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Ayelet Hashashar lies in the Jordan Valley a few miles north of the Sea of Galilee. It is one of the oldest and most prosperous of the Kibbutzim and was established at the end of 1915 by young people from Russia under conditions of great hardship. Isolated from other Jewish settlements, the encampment grew slowly, despite disapproval of British authorities, and became the armed outpost of the region. Repression of the Jews in Europe and World War II brought a flood of new refugees to the area. What must have been Russian cultural predominance from the outset is not distinguishable today. All are Israeli. In the War of Independence during 1947 and 1948, the Kibbutz was subjected to a number of heavy attacks by enemy forces and suffered many casualties in the shelling and bombing. Since then it has remained the center of defense, farm and commercial activity and has grown and prospered. During recent years it has been near enough to the Syrian border to be shelled at times and has always had to be alert to terrorist attacks. Today, in addition to its citrus plantations, cotton crop and livestock, it is one of the largest honey producers in Israel and has expanded into other activities. Its handicrafts and an air-conditioned guest house and restaurant attract a large number of visitors from the main road north through the Jordan Valley.

Our party, made up of an Israeli foreign office representative, a military guide, David, the intrepid driver, and myself, had passed through the town on the way North early in the day and came down again for lunch from the Syrian heights at Qnaitra. During the morning we had visited the Lebanese border at Metulla and then turned East up through Druze villages into the Syrian hills to the towns of Baniass and Massada. Across, in Lebanon, we had seen the canal abandoned a number of years ago when the Israeli artillery was used to prevent this planned diversion of the Mariosa River, one of the principal tributaries of the Jordan. Throughout the day in the Syrian heights we passed field after field of abandoned or destroyed military vehicles of the defeated Syrian army. Some had been hit in action. Others appeared to have been caught unprepared in staging areas. Most were of Russian make, although there were a few French models interspersed. I took no individual

count, but just along the road and in the encampments an estimate of two hundred tanks and two or three thousand trucks and other vehicles would be justified. Many appeared in good repair, and some were already being moved by the Israeli army. A sizeable volume of captured artillery was also evident.

All along the road from Tel Aviv north, at the Kibbutz, and even in the roads in the Syrian heights, we encountered busload after busload of Israeli tourists who had come to view the area of the great victory of just three weeks earlier. Tel Aviv residents, whose bus service had necessarily been curtailed or shifted to trucks had complained but had been overruled. Many felt that the war had been won through the rapid mobilization made possible by these busses. Now the results of the victory were viewed in the same vehicles. At Baniass, where the Baniass River flows out of a rock under the ruins of a Greek temple to Pan, these tourists waded and bathed in the pool of the river, picnicked on fruit brought in by the Druze villagers, and wandered through the wreckage of the abandoned and largely destroyed Syrian town. Very heavy fighting had taken place there. Inevitably, the litter of such crowds and the ankle deep dust followed. While the mood of the visitors was happy and almost wondrous, it was also one of restraint, except perhaps when the visitors saw the heavy Syrian fortifications towering over Galilee and the fertile plains of Israel below. Here the memories of twenty years of intermittent shelling of the farmers and fishermen and the terrorist raids caused other moods to give way to a sense of justice done, and of resolution that what had existed intolerably before should never be again. A few snapshots taken from inside these fortifications, looking out over the seven hundred foot cliff onto the farms, have since been sufficient to bring a sense of such feelings to Americans who have never visited Israel and who have read of the Heights only in the newspaper accounts. The concept of "Greater Israel" will not likely determine the future course of events in the Middle East, but a willing return to the conditions existing before the June war must become most doubtful to any who have viewed this scene. Settlements of Jews have already been made in some of these parts of Syria and we saw Syrian-raised crops already being harvested. They were poor in quality,

but the significance was not lost on the tourists. The people and government may or may not hold to the view of President Shazar, whom I was to hear say later, "The Hagolan Hills were a part of the Kingdom of David". But the topographical situation around the Tiberian Sea and the northern Jordan valley alone makes a return to the previous escarpment border provocative and unacceptable to most Israelis.

A month after my visit to the Kibbutz and the Syrian border I arrived at the door of the Central Synagogue in Moscow for an interview with the Chief Rabbi, Yehuda Levin. An elderly attendant met us, provided us with our yamilkes, and we proceeded inside. This is the only regularly operating synagogue in the city, although it is estimated that there are over a half-million Jews. We were greeted by the venerable Rabbi and another somewhat younger man with steel rimmed glasses and pursed lips. They led us to the Rabbi's small study. With an American Embassy officer acting as interpreter, we covered many subjects relating to the attitudes and practice of Judaism in the Soviet Union.

Rabbi Levin opened the discussion. He appeared happy to meet with representatives of the American Congress. After a few minutes he introduced the spectacled gentleman, close at his right elbow, as "Congregation President". Thereafter this person frequently prompted the Rabbi or interrupted, offering his own comments or conclusions. This seemed unique in various meetings or discussions that I have attended with American rabbis. Although the discussions were translated between English and Russian, it was soon evident that the "President" had a good understanding of English but did not use it himself. It became very clear that his role was that of the omnipresent "observer" we experienced in all our Russian interviews.

We were told that in accordance with the general campaign under way at that time in Moscow as a part of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the revolution, the Central Synagogue was being restored on a schedule expected to be completed by the anniversary celebration date of November 8th. It was also said that the restoration was being assisted by the state "in many ways", although all of the actual cash involved,

some fifty thousand rubles, had been collected from private donations over a long period of time.

The Rabbi said that the attendance at the synagogue was approximately two hundred a day, with perhaps six hundred on the Sabbath. During our visit we went into a small side room where about forty or fifty old men were reading or praying. During the Passover early this year it was claimed that almost thirty thousand people had attended services in the synagogue and on the outside, with the street being blocked off by the authorities for this purpose.

In reply to our inquiries about the prohibition upon the printing of Hebraic prayer books over many years, we were told that all Hebraic type had disappeared, but that recently the Rabbi, himself, had found an almost complete font of type and that it was expected that very shortly they would have ten thousand new prayerbooks completed. The Rabbi spoke also of having a religious calendar prepared.

When queried about anti-Semitism in Russia both the "President" and the Rabbi stated that the synagogue is open to any and all. It was also claimed that there had been no incidents of anti-Semitism at the Synagogue, referring apparently to the time of the recent Middle East crisis.

When we inquired about the position of the Jewish citizen in the Soviet society, it was acceded that party regulations require that no party member be a religious believer. Promotion and security in many fields depend on such membership. In spite of this, it is known that there are an appreciable number of important officials and leaders who are of Jewish descent. The extent to which they still practice Judaism is doubtful. However, it would be foolish to ignore their potential if not actual influence on Soviet policy on Middle Eastern questions, particularly in view of the strong tradition of Israeli leadership from Jews of Russian and Middle European (now Communist satellite) nations.

Rabbi Levin emphasized that the official policy of the Soviet government is atheism and that this also implies that education is the sole responsibility of the state. All schools must be separate from religious

activities. The Communist Party attempts to draw youth away from religious practice, he said, but only through changing their convictions rather than through any administrative requirements. Thus, the Rabbi claimed that everyone was free to worship, and that there is no interference with those who wish to worship, although admittedly no Sunday schools or religious training of any sort is permitted. The probable effect of this became clear when the Rabbi estimated the average age of his parishioners at "60, 65 or 70".

In further evidence of the tolerance of the Jewish religion in Russia the "President" and the Rabbi cited the availability of kosher preparation of birds and meats and produced a glossy photograph album of the last celebration of the Passover, showing the preparation of matzos. This was a pretty obvious bit of government public relations material in response to outside attacks on anti-Semitism. An identical photograph was shown to me later in Washington by a Soviet official who came to my office after reading my report on the trip.

Premier Eshkol of Israel has recently indicated that Russian emigration to Israel has been closed since the June war. The Rabbi replied that emigration was not a matter for the congregation. He did say, however, that he knew a very large number of Jews had safely left the country, because they were in Israel. He said he had personal knowledge of this because two of his own secretaries had emigrated to Israel. He could offer no figures on the total number of people who might have emigrated.

In discussing the closing of the Israeli Embassy in Moscow, the Rabbi commented with the hope that it would be reestablished, saying "That which has been before will be again. That which has never been may never happen".

From these two recent and diverse experiences and from other similar ones in the Middle East and in Russia it has not been easy to gather the strands and weave some intelligible reaction on Russian attitudes and peace in the Middle East. A better understanding of the relationship is a task to which we Americans, concerned with the future world peace in a nuclear age,

must take on. Like it or not, a large part of the responsibility for building toward the goal of lasting peace falls upon us and upon the Soviet Union. A number of lessons can be learned from the June War in the Middle East. The inescapable and most important conclusion is that such a conflict in this part of the world involves a confrontation of these two major powers. The degree of their mutual restraint exercised in the recent war there is perhaps hopeful, but their involvement was profound and at times very uncertain as to limitations of possible scope. The United States cannot afford again to be in a position in which, to many Americans and certainly to the outside world, it appeared that in fact we had no Middle East policy. This was said to me in so many words by one of the frankest and most hard-minded men with whom I talked in Israel, Minister-without-Portfolio, Joseph Saphir. Minister Saphir is an aging "sabrah", meaning that he is Israeli born. The name derives from the fruit of Israel's ubiquitous prickly pear, thorny on the outside but good within. He had spent the entire day expediting Israeli oil production in the captured Sinai. Saphir's opinion that we had no policy seems justified by the public appearance that our State Department was so void of policy ideas on the Middle East that it could not have seriously affected the circumstances leading to the "June War", even if it had wanted to do so. We at first announced that we were "neutral in thought, word and deed". This was rapidly recanted by an avowal that the earlier statement was "not a formal declaration of the neutrality". Finally, Secretary Rusk tried to explain both by stating that by "neutral" we meant we were not going to become a belligerent, but that this did not imply that we were indifferent to the outcome of the war. Consider also that this on-the-spot confusion had been built on a base of what must have been prior misjudgment of the Middle Eastern developments. Such misassessment was evidenced best by the absence of any American ambassador to Egypt during three months preceding the crisis. When the Ambassador, Mr. Nolte, eventually arrived on May 21, he gave forth with his famous "What crisis?" statement. Meanwhile, David Ness, our charge d'affairs, a senior career diplomat, had become so disturbed by the lack of interest in the State Department in the Middle Eastern situation that he took the radical step of complaining to the press that his reports, which showed a major crisis developing, had been totally ignored.

On the basis of this record it would be easy to say that the dangers to world peace, insofar as the Middle East is concerned, depend most heavily upon better information, judgment and policies by the United States. But in saying this we must recognize that the most important single factor in our considerations and policies in the Middle East is probably Russia. And the Russia with which we will deal is Soviet Russia and her attitudes of today and as they can be expected to develop. For this reason we should examine Russian thinking and reactions in the Middle East. Unfortunately the depth of detailed knowledge of motivation of Russia and its government seems extremely limited even to the fine officers in the U. S. Embassy in Moscow. The practice of the art of Kremlinology is at one of its lowest ebbs. The fall of Krushchev, with whom some progress in communication at least appeared to be possible, has once again drawn the curtain on much contact with the government, almost to the degree that existed under Stalin. The reasons for this are not entirely clear. Within the Politburo, itself, there remains a struggle for power between Bresnev, Kosygin and others. It may also be that the tendency of the Russians toward secrecy and suspicion has reasserted itself once more in a dominant way. On this latter point the thoughts of one great Russian scholar, Dr. George F. Kennan, have recently been well expressed in his article in the October issue of Foreign Affairs (p. 15). Ambassador Kennan says of Russian xenophobia as follows:

"One should begin by noting that elements of extraordinary antagonism in those relations were not unknown in earlier Russian history. Many of the characteristic features of Soviet attitudes (the strong instinct for orthodoxy acclaimed the political infallibility and to a monopoly of ideological or religious truth, messianic dreams of world ascendancy, an exaggerated sense of prestige, a morbid suspiciousness toward outside powers, a determination to isolate the Russian people from contacts with the West, etc.) were characteristic features of pre-Petrine Russia".

Kennan goes on to state (p. 20) that,

"External relations are still troubled and made precarious by the neurotic view the regime takes of itself as a government among governments, by its predilection for secrecy and mystification in method, by its addiction to the use of exaggeration and falsehood in political utterance, by its persecution mania, and its pathological preoccupation with espionage, by its excessive timidity and suspicion (more suitable to the former Grand Duchy of Moscow than to a modern great power) about personal contacts between Soviet citizens and foreigners, by the inordinate role it concedes to its secret police apparatus in the conduct of its foreign policy . . . In Russia, unfortunately, the years since Drushev's fall has seen in many ways a retrogression".

My own experiences as to these attitudes were limited to a week long visit to Russia with two other members of Congress in the first week of September of this year. During that visit we were granted interviews with the Soviet Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Foreign Trade, the Mayor of Moscow, the Chairman of the Council of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet, local officials in Leningrad and representatives of Pravda and editors of a group of Russian magazines. The almost uniform coolness of our reception at times bordered on "rudeness" which other American visitors have noted as characteristic not just to foreigners, but as a part of the very fabric of the society. The limitations upon our contacts seemed designed deliberately to hamper achievement of our goals of exploring Soviet attitudes on the Cold War, on Viet Nam, on the Near East, on trade with and on religious freedom in Russia. They sufficed, however, to warrant many vivid impressions. The suppression, the suspicion and the surveillance which have long characterized the Soviet government remain in full measure. Despite the fact that this is the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution and new steps toward consumer orientation, flowering of the arts, and the debut of a new era of prosperity and scientific advance have been loudly heralded, even in Russia, it is generally agreed that the performance in all these respects in the anniversary year has been desultory and disappointing to date.

One of the most interesting reverse aspects of the anniversary is the extraordinary sensitivity to criticism at this particular time. For example, it would be hard to overemphasize the impact of the defection of Svetlana Stalin to the United States or of her comments and writing about the period under Stalin. Time and again this was brought up to us in discussions with Russians. They somehow seem to blame the entire matter on a ploy by the CIA. Making all allowances for a dislike for turncoats, it seems unlikely that our nation or other nations in the western world would work themselves up into a frenzy over such an incident. For instance, if Elliott Roosevelt were to defect to the Russians and engage in writing or broadcasting there, I doubt whether U.S. impact would be very important. The demimonde of Western defectors in Russia has been written about on many occasions, but they seem to have little importance to public opinion outside Russia.

The same violent Soviet reaction results from even the smallest criticism in the U. S. papers, such as one indicating a counter-celebration of the revolution by a small group in Boston. This clipping was waved before us by Soviet editors. I said I had never even heard of the organization. The response was "You may not have heard of it, but the C.I.A. has!"

Unhappily, the 50th Anniversary space achievements of a soft landing on Venus and docking of cosmos space craft have been overshadowed by the disclosure of development of an orbital bomb and new military weapons. The amnesty to thousands of prisoners has been limited to low-grade criminals rather than to political figures or dissenting writers. In fact, during the time we were in Moscow the trial of two of these writers was proceeding in secrecy, but nevertheless leaked and became known. The fate of authors like Yuli Daniel, who was convicted of having his unauthorized works published abroad, stands as a warning to those who would stray from the hegemony of party doctrine. None in the USSR can fairly interpret the 50th Anniversary asatocsin for a new freedom of expression. Just this last week forty-four intellectuals in Moscow made a plea that the trial of four more young Russian writers be opened to the public. The trial is reported as delayed, but expected soon. This December's issue of Atlas magazine, republished from Die Zeit of Hamburg an article by

Daniel's wife, describing pitifully the conditions in the secret prison camps where she was permitted to visit her ailing husband. It is all summed up in an exchange after her complaint about prison restrictions against food gifts as follows:

Daniel's Wife:

"That may be so. I, of course, don't know the camp regulations; they are a secret. But it isn't good either. Perhaps the result will be that my husband will return an invalid, if he returns . . ."

The Official:

"That depends on him. Let him change his attitude. I advise you not to talk to anyone about this. Should anything appear in a newspaper about the camp . . ."

Daniel's Wife:

"I'm not reading between any lines, only telling what I myself have seen, what Yuli Daniel knows. A great many people will confirm every detail."

The Official:

"I believe that the conditions are too soft. You have too much freedom. And that is why your husband doesn't change his attitude. The screws will have to be tightened."

Nor does there appear to be any progress toward economic freedom that is inherent to personal freedom. An increase in the minimum wage and a flow of consumer goods, most of them from outside Russia, have raised superficial claims for celebration. But the desired impression of a new liberality and prosperity has hardly come off. The new doctrine of "Liberism", applying standards of profitability to industrial production has been hailed by some as a hopeful departure from hard line Marxist Communist economics. But as Liberman, himself, says in a recent article published in this

country:

"First of all, no private individual and no enterprise as a group of private individuals may acquire a profit. Profit may not be invested arbitrarily by any person or group for the purpose of deriving personal income. Profit in our country belongs to those who own the means of production; that is to say to society and to all the working people as a whole".

There is no indication whatsoever that the change has led to an acceptance of the concept of private property rights that would be the primary force for an operating profit system.

The "peasant mentality", of which foreigners in Russia have complained for centuries, remains today. It is difficult, if not impossible, to get good service in Russia. U. S. Embassy automobiles are taken to Finland for repairs. Elevators are out of order more often than working. Accurately cut lumber has to be imported in a nation of forests.

Moreover, the peasant mentality, too, is shown in the practice of espionage and reprisal that is a part of the Everyday existence of our officials in the Soviet Union. An instance we learned of in our recent visit, for example, was the stealing of three easily identifiable American automobiles from the U.S. Embassy staff in retaliation for two Russian vehicles stolen previously in Washington, D. C. Just to make sure the message came through, personal property in the first vehicle stolen was not returned when it was returned, but was later found in the second vehicle on its redelivery. During our visit two useful and experienced officers on the Embassy staff in charge of agriculture and press relations were declared persona non grata and barred from the country, not for any activities of their own, but in expected reprisal for the expulsion from the United States of the two Soviet UN diplomats, who had been engaged in espionage with American military personnel.

But, in some ways, the picture is not an entirely gloomy one. The typical Russian on the street

seems friendly enough. He is almost certainly better off economically than he has been. The youth have a preoccupation with science and with material progress for the nation. Recently an article in the U. S. press reported young Russians as wondering just how much they, as individuals, want to know about and participate in world affairs. But in discussions with officials extremely unbending lines are taken against U. S. involvement in Viet Nam, against our position in the Middle East crisis and against NATO. Like the Arabs they support in the Middle East, and even like the Red Chinese they scorn, they seem unable to resist extreme language and overstatement of position. They could well consider the injunction of Abraham Lincoln in 1862, "In times like the present, men should utter nothing for which they would not willingly be responsible through time and in eternity". But despite the apparently irresistible urge to excesses, Americans, both officials and others, who know them best seem to feel that the Russian people as well as their leaders, remain primarily concerned with the building and preservation of their own nation and their economy. The insecurity and suspicion remain and, with them, the "claim to political infallibility and to a monopoly of ideological or religious truth" of which Kennan wrote. It was on this premise that we based the eyeball to eyeball confrontation in the Cuban missile crisis, relying largely on the assessment of our then and now Ambassador to Moscow, Llewellyn Thompson. The same premise was partially tested once more in the Middle East and found to be sound. The extent to which we have relied upon it and will continue to rely upon it in the Southeast Asian conflict and elsewhere is a subject of national and international dispute. Admittedly, this question is complicated greatly by the close presence of a rival for international communist leadership, Red China.

Such is an abstract of the people of the power with whose policies we must deal in the Middle East. Once turned to that area and its specific problems one tends to become preoccupied with them. We must never forget that, important as they may be, they rest upon a home base that is in the long run almost certain to dominate the expected and actual conduct. The Middle East, perhaps more than any other part of the world, must be related to the interplay of world-wide considerations. And we should never again allow our policies

there to be determined by default, or even to give that appearance.

In understanding the Russia with which we are dealing in the Middle East, we have to recognize that in addition to dominant domestic considerations of the Soviets, there are many external factors to be weighed, such as international economics, geopolitics, and national aspirations.

Historically we should recognize that the aspirations of the Russians for the Middle East have been fairly constant over the centuries. The goals have been warm water ports and access to the Mediterranean and Indian oceans. We need look only to the history of attempted Soviet expansion since World War II to find reaffirmation of this policy. In 1945 and 1946, Russian armies moved into Northern Iran. They were finally withdrawn only at the behest of the United Nations, prompted by Iran, United States and Great Britain. In 1946 and 1947, a move was made in Greece and pressure was put upon Turkey to attempt to gain a dominant Russian position over the Dardanelles. The successful reaction of the United States through NATO and our foreign assistance programs to Greece and Turkey thwarted this goal. With the death of Stalin, Soviet policy took a new line in trying to by-pass the Northern Middle Eastern countries by strengthening ties with the Arab nations further to the South and by trying to establish in that area revolutionary regimes which would upset the established order. Since that time, massive amounts of economic and military aid have flowed from Moscow into such countries as Algeria, Iraq, Syria, Somalia and Yemen. In a bid to establish leadership and central direction to this effort, the lion's share, however, has gone to Egypt with the Soviets betting upon Mr. Nasser as a leader who could rally "anti-imperialist" forces in the Arab world.

Since its inception, the Soviet Union has been faced within itself with a conflict in its attitude toward developing nations. Put briefly, the question has been whether Russian Communism should back communist parties with strict Marxist doctrine or whether any forces offering effective opposition to established order and interests of Western nations should be accepted. It was Lenin's view and practice that the

latter was the correct choice, even if it meant scuttling local communist parties and attempting to subvert the new nationalist regime which rose from the ashes of dying colonialism. This course has been followed since in the Middle East with little exception. That it is not without its problems the Russians are now finding out. Once such a regime is in power, factors other than pursuit of Marxist goals and Soviet interests often dominate the picture. Especially this has turned out to be true of Moslem countries, where separation of religion and state has never developed to a recognizable extent. This must continue to worry the Soviets, particularly in view of their own large Moslem population. Troublesome also, as a manifestation of such a diversionary trend of new regimes, has been the development of the Arab cause celebre against Israel. This hardly coincides with United Nations, and even Russian, approval of the State of Israel, from the very outset after World War II. Studying such problems, the surface reaction of the Russians today, based upon our interviews in Moscow and similar reactions in the world press, is that there are "many roads to communism". This is a pat answer to foreigners, and it may even be a practical attitude to take toward the course of events in an area as complicated as the Middle East. On the other hand, it may be difficult to explain in Russia in the climate of "political infallibility" adhered to in the dialectic disputes with Red China.

Many have viewed the tremendous Arab defeat in the June War as a catastrophic setback for the Soviet aspirations in the Middle East. It certainly was one by many standards. The economic and military loss to the Soviet Union alone has been estimated in the neighborhood of two billion dollars of aid already provided, not to mention the replacement cost of military equipment promised or already provided to replace that loss. Moreover, it was a severe blow to the prestige of the Russians and a forcing into hard daylight of their limited commitment, position and strength in the Middle East. Whatever the extent of the Soviets' involvement as a supplier and even technical adviser of the Armed Forces (Russian transmissions were heard and a handful of Russian prisoners were captured in the battle on the Golan Heights), it has become clear that there is a limit to the extent of commitment and backing that may be relied on in local and limited conflicts. Just

how much this should be attributed to fear of a direct confrontation with the United States and the NATO powers, and how much may have related to internal doubts about a desired fate for Israel, remains a subject for conjecture for the Arabs and for the entire world.

In assessing the effect of the June War, however, we must take into account the fact that, while the measure of defeat was great, the ultimate goals of Soviet Russia in the Middle East have not been shattered to such a great extent as some may think. The unanimity of the Arabs against Israel may have been shaken, but it has not been broken. The United States' policy, which tried to maintain an early position of neutrality and still gives lip service to it, has been forced out into the open as, for all practical purposes, committed to Israel and a Middle East settlement guaranteeing its future. The United States is even in a position where it can no longer advocate directly a return to former territorial boundaries. This has alienated our Arab friends. It has also driven more of a wedge on the issue between America and some of its allies who have strong ties with the Arab countries and do not desire to lose them.

Oil is a key factor in the entire situation and deserves comment on its own. Three-fourths of the non-communist world's fuel oil resources lie in the Middle East. The production there comes to more than nine hundred million barrels per day, of which over half goes to Western Europe, providing 65 percent of its needs. Even as far away as Japan one million two hundred thousand barrels a day or 60 percent of consumption comes from this area. Thus, if the Russians should truly come to dominate the flow of oil from Arab countries, possible blackmail of Western Europe and Japan could result. The likelihood of effective control developing may be questioned, particularly in view of the refusal of eastern Arab countries to observe boycott attempts during and after the June War. However, it seems obvious that the Russians are no further from this goal than they may have been before the War. And they may be somewhat closer to it. The side effect, which should not be underestimated, of increasing the cost of supply of oil, has already registered on the economy of Western Europe. The devaluation of the pound reflected in no small part the increased cost of petroleum

caused by the partial boycott and the closing of the Suez Canal. The additional cost for Great Britain alone has been estimated at one million dollars a day. Moreover, U.S. oil companies have investments in the Middle East worth nearly three billion dollars from which annual production profits come to one billion dollars. British and Dutch companies have similar holdings. All this affects payments balances.

Nor can it be forgotten that the Soviets themselves are holders of what well may be the next important or most important oil reserves in the world. This faces them with somewhat of a dilemma in the future insofar as the Middle East is concerned, for they themselves stand as possible major competitors in supplying petroleum products, particularly to Europe. In our discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Trade in Moscow, we brought up the possibility of foreign capital investing in Russia. It was made clear that while this was impossible under the Soviet economic system, the same effects might well be achieved by longterm credits and payment as a barter basis. Particular mention was made of a recently negotiated agreement with Italy, under which payments for Italian machinery and goods will be made in gas delivered in Italy by a new pipeline from the Soviet Union. Obviously, the development of supply arrangements of this sort, on which the economy of Western Europe may come to depend, might be a far more reliable economic and para-military weapon than the indirect and less reliable control over the Middle Eastern petroleum resources. In this sense, the disruption of the Middle East and the oil supply from that area may have played into the Soviet hands. There would seem to be no reason why it should not continue to do so. But the realities of these competitive factors are probably not lost on the oil-rich Arabs.

We must recognize that it is a costly proposition that the Soviets have been financing in the Middle East, both in money and military equipment. The pressures for a consumer economy at home are considerable. The promises have been made and have to be implemented. The increase in wages, the increased demand for consumer goods and the promise of increased industrial production are all positions from which a retreat would be difficult. Moreover a number of the Middle Eastern countries, who turn to Moscow as a patron, face increasingly difficult

economic circumstances themselves. Particularly is this true of Egypt. Russian defense spending for 1968 has been scheduled for a thirteen percent increase. The published figure, according to our own experts, is probably only about half of the actual increase involved. Replacements costs of the military equipment to the Arab Republic, Syria and Iraq alone will be in the neighborhood of two billion dollars, while the outflow to North Viet Nam is estimated at at least one billion dollars annually. This must continue to raise questions in the minds of domestically oriented Russian leaders. One can visualize a foreign aid debate similar to our own. The Russian position with regard to Israel and the Arabs is thus put into some degree of reference and leads one to wonder whether the involvement of the Russians in the Middle East may remain more a matter of opportunity than it is a matter of deep commitment or dominant policy considerations. The achievement of her goal of warm water ports and security would seem to involve more directly the first ring of southern European and Middle Eastern countries, Greece, Turkey and Iran. Thus in the involvement of the Russians with the Arab countries, there may be more the anti-imperialists opportunism of Lenin than any firm commitment to support national entities or to follow any special beliefs. It is very unlike the relationship of the United States to Israel, where the commitment is one of principle of the heart rather than one of self-interest. In fact, from the point of view of self-interest, the importance of American petroleum investments in the Middle East Arab countries might well seem to dictate a policy contrary to that we have followed. There is almost certainly some feeling of affinity in Russia for Israel as well. It is likely that such affinity has an importance within Russia itself in the Russian origins of settlements such as Ayelet Hashashar and hundreds of others. As commented by "Le Nouvel Observateur" recently, about the June War, "As elsewhere, the pressure of Jewish opinion made its weight felt in the U.S.S.R., right up to the leading circles".

Because of their considerations despite the global aspects of the Middle Eastern confrontation and the tremendous economic psychological and demographical forces that are at play, the problems might still be largely resolved at the local level by solutions that are essentially tailored to the area and the problems.

We should reflect also that the current anti-Israel cause of the Arab world was neither a traditional nor an historic one. Both Semitic peoples, the Jews and the Arabs, have lived together in relative peace over many centuries. Nor was the explosion of Egyptian and Syrian nationalism inexorably tied to an anti-Israeli feeling. To the neo-fascist "Young Egypt" organization from which Nasser emerged, only one thing was of importance, the elimination of foreign domination from Egypt. Even after the War of Independence in 1948, many of the extremely left-wing groups supported the Soviet position of favoring a partition of Palestine. The seizure of power by the Egyptian officers in 1952 was accompanied more with a condemnation of Farouk's bungling in connection with Palestine than it was with any new call for liberation. The coup d'etat itself was hailed by Ben Gurion, the Israeli premier, as the chance for Egypt to revise its foreign policy and start to build itself. As commented in a recent article in "Le Nouvel Observateur" by Jean Lacouture during an interview with Nasser in January of 1954, "Israel did not come up once".

Thus, despite the oral violence of the Egyptian position against Israel in the U.N. and everywhere else, some doubts exist as to its dominance as a long-range issue in view of the immediate problems which Egypt faces with its food, population and economic crisis.

There are a number of other interrelated problems about any solutions that could be accepted by Egyptians, the Syrians, the Jordanians, or their governments. Most important are the boundary disputes, Jerusalem, and resettlement of the Arab refugees. Almost equally serious issues are innocent passage of the straits of Tiran and the accessibility of the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping. Our role, the Russian role, and that of the United Nations are all important in trying to develop possible approaches. We must start by recognizing that certain points are non-negotiable with the Israelis and that others can probably never be acceptable to Arab powers, no matter how great their state of economic or military collapse.

In the first category is the disposition of Jerusalem. International control of the Holy places may be worked out, and it might even be welcomed. But

to any who have talked with the Israelis, it is clear that the area of negotiability stops right there. Twenty years of a split city and deprivation of their Holy places have ingrained in the minds even of the many non-religious Israelis a commitment that is not to be reversed. It is a strong mixture of religion, nationalism, and symbolism that is involved. It has even been balladized in the emotional song, "Jerusalem the Golden". On the other hand, the presence of the Israelis on the east bank of the Suez Canal is something that no Egyptian leader can countenance for long.

Beyond these thorns there is the question of the Golan Heights and a viable boundary between the Syrians and Israel. As described earlier, the return of the prior situation seems impossible and undesirable.

Insofar as the refugees are concerned, the major powers, particularly the United States, might be of most assistance. Economic aid and development is plainly the important factor. It must be recognized, however, that it is not the only one. Changed attitudes on the part of the major powers, the various host countries, and the refugees themselves must be worked out. Never in the entire history of the refugee problem has the Soviet Union contributed a penny toward the solution. From the outset, the Arab policy, backed by the Soviets, has been one of isolating and fomenting trouble among these refugees to render them a counter force against Israel. No sight distressed me more than a visit to the so-called "Beach Camp" at Gaza. Here some forty-five thousand refugees for all practical purposes have been ghettoized for twenty years and kept under the sole support of the United Nations Relief and Welfare Agency. They had no jobs. They were permitted to have none regardless of their ability or desire to work. They were prohibited from mixing with the thirty thousand natives of the city and from traveling to Egypt, Jordan or elsewhere. In some camps, such as the one at Kahn Yunis, the camp itself was divided into segments for community and education purposes, each unit bearing the name of the Palestinian city to which each group of refugees were pledged to return after "driving the Jews into the Sea". The art exhibit from the schools in this area offered a selection of childish atrocity drawings which told in bloody testimony of the

deep hate that had been engendered and maintained against the Israelis even in small children.

We drove through the sand alleys of the Beach Camp in a jeep with a Major Ben Israel, a lawyer who had been called from his Tel Aviv practice into the Military Government Branch of the Army. He related to us some of the steps taken in the attempt to change the status of the refugees. Emigration and visits to Jordan have been opened for the first time since 1957 and the response has been large. The curfew on the town has been lifted from nine to eleven P.M. Little trouble had resulted although one well-off Arab whose compound had been raided by a marauder the previous night, had complained to the Major that the "Israeli Army is no good for anything except fighting". But whatever interim steps are taken with eight hundred thousand to a million people displaced for twenty years and two hundred thousand more displaced as a result of the recent hostilities, a major problem of resettlement will continue to exist. Whether the answer lies in a large scale desalination and irrigation project such as proposed by Admiral Lewis Strauss and General Eisenhower in 1956, may depend upon the attitudes of the various nations involved. The blossoming of Israel itself seems to make such a goal conceivable if only the people of the area will accept it. There are dangers, of course for Israel in such a proposal since it might well be building up within or on its borders a new force which could have more military and technical potential than the underdeveloped Arab nations. But surrounded as they are by a sea of fifty million Arabs, the Israelis are generally willing to take this risk.

For the Arabs, unable as they are to respond for the moment to the effectiveness of Israel as a modern power, it would seem only a matter of common sense and humanity to take such a course, but that doesn't mean it will be followed. There is also the hope that it may be set a pattern for their own development, but their sensitivity on such subjects must be respected. It hardly helps to propose, as I heard one U.S. congressman say to King Hussein recently, that the refugees should all go to work for Israelis who have shown they know how to develop these areas.

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For the U.S., and for the Soviets, while the economic burden may be a serious one, it is worth the risk and better than continuing to supply vast amounts of economic and military aid to the nations involved, risking periodically the danger of a serious confrontation there.

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In seeking solutions for the threats to peace in the Middle East, such as the refugee problem, there is a growing recognition that the ultimate concern must be with the U.S.- Russian relationship. No longer is the Middle East a side show in the circus of international affairs. No longer is it correct, as ex-premier Ben Gurion told me he had told President Eisenhower, that it would take so long to fulfill any U.S. military commitment that it would probably be meaningless. While the flammability of the situation is again as great as ever, or soon will be, it is not without hope and chance of success. But the success is unlikely to be achieved without active and intelligent participation of the great powers.

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The historical, cultural and racial ties of many settlements, such as Ayelet Hasahahar with Russia, submerged though they may be, the inevitable relation of Russian and Eastern European Jews with the Jewish homeland concept and the emigrants, the more direct and immediate concern of the Soviets with Europe and with domestic progress, the interest of European nations in and their dependence on Middle Eastern oil, and the desperate need for economic help of the Arab nations, all should favor a forum in which to develop sound and peaceful foreign policies for both the United States and Russia in the Middle East. It will take imagination and a great deal of patience. It will call for a more positive policy than we have had for the area, and a recognition that it can take a position of second importance to no other part of the world. For if we permit to be created an empty pit, it is one into which the Kipling's smiling bear may lumber, facing us with a "time of the bear", with prospects far more bleak than the present and with more and not less call for our involvement.

On the other hand, a firm policy with a clear definition of the extent of our interest and commitment could offer a possible success, working with the United

Nations, which certainly needs a success. It might even set a pattern for tackling other problems in developing areas of the world.

How hopeful it would be if from the differences surrounding the Holy Land and the City of the Wailing Wall, the Holy Sepulchre, and the Dome of the Rock, from "Golden Jerusalem", we could cause to sprout the seeds of peace in the arid soil of the Middle East.

Robert Taft, Jr.
