us when Great Britain voted against. Not because they loved us, but because they wanted the British out. Funny thing though, the Russians were not hated by the Arabs for that. But now the Russians have become more and more anti-Israel. They vote against us on

every issue. We are alone here," Kohn said, "and with opposition all around us it's not such an easy position. We are only members of the UN. If we were attacked today, the only place we could go to would be the UN. The Americans are afraid to enter into any alliance with us because it would put them in the enmity with the Arabs. Even if the offer were made to us, we would have to be very careful. We have to consider the Jews in the Eastern bloc." But then Kohn thought better of his remark: "...not that I think we wouldn't do it, if we were asked to join NATO."



Moshe Sharett is the only man in Israel who has spelled David Ben-Gurion as Prime Minister (from January, 1954 until November, 1955). And then, as the Suez crisis began to develop, "B.G." came back from voluntary retirement to his kibbutz (cooperative farm) in the Negev and told Sharett to move over. Sharett had long served as Israel's Minister of External Affairs, and would again today had he not chosen to publicly refuse all Cabinet posts under Ben-Gurion. Sharett is still a member of the Knesset (Assembly) and rated as No. 2 on the Mapai (Israeli Labor Party) ticket of Prime Minister Ben-Gurion. But many people here also regard Sharett as "B.G.'s" leading opponent. Since he is now out of the

"We are certainly not neutral"

Cabinet, Sharett has been heading up the pocket-book publishing enterprises of Histadrut, the Israeli General Federation of Labor. Publishing actually is not so far afield for this 65-year-old native of Russia who likes to think of himself as a poet. He is an economist as well, and attended the London School of Economics. I found this soft-spoken, eloquent man in his Jerusalem apartment one evening. He had just returned from a strenuous lecture trip to India and was all set to relax and go to the movies. But he graciously changed his plans when I asked to see him. Sharett was one man of those I have met here who was not in a hurry, or at least was kind enough not to give me that impression. He seemed able to talk for hours as he sat on his couch in a smoking jacket, his feet curled up under him.

Sharett put much emphasis on Israel's relation to world Jewry: "We are certainly not neutral. The State was born in a democratic society. Democracy is the system which makes the continuance of Jewish life possible. We are a rapidly developing country. We can't possibly develop without foreign aid. This is our lifeblood. All these things are only possible in the Free World. And this is not balanced by a similar connection with the Communist World." Yet Sharett said it was of "vital concern" to Israel to keep in contact with the 2½ to 3 million Jews behind the Iron Curtain. (Since the World War II massacre of 6 million European Jews -- one-third of the world count -- the bulk of Jews remaining, 5½ million, now live in the U.S.).

Sharett stressed the need for Israel to increase her relations with Afro-Asia, "but by no means at the expense of our Western ties." And he said the matter of Israel being aligned or not aligned was not important in relations with these countries. The essential appeal is that she too is a small country. As for Nasser having any fall out with the Soviet Union, Sharett was pessimistic: "I think Russia will show infinite patience with Nasser. Whatever he gives them is gain to them and a loss to the Western World."

Abba Eban is another London School of Economics man and, like Sharett, is looked upon as an intellectual. (No disgrace in Israel. One cabbie told me: "Ninety per cent of us are members of the intelligensia." I explained to him that in America "egghead" is a dirty word.) Eban, now 43, seemed content to live and work in his native Britain until the Zionists persuaded him that his talents were needed in the Holy Land. He changed his given name from Aubrey to the Hebrew Abba, and he also changed his citizenship. Eban was Israeli Ambassador to both the U.S. and UN for nine years, almost all of his country's life, and left Washington only in May to become President of the Weizmann Institute of Science at Rehovot. Actually, his recall to the Institute is generally regarded as just a waypoint. Eban, along with Shimon Peres, former Director General of the Ministry of Defense, and Gen. Moshe Dayan, former Chief of Staff, are considered to be Prime Minister Ben-Gurion's bright young men of the future. "B.G." saw to it that each was given high priority on the Ma'ariv ticket in the November 3 Knesset elections. (Those who head the priority list are the first to be allocated the seats available.) And at the moment Abba Eban is rumored to succeed Mrs. Golda Meir as Israel's Minister of External Affairs.



egghead

When I saw Eban at his new home on the Weizmann Institute grounds, he made no secret about his joining the new Cabinet, once it was selected. But he said it had yet to be decided whether his post would be at the top of foreign affairs, or as a Minister of State. At any event, he said the fine modern home I was in was his own and even though it was in Rehovot and the capital in Jerusalem, it was only a 40-minute commute in this intimate country.

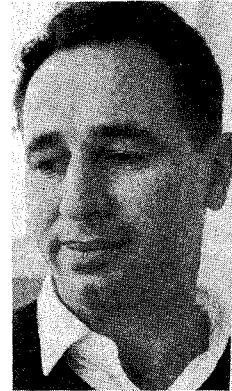
Although in Cairo, as I had written you (WWU - 33-36), the war whoop of "Israel" crops up everywhere, Eban feels his country really does not merit that much attention: "I think Nasser's No. 1 problem is not Israel but the Arab World. And his second problem is how to adjust his relations between the two Great Powers."

What efforts has Israel made toward neutrality? "The question is more, 'Are the Great Powers neutral toward us?' 'Are they equal toward us?' There simply is no comparison between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. One of them respects our integrity and independence, and the other supports the Arabs in every conflict. One of them helped build up our whole economy; the other won't even have any trade with us. (Israel's trade with the entire Eastern bloc is pretty well confined to the purchase of some Rumanian timber.) It isn't for us to decide. The balance doesn't exist in the Great Powers. Fundamentally, the Soviet Union's policy is wanting other nations to join them in an anti-American attitude. The Arabs are capable of this, and are. Our relations with the Western Powers is hardly less intimate than the arrangements for security among the Western Powers themselves. A treaty would be advisable if we could receive it. But the fact that there is not an arrangement doesn't quite put us in the position of India or Indonesia. On the other hand, we are free to make arrangements elsewhere, in Burma, Ghana, Guinea, to some extent in Nigeria, Somaliland and the Cameroons...I don't think the Africans and Asians think much of neutrality at all. If we mean to make a proclamation (about Israeli non-alignment), they couldn't care less. The question is,

'Can or cannot we be of mutual assistance, one to the other?'

Eban also cleared up a remark I had heard in Cairo, to the effect, "What's wrong with the UAR getting arms from the Czechs, the Israelis themselves did?" Eban explained that in December, 1947, right after the Partition of Palestine, an arms purchase contract was arrived at with Czechoslovakia, courtesy Jan Masaryk. When the Communists took over Czechoslovakia the contract continued to be honored, mainly because Russia at that time was championing Israel's cause against Britain. Since 1948, however, Eban said Israel has received no arms from Czechoslovakia, nor from anywhere else in the Eastern bloc.

I mentioned Shimon Peres a little earlier as one of Ben-Gurion's bright young men. To be precise, Peres is 36, a native of Poland, and typical of the almost frenzied rush nearly everybody here seems to be in. I saw Peres in a closet-sized Mapai Party headquarters office. He wore an open-necked shirt and a black sweater (Israel is one country where the coat and necktie are honored in their absence) and was most emphatic in everything he said. It was Peres, during his tenure as Director General of the Ministry of Defense, who did most of the negotiating with France for Israel's arms supply.



"After the UAR's Czech arms deal," Peres said, "we looked for a balance. With the U.S., the cold war was at the very first stage. They said the Eisenhower Doctrine actually covered in case Israel should be attacked by foreign countries. (The 1957 Eisenhower Doctrine followed the Czech arms deal by 1½ years) And also the UN could put in collective security in case of an emergency. But the present organization doesn't have time. Then we reached a point of understanding with France. No formal agreement was necessary." And have you felt constrained since to vote against France at the UN? "We've voted for the independence of Morocco, but she then turned her back to us. The same with Tunisia. It was a complete failure." And Algeria? "We have to face the situation that the Algerians are members of the Arab League. France never asked us to do anything. But we voted for France. It's the natural thing to do for those who are helping you."

Since Peres is considered to be one of the more militant members of the Government, I asked him about the UAR fears that Israel wants to advance her borders. "We are interested in stability in the Middle East. No changes, because we feel even a small change is letting open a bottle full of giants. Israel has nothing to gain by a war. We're at an age where territory doesn't count. The first aim of Israel is to avoid a war." Then Peres added: "Nasser introduced communism into the Middle East. He brought in the Russians ... We would certainly join forces to get Russia out of the Middle East." And: "If Israel would join a community where the Arabs are participating, we would lose a little bit of the Arab hostility to us, prestige vs. security." With that, Peres took a final look at his watch and bolted.

Peres speaks for the majority Mapai Party (47 out of the Knesset's 120 seats, including a seven-seat gain in the elections two weeks ago). Dov Zakin is the spokesman for the Mapam, a leftist, avowedly socialist party which has 9 seats in the Knesset and is represented in "B.G.'s" coalition Cabinet. Zakin is the same age as Peres, 36, Russian-born, a member

of his party's Central Committee Secretariat as well as its "Intelligensia Committee" (that word again). As a youth movement educational director in the U.S. in 1948-1950, he recruited 50 new settlers, as well as a number of pilots from both Canada and the U.S. Zakin is a member of a kibbutz, but calls himself "only a Friday-Sunday husband and farmer" because of the drain on his time from his political work. Zakin came up to my room at Tel Aviv's Hotel Dan for what proved to be an expensive interview: \$1.75 for a pot and two cups of coffee. (The Dan fancies itself to be a Miami Beach-type of hotel and charges accordingly. But even outside its confines, I paid \$11 for a taxi ride to and from nearby Rehovot; \$3 to have a 12-picture roll of film developed and printed; and \$2.75 to the Dan's porter as the supposed cost of fastening back the handle on my typewriter case).

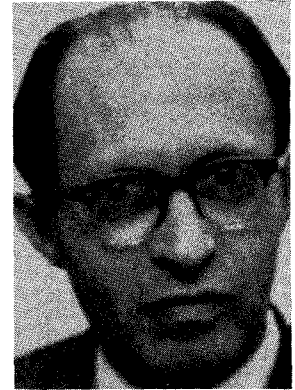


"stupid provocation"

But back to Dov Zakin: "Ben-Gurion said in 1950 that we couldn't solve our problem without an alignment with the U.S., even though there are Jews on both sides of the Iron Curtain. He said we should support and ally completely with the U.S. Slowly, slowly, we lost our independence, which brought us a lot of harm. Russia knew the nature of our policy but expected we would at least be neutral like Austria. Today the economic ties with the U.S. compel us completely to lose our self judgment in international matters. We never were able to vote independently, especially in regard to Afro-Asian matters. Mapam thinks we can't develop real political ties with Afro-Asia unless we change our policy. We are too much associated with France, and France is hated. Eighty-one Afro-Asian countries are invited to the conference in Guinea in January. Israel, the eighty-second, is excluded. Ghana said, 'We can be good friends, but you are too much identified with a single pro-Western line.' Guinea said, 'The Arabs objected.' We should be against both the French policy in Algeria and the Sahara atomic tests. We should support every independent move in Afro-Asia. We should show the armed world, and the neutral world, that we are a part of Asia. We should say to France, 'As far as Africa and Asia, this comes first. We are good friends, but---' We can encircle the Arab countries. Yet the Young Colonels in the Mapai -- Shimon Peres -- think we are a part of Europe. Ben-Gurion says for 20 years there are no prospects of peace with the Arabs. How can you build a strong policy with that? Even DeGaulle is going step by step to appease the Arab countries. Even America is not against Algeria: she didn't vote with France. We might lose France -- and the neutrals -- one day if we don't change. We could take the risk with France as far as Algeria and Sahara, and also with the U.S. We could tell them, 'It is also valuable to you, the U.S., that Israel is a member of the Afro-Asian bloc.' The Sinai Campaign was a great stumbling bloc with the Afro-Asians because, for the first time, they were convinced we were allied with imperialists. We had reasons, but I was against it because we shouldn't have associated with French and English objectives. Our role was defensive and theirs was imperialist. The Inge Toft (the Danish ship with Israeli cargo which Israel announced was headed for the Suez Canal and which the UAR, in turn, has detained there since May) was a stupid provocation. Egypt couldn't have done anything else. Peres said "B.G." and Mrs. Meir didn't know about it. He said this two weeks before the election, to clean their hands. Yet newspapers made the announcements. And it is costing more than \$1000 a day for Israel to the Danish company. It's a waste of money and prestige, and you have no retreat."

Since Zakin is so avowedly for a softer policy toward Afro-Asia, I mentioned Peres' frustrations over the the friendly Israeli moves which were made toward Morocco and Tunisia: "You can't judge policy on the immediate result," he declared.

The third politician with whom I talked was Menachem Begin, the chairman of the so-called "right-wing" Herut Party. The Herut is the outgrowth of the old terrorist Irgun Zva'i Leumi. Begin was also its commander. I interviewed Begin in his small, ground-floor apartment at No. 1 Rosenbaum Street in Tel Aviv, the same one, he said, which was his secret headquarters for two years when he was being hunted by the British. He showed me a photograph of himself with the beard he had grown for disguise. "I'm quite an old man now," Begin said, admitting to all of 46. This short, friendly, Brest-Litovsk-born lawyer was at one time thrown into a concentration camp by the Russians for Zionist activities. He was released to join the Polish Brigade in World War II and came to Palestine with it in 1943. Begin's Herut Party is the Knesset's second largest (next to "B.G.'s" Mapai) and has just increased its seats from 15 to 17.

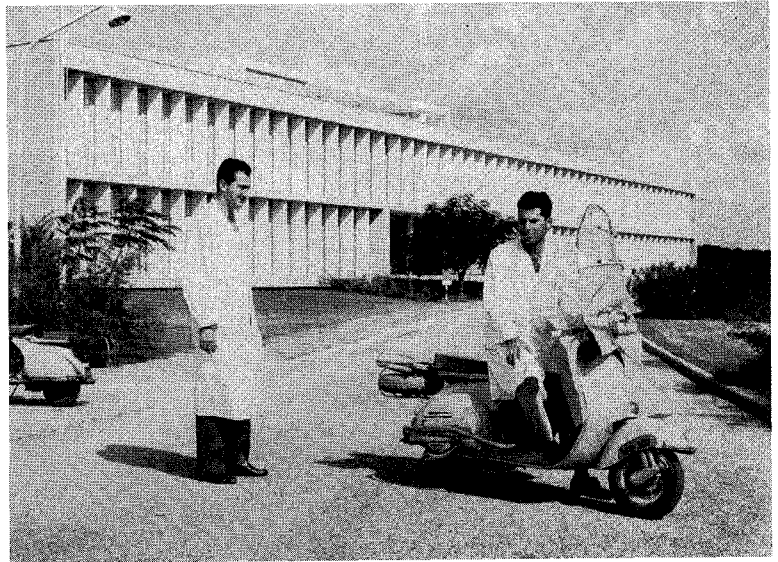
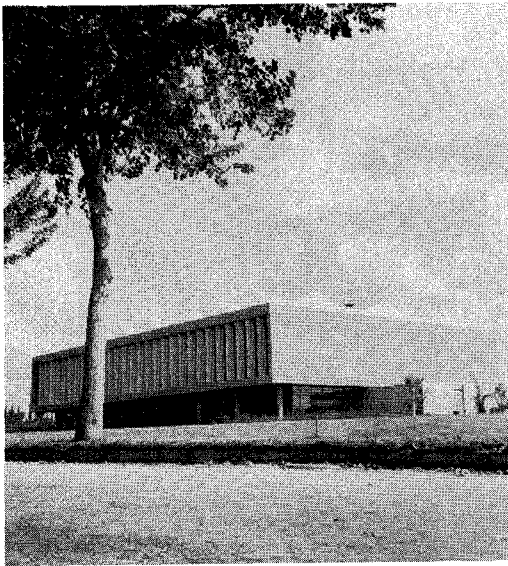


"aged" terrorist

"There is no opposition to the Government except us," Begin declared. "We wouldn't join a Ben-Gurion coalition. ("B.G.", in announcing the other day that he was seeking a "wall-to-wall" coalition for his new Cabinet, made only two exceptions, Begin's Herut and the Communist Party, whose six seats have just been halved to three.) We say there should be private enterprise, a separation between the Histadrut (the labor organization here owns many concerns of its own) and economic enterprise. We believe our people should not forsake the right to the whole country that is historically called Israel. At the time of the Sinai Campaign, the Government actually accented this. We pushed out the Egyptians from the Gaza Strip. But when our real reunion will come, nobody can say."

Then Begin made it clear how his party differs from the Mapai and Mapam on East-West relations: "We can't find alliances in the Communist World so we look to the West. But I don't think we should look to them in any collective pact like NATO. They have, after all, their own interests in the Middle East. We can have -- we can try to have -- bilateral alliances. France for the last few years has played the role of an ally. When a state gives another state such weapons as Mysteres it plays the part of an ally. My friends and I would like to see an official alliance. A French committee created three years ago, just before the Sinai Campaign, headed by Jacques Soustelle, said openly they were for alliance with Israel. They said that the Arab League, as it is headed by Mr. Nasser, is a self-proclaimed enemy of France, as it is a self-proclaimed enemy of Israel. We have mutual interests and almost identical enemies. France we should look to before any other country."

Let me digress from the theme of East-West relations to give the other side of the UAR charges that Israel is intent on aggressive warfare. I had a talk with Mrs. Yael Verad, the Ministry of External Affairs' research specialist on Arab affairs.



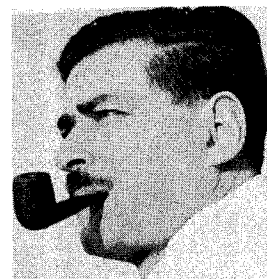
WEIZMANN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE: The emerging state does not neglect basic research

"If we extend to the South," she declared, "what does it add up to? Another desert in Sinai. We have enough to develop with the Negev. It is nearly one-half of Israel. It is not populated. If we are able to bring enough water, that would be the answer to our population problem. Ben-Gurion once said he looked to a 4 million population maximum (double the current count). And if we expand to the East, there is Jordan with 800,000 Arab refugees which we have no reason to want to incorporate. On the North, there is Lebanon and Syria. Lebanon is a saturated population. Syria is a rich country, but the richest parts are on the northern frontier (furthest away from Israel)." And the Gaza Strip to the West which would even out your coastline? "Gaza is not a very good coastline. Why should we try to occupy a poor strip of land which would add nothing but 300,000 Arab refugees? The security problem which might be solved by an even frontier would be more disturbed by the population problem. Both from the economic and security point of view, it would be suicide." And what about Jerusalem, which Israel must share with Jordan, yet which Israel makes much fuss about in referring to it as its capital? "It is a sentimental problem and I don't think anybody is interested. Even the Orthodox Jews who would want to go to the Wailing Wall have not raised this problem." Mrs. Verad also mentioned that in August, Jordan's King Hussein started referring to Jerusalem as his "second capital" (after Amman) and three or four Jordanian Ministers now are required to spend one day a week there. She said Jordan's late King Abdullah looked upon Jerusalem for sentimental and historical reasons: Mohammed supposedly made a one-night stand there on a winged white horse and, more factually, much Arab history originated in Jerusalem. Now, she said, King Hussein is anxious to affirm his right to West Jordan, a right which the UAR has never recognized. Hence his interest in Jerusalem. To my surprise, the incidents between Jordan and Israel over Jerusalem apparently have been very few in recent years. And, more humorously, the divided city has presented such problems as the retrieval of a pair of false teeth which fell from the mouth of an Israeli patient in the French Hospital as he was looking out of the window into no-man's land; and the

wedding of an Israeli Arab girl and a Jordan Arab swain who apparently fell in love through the fence and found the only legal spot for nuptials was under the neutral Mandelbaum Gate.

I also wondered about the charges, outside the UAR as well as inside, that Israel has seriously compromised her cause by refusing to do anything about the Arab refugees who used to live on the land it now occupies. Mrs. Verad said that in 1949 Israel was prepared to accept 100,000 of the (now) 1.1 million refugees, but that the Arabs, "who are not interested in the fate of refugees, but in the political problem of a country which is called Palestine," refused to go along with it. Nowadays, to accept all of the refugees -- as demanded by the Arab States -- would present "security difficulties." "We are ready to pay all indemnities to Arab refugees for property left in Israel, and this can be used in their rehabilitation," she said. And actually, she added, the main problem now concerns the 300,000 in the Gaza Strip. Lebanon and Syria have absorbed most of their able-bodied refugees into the population, she said. And Jordan, anxious to affirm its claim to the West Jordan territory, has gone out of its way to establish a new city for these refugees.

I should mention that although I have moaned about some Israeli officials being rushed and brusque, almost to the point of rudeness, it is after all understandable in a country which started almost from scratch 11 years ago and now is visibly making the desert bloom. Moreover, I had the warmest possible initial welcome here. Although my plane from Athens was hours late and didn't put down at Tel Aviv airport until 3 a.m., there, waiting to greet me, was an old acquaintance, Dr. Louis Miller, director of Israel's Mental Health Services and the equivalent of Israel's chief psychiatrist. Miller, a South African by birth, rearing and education, came to Israel originally to shoulder arms in its fight to exist. He then decided to stay. He has a face so typical of the purposeful people of this frontier country, who wince neither at Arabs, Russians, nor the word "intelligensia," that I thought you might like to have a look.



Cordially,

Warren W. Unna

Received New York December 8, 1959