

Dissent

COMMUNICATIONS

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Henry Pachter

Troubles of a Jewish Conscience

June 12, 1967

I have talked to a number of citizens of Jewish descent—some of whom have relatives in Israel or have lived there—who, like me, have been troubled by the ruthless actions of the Tel Aviv government in the recent conflict. While we hold no brief for Arab provocations and fully understand Israel's right to self-defense, we are deeply disturbed by General Dayan's independence in the execution of his assignment. By proclaiming the Army's determination to keep the Old City of Jerusalem, he contradicted the words of his Foreign Minister who—almost at the same time—promised the United Nations Security Council that Israel would annex no territory. By pursuing the Egyptians until his troops had reached the Suez Canal, he defied the U.N. Security Council's cease-fire order; by continuing the war in Syria long after the deadline of the cease-fire had expired, he defied world opinion.

In addition, we note with regret a number of incidents which require a thorough investigation by impartial authorities:

The refusal, at the beginning of the crisis, to accept the UNEF on Israeli territory;

The repeated disregard of U.N. Security Council orders and the welsling and hemming on the given word of the Foreign Minister or his representative in the United Nations;

The killing of 11 UNEF members in the Gaza Strip;

The occupation of U.N. Truce Supervision Commission Headquarters in Jerusalem;

The brutal expulsion of Arab refugees from conquered territory west of the Jordan River.

The United States has been proud to support the only democratic government in the Near East. It would be sad if that government were to be replaced by a military dictatorship or if it were swayed by militaristic-chauvinistic passions which might prevent a just and fair peace. Generosity behooves the victor and we hope that Israel, while insisting on a peace which would give it as much security as can be expected within a rather imperfect system of states, will

moderate its demands in such a way as to avoid additional humiliations, which might only give the Arabs and their allies new cause for revenge;

make constructive proposals for a fair solution of the refugee problem.

I am frankly dismayed by the inclusion in the cabinet of Menachem Begin, a terrorist, fascist, and expansionist.

We further note with regret the wave of mistaken chauvinism among American Jews and their friends. In a democracy we are taught to support our government not blindly but critically; this should also be the rule for the support of our friends. If they are wrong, we feel compelled to tell them so. We therefore had to take exception, regretfully but firmly, to a statement of blind support, published in *The New York Times* by a number of writers usually associated with the Left and presuming to speak in the name of "the intellectuals." It was particularly surprising to find among

the signers some persons who previously had associated themselves with protests against the American conduct in the Vietnam War. Is it too much to ask for consistency? We certainly condemn the aggressive policies of the Arab dictators and of the Soviet government which abetted their provocations. But we continue to uphold the ideals of humanity and of obedience to international law against our own and any other government, and we hope that the peace will be fair to all. We further hope that the United Nations' authority will be restored in the area, especially that an independent peace guard will be constituted and that it will be given sovereignty in disputed strategic areas such as the Gaza Strip and the hills overlooking the Israeli-Syrian border, as well as the City of Jerusalem with the holy places of many nations.

Bob Simon

Questions on the Freedom Budget

The Freedom Budget is a coherent, pragmatic, democratic, non-apocalyptic program for political action. Unfortunately, the Vietnam War makes it far more utopian than anything proposed by Narodnicki students who allegedly don't understand politics.

This is not the fault of Bayard Rustin (who has been caricatured by Staughton Lynd as a "labor lieutenant of capitalism"). Rustin is committed

to getting what people need to reconstruct their lives through tactically sound politics. Real options for action are being constricted by a deteriorating national situation rather than by leaders "selling 'out" the movement.

White middle-class America is moving to the Right—not toward garrison-state fascism, but toward an endorsement, no matter how apathetic, of an indefinite future of urban decay, repression of the ghettos, welfare doles,