



# **WAKE UP ISRAEL**

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### W A K E      U P      I S R A E L

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This report takes a hard look at Israel's social, economic and religious problems. The author's past record underlines his conclusions and recommendations:- The situation is serious, urgent action is required.

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## SUMMARY

The work reported here is part of a larger study of the social and economic problems facing democratic countries and is being published in advance of the main work so as to make the results available more quickly. It deals with the social and religious problems of Israel and of the Jewish people. Many of the conclusions apply to other Western democratic societies.

Most Israelis work very hard indeed, work being exhausting, carried out under demanding climatic conditions. They are the highest taxed people in the world, and generally both husband and wife have to work or one has to have two jobs to live rather than to exist. Many Israelis seem to be under strain, often acting emotionally and aggressively towards each other. More and more are finding their way to other countries, leaving Israel for the better working conditions and better life which can be obtained elsewhere.

A conflict situation exists between the Jewish leadership and the Jewish community. The leadership is mostly non-observant and it is the poorer sections of the community who are religious. It is loyalty to the non-observant leadership which is being rewarded, and this discourages adherence to the principles of Judaism. The leadership demands and conditions the population into giving loyalty to the dictates of the state in preference to religious principles and behaviour. Promiscuity is widespread, the resulting social disruption is becoming very apparent, and the report describes the symptoms which indicate the present extent of the disruption. While Judaism is being discouraged and dismantled in this way by the Israeli establishment, Jews abroad are given the impression that Israel is a state which protects Judaism and they donate large sums.

Power is being concentrated in relatively few people and this goes hand in hand with the condoning of promiscuity which weakens democracy thus making it more liable to be taken over by dictatorship. Even trade union organisation has become more authoritarian.

The report points out that in the past whenever they regained Israel the Jewish people ceased to observe their religious laws and were expelled to suffer persecution among other people. This is historical fact and events taking place in Israel today are similar to those which in the past preceded the fall of Israel. One of the conclusions is that the conflict between Israel's leaders and Judaism has brought Israeli society to the brink of destruction from inside. The report compares this with the way in which Jewish leaderships assisted the Nazis in exterminating their own Jewish communities instead of leading them in battle, apparently so as to preserve their own power and position.

It draws attention to the danger that Jewish leaders, outside as well as in Israel, may be putting their own power and position above the interests of the Jewish community.

The author pointed out, before the 1973 'Yom Kippur' war, that Israel's internal problems were already weakening the country and that its fighting efficiency would be affected. Events proved him right. With social problems there comes a point of no return beyond which solutions become impossible by ordinary means. The situation is serious and the report outlines the kind of results that have to be achieved if the problems are to be solved and makes a number of recommendations.

### Introduction

The first part of the report looks at Israel's economic, social and religious problems. Conclusions are then listed, followed by statements of results required if the problems are to be solved, and of ways of achieving this.

If you are a sociologist, make up your mind about the report on the basis of what is said about Israel's social problems. If you are a rabbi, consider what the author says about Judaism and the Torah. As an Israeli, look at what is said about life in Israel today and then consider Israel's future.

### Economic Background

Most Jews in Israel work hard. Work is exhausting, carried out under demanding climatic conditions. Israelis are the highest taxed people in the world, work five and a half days a week, barely able to pay for a room and basic foodstuffs with what they earn. Both husband and wife have to work, or one has to have two jobs to live rather than to exist. This affects family life. Many Israelis seem to be under strain, often acting emotionally and aggressively towards each other.

Accommodation is expensive and difficult to get, and then it has to be bought. Its scarcity and high cost mean that young Israelis find it difficult to marry.

Young immigrants are a source of cheap labour simply because they are young. Employers rely on Arab labour. Israelis are leaving Israel in increasing numbers for the higher standard of living and easier life which can be found abroad.

Parents have to pay fees for higher school education. To get a college or university education one has to pay fees and maintain oneself. Grants are rare.

Some Israelis are very well off, the bulk are not. Poverty seems to be increasing and about 50,000 families live in overcrowded conditions (1972). Jewish beggars, slums and prostitutes are accepted as normal.

Large sums are donated by Jews in the diaspora, largely from America, South Africa and Britain, without any controls whatsoever. One does not know what the money is spent on or who profits from its investment.

### Religion

Russian Jews are not allowed to practise their religion even though the Russian constitution guarantees such freedom. Jews protest strongly and often successfully about Russia's attempt at completely absorbing its minority of about three million Jews.

If Israel were concerned about the possible extinction of Judaism in Russia, it would be beaming Hebrew lessons and religious programmes to Russia's three million Jews. No serious attempts are made to do this. Israel does seem to want the manpower provided by immigrants, but is apparently not concerned about the stifling of Judaism in Russia.

Religious observance is treated lightly and discouraged. When questioned about the shallowness of religious feeling and observance, many Israelis reply 'We don't need to exhibit our Judaism' or 'We don't have to prove that we are Jewish'. They are saying 'We don't have to follow the law' which means 'We don't have to be Jewish'.

Religion has lost its meaning and significance, has ceased to be relevant to the daily lives of most Israelis.

But world Jewry is subjected to a vast expertly directed religious fund raising programme which uses every possible emotionally loaded means to raise funds for the 'Jewish Homeland' from the organised religious communities abroad, including regular appeals by rabbis at religious services. Religion abroad is being used to raise funds for Israel, to get people to visit and spend money in Israel, to emigrate to Israel.

Those who want to be religious can be, but while religion is used to raise funds abroad, religious observance is discouraged at home.

### Promiscuity and its effects

The young are subjected to the same influences as in the west. Men and women are encouraged to sleep around casually. Pre-marital sex appears to be the rule instead of the exception, particularly so among students. Israel is the only western country which compels girls to join its forces and this throws boys and girls together in a way which encourages pre-marital sex. Adultery seems to be condoned.

The results are becoming obvious:-

- 1 The number of new registered cases of venereal disease in 1968 was more than double that in 1965. A rise in drug addiction has taken place among young people in Universities and other institutes (1969).
- 2 That there are Jewish prostitutes is taken for granted. Many Jewish girls have married Arabs. There are Jewish women in Israel who serve Arabs as prostitutes by choice, this apparently being accepted by Israeli society.
- 3 Crime is on the increase, police investigating departments are said to be understaffed and underpaid.
- 4 Birthrate is dropping. In Tel Aviv it dropped from 19 to 13.2 per 1000 inhabitants in only ten years, from 1957 to 1967. Israelis in any case have a much lower fertility than their neighbours, or compared with Arabs living in Israel.
- 5 The country has already lost its creativity. Its art is without sense of purpose, unrelated to the reality of life for its people, is purely decorative and badly produced. Its monuments are sometimes not even decorative, often empty of meaning and then the visitor is told that they are 'symbolic'.

Jewish girls are frequently persuaded to spend some time in Israel for high, often religious, motives. Far too many leave with the engrained habit of casually sleeping around. This applies to youths as well. The habit is exported by them to their communities abroad when they return home. Israelis visiting these communities do the same. Jewish communities in the diaspora are being attacked from the inside by promiscuity imported from Israel.

Promiscuity damages the individual and weakens the family. It has taken hold, condoned by the establishment. Social disruption is becoming very apparent, social breakdown is starting. Promiscuity is being exported to Jewish communities in the diaspora.

### Establishment

A Jewish establishment has been created which runs the Jewish working class. Jew exploits Jew, the right to strike is limited by law so that workers cannot freely withdraw their labour. The slave cannot withdraw his labour, the free man can, so that a basic freedom has been restricted.

The establishment has a firm grip on the general population. Even the Histadruth, Israel's Federation of Labour, seems no exception. Its central executive is apparently unable to introduce worker participation in management, in the enterprises it controls, while the management of the same enterprises becomes more authoritarian and tougher. The government has taken power away from the trade union membership and given it to the trade union leaders. This means more direction from the top, means more authoritarian trade union organisation. \*

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\* See also Appendix 1:- Histadruth



The establishment supports itself against others and dispenses patronage. The extent to which this takes place in Israel has found expression in an Israeli joke: 'To get anywhere in Israel one needs a good dose of vitamin P' where P stands for 'proteksia', for protection. This is the Israeli way of describing the network of those who run the country.

In Britain the private fee-paying school system and old-boy network, in Russia the Communist party, perform the same function. He who pays the piper calls the tune. To get on one has to adhere to their standards, has to adhere to the standards of the Israeli establishment.

European Jews tend to have better positions, greater income, higher education and smaller families than Jews from middle eastern Arab or underdeveloped countries. They are also less observant. Sephardi Jews lack opportunity, get pushed lower down the economic scale. The result has been a division of the population into have and have-not classes according to where they come from, according to strength of their religious beliefs.

Leadership groups in business, government, the professions and in the academic world are distinctly less observant than the general run of Israeli Jews. Nearly half are totally non-observant and never attend the synagogue.

Those who are non-observant run the country, those who are religious are losing out. Those who are non-observant get on, those who are religious do not. Jews in the diaspora meet with exactly the same situation.

Israelis seem to get very little return for their hard work. It so happens that the population is Jewish but to get on one has to leave one's Judaism behind. The establishment, however, present Israel to Jews abroad as a state which protects Judaism, while at the same time discouraging religious observance.

Why leaders of a country should wish to dismantle Judaism is explored in the following sections on Judaism and on the Torah.

## Judaism

Jewish history is very definite. On regaining Israel we have in the past ceased to observe the law and were expelled back to persecution in the diaspora.

The loss of Israel resulted in each case from a process of social weakening from within, resulting from non-observance. History shows that the Jewish non-religious establishment was the tool of destruction, in the past as now.

Our religious principles have the force of law. Judaism is a way of life. There is no distinction between the secular and the religious.

The Torah serves those who are enslaved, oppressed, persecuted and uneducated. It teaches social responsibility. The higher up we go in society, the more conditioned people are to serve the leaders who are motivated by self-interest alone. The leaders demand loyalty only to themselves regardless of the consequences to others and oppose social responsibility. Hence they oppose what the Torah teaches.

## The Torah

The Torah contains clear warning about betrayal by our own leadership at our greatest occasion and tells us what has to be done.

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming, they demanded a god from Aaron. Aaron asked the people for their gold, and they gave it to him. With this he made them a god of gold whom they worshipped instead of the one God, doing so at their request. They exclaimed that it was this god of gold who released them from slavery.

In the same way the Israeli leadership asks Jews for their gold and gets vast amounts. The leaders run the country and, by rewarding non-observance, put loyalty to themselves (god of gold) above the belief in the one God. People ask for non-observance and promiscuity and the leadership gives them what they want. The people proclaim their allegiance to the state (that is to their leaders, the god of gold), having been conditioned to disregard Judaism and the one God as irrelevant to modern life.

Once again the tablets, and the basis for freedom which is written on them, have been smashed. Once again you are being called to stand up and be counted. Is it to be freedom and the law, or destruction?

The trend of events in Israel needs to be halted and reversed before it is too late. The climate of public opinion needs changing, and the establishment has to be put under pressure to do this. The flow of funds to Israel may have to be reduced and the establishment put under pressure from within Israel. Both would need to be done at the same time as the Israeli establishment may otherwise be tempted to ignore the pressure of world Jewry in spite of falling income, or may disregard public opinion at home because of its secure financial position.

The Torah indicates clearly that the establishment will attempt to deny responsibility but that people are out of control because the establishment let them get out of control.

## Conclusions

- 1 Israel is being run by non-observant leaders and their establishment. While Israelis seem to get little return for hard work, Judaism is almost being dismantled. But Jews abroad are given the impression that Israel is a state which protects Judaism, and donate vast sums.
- 2 Promiscuity has taken hold in Israel, condoned by the establishment. The resulting social disruption is becoming very apparent, social breakdown is starting. Drug taking, a direct consequence, has taken hold already.  
  
The introduction of sex education has resulted in the same pattern of even more destructive social change in all countries where it has been introduced<sup>(3)</sup>, destroying from within the society in which it takes place. Promiscuity in the end does even far greater damage than is already apparent in Israel.
- 3 In addition, promiscuity and non-observance are being exported to Jewish communities in the diaspora which are already struggling for survival against similar pressures from their environment. This contributes to their weakening.
- 4 Power is again being concentrated in a relatively few people at the top who put loyalty to themselves above Judaism, who put personal power above the interest of the Jewish community. \*
- 5 The cost of appointing to important positions people whose first loyalty is to the leaders instead of to the community, appears to be very great indeed. The increasing pollution of the environment, adulteration of food, spoiling of amenities of countryside and towns, production of expensive shoddy unreliable goods, increasing white-collar inefficiency and increasing way in which people are being directed by bureaucracy,

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\* See also Appendix 2:- Holocaust.

indeed the general lowering of the quality of life, all bear witness to this. And increasing pace of scientific and technological advance points towards our having to face even greater problems in the near future.

Judaism, the Law, teaches social responsibility. Those who are observant know that people, the family, and the community matter and generally act accordingly. Those who observe the Law care about people, family and community. Judaism is utterly relevant today.

- 6 The conflict between Israel's leaders and Judaism has brought Judaism and Israeli society to the brink of destruction from inside. Israel's leaders would have little difficulty in escaping the catastrophe they are causing, nor would they have any scruples about doing this, having wealth and being in the position to anticipate events.

Israel's internal social problems are already weakening the country. Its fighting efficiency will be affected in due course. With social problems there comes a point of no return beyond which solutions become impossible by ordinary means. Social analysis indicates that there is no time to be lost.

Events taking place in Israel today are similar to those which in the past preceded the fall of Israel. The present crisis is immediate and all-important, the trend must be stopped and reversed. The outcome will decide the fate of Judaism and Israel, will decide between freedom and the law on the one hand and destruction on the other.

## Required Results

The kind of positive results expected from Israel's establishment, in government, business, the professions, the academic world and in the armed forces, are as follows:-

- 1 Those in important and in public opinion forming positions should be expected to set an example to others when it comes to observing Jewish laws.
- 2 The interest of the community has to be taken into account when making decisions, social costs need to be allowed for. It follows that important positions need to be filled by those to whom the community and Judaism matter.  
  
One way of encouraging observance is to promote those who are.
- 3 Agencies which spend funds contributed by world Jewry should be under control of elected Jews, paid by the community, presenting clear and audited accounts to the community. Election should be for not more than one limited term of office.  
  
The least we need to know is how much is received and who spends how much on what, and who profits from the sums so invested in the community.
- 4 One job per family should be sufficient to provide its members with a good life. This applies equally well to the young who want to marry and set up home. Income should cover social needs and depend on service to the community.  
  
There should be work for those who want it. There should be equal opportunity dependent only on ability and on the extent to which the individual has the interest of the community at heart. We need to find ways of doing this.
- 5 A positive approach should be worked out, and applied, for showing on mass media the relevance of Judaism to today's problems.
- 6 Schools should stress the relevance of the Law and the importance of its observance to a much greater extent than at present.

- 7      The importance of the family, and the advantages of restricting sexual relations to within marriage, both to the individual and to Judaism, need to be emphasised.
- Promiscuity destroys family and Judaism. Sex education should not be taught in Israeli schools.
- 8      Education in the armed forces should stress the importance of Judaism and its teachings. The operations of the armed forces need to be arranged to discourage promiscuity. Conscription of women should be stopped.
- 9      One should not accept or portray as normal the kind of behaviour which is condemned by Jewish law, such as promiscuity, violence, crime and drug taking. This applies to the entertainment and mass media in any of their forms, to radio, theatre, cinema and television, to plays and songs, newspapers and books, to give examples. These should not portray and condone or even encourage behaviour and relationships condemned by Jewish law.
- Neither should Judaism be slighted, or made to appear irrelevant or shown to take second place to some other allegiance such as state or the employing company.
- 10     Do not be taken in by sweet words, plausible sounding excuses, empty phrases, by promises intended to delay action till it is too late. Judge only by what people do, by the effect of their actions, and by who benefits.
- To some extent the establishment may not have been aware of the serious consequences of their past behaviour. They can show this by helping to undo the damage they have done.

## Recommendations

Urgent action is required to put pressure on Israel's leaders and on their establishment to stop them from dismantling Judaism, to stop them from condoning promiscuity.

The climate of public opinion has to be changed. Judaism is relevant to life today. People have to be helped to battle their way back to Judaism, to overcome promiscuity.

Pressure has to be applied from within Israel and from outside. Both need to be applied at the same time, until positive steps taken in Israel have stopped and reversed the trend of events, as Israeli leaders would otherwise be tempted to ignore the pressure of world Jewry or would disregard public opinion at home. The flow of funds to Israel may have to be reduced before they will take effective action to reverse the trend of events.

Speak up against what is happening in Israel, against what is being done to all of us, against promiscuity and drug taking.

Make Jews aware of what is happening. Find ways of doing this. One way would be to show this report to others and to discuss the problems in groups.

Speak up for positive steps to be taken to stop and reverse the trend of events in Israel. Make your voice heard, arouse public interest, get publicity, get results.

Stand up and be counted.



## Appendix 1

### Histadruth

The Histadruth, Israel's Federation of Labour<sup>(4)</sup>, acts as trade union and as employer, owning and controlling enterprises on behalf of its members. About 90% of the country's wage earning and salaried employees are among its members, it controls about one-quarter of the economy. Histadruth bodies are based on proportional representation of political parties and there is a very close relationship between its leadership and the government which in turn controls much of the economy.

The National Convention of the Histadruth is its highest policy deciding body. It is directly elected and its decisions have to be implemented. Its Eighth Convention, held in 1956, decided that in Histadruth enterprises the workers should participate in management. The Histadruth Executive controls both the trade union activities and the enterprises. The management of the enterprises successfully opposed participation and the Histadruth Executive has not implemented the decision of the 1956 Convention.

The attitude of Histadruth's managers towards their employees hardly differs from that of managers in government or privately owned companies. Top positions, instead of being filled from below and from the trade union movement, are being filled by people from the army and the universities.<sup>(4)</sup> In other words a more obedient management is being recruited and management is getting tougher.

Local Workers' Committees represent the workforce in any organised place of work. They are subordinate to the Histadruth's local Labour Council, that is to its Head Office, and the Histadruth lays down that its representative should be present during negotiations. The government has passed a law which says that it is the most powerful union which is party to an agreement. Hence it is not the Workers' Committee but the Histadruth which is party to the agreement.<sup>(4)</sup>

About half of the local Workers' Committees in its own enterprises consider that the Histadruth does not represent them as it should, neither consulting them nor paying attention to their needs<sup>(4)</sup>. Unofficial

strikes result from such neglect, drawing attention to local unresolved grievances. If there are too many unofficial strikes then trade union officials have to be made responsible for promptly taking up their members' grievances with management, and need to be replaced if they do not do so.

Instead, the government passed a law restricting the right to strike. Unofficial strikes are out but the Histadruth can call strikes. Local grievances are bottled up, resentment increases, the conflict becomes more severe. Introducing such legislation generally results in fewer but bigger strikes which do far more damage to the economy than before. So what such a law does is to silence effective protest against the trade union establishment and to increase the power of the trade union leaders to direct and control their members. The free man can withdraw his labour as he pleases so that a basic freedom has been restricted.

## Appendix 2

### Holocaust

As the Nazis advanced across Europe, in country after country, Jewish Councils were formed, as a rule consisting of the locally recognised Jewish leaders to whom the Nazis gave enormous powers. The Jewish officials knew that deportation meant death by gassing in extermination camps but voluntarily kept the truth from their Jewish communities. The Councils were informed by Eichmann or his men of how many Jews were needed to fill each train, and they made out the list of deportees. They succeeded in misleading their communities to the extent that some people volunteered for deportation to Auschwitz and denounced those who tried to tell them the truth as being 'not sane'. The few Jews who tried to hide or to escape were rounded up by a special Jewish police force.<sup>(1)</sup>

In Belgium, among those Jews who had fled were all the more important Jewish leaders. Hence there was no Jewish Council to register the Jews and not a single Belgian Jew was ever deported. Stateless Jews, easily recognisable and most difficult to hide in such a small country, were shipped to Auschwitz in large numbers.<sup>(1)</sup>

Jewish leaders kept the truth from their Jewish communities which, had they known the truth, might have resisted the oppressor, might have fought against extermination, might thus have endangered the lives, power and wealth of their leaders which at that time depended on the oppressor. Instead of leading their people in total resistance to the oppression, the Jewish leaders 'sought to negotiate the fate of their people in exchange for the preservation of their institutions'<sup>(2)</sup> on which their power and position was based so as to preserve their own power. In the end, of course, most of them were also deported.

The reason Jews did not fight the enemy seems largely to have been that they were betrayed by their leaders, that they were handed over to the enemy. It happened in East and West, with those who were assimilated and those who were not, with those who were orthodox and with those who were non-observant. 'Jewish society, like the rest of society, was one of classes in which the interests of the leaders did not necessarily coincide with those of the others, in spite of a shared religion'<sup>(2)</sup>.

Most Jewish leaders sacrificed their communities, apparently so as to preserve their personal power. In Israel a stratified society has been created. Power is again being concentrated in a relatively few people at the top whose actions seem to indicate that they put loyalty to themselves above Judaism, put personal power above the interest of the Jewish community.

### Appendix 3

#### Use of Labels.

Labels are used to obtain an emotional response towards the establishment's aims, and to smear and thus discredit the opposition.

Israel has limited the right to strike and its people seem to see little for the hard work they do. A state which does this can hardly be called 'socialist'. Similarly 'promiscuity' can be called by labels which are intended to sound more attractive and inviting, such as 'permissiveness'.

In Russia those who stand up against the system and for personal freedom of the individual are labelled 'reactionary' and 'insane' so as to discredit them. Israel may have political parties of the extreme right and of the extreme left, but those who speak up for religious values are at times labelled 'right wing' to discredit their concern for people and for the community.

## Appendix 4

### Sources

- 1 Eichmann in Jerusalem - A Report on the Banality of Evil; Dr. Hannah Arendt, Faber and Faber, 1963, p. 101-105, 150.
- 2 Black Sabbath; Robert Katz, Arthur Barker, 1969.
- 3 Sex; L.W. Eickhoff, Consultant Psychiatrist, Guardian, 12/9/1970.
- 4 Workers' Participation in Management - Expectation and Experience; J.Y. Tabb and A. Goldfarb, Israel Institute of Technology, Pergamon Press, 1970.



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