

# Israel and South Africa : Two Beleaguered Elites

By NATHANIEL WEYL

In the Middle East, Israel is an enclave of creativity in a surrounding desert of peoples who have not made a single significant contribution to the world in the last four centuries. In sub-Saharan Africa, the white people of South Africa and Rhodesia are similar creative enclaves in a sea of primitive mediocrity. The Middle Eastern societies are the backwash of former higher civilizations which have materially decayed to a point where there is a danger of extinction; the Negro societies of sub-Saharan Africa have not risen to the civilization level.

There are, of course, a few islands of accomplishment in this vast Near-Eastern area and there are variations in intelligence among the peoples, classes, castes and tribes which comprise the Arab-speaking portion of Islam. The Lebanon is more like a dynamic European state than any of the others, with people of greater ability than the average in the Near East. Nevertheless, the Arab world, as a whole, is non-creative. This cannot be attributed primarily to such environmental factors as poverty and malnutrition. The Near East was an area of prodigious civilization-building and cultural ferment for several millennia during which the masses were poorer and worse fed than they are today. Poverty did not prevent China from producing Nobel physicists or India from giving the world distinguished mathematicians, scientists and creative writers.

No Arab has ever won a Nobel prize in science; no modern Arab has, to my knowledge, made any first-class invention or discovery. Over recent centuries the Arabs have managed to ruin their land resources\* by inept agricultural practice and to squat parasitically on vast oil resources which more energetic and able peoples have developed. The so-called Arab renaissance involves chiefly the emergence of an hysterical, pseudo-intellectual élite, almost entirely verbal and legalistic, concerned not with taking constructive steps to improve the squalid and inert Arab society, but with voicing largely imaginary grievances and blaming other people for its own failures.

\* And those of the Roman Empire in Africa where they destroyed the irrigation systems and other conservation factors.— EDITOR.

## THE EGALITARIAN FIASCO

Under Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson the United States squandered hundreds of millions of dollars in underwriting the fledgling black states of Africa which emerged from the suicide of the colonial system. An area of continental dimensions, which had formerly been an island of progress and order in a world shaken by wars and revolutions, was transformed into an inferno in which tribalism replaced nationality, genocide order, arbitrary power law, and dictatorship institutional government. This reversion towards barbarism was bewildering and unexpected to those egalitarian politicians who believed that all races and peoples are essentially equal in innate ability, that history and institutions are irrelevant to the forging of viable societies and that democracy on the American model is a universal panacea.

The Soviet decision to pour \$3 billion of arms into Arab countries whose armies lacked the ability, courage, and self-reliance needed in modern war derived from exactly the same illusion that the human element is unimportant. The concept of man as a homogeneous abstract entity has unfortunately been almost as popular in the United States as in the Soviet world. John Locke with his psychology of *tabula rasa* exerted a potent and malign influence on the Founding Fathers of the American Republic. The theory that men are equal in innate capacity had been propounded with equal vigor by Rousseau and other *philosophes*. Since the Declaration of Independence was designed to win French backing for the American cause, it contained the resounding slogan: "All men are created equal." While Thomas Jefferson was much too intelligent and sophisticated to believe this,<sup>1</sup> his words became part of the American creed. In its Communist form, as in Rousseau's system, the *tabula rasa* theory conceived of men's minds as interchangeable, as blackboards on which the hand of authority could write whatever it fancied. Even though propagated in the name of democracy, this egalitarian hypothesis is inherently destructive of free societies since it denies

<sup>1</sup> Contrary to the general, ill-informed opinion, Thomas Jefferson was not an egalitarian but rather the outstanding élitist political philosopher whom the United States has produced. In characterizing proposals for public education in his *Notes on Virginia*, Jefferson wrote: "By this means twenty of the best geniuses will be raked from the rubbish annually and be instructed, at the public expense, so far as the grammar schools go." He once defined the American purpose as "an aristocracy of achievement arising from a democracy of opportunity". On 28th October 1813 he wrote to John Adams: "For I agree with you that there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents. . . . The natural aristocracy I consider as the most precious gift of nature for the instruction, the trusts, and government of society."

the uniqueness of the individual and hence, by implication, the crucial importance to society of the right to dissent.

Elsewhere I have attempted an analysis of the historic, institutional and biogenetic causes of the torpor and intellectual inertia of the Arab world.<sup>2</sup> Without retracing this ground we can say that the denizens of Arabic-speaking Islam are essentially people who live outside of history and the modern world, who contribute little and achieve little, who are imbued with power to destroy, but not to create, and who constitute the ashes or embers of once viable culture-civilizations.

#### SOUTH AFRICA AND ISRAEL

The large and self-evident similarities between South Africa and Israel have been somewhat obscured by the difference in the ideologies of the two countries and the relationship between them has sometimes been characterized by ambivalence.<sup>3</sup> Jewish fears of neo-nazism and liberal hatred of South Africa have combined to magnify the importance and persistence of the anti-Semitic and pro-Hitler sentiment which existed in South Africa during the 1930s and early 1940s.

The Afrikaners, like the ancient Hebrews, were "people of the Book". To them the Old Testament was both divinely inspired history and their guide to moral conduct. Addicted to a rigid Calvinism, they trekked into the wilderness of the interior to build their own country and govern it themselves on religious principles and without British domination. Since the Bible was usually the only book of the *Vortrekkers* the parallel between their wanderings in the wilderness and those of the ancient Hebrews in the land of Canaan made a deep impression on their minds. In their many victorious struggles with the Zulus and other alien peoples the Afrikaners again saw themselves playing the rôle of the Old Testament Hebrews, that of a righteous minority inspired with a divine mission and guided by Providence.

During the years of Nazi rule in Germany South African attitudes toward the Jews changed and anti-Semitism became rife.

<sup>2</sup> Nathaniel Weyl, "The Arab World: A Study of Biogenetic Disintegration," *THE MANKIND QUARTERLY*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, July-September 1967, pp. 26-43.

<sup>3</sup> In this context South Africa means the white population of that country only since it alone rules and since the South African whites, whether rightly or wrongly, consider that they and the Bantu lack a common language, culture or territory and hence do not constitute either a multi-racial community or a nation. The color bar has been the traditional means of enforcing this separation where the two races occupy the same terrain. *Apartheid* is the emerging substitute solution, designed to make the two races allopatric.

Its basic causes seem to have been the conspicuous presence of Jews in the South African Communist Party and in other subversive movements and also in the mining and financial plutocracy. A poor white problem among the Afrikaners during this era contributed to unrest and hatred. Pro-Nazi movements sometimes won public sympathy because Britain was regarded as the traditional enemy and because of the large population of German stock in South Africa and South West Africa.

The Nationalist electoral victory in 1948 caused consternation and gloom among South Africa's Jewish population. Jewish fears of an outbreak of anti-Semitism, however, were almost immediately proved groundless. Dr Daniel François Malan, the South African Prime Minister, immediately gave the nascent state of Israel *de jure* recognition and permitted South Africans to volunteer in the armed forces of the new Jewish state. Consequently, more Jewish volunteers enlisted from South Africa than any other foreign state and the nucleus of the Israeli Air Force consisted of South African contingents.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Dr Malan was the first British Commonwealth Prime Minister to visit Israel. On his return he told a Jewish audience in Cape Town: "The greatness of a nation does not, after all, consist in the vastness of its wealth but in the extent and the greatness of its inward qualities of spirit and soul." In an interview with leading members of the Jewish Board of Deputies, the central organization of South African Jewry, Dr Malan pointed out that his government "stood for a policy of non-discrimination against any section of the White population of South Africa. . . ."<sup>5</sup> In a major policy statement of July 8, 1951, the South African Jewish Board of Deputies responded to these approaches by declaring that it represented the interests of the entire Jewish community and hence could not adopt any partisan political position.

An Afrikaner editor defined his country's policies in these succinct terms: "We have two aims. Not to drown in a British sea; and not to drown in a Black sea. Our aim is Afrikaner survival."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the Jews of Palestine had fought for years against the British and the state of Israel was continuing to fight against engulfment by an Arab sea.

Saluting the new state of Israel, the leading Nationalist newspaper, *Die Burger*, wrote in May 1948:

The small Jewish community in Palestine, barely more than 600,000 strong, wishes to carve out for itself and for

<sup>4</sup> Henry Katzew, *Apartheid and Survival*, Simondium Publishers, Cape Town, 1965, p. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Katzew, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Katzew, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

racial brethren without a homeland a place on the map against the opposition of hostile states with a population of 30,000,000-40,000,000. If this is folly, then it is folly on an heroic scale.

At a time when exchange control prevailed in South Africa the Nationalist Government permitted the transfer of funds to Israel. In 1952 Dr Malan committed South Africa to defend the Middle East "because that is the door through which the (Communist) enemy will enter Africa. . . ." It was evident that he viewed Israel and South Africa as bastions of the Free World.

For 15 years the Nationalist Press consistently praised and supported Israel, sharing the distinction with the Press of Scandinavia and Holland.

Then in 1961 the President of Upper Volta visited Israel and the two countries issued a joint statement condemning all racial discrimination and *apartheid* in particular. Dr Verwoerd's newspaper, *Die Transvaaler*, expressed its "dumb amazement" at this unexpected and gratuitous attack. It asked:

And is there any real difference between the way that the people of Israel are trying to maintain themselves amid non-Jewish peoples and the way the Afrikaner is trying to remain what he is? The people of Israel base themselves upon the Old Testament to explain why they do not wish to mix with other people; the Afrikaner does this too. . . . Has not the time come for Jews in South Africa to do some information work in Jerusalem?

The editorial continued with a reminder that countless Jews were enabled to leave South Africa to fight for Israel's survival and to help create the new state. "All this has been connived at with good will while an American Jew who does military service in Israel immediately loses his citizenship. Is Israel willing to sacrifice all this? If so, she must say so."<sup>7</sup>

Later in 1961 Israel joined 66 other nations in censuring a speech to the United Nations by Mr Eric Louw, South African Minister of Foreign Affairs. This attack on freedom of speech was characterized by Mr Louw as an act of "hostility and ingratitude". The *Jewish Herald*, organ of the Revisionist Jews who are nationalist rather than socialist, thought that Tel Aviv's attack on "one of Israel's first and staunchest friends" was "unwarranted, unjustified and politically unrealistic".

The cordial relations which had prevailed between the two countries were progressively destroyed because of the ideological intransigence of the Israel Government — particularly that of

<sup>7</sup> Henry Katzew, *op. cit.*, p. 26. Actually, American Jews who fought for Israel were not stripped of their citizenship.

Eshkol — on the race issue. In 1963 the Israeli representative to the United Nations, who boasted that his country had been among the first to bar shipments of arms and strategic materials to South Africa, stated that the Jewish people stood “in the vanguard of the battle against any form of discrimination”, and advocated decisive, concerted steps to end *apartheid* in South Africa. This declaration “deeply distressed” the Jewish Board of Governors which had never condemned South Africa’s racial policies. When Israel lowered the status of her diplomatic mission to South Africa Prime Minister Verwoerd called the step “a slap in the face for South African Jews, who did not deserve it”. He considered the action merely a political maneuver in the hope of “currying favor with the non-white states in Africa” and correctly predicted that, regardless of how much Israel pandered to these black republics, they would leave her in the lurch in the event of another show-down with the Arabs.

Israeli technicians were sent *gratis* to black Africa and Israeli officers did their utmost to train Congolese military men. In 1964 Eshkol joined Jomo Kenyatta in pledging co-operation to end colonialism. The Israeli Foreign Minister denounced what he called “the usurping of power by an illegal regime in Rhodesia” and Prime Minister Eshkol made the historically absurd assertion that Jews and Negroes were bound together by centuries of oppression and had won their independence simultaneously. It apparently did not occur to him that there could be a significant distinction between a persecuted élite and primitive peoples who were enslaved to do unskilled manual labor.

It seems not improbable that Israeli hostility to South Africa will abate. The similarity of the two states in respect to their political position and problem of survival may be officially denied in Jerusalem but this does not mean that it is not privately recognized. The bread Israel cast on black waters never returned. Out of military and survival crisis Israel is developing a tougher, more realistic and more nationalistic leadership than that of Levi Eshkol.<sup>8</sup> In the United States Jewry has discovered that the Black Power movement and other Negro groups expound a virulent anti-Semitism at times reminiscent of that of the Nazis and this despite (or is it because of?) the fact that the Jews, more than any other group in the United States, have fought to advance the Negro and remove his disabilities.

The world Communist movement clearly recognizes the community of interest and position between Israel and the white states of southern Africa. At the Eighth Council Meeting of the Afro-

<sup>8</sup> A Tel Aviv joke of two years ago revolved around the fact that Ian Fleming’s fictional counterspy had the code number 007. “What is the difference between Eshkol and James Bond?” The answer: “Seven.”

Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) in Nicosia in February 1967 a General Declaration was passed which condemned Israel's policy towards the Arabs, the racial policies of South Africa and "genocide by the Portuguese in Africa". At the International Conference in Support of the Peoples of South Africa and the Portuguese Colonies, which met in Khartoum in January 1969, Israel and South Africa were assailed as the "two imperial pincers in the north and south of Africa".<sup>9</sup>

Thus alignments are becoming clarified. The Communist world is successfully mobilizing the have-not peoples — poor, undeveloped, ill-equipped with intellectual or executive élites — to overrun and conquer the enclaves of order and prosperity which are ruled by more creative elements. The illusion is propagated that the have-not peoples can enjoy prosperity by the simple expedient of plundering the enclaves and there is little understanding of the fact, so painfully visible from Algeria to the Congo, that once the creative element is driven out, dispersed or killed, wealth vanishes, production halts and civilization disintegrates. The class war of Marxism has become primarily a war based upon race and nationality. In Toynbean terms, the centers of Western civilization are under combined assault from the external proletariats of Africa and Asia and from the internal proletariats produced in the non-white slums.

#### THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE WEST

In many ways the revolutionary forces in the Arab world are engaged in a struggle to perpetuate its backwardness and widen the chasm separating it from the more creative societies. They are committed to a war of extermination against the Israeli élite enclave. Their tendency is to shift power from the business community and the economic upper strata to the professional revolutionaries of the intellectual *demi-monde*. In Egypt the Christian minority is viewed with suspicion, discriminated against and treated as a potential security risk because of its ties with Western civilization and because it is more intelligent, energetic and resourceful than the Moslem mass.\* The regressive nature of the revolutionary regimes, their rôle as enemies of the natural

<sup>9</sup> International Documentation and Information Centre, *Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO)*, The Hague, 1969, p. 67.

\* In Palestine the same thing is true. The Christian Arabs are creative, and even where they have become victims of the Israeli-Arab conflict they do not remain as permanent inhabitants of refugee camps. Although the Christians of Palestine and Egypt are "Arabs" they are, in fact, racially of a different matrix as we have pointed out elsewhere, being more Nordo-Dinaric than are the average Arabs.

élites, is highlighted by their desire to break the ties of the Middle East with Europe and to turn instead towards inner Asia and Negro Africa.

The revolutionary regimes tend to be non-creative, technologically and militarily incompetent, unstable and insatiate in their ambitions because of the disproportion between their appetite and their ability. It is perhaps foolish to believe there is any concession which the West could wisely make that would satisfy their greed or buy their friendship.

The alternate policy is overt Western support of the viable élite bastions in the Middle Eastern and black African areas. Of these, the most important are Israel, South Africa, Rhodesia and the Portuguese overseas dependencies. Both Israel and the countries of southern Africa under white rule are anxious to assist their unfortunate neighbors in moving towards modern civilization and achieving order, constructive purpose and representative institutions. These strongpoints are natural centers for the outward radiation of Western objectives in this region.

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# The Measurement of Cultural Development in the Ancient Near East and in Anglo-Saxon England:

## A Review

BY DONALD A. SWAN

In the latter half of the nineteenth century the principle of evolution transformed the outlook of many sciences. First applied to the study of biology and physical anthropology, it was soon extended to the fields of sociology and cultural anthropology. Scientists such as Herbert Spencer (*The Study of Sociology*, 1873) sought to determine regularities or sequences in cultural development, measure cultural change, and compare cultural levels in contemporary and past societies. In the twentieth century, however, "anti-evolutionism and cultural relativism held sway in American anthropology." Writers such as Alexander Goldenweiser (*Anthropology*, 1937) denied that cultures could be rated objectively or compared over time.

In recent years there has been a renewal of interest in the study of cultural evolution and in the rating of cultures. Raoul Naroll<sup>1</sup> constructed an *Index of Social Development* based upon three differentially weighted criteria—the number of craft specialities, the number of "team types," and the size of the largest community in a society. Applying this index to a sample of 30 societies, Naroll could quantitatively assess their social development. "The societies ranged from the Yahgan, with an index of 12, to the Aztecs, with an index of 58." The great German anthropologist Friedrich Keiter<sup>2</sup> also developed methods of quantitatively comparing art forms and literary styles in different cultures.

One of the most active workers in the field of quantitative cultural anthropology is Dr Robert L. Carneiro of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Dr Carneiro<sup>3</sup> has pioneered the application of scale analysis to the study of cultural evolution.

<sup>1</sup> Raoul Naroll, "A Preliminary Index of Social Development," *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 58, 1956, pp. 687-715.

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Keiter, "Race and Culture," in *Race and Modern Science* (edited by Robert E. Kuttner), Social Science Press, New York, 1967, pp. 333-365.

<sup>3</sup> Robert L. Carneiro, "Ascertaining, Testing and Interpreting Sequences of Cultural Development," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* Vol. 24, 1968, pp. 354-374.