



האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM
המכון ליחסים בינלאומיים ע"ש לאונרד דייויס
The Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations

THE INTERNAL REPERCUSSIONS OF THE LEBANON WAR

by

S. N. EISENSTADT

Policy Studies ✕ 17

In memory of Brigadier General David Carmon

August 1986



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ABSTRACT

The Lebanon War had a tremendous impact on the internal Israeli scene. It was clearly the first time that Israel went to war out of choice, without a national consensus. Many Israelis questioned the wisdom of their government's decision to enter the war which ultimately resulted in widespread dissension in the nation.

It seems likely that the Lebanon War was an important cause of Menachem Begin's resignation as prime minister, which led to a change of leadership within the Likud party. It also influenced the Knesset's decision to hold elections in July 1984--six months before their scheduled date, against the Shamir government's wishes.

But the war's impact upon developments within Israeli society is much more far-reaching. The Lebanon War created a new divisiveness in Israeli society. A growing tension developed between the upper ranks of the army and the minister of defense. There were also numerous accusations against the opposition and against media opposition to the government which in turn greatly influenced the tone of public debate during the 1984 elections and gathered momentum afterwards.

The weakening of the various aspects of civility brought out other themes of Jewish political culture,

especially intransigence and the politics of the higher law. Divisiveness and intolerance continued to grow and even intensify.

However, despite polls which indicated the public's loss of confidence in democracy, the basic democratic framework and most of the rules of the democratic game were maintained. The openness of society and the lines of communication between the population and the authorities remained intact. Even during the height of the Lebanon War, the lack of consensus did not impede the efficiency of the army or the basic loyalty of Israeli citizens. In spite of some initial attempts at censorship, the Lebanon War was fully covered in the press, in sharp contrast with the Falklands War.

This paper suggest that in order to understand the internal impact of the Lebanon War, it is necessary to put it in the framework of the far-reaching changes and transformations that have been taking place in Israeli society.

These changes culminated in the shift in government in 1977, some of the repercussions of that event are easily visible; others are less direct, but may be of more lasting significance. They have continued to develop since the 1984 elections.

INTRODUCTION

It is by now well known that the Lebanon War had a tremendous impact on the internal Israeli scene. It was the first time that Israel went to war out of choice, without a national consensus. Many Israelis questioned the wisdom of their government's decision to enter the war and the war gave rise to wide-spread dissension in the country.

It seems likely that the Lebanon War was an important cause of Menachem Begin's resignation as prime minister. His resignation led to a changing of the guard within the Likud. It also influenced the Knesset's decision to hold elections in July 1984--six months before their scheduled date, against the Shamir government's wishes.

But the war's impact upon developments within Israeli society is much more far-reaching. However, without a historical perspective, it is difficult to evaluate its full impact. Nevertheless, some attempt at evaluation, albeit tentative, is in order.

The starting point is the simple fact that the Lebanon war, and its repercussions, transformed Israeli society and the Likud government.

THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE INITIAL INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

The switch from Labor to Likud in 1977 was no routine change of government. It marked the end of a long era of Labor predominance in Israel that had begun before the establishment of the state.

It also marked a change, and partial disintegration, in the dominant institutional mold. This mold, which had crystallized during the first twenty years of statehood, was institutionally democratic, albeit with strongly restrictive overtones and consociational characteristics. Governments based on this mold naturally granted full political rights to all sectors of the population. This was limited at first by the development of clientelistic mechanisms and later by the appropriation by the political center of the Zionist and Labor pioneering symbols, and continuous economic development within the framework of a mixed, but relatively controlled economy. During the early years, governments placed strong emphasis on the construction of an old-new nation, and the reconstruction of a new national and cultural tradition, with a strong universalistic orientation. The aim was to join the family of modern nations.

The institutional mold developed in Israel was rooted in the Zionist dream, hence the success of that dream could be seen in its continued implementation. The functioning of

governments fashioned from this mold proved the ability of the Jewish people to forge an independent political entity, encompassing all spheres of life. The Jews reemerged as an active force in history. Meanwhile they confronted the challenge of actively reassuming a national identity which had been dormant for almost two thousand years of exile.

Unlike their behavior during the Second Temple period (the Jewish people's last previous opportunity for political independence), after achieving statehood in 1948, the Jews were aware of the opportunity and inspired by the challenge. Indeed, the Zionist movement epitomizes this awareness. In contrast to the nationalist movements of the Second Temple period, the Zionists sought to achieve not only political autonomy, but also social and institutional revolution. In their relations to other civilizations the Zionists were not as antagonistic as were their predecessors in the ancient world and the medieval "galut". Zionism was open to the civilizational vision of the modern world, although many antagonistic elements persisted.

The new institutional mold, developed from the Zionist revolutionary orientation, went far beyond the institutional molds Jews developed in the diaspora through the traditional "kehillot" and centers of learning. It also went beyond the more scattered and diversified modern organizations and ways

of life. The significance of this new mold lies not in the development of new political, military, or economic institutions (including agriculture and basic industries), but in the fact that these were brought together through a new autonomous collectivity. This collective institutional infrastructure has crucial importance, and epitomizes the collective reentry of the Jewish people into the community of nations.

Beginning in the 1960s, this institutional mold underwent extensive changes. The major socio-historical reasons for its decomposition were structural transformations in the elite groups of society in their relations to the major strata, and the concomitant transformation of basic components in the dominant ideology. The links of solidarity among the elites, and between these groups and the rest of society, weakened. This coincided with the emergence of new social groups and forces which could no longer fit into the original mold.

At the heart of this decomposition was the contradiction within the ideological basis of the prevailing mold: its emphasis on institutional and cultural creativity, and its universalistic orientation. In addition, a paternalistic relationship developed between the center and the periphery in general, and political participation in parti-

cular.

These contradictions were intensified by the transformation of the ideologues into a ruling elite, and the fact that they now mixed with the upper strata of society. The Zionist ideologues-turned-politicians now publicly conducted themselves in a manner which went directly against many premises of their ideology. This transformed the prevailing ideology in general, and exhausted its social and institutional dimension.

These changes and the numerous problems they created were magnified by the fact that Israel is a small country with claims to centrality much beyond its natural size. Israel underwent a transition from a highly ideological society to one in which ideological orientation is just one aspect of collective identity. All this intensified in the aftermath of the Six Day War and the Yom Kippur War, and was further intensified by the momentum of various internal developments.

The Six Day War and the Yom Kippur War were watersheds, not only with respect to external relations, but in Israeli internal political life as well. After these wars, problems stemming from the dynamics of Israel's development were intensified in every area--attesting to the growing importance of the security dimension in Israeli society.

The Six Day War highlighted basic problems in the structure and collective identity of Israeli society. The war changed the basis of the territorial compromise which accompanied the establishment of the State and altered Israel's perception of its place in the Middle East and its relations with the Arab world.(and with Israeli Arabs). The war also impinged on Israel's internal cultural pattern, and the national/Zionist pioneering heritage.

Most of these problems were dormant before the Six Day War. The great military victory, and the economic expansion and rise in the standard of living that followed, seemed to justify the institutional patterns which had developed under the aegis of dynamic conservatism. Indeed, it was during this period that the continuous organizational expansion reached its peak.

All of these developments were connected with a growing atrophy in institutional creativity, and a decline in innovative political and social thought. Despite this, public discussion tended to freeze the external situation, and define it in purely static terms. This "waiting" gave rise to a general, perhaps uneasy, feeling of self-satisfaction.

This relative self-satisfaction was shattered by the Yom Kippur War. The war and its aftermath created a strong sense that the existing institutional framework was unable

to cope with the continuously intensifying problems. This feeling further undermined the legitimacy of the ruling elites. The accumulated impact of these developments became manifest in the 1977 election, which terminated the Labor movement's long-standing dominance in Israeli politics.

THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT AND NEW IDEOLOGICAL AND POLICY DIRECTIONS

Given these developments, it is no surprise that the change of government in 1977 and the Likud's rise to power (reconfirmed in the 1981--but not in the 1984--elections) represented not merely a routine change of command but signaled a major change in ideological orientation. This raises the question of crystallization into a new institutional mold.

It is crucial to remember that this change, with all its repercussions, took place through an orderly democratic process within the framework of democratic institutions--even if some aspects of this process seemed threatened from time to time.

The change of government was related to changes in the emphasis on specific themes and orientations within the basic Jewish and Zionist orientations. Several such themes, latent in the early decades of the state, were first articulated after the Six Day War, and became more central to the

political life of Israel. The articulation of these theories was closely related (although not always in a simple way) to the development of policies such as the war in Lebanon.

The most important of these changes in Zionist themes and Jewish orientations was the revived emphasis on military strength and struggle inherent in the revisionist vision and the attempts at their partial sanctification.

Closely related to this was a very strong emphasis on the territorial dimension of Zionism and of Judaism. There were many attempts to sanctify this component in historical and religious terms. Interestingly, this sanctification had not been an important part of the original revisionist vision.

The concept of territoriality has greatly changed from the perception of territory as a medium for the realization of national reconstruction, and a basis of national security. Today the emphasis is on territoriality and settlement as an end in itself, and the ultimate fulfillment of the Zionist vision.

In its secular expression, such sanctification combined a secular primordial emphasis with a strong stress on settlement and security. This ideology was found among Labor supporters of "Eretz Israel Hashlema," and among many

Kibbutzim or Moshavim, as well as in the cities.

The religious/national terms of such sanctification have developed principally among Gush Emunim and those close to them. These groups stress above all the religious, historical, and quasi-mystical dimensions of the land. This ideology often borders on political Messianism.

In this period the themes of Jewish solidarity and the religious dimensions of Jewish tradition and historical experience became the most important of general Jewish and Zionist themes. Great stress was placed on Jewish particularism and isolation from the outside world, and the inherent morality of the Jewish or Israeli collectivity. This weakened the civilizational and universalistic (as opposed to the national and particularistic) aspects of the Zionist or Israeli identity.

A far-reaching transformation of basic social themes and an intensification of some of the former ones developed. There was continuous weakening of the elitist notions of duty and obligation. These ideas were replaced by a new orientation toward rights and titles, best illustrated by the slogan "leheitiv im haam"--be good to the people.

The rise of the Likud government (especially those aspects connected with the decomposition of the former institutional mold) were related to the emergence of several

additional themes--some new, some old.

The most visible and focal emphasis was the stress placed on the ethnic--especially "Oriental"--entity as part of collective Israeli identity. This sentiment often expressed itself in divisive tones against the "Western" or "Ashkenazi" identity.

There has also been a continuous increase in the strength of the anti-Zionist, or at least non-Zionist, religious orientation of Agudat Israel and other Orthodox groups. These groups' acceptance of the State of Israel was de facto at most. They stressed "the settlement of the Land of Israel," rather than the Zionist vision of a reconstructed Jewish society. Paradoxically, during this period their position became at least semi-legitimized.

The emergence of these themes was related to the development of new policies in several central areas of Israeli society.

The major areas where reorientations were apparent were security, military, and foreign policy; religious affairs; and, less clearly, economic affairs.

In defense and foreign affairs, the new development was the establishment of peace in 1979 by the first Likud government and the withdrawal from Sinai in Spring 1982.

Although Camp David was not necessarily connected with

revisionist or Likud ideology, it could be--and was--portrayed as proof of the basic correctness of this ideology, which posited that a show of strength would lead to peace.

The second new development was the extension of settlement in Judea, Samaria, and Ramat HaGolan. While there was no legal change in the status of the territories despite the extreme right's demands for outright annexation, the settlement process in Judea and Samaria received new impetus after the Likud government came into power. It also became the focus of national controversy. These developments were the product of the ideological and political legitimation given by the Likud government to the policy of settling all parts of Eretz Israel to diminish the chances of withdrawal from Judea and Samaria and the Gaza regions.

This policy of settlement was closely connected with a new, more aggressive stance in security matters and an emphasis on active struggle against terrorism and the PLO. This policy came to a head in Operation Peace for Galilee, which began in early June 1982 and became the Lebanon War. As we shall later analyze in detail, this war had far-reaching repercussions on internal Israeli politics and on foreign relations.

Using their long-standing tactics, the religious

parties used their power in the coalition very effectively and extended it in ways that could not have been imagined in former periods. The religious parties, and especially Agudat Israel, obtained ever-increasing financial allocations for their institutions. These allocations often contravened standard budgetary procedures--even in periods of extensive restrictions in education and social services. They also became very influential in setting the general tone of religion in public life, thereby changing the relationship between state and religion.

The religious parties succeeded in passing many new laws, including the pathology law that limits the scope of autopsies. Under their influence the Knesset repealed the relatively liberal abortion law. It also increased the exemption of religious girls from the army, and prevented El Al from flying on Shabbat and Jewish holidays. The religious parties are currently trying to limit the freedom of archaeological excavations on the grounds that old Jewish graves might be unearthed, and to pass the "Who is a Jew?" law, which would recognize only conversions done by Orthodox rabbis, and not conversions done by Conservative or Reform rabbis.

In some cases, the Rabbinate implicitly sets itself above the secular authorities by claiming to be the arbiter

of conduct--at least in the public sphere.

The renewed emphasis on religious--as well as ethnic--orientations has a continuous, growing impact in the field of education. Even greater sections of the curriculum were devoted to past-oriented religious themes instead of future-oriented Zionist themes.

It is more difficult to isolate the ideological underpinnings of the Likud's economic policies. The first stage, that of liberalization under Simha Erlich, grew out of a naive liberal conception, in contrast to the previous emphasis on government regulation. Its major outcome was the effective abolition of most foreign exchange regulations, especially with respect to imports. But on the whole, many of the central aspects of regulation and government investment in economic life--the share of government in employment--was higher than ever before. During this stage real wages, inflation, and deficit payments increased.

The second stage came with the appointment of Yigal Horovitz as minister of finance. He intended to implement strong restrictive policies, which would demand sacrifices. This did not go down well in an election year, and Horovitz resigned in early 1981. With the appointment of Yoram Aridor as minister of finance, the new specific Likud or Herut policy of "good" or "correct" economy was instituted.

This policy had the stated goal of curbing inflation and renewing economic growth. Under Aridor, food subsidies were sharply increased, taxes on consumer durables were reduced, and budgetary constraints relaxed. Consequently, private consumption and real wages soared in 1981, the election year. The standard view is that this was a "populist" economy--in some ways resembling the economy of Peronist Argentina.

The ultimate impact of this on Israel's economic structure was far-reaching, and led to a deterioration of the economy. In the fall of 1983 the most far-reaching economic crisis in Israeli history commenced.

CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT AND THE TRANSFORMATIONS

IN ISRAELI SOCIETY--STRUCTURAL CHANGES

To understand the full impact of these changes in ideological themes, it is necessary to consider several crucial developments related to the 1977 change of government, which gathered further momentum in 1981.

The first development was the emergence of a new type of opposition and a new relationship between the government and the opposition. For the first time in the history of the state, an opposition arose which held almost as many Knesset seats as the coalition (the Maarach had three more seats than the Likud). The opposition no longer saw itself

as a check on the majority but, with the passage of time, as principled opposition which rejected the basic premises and policies of the government.

The opposition increasingly coalesced around the issue of territorial expansion and Israeli rule over Judea and Samaria and the more than one million Arabs there. The opposition advocated partial territorial compromise to preserve the democratic and Jewish character of the state and prevent a change in the Zionist emphasis of collective culture.

This unprecedented emergence of a principled opposition created an entirely new political dynamic. It widened the limits of criticism of the government and the possible equation of the state and the government.

While the tendency to equate the government with the state was strong during the Maarach period, during that period most of the opposition accepted the basic premises of government. At most they demanded a somewhat stronger stance in external affairs.

Another crucial development was the natural change of government personnel, and the incorporation of new sectors into the center.

These movements signaled a very far-reaching process of mobility at the political center. Closely related to this

process was the development of a new, active, and often very constructive leadership in many of the development towns, as well as in other sectors. Parts of this leadership were closely connected to the government. The very fact that they did not feel dispossessed but aspired to participate was probably one of the most important and constructive developments to take place during this era.

At the same time, change was also connected with an attempt by the new regime to deligitimate its predecessors. As we shall see, this gave rise to widespread tension and cleavage within Israeli society.

CHANGES IN SYMBOLS OF THE CENTER AND GROWING DIVISIVENESS

The new security, foreign affairs, economic, and religious policies, and the new groups' movement into the center (displacing some sectors of the old establishment), combined with the development of new themes. In addition, the realignment of political forces, and the new relationship between the government and the opposition, all had a wide impact on Israeli society and political life. This influenced the center toward the development of a new institutional mold. Only in the context of these changes can the repercussions of the Lebanon War be understood.

Significant changes took place in the themes and

symbols of the center and of Israeli collective identity. Initially, the Likud and Prime Minister Begin successfully articulated new symbols of the center, based on the revisionist symbols of strength, and Jewish pride and defiance. There can be no doubt that these symbols have evoked far-reaching resonance among many sectors of the population, although militancy has probably waned with the prolongation of the Lebanon War. Even opponents of Begin, who saw him as a great danger to the state of Israel, conceded that these themes were highly resonant.

This resonance was greatly reinforced by the continuous movement of the new groups into the center and by growing feelings among large sectors of the general population (especially in the development towns and many of the more mobile sectors) that they belonged to the center and were no longer dispossessed.

These changes in symbolism, and in the relationship between the center and parts of the periphery, as well as growing access to the center by new sectors of society, influenced the incorporation of other themes and symbols (ethnic and religious) which had gathered momentum before.

The crystallization of these themes developed in two contradictory directions: a continuation and intensification of their divisive aspects, and a growing incorporation of

some of these themes into the center. This was accompanied by a growing tendency among some of the carriers of these themes to stress their unifying, rather than their divisive, aspects.

Ethnic themes of divisive orientation have continued, sometimes leading to ugly outbursts. For example, in the Hatikva Quarter of Tel Aviv an illegally built house was demolished by the police by order of the municipality. This led to an outburst against the police. Afterwards, in the northern, affluent, Ashkenazi suburbs of Tel Aviv, "Ashkenazi" inscriptions appeared (i.e., equating Ashkenazis with Nazis), and older divisive slogans were heard.

Some of these orientations have probably changed. Oriental culture was presented as an alternative, not just for Orientals, but as a legitimate aspect of the center. Others stressed the search for different means of bringing Oriental and Western themes together, while still others openly denied the validity of a distinctive Oriental culture.

Ethnic festivals and gatherings such as the Moroccan Mimouna, the Kurdish Saharana, and others increasingly stressed the themes of national unity and solidarity. The revival of many "ethnic" traditions, for example the North African Cult of Saints, was seen as an affirmation of mem-

bership in Israeli society (information provided by Yoram Bilu).

The development of religious themes, and their relations to the center and the symbols of society and collective entity, was more complex. In general, religious symbols and religious groups were more visible, both in the center and in daily life.

Extensive changes in religion's place in society and in state-religion relations continued to develop. As noted above, these changes led to opposite, but often mutually supportive tendencies. One example of this was the growing ideological and political militancy of the Zionist religious group, both in its political and in its Halakhic claims against "secular" Zionism.

This tendency accompanied the rise of a radical religious-national ideology among the youth movements of the religious sectors--especially Bnei Akiva, and the Yeshivoh Hesder. All this was firmly set within the framework of the Zionist vision. The carriers of this vision combined settlement, military service, and extreme national symbolism couched in very militant themes with a strong emphasis (far exceeding that of the older Zionist-religious groups) on the sovereignty of Halakha, albeit strongly imbued with nationalist connotations.

For a long time it seemed that religious Zionism was headed in this direction, abandoning the more universalist dimension of the Zionist vision. Only during the Lebanon war did this trend begin to change.

In the religious sphere the second major trend was embodied by Agudath Israel. It combined with the growing delegitimization of the Zionist premises and symbols, and with increasing attempts to impose not only the rule of Halakha but also a specific non-Zionist ambiance.

By the late 1970s non-Zionist orientations had won over large sections of the religious world, both from the religious-Zionist groups, and from the "Hozrei b'tshuva" or "returnees" who came to Orthodoxy from secular backgrounds. This was due largely to the fact that many of the teachers were recruited from within ultra-Orthodox circles. They influenced their students with their non-Zionist orientations. Many young people from religious Zionist homes left the Zionist fold to try to attain fuller realization of the Halakhic mold.

It was not only within religious circles that the views of Agudat-Israel and more extreme sectors became predominant. Their central place in the coalition seemed to partly legitimate their anti- or, at best, non-Zionist orientations.

Thus, for instance, during the controversy concerning the archeological digs in the City of David there were suggestions of the need to control or censor academic research. There was also opposition to the special status of archeology and attachment to the land as a central component of the new Israeli collective identity--as opposed to themes stressed in the Halakha itself.

In spite of the varied and mutually contradictory ways in which the religious and ethnic components became symbols of Israeli collective identity, both shared the acceptance of tradition (even of reconstructed tradition). This was evidenced in the curricula, as well as popular festivals and events. This involved sanctification of the past as opposed to attempts at reconstruction. It also showed up in the weakening of the reconstructive and revolutionary attitude to cultural traditions and symbols that had traditionally characterized the Zionist vision. Paradoxically, this weakening was also felt by sectors close to the opposition who are socially and culturally close to the Maarach. Among those sectors, the major emphasis was on the more humanistic elements in Jewish tradition and on tolerance and democracy. Traditions built up during the long period of settlement in Eretz Israel. There were few attempts to restructure Israeli culture, with new symbols of collective identity or

new patterns of creativity.

This sector's leadership emphasized "sane" Zionism, which they defined as the need to accept reality instead of clinging to visionary dreams. While they emphasized political problems and deficiencies in the quality of life, they seemed to accept this reality in its nicer aspects, and saw no great need for change.

Nevertheless, there were great differences between these camps. On the political level these differences centered around the problem of finding a political solution to the Arab problem in Judea and Samaria. The political stance of the Likud, with its emphasis on maintaining Israeli rule of these areas (if not necessarily immediate annexation), highlighted the problem of granting the Arabs full citizenship, which could easily undermine the Jewish nature of the State, or granting them the status of resident aliens (as proposed by Prof. Yuval Ne'eman of the Tehiya party).

The Likud leadership did not fully face up to these problems. Minister of Defense Moshe Arens admitted that he did not have a solution. The ideology of many Gush Emunim settlers was more simple and straightforward. The more extreme groups, including followers of Rabbi Meir Kahane, had a vision (influenced by their understanding of biblical

injunctions) of the Arabs as second-class residents or subjects.

Continued Israeli rule--no longer a temporary exigency over an alien and largely hostile population--and Israel's new status as a conqueror had major influence on Israeli life.

Against this the Maarach (or at least large parts of it), Shinui, extraparliamentary opposition groups such as Peace Now, and public and intellectual leaders stressed the need for territorial compromise, or even the acceptance of a Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria. These groups argued that full rule over Judea and Samaria was not required for security reasons. They emphasized that compromise was necessary, not only to reach settlement with the Arabs, but also to maintain Israel's Jewish and democratic character.

The lines between the two great blocs, which first became visible in the 1981 election, became even more sharply drawn--at least until the 1984 elections. After the establishment of the government of national unity they were blurred.

These political differences emphasized other crucial divisions in Israel's collective identity. Within the Likud, and in some religious sectors, there was at least initially an increasingly introspective orientation away

from Jewish universalism. This was evidenced by references to other nations and the civilizational concepts outside of Jewish tradition. At the height of his oratorical power Prime Minister Begin connected these themes with constant reference to the Holocaust.

Begin often used this tone even with foreign heads of state, such as Chancellor Schmidt. Although Begin made frequent reference to the French revolution or to principles of international law when he justified Israel's policies against the PLO, he refused to accept the legitimacy of outside criticisms.

Some religious groups used the biblical injunctions against Amalek to justify extreme xenophobia. All this prevented the easing of tensions between the older religious Zionist movements and the "secular" Zionist groups.

This introspective attitude found its expression in the treatment of Arabs in Judea and Samaria, and in settlement policy.

Extreme expressions appeared among Gush Emunim settlers, and in older settlements, as in Amos Oz's character Zadok (In the Land of Israel, 1984). The Kach party justified denial of rights to Palestinian Arabs with biblical references and even advocated evacuation. These attitudes were reinforced by remarks made by Chief of Staff,

General Rafael Eitan to Arabs in general, and Prime Minister Begin's description of the PLO as two-legged beasts. Implicitly, this dehumanizing characterization of the enemy (especially during the Lebanon War) drew ideological distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish blood.

One significant result of these attitudes was the use of brutality by Israeli security forces, and some settlers, against Arabs in Judea and Samaria. Most indicative of such trends were instructions by Chief of Staff Eitan on the treatment of protesting or stone throwing Arabs. These instructions were disclosed during the trial of several army officers engineered by the Peace Now group. Some of the officers were sentenced by the Military Court. The court also condemned the instructions, albeit mildly. They were later rescinded by Eitan's successor, Gen. Moshe Levi, and the new minister of defense, Moshe Arens.

Similar attitudes were verbalized in army slang. For instance, the term mikhlaot ("pens") used by the army to describe housing units in the camps for prisoners, many of them PLO members, taken during the Lebanon War.

While it is very difficult to measure the exact impact of these policies and statements, there is no doubt that they found an attentive audience. Although with the protraction of the Lebanon War and the deterioration of the

economy these views are expressed less fervently, they remain very powerful aspects of Israeli politics. This was seen during the 1984 elections when the extremist right-wing parties--the Tehiya headed by retired chief of staff Rafael Eitan, and Prof. Yuval Ne'eman, and the Kach list headed by Rabbi Meir Kahane--won increasing numbers of votes.

Against this background, the Alignment, Peace Now, and other protest movements cried out, stressing the value of human life and democracy. This deepened the divisions that had begun to develop before the 1981 elections. Only in the context of these developments can the impact of the Lebanon war on the internal scene be understood.

THE LEBANON WAR AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF ISRAELI SOCIETY

The Lebanon War created a new divisiveness in Israeli society. During the first stages of the war most Israelis trusted Prime Minister Begin, who insisted that the war's aim was to assure a 45 kilometer security zone for Galilee. This was supported by most of the political parties, except the opposition "left" (several Labor members and most of Mapam), who in the end had more foresight than the more moderate parties who accepted the official statements.

With the extension of the war beyond the original 45 kilometer zone, objective dissent increased. There was increasing lack of public confidence in Minister of Defense

Ariel Sharon and in many of the army spokesmen, including Chief of Staff Eitan. Even soldiers distrusted the authorities, because they saw in the field that the official announcements were untrue. Public dissent became intensive with the bombing of Beirut. It grew even stronger after the Sabra-Shatila massacres. From that point, dissent was prevalent and expressed in demonstrations held by various groups, including mothers of soldiers who had returned from the front. Some anti-war protesters mounted a continuous vigil near the prime minister's house and displayed an up-to-date tally of the number of soldiers who had fallen in the war.

Even within the army, divisions developed and some officers joined the protests. The best known of the anti-war officers was Eli Geva, who requested to be relieved of his command before the bombing of Beirut. That request was granted; his request to continue serving in his unit was not. He was subjected to vicious personal abuse by many top brass, including the prime minister.

A growing tension also developed between the upper ranks of the army and the minister of defense. This tension intensified after the publication of the Kahan report on the Sabra-Shatila massacres. The changes in the ministry seem to have toned down this unrest.

The following factors may have contributed to Mr. Begin's resignation in September 1983.

1. The prolongation of the war (the longest in Israel's history).
2. The increase of casualties.
3. A growing awareness of the impossibility of a peace settlement in Lebanon.
4. The demise of Defense Minister Sharon's much heralded "global" security concept and the pretension of attempting to create a new order in the Middle East and in Lebanon.
5. The deterioration of relations with the loyal Druze minority in Israel.

Contrary to Mr. Begin's promise at the beginning of the war, that the trauma of the Yom Kippur War would be eradicated, the trauma was reinforced among many sectors of the population.

These developments sharpened the tensions between the government and the oppositions, especially concerning the question of loyalty to the state and to the government. This theme was used by the government against the opposition, especially during the war. The Likud compared its loyalty to previous Labor governments to the presumed disloyalty of the oppositions without mentioning that this

loyalty was based on at least tacit agreement with Labor's policies. The Likud singled out Peace Now and other parliamentary groups and accused them of disloyalty to the state and of aiding the PLO with their dissent and public demonstrations.

In one of the last Knesset debates on Lebanon and the economy, the prime minister admitted that this was a bad time for Israel. He claimed, however, that during hard times it is appropriate to close ranks and not to attack the government.

The accusations against the opposition and against press opposition to the government greatly influenced the tone of public debate during the 1981 elections and gathered momentum afterwards. This new tone was set primarily by the Likud, Prime Minister Begin, Minister of Defense Ariel Sharon, and Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan.

Even before the war, and increasingly during its more controversial phases, Likud leadership often equated criticism of the government and the chief of staff with treason (see "Making Criticism Treason," Jerusalem Post, 30 March 1982). This attitude became widespread and led to protest from sectors opposing the government.

This stance toward the opposition was reinforced by the concurrent development of these new government-opposition

relations, and the changing relationship between the government and large sectors of the literary, artistic, media, and academic communities.

Although the claims of total alienation between these groups and the government were generally exaggerated, there was some truth to them. Only a few outstanding literary or artistic figures wholeheartedly supported the government; the academic sectors were more divided. But those who opposed the government were more visible. On the whole the government did not receive good press--especially as the war continued and the "correct" economic policy broke down.

The Likud's failure to establish its own daily newspaper, and the continuation of independent and critical television reporting in spite of the Broadcasting Authority's restrictive policies, reinforced the anti-intellectual, populist attitudes of large sectors of the Likud. Supporters of the imposition of restrictions on free expression became very vocal, creating an atmosphere of fear in some strata of public life.

Members of the prime minister's entourage and members of Knesset made public statements against the media. Defense Minister Sharon and Chief of Staff Eitan were torch bearers in these campaigns before the war, and continued in this role during the war and in its aftermath.

Thus, while Israeli identity cards were imposed on the Druze in the Golan, and during the withdrawal from Sinai, the media were either not allowed to report or were very severely limited. Similar attempts to limit the press during the Lebanon War were unsuccessful--although they managed to antagonize large numbers of the foreign press corps. The war became one of the best covered--not only by the foreign press, but also by Israeli commentators. Among the latter, the most outstanding was probably Zeev Shiff, military correspondent for Haaretz. His work was commended by the International Press Institute. After the publication of the Kahan report, Sharon's diatribes against the press and the Commission became even more intensive. They were indicative of a growing intolerance for the opposition and an official attempt to deligitimate it. Such outbursts, especially during the debates on the Lebanon war, perpetuated the atmosphere of the 1981 elections.

The security problem, which previously had been a point of relative consensus, has become increasingly open to public debate. This process, which began after the Yom Kippur War, intensified generally after 1977 and particularly after the Lebanon War. This naturally raised the problem of how to maintain a high degree of commitment and consensus on security, while at the same time being able to criticize

government policy, and even government pronouncements on matters of defense.

This problem also seems to have become acute in the army, where wide differences of opinion among some groups of soldiers and officers with regard to government policy seem to have developed.

WEAKENING OF CIVILITY AND OF RULE OF LAW

These developments can be understood only if we take into account their impact on the ambiance of political culture in Israel, and especially on the scope of civility and the norms, taking into account the very strong feeling of shame at being accused of their contravention.

During the Abuhazeira case, there were many calls to recognize different norms set by different cultural traditions. Many argued that the particular norms and patterns of behavior of the older sectors are no better than those behaviors for which Abuhazeira was sentenced. These often violent outcries were not rebuffed by the prime minister or other persons of authority.

There was a weakening of many autonomous public bodies. For example, the governor of the Bank of Israel initially behaved much less independently toward the government than did his predecessors. One of his deputies was also an advisor to the minister of finance. There was also the

appointment of Mr. A. Shapira, chairman of the Coalition and an industrialist, to the chairmanship of the Bank of Israel.

The autonomy of the non-governmental public bodies also weakened. At the Broadcasting Authority a restrictive atmosphere was imposed.

Yet another aspect of the weakening of civility which came to the fore during the Lebanon War was the growing involvement of some Army top brass in politics (see Y. Peri, BETWEEN BATTLES AND BALLOTS--ISRAEL MILITARY IN POLITICS, Cambridge, 1983).

The most extreme manifestation was the unprecedented public declaration of Chief of Staff Eitan in defense of the basic policy of the government. Not only on general educational principles, but on specific political issues, the chief of staff took a public stand against the opposition. Such involvement by a chief of staff was unprecedented. (For a comparative view see Peri 1983.) During the war, Sharon and Eitan ignored the parliamentary committees. Less visible, and naturally not fully documented, was the involvement of various army top brass with different political coalitions.

Another aspect of the weakening in civility could be seen in the administration of justice within Israel proper and especially as regards the relations between Arabs and

Jews in Judea and Samaria.

Within Israel itself, until recently (especially until the Kahan Committee Report) there has been a tendency by the authorities to be more lenient toward the religious and politically right-wing sectors. This is perhaps most evident in the kid-gloves treatment given to demonstrators against the withdrawal from Sinai, and to settlers in Judea and Samaria, especially in Kiryat Arba--at least after the murder of Emil Grinzweig during an anti-government demonstration.

The most extreme illustrations of this legal inequity occurred in relation to the Arabs of Judea and Samaria. Many of their complaints against the settlers or the army were ignored by the authorities. A special committee (the Karp Committee) was appointed by the attorney general to investigate law enforcement in situations of Arab-Jewish conflict in Judea and Samaria.

Chief of Staff Eitan tended to reduce sentences imposed by the military courts on soldiers convicted of various types of misbehavior towards Arabs. Many claimed that this attitude also showed up in the military courts, noting the military courts' slow enactment of the recommendation by a public commission headed by Supreme Court Justice Shamgar (a former judge advocate general) that military jurisdiction be

headed by a jurist. The policy of selective enforcement of law was indicated by the fact that many perpetrators of criminal acts against Arabs were never apprehended.

Finally, there was the development of the politics of "higher law." Many groups--the religious and especially the extreme Orthodox; Gush Emunim settlers in Kiryat Arba, Judea and Samaria; some members of the Tehiya; and many other advocates of the ideology of Eretz Israel Hashlema--regarded themselves as representatives of a law higher than that of the state. They introduced a strong anarchical element into Israeli political life. This culminated in the development of a Jewish terrorist underground directed against Arabs. Despite its alleged "liberal" credo, the Liberal party (part of the Likud) had little influence on these developments. Its liberal postures were sometimes upheld in matters relating directly to the economic interest of the groups they represented, but it was silent on issues of rule of law and the rights of citizens--themes stressed by Shinui, Ratz, and parts of the Alignment. Some elements among the Liberals succeeded (at least until September 1983) in postponing requested legislation on some of the more extreme demands of the religious groups, including the archeology law and the "who is a Jew" question. On the whole, however, most of their political energies were focused on bargaining, to

assure positions for their members.

The only exception was Itzhak Berman. A former speaker of the Knesset and minister of energy in the second Likud government, Berman resigned after the Sabra-Shatila massacres. His resignation, which was supported by other liberal MKs, probably influenced the prime minister to appoint the Kahan Commission.

The combination of a weakening in civility; a growing divisiveness within society (and between the Likud and the Maarach and their supporters); the breakdown of many normative restraints in public behavior; and the weakening of feelings of shame led to violence and growing intolerance, as evidenced in the Hatikva quarter incident in Tel Aviv.

After the Hatikva incident, some public personalities, especially journalists, spoke out against the violations of the rule of law. The prime minister was silent. Some of the Maarach leadership spoke out against too stringent an application of the law in such "social cases."

A lack of respect for social norms led to an increase in violent behavior. This trend abated somewhat after the murder of Emil Grunzweig. This normlessness could be seen even in the behavior of some Israeli tourists, both within Israel and abroad. They vandalized the hotels in which they were staying, stealing sheets, carpets, curtains or anything

they could.

The culmination came during the doctors' strike in the summer of 1983. There is no doubt that the government showed great ineptitude in managing the health services, especially during the strike. The Histadrut was almost entirely immobilized by its role as employer of doctors, their professional representative, and provider of health services to a large sector of the public.

The behavior of the doctors (many of whom abandoned the hospitals and went on picnics, etc.), and the violent incitement to disobey law, had no precedent in labor relations in Israel, and has created a very demoralizing atmosphere.

The weakening of the various aspects of civility brought out other themes of Jewish political culture, especially intransigence and the politics of the higher law. Paradoxically, the existence of the State of Israel seemed to relieve many groups of a sense of responsibility for the overall running of society, which had been strong during the medieval period.

The weakness of many central normative regulations and frameworks allowed the articulate standard bearers of the more extreme Jewish or Zionist themes to erupt. These extreme themes had previously been limited to some units of the army, various sectors of the older settlements, and more

traditional sectors. These attitudes were latent within wider sectors of the public because they were hemmed in by a central institutional framework and on the whole segregated from autonomous articulation and impact on the center.

This situation was forcefully portrayed by Amos Oz in his book *THE LAND OF ISRAEL*. In Oz's book, the various extremist groups are dynamic and articulate, in contrast with the introspective, segregated old settlers. The author emphasizes the lack of any central vision to counter those of the extreme groups.

COUNTER TENDENCIES

**Legitimation of Protest and Oppositions, Upholding the Rule
of Law, Continuity of Democratic Frameworks,
and the Openness of Society**

In contrast with the weakening of civility, many structural and ideological counter-tendencies have also begun to develop in sectors of the periphery, as well as in the center.

The two most important are the crystallization of constructive-creative tendencies, especially among many in the twenty-to-forty age group. They wished to effect far-reaching structural changes in previously dormant or passive peripheries of Israeli society--especially in some of the development towns, as well as in the cities.

At the same time, in many hitherto successful development towns, youths who had already passed through the educational system and the army were clamoring for more diversified and sophisticated economic opportunities. This problem became more serious with the deterioration of the economy.

Increasingly, however, during the Lebanon War, soldiers and officers from development towns became much more visible (due to simple demographic process). According to several studies and direct testimony, these men displayed a higher level of motivation than soldiers and officers from the kibbutzim, who had previously been regarded as the most motivated.

These trends indicate a very high level of potential for new types of solidarity linkages with a more principled pluralistic orientation and a more open center.

Several very significant counter-tendencies also developed with respect to the weakening of civility. First of all, quiet acceptance of some aspects of pluralism developed, even at the center. This weakened some of the divisive effects of pluralism. At the time, opposition developed to the divisiveness, intolerance, and the delegitimation of protest. The turning point was the murder of Emil Grinzweig during a demonstration organized by Peace Now following the publication of the Kahan Report.

During the demonstration, the hatred of the demonstrators by the "street mob" which gathered along the route reached unprecedented dimensions. But immediately after the murder, which did not evoke a very sharp reaction from the prime minister or the minister of police, a sharp turn in public opinion seems to have taken place. At Grinzweig's funeral, which was attended by both the speaker of the Knesset and Deputy Prime Minister David Levy, the representative of Betar (the revisionist [Likud] youth movement) laid a wreath on the grave on behalf of all Zionist youth movements.

Since then, some rightist groups, but not the more extremist ones, have been trying to find ways of "talking together" (hidabrut) with anti-government protest groups. Some of the members of these rightist groups (such as Zachy Hanegbi, a leader of students and of protestors in Yamit) have publicly admitted to being wrong in their delegitimation of Peace Now and stressed the importance of protesting within the limits of the law.

The attempts to delegitimize opposition and protest became much weaker, as demonstration against the war in Lebanon ceased to evoke strong outbursts of hatred or attempts at violence. The university campuses calmed down and the terrorizing atmosphere of the late 1970s and early

1980s subsided. The students turned away from the right wing parties.

After Prime Minister Begin's resignation, the negotiations between Likud and Labor for a government of National Unity (which, according to the polls, was favored by large parts of the public) were conducted in a very civil atmosphere. When negotiations concluded without agreement, this tone of civility and mutual acceptance was maintained by both parties. At the same time, however, new extremist anti-Arab movements developed among the Jewish population.

In this context, the position of the new chief of staff, General Moshe Levi, was important. He rescinded his predecessor's instructions regarding the treatment of Arab demonstrators. In one of his appearances before soldiers, Levi stressed that there is no such thing as the army's view, but rather that the army represents all the variety of views existing in Israeli society. A general calm fell upon some of the higher echelons of the army and there was a restoration of mutual trust.

Important parallel reaffirmations of the rule of law also developed. This commenced with the publication of the Kahan report, most of the recommendations of which were implemented. Nonetheless, sectors of the public protested against Mr. Sharon remaining in the government at all, but

the attorney general ruled that this was not against the spirit of the recommendation of the commission.

The Kahan Commission very sharply criticized the political and military levels alike. This was quite unlike most commissions of inquiry in other democratic regimes, and unlike the reaction to the Agranat Commission after the Yom Kippur War, which exonerated the leadership.

While their conclusions have evoked criticism as well as constant abuse from Ariel Sharon (who has not been rebuked by any public figure), the very fact that the report was basically accepted and implemented testifies to the strength of the rule of law. This was further emphasized by the actions of the attorney general, and the Supreme Court.

The Court struck down the Television Authority's policy banning any interviews with PLO or other anti-government Arab leaders. The Supreme Court also permitted a demonstration thirty days after the murder of Emil Grinzwieg--against police wishes.

Following negotiations with the police inspector general, the attorney general issued directives to the police stating that it is their duty to protect the security of protestors at legitimate opposition demonstrations, even if the majority of the public may be opposed to them, and even if the protestors' views seem to threaten public order.

There were some new and important ideological developments. During the Lebanon war, many religious intellectuals, who had been relatively quiet for many years, came out strongly against the war and against Gush Emunim's seeming monopolization of the Zionist religious movement. Perhaps even more significant was a similar, strong anti-war stand taken by the Yeshivot Hesder, and such personages as Rabbi Avital and others. This led to the public expression of second thoughts by Minister of Education Zevulun Hammer, one of the leaders of the younger groups in the NRP, major standard bearers of the Eretz Israel Hashlema ideology.

Some Oriental intellectuals spoke out against the image of the Orientals as war-mongers. Some even claimed that this false stereotype was part of an Ashkenazi plot to denigrate the Sepharadim. There were attempts to form movements of Orientals for Peace.

Despite polls indicating a public loss of confidence in democracy, the basic democratic framework and most of the rules of the democratic game were maintained. The openness of society and the lines of communication between the population and the authorities remained intact. Even during the height of the Lebanon War, the lack of consensus did not impede the efficiency of the army and the basic loyalty of the citizens. Despite some initial attempts at censorship,

the Lebanon War was fully covered in the press, in sharp contrast with the Falklands War.

Despite all of this, the tendencies toward a weakening of civility, divisiveness, and intolerance continued to grow and some even intensified.

The preceding analysis has indicated, albeit in a preliminary way, that in order to understand the internal impact of the repercussions of the Lebanon War, it is necessary to put it in the framework of the far-reaching changes and transformations that have been taking place in Israeli society.

These changes culminated in the change in the government in 1977, and hence also its repercussions. Some of them are easily visible; others are more indirect, but possibly of more lasting significance, and can be understood only in the context of these changes and transformations with all their contradictory tendencies. These have continued to develop, albeit in greatly changed ways, even after the period discussed here--i.e., even after the 1984 elections and the formation of the national unity government.

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