An Orthodox Rabbi Speaks Candidly On the Legitimacy of the State of Israel
Rescuing Judaism from Zionism: A Religious Leader's View

MANY RELIGIOUS JEWS DO NOT SUPPORT POLITICAL ZIONISM . . .
SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL IS NOT CENTRAL TO EITHER THE JEWISH OR THE CHRISTIAN FAITH . . .

INTRODUCTION BY MARK LANE

A leading civil libertarian attorney, one of America's most outspoken Jewish critics of Israel, answers the question, "who speaks for Judaism?"

S
ome years ago I traveled through Palestine, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to interview witnesses for a case I had filed against the Jewish National Fund (JNF) in the United States District Court in Washington, D.C. The complaint that I drafted charged that the JNF in the United States was not entitled to tax-exempt status as a charitable American institution since it was openly controlled by a foreign country, the state of Israel, therefore not an American organization, and since its primary function was to steal land from Palestinians, it was about as charitable as Al Capone, but on a larger scale.

While there, I met the chief rabbi of the Neturei Karta, the most orthodox Jewish community in the world, with tens of thousands of followers living in Jerusalem and many more throughout the United States.

His son had just been feurtively kidnapped by the Israeli Defense Force and was being held as a prisoner at a military base. Rabbi Hirsch asked me to represent his son in an effort to secure his freedom.

Thus began my introduction to, and working relationship with, the leading and most spiritual anti-Zionist force.

The members of the Neturei Karta live in Jerusalem, do not recognize the state of Israel, pay no taxes to it, do not attend its schools, do not register their children at birth with the Israeli regime and above all, refuse to serve in its military.

As an American lawyer, I believed that my powers of persuasion in a foreign nation were extremely limited, until the leaders of the movement, at a press conference with me, stated that we would, all of us, several thousand strong, march to the military base and free the young man, as the rabbi stated, "by any means necessary!"

As you can see the group is spiritual but not passive.

Menachem Begin, then the prime minister and former terrorist, released the rabbi's son to a serious confrontation that would have brought to the attention of the world a Jewish, orthodox religious movement dedicated to peace with all the residents of the area.

I spent many hours with Rabbi Hirsch, the religious leader of the community, and learned for the first time that hundreds of thousands of orthodox Jews spoke for principle and for love and respect for the rights of their sisters and brothers, their Palestinian neighbors, as they opposed the violence of the terrorist state of Israel.

While these Jew ish anti-Zionists daily risked their liberty and

EXCLUSIVE TO AMERICAN FREE PRESS

By Mark Lane

In 1000 B.C., King David captured the Canaanite town of Urausalim (Jerusalem) and made it his capital. In A.D. 66, after years of Roman occupation, Jewish rebels drove the Romans from Jerusalem and managed to hold the city until Emperor Vespasian sent his son, Titus, to take over the imperial forces. In a counterattack, Roman troops regained the city, then destroyed it in A.D. 70. Celebrating the victory, a relief on Rome's Arch of Titus (above) depicts a triumphal procession carrying the Temple's menorah as plunder. From the time of the Temple's destruction and throughout Jewish history up until today, many Orthodox Jews believe their exile and national disasters were Divine punishment for straying from their faith. According to Rabbi Yisroel Weiss, Jews are forbidden from taking the Holy Land through force— which is the preferred modus operandi of the secular movement known as Zionism.

THE COMMENTS OF RABBI WEISS:

Contrary to what Zionists would have Americans believe, not all Jews support the state of Israel, as evidenced by a talk delivered by an Orthodox Jewish rabbi on June 14 at The Barnes Review Third International Conference on Authentic History and the First Amendment. His conference comments follow.

By Rabbi Yisroel David Weiss

There is, perhaps, no other topic about which Jews disagree more than on the subject of Zionism. Although, perhaps you may not know this, but despite stereotypes to the contrary, we have been known as a people to disagree at times among ourselves.

I hope to present some of the opinions found, at present, among Jews and to explain why it is so clear to us that some of them are authentic and traditional and others have strayed far from the correct path.

Further, we will explore a segment of Neturei Karta's public activities that are often misunderstood and misrepresented when reported in the mainstream press.

Before so doing, however, I'd like to offer a working definition of Orthodox Judaism. I do so because this definition will frame all that follows. My remarks are based on the beliefs, practices and laws of the Torah. Although, in truth, much of what I say, especially when we will turn our attention, a bit later to the current situation in the Holy Land, may be understood in secular or humanistic terms, we believe that Jews must step beyond the limitations of "this-worldly" philosophies, however morally commendable they may be.

What is Orthodox? As we would insist, normative Judaism? It is the belief that the Creator revealed to the Jewish people, at Mount Sinai, the Torah. This Torah is divided into two parts: the Written Law, known in common parlance as the Old Testament (See ORTHODOX RABBI DECRIES, Page B-2)
Orthodox Rabbi Decrees Zionist Warmongering was largely transmitted first time in our people come. Of the non-Jew, the throughout the years have been completely voluntary. Judaism always taught that it was imperative that Jews believe in and practice their faith, the Torah, with all its many detailed laws, and one is forbidden to stray from these laws even one iota, even slightly.

However, Judaism knows of no commandment to convert the non-Jew and, in fact, all converts to Judaism throughout the years have been completely voluntary. Of the non-Jew, the Torah asks that all humanity believe in Him and observe His basic moral law which is detailed in the Torah. That person is then referred to as a righteous individual, who will inherit the world to come.

And, in accordance with God's law, the Jewish people lived throughout the generations, humbly and purely, immersed in study and practice of the Creator's Will, and His many Torah commandments.

In the aftermath of the European Enlightenment, the basics of Jewish existence came under attack. For the first time in our people's history there were large numbers of Jews who left the Torah faith.

In addition, assorted movements sprang up that attempted to maintain Jewish identity while abandoning the God-centeredness of Jewish life and, along with it, obedience to Torah—such as the Reform Jewish movement and, later, the Conservative Jewish movement.

Zionism, historically speaking, is just one of these many late 19th and early 20th century attempts to create a secular Jewish identity.

However, unlike others such as Autonism, Bundism, Yiddishism, all of which were eventually reduced to cult-like status, Zionism has experienced much success. Perhaps this is due to its unique weaving of what appear to be traditional themes into the fabric of its novel ideology.

EXILE AND REDEMPTION

Abraham, the mutual forefather of the Jewish people and their Arabic cousins, is described by the children of Seth in the Bible as “a prince of the Lord in our midst” (Genesis 23:6).

Since man does not live in isolation, one of the goals of the true religious personality is to achieve a degree of devotion capable of evoking among others their desire to emulate his piety.

From Abraham's days this was a major priority of the Jewish people. The revelation at Mt. Sinai placed an obligation on the Jewish people conditionally. The revelation at Mt. Sinai placed an obligation on the Jewish people conditionally. The revelation at Mt. Sinai placed an obligation on the Jewish people conditionally.

Jewish holiday we find the following prayer: “And because of our sins we were exiled from our land and removed from our soil and we cannot go up and appear and prostrate ourselves before You.”

These prayers represented nothing new in the way of doctrine to those who instituted and recited them. From the time of the Temple's destruction and throughout Jewish history our people always regarded their exile as a Divine punishment.

Indeed, no Jew ever dared suggest in the thousands of years of our exile that the Romans had destroyed the Temple due to a lack of Jewish military preparedness or resources. Rather, the Temple was lost physically because of the Jewish people's failure to live up to their spiritual obligations to God.

Indeed, despite thousands of years in exile, frequent exodus and persecution, no Jew ever suggested that the Holy Land could or should be retaken by force of arms. Exile was, indeed, a physical state. Yet, it was completely caused and perpetuated by spiritual forces.

Thus the only means to end exile and to usher in the promised era of peace and worldwide brotherhood were and are spiritual. They consist of the essential practices of our faith: repentance, prayer, Torah study and good works.

And the eventual goal, the end of exile, does not mean a “state of Israel”—a political entity—including the oppression and subjugation of another people. Rather this is the antithesis of the end of exile as we hope for—that is, a spirituality of brotherhood, harmony and of worldly servitude to the One God.

In the words of Rabbi Zvi Elimelech (Maharal of Prague, a Czechoslovakian Rabbi and pivotal medieval Jewish leader, writes that a Jew should rather give up his life than attempt to end exile by conquering the Holy Land.

Why? Why was this seen as so basic to our belief system?

In simple terms, if one views the exile as the result of military cause-and-effect, then the very heart and soul is ripped out of Jewish destiny and Divine guidance.

By asserting our right to alter the Divine plan of exile as punishment, repentance, expiation and miraculous return, we assert that the essence of Jewish destiny is fundamentally capable of being altered by other than spiritual forces. God is then exiled from the drama and final resolution of mankind's hopes.

And in yet simpler terms, to refute the fact that all reward and punishment to every individual is from God, to refute God's constant supervision and to contend that our punishments are due to physical weakness, is blasphemous and heretical.

Of course, exile is far more than mere punishment. The Jewish people were sent amongst the nations in order to proclaim by word and deed the truths of God's existence and His revelatory injunctions for all men.

In the words of Rabbi Bachya, a 12th century Saragossan Biblical commentator: "The Jewish people should spread among the nations in order that those nations should learn from them belief in the existence of God and the flow of Divine Providence regarding the particulars of men."

WHY DID ZIONISM SUCCEED?

Tragically, two events coalesced to cloud over the above once-universally-recognized truths among the Jewish people.

First, the exile dragged on for hundreds and eventually thousands of years.

Second, in the aftermath of the Enlightenment, many Jews abandoned Torah faith.

Thus, those Jews who no longer saw exile in Divine terms sought to explain it as nothing more than the result of this-worldly powerlessness.

In their frustration at the length of the exile, they demonized all nations. In their view all Gentiles would forever hate the Jewish people. Therefore, they reasoned, we must immediately end exile by political and,
In 1948, the state of Israel became a reality. The Jewish people were now to have a safe haven. Jews need no longer fear the exile. They had come home. Eventually all Jews would find their way to the land. They no longer fear the exile. They had come home. Eventually all Jews would find their way to the land.

Although isolated voices within the Zionist movement were raised that protested this moral blindness, the mainstream movement was determined to proceed regardless of Palestinian sentiments. In retrospect it is worth noting the efforts of those associated with the Zionist movements of Brit Shalom and Ichud, who insisted that any attempt at Jewish return to Zion could only be done with the cooperation of the Palestinians.

When this strategy of ignoring the Arab community became impossible, the Zionist movement and, later, the Israeli state sought to depict them as unreasonable enemies, for whom military conquest was the only just fate.

MORAL DILEMMA

There was a second issue, no less important, involved here and that was a moral dilemma, involving the oppression and subjugation of a people, the stealing of their land and of their sovereignty. All of this is most strictly forbidden by God and His Torah.

The Zionist platform necessitated ignoring the Palestinian inhabitants of the land. This was the other great evil of Zionism. It tried to tell the world that Palestine was uninhabited and all those living there were little better than barbarians. As their famous slogan went: “a land without a people for a people without a land.”

Unfortunately, they were wildly successful. Basically, they wanted to transform Judaism from a spiritual, Godly entity, into a secular, political entity — with its goal, a land, materialism etc., acquired through military means.

The spread of Zionism to Eastern Europe resulted in fierce condemnations by the then-Rabbinic leadership. Unfortunately, they were totally ignored.

In the 1920s, the chief rabbi of Jerusalem, Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, personally went to King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan to declare the Jewish communities’ loyalty, and in order to elucidate the true Jewish stance, which was in total opposition to the Zionist movement.

The second episode was in 1947. The then-chief rabbi, who was Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Dushinsky, sent a letter to the United Nations in Lake Placid, stating that he has 60,000 Jews under his authority and that they request to be included in the so-called ‘state of Israel.’ Unfortunately, they were totally ignored.

These chief rabbis in Jerusalem should not be confused with the “chief rabbis” and “Rabbinate” of the “state of Israel.” For these above mentioned chief rabbis were truly the leaders of Jewry, in Jerusalem, Palestine and worldwide. The Rabbinate of the “state of Israel” and their rabbis are a farce, have nothing to do with the true Jewish religion and certainly cannot represent the Jewish people. The misgivings and warnings of so many Orthodox leaders were forgotten. A euphoria seized much of world-wide Jewry.

Today, 54 years later, the dream has become an ominous nightmare. There is no safe haven. The “state of Israel” is the most dangerous place in the world for a Jew. Wars follow upon wars. The toll of Jewish and Palestinian dead mounts steadily. Efforts toward peace have failed. Further attempts to “wage war on terrorism” will doubtless exacerbate Palestinian resentment.

The Zionist leaders are at a loss as to how to proceed.

ISRAEL, THE GRIM REALITY

The goals of Neturei Karta International are varied. First, we seek to keep alive the traditional Jewish approach to exile and redemption. The notion that the great, glorious and spiritual miraculous prophecies of Scripture have been, are and will be fulfilled by those who reject the basics of Torah is bizarre and repugnant. The notion that our people are no longer in exile, because the likes of Chaim Weitzman or David Ben Gurion have so decided, is false and distasteful.

J ewry always yearned through centuries of precarious existence for the true redemption of the Messiah. This Messiah has been the source of our hopes and prayers since the Temple’s destruction.

The true redemption of our people and of all mankind is in the hands of the Creator. It is imperative that we realize that we are still in exile. Failure to do so will mean that the mitzvah of being meatsapim l’yeshuah—yearning for redemption—will be lost.

We will no longer seek to alleviate the burden of sin that has brought us exile. We may fail, prey, as do Zionist’s and their lackeys, to an inappropriate and aggressive stance toward the Gentile host countries.

On the contrary, it is imperative that the Jewish people be thankful to all those nations, including the Arab nations and including the Palestinian people.

Further, we are commanded to be peaceful and loyal citizens in every country wherein we reside. And again the true Torah-abiding Jew worldwide obey fully this commandment.

Second, the oppression of the Palestinian people is repugnant, painful and embarrassing to us. We wish to undo the damage done to the good name of the Jewish people by those who wage war against the Palestinians and open the wounds of enmity between Jew and non-Jewish peoples.

We meet with Palestinians and Muslims leaders and layman around the world. We join in the pain and suffering of the Palestinians and other men of goodwill in their battle against oppression and in their struggle for justice.

If Jews wanted to settle in Palestine, then this had to be done in agreement with the land’s indigenous people. The notion of taking it from them or depriving them of their sovereignty and right to representative government is totally wrong.

The Jewish people were not created to oppress another people. They were intended to be moral paragons. The desire for the land at any cost to anyone is a contradiction with our moral national mission.

Third, we seek to promote goodwill between Jews and all mankind. The philosophy of Zionism encourages Jews to lord over all non-Jews. This results in endless Jewish confrontations with all people. This is improper at any time and certainly at present.

Ironically, the Zionist state was supposedly created to protect Jews from anti-Semitism, yet they are the greatest and main creator of anti-Semitism worldwide.

We welcome all Jews and all men of goodwill to our efforts.

We pray and hope that those Jewish people who have strayed from the proper path return to the true folds of (See ISRAEL HAS NO BIBLICAL RIGHT, Page B-4)
Israel Has No Biblical Right to Holy Land

(Continued from Page B-3)

their faith. We further pray for the peaceful and speedy dismantling of the Zionist state, without any further bloodshed and pain to Muslim or Jew.

We pray and hope for the eventual redemption of all people, and for the day when all mankind will recognize the One God and serve Him together in peace and harmony speedily in our days. Amen.

Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss is from the anti-Zionist Orthodox Jewish group Neturei Karta International. For more information contact Neturei Karta International, Jews United Against Zionism, 102A Saddle River Road, P.O. Box 81, Monsey, N.Y. 10952, telephone (845) 371-0490; Fax (845) 371-4291; netureikarta.org. Rabbi Weiss can be reached via email at info@neturei-karta.org.

Pieces of Silver

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even life in a nation gone mad, in the United States the leading Zionists, recipients of pieces of silver for their service to a foreign state, count among its most respected members such leading Christians as Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell and George W. Bush.

Why is the teaching of the Neturei Karta relevant today? Those, myself included, who have relied upon secular arguments to oppose the illegal occupation of Palestine by the state of Israel, who oppose theft of land and the murder of its inhabitants upon moral principles have been met with statements by the official state rabbis of Israel and their Christian supporters on American television that God wants the Jews to occupy Israel.

Having neither a direct line to God nor an understanding of the ancient history I was unable to reply.

When I recently was asked to introduce Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss, a spokesman for the Neturei Karta, at a conference sponsored by The Barnes Review I accepted at once.

I was delighted that another view regarding the struggle in the Middle East, one too often suppressed, was to be heard.

Again I am honored to present Rabbi Weiss, to the readers of American Free Press.

Mark Lane is an attorney in Washington, D.C.

Israel Laments Destruction of Christian Sites

There is no rationalization for destroying churches and other holy sites as a military necessity or “collateral damage.”

By Israel Shamir

“Aboard is one of the prettiest Palestinian villages, strongly reminiscent of Tuscany. Its timeworn stone houses grow on the gentle hills . . . Three millennia ago Aboud received the faith of Christ from Christ himself, says the local tradition, and there is the church ready to prove it, one of the oldest on Earth, built in the days of Constantine in the fourth century, or maybe even older, as some archaeologists claim.

“Aboud has more than one church: there is a Catholic, a Greek Orthodox and an American-built Church of God. There is also a new mosque, as Christians and Muslims of the Holy Land live together in great harmony. On Dec. 17, all of them, the Muslims and the Christians, go to venerate the village patron saint, St. Barbara. She was a local girl who fell in love with a young Christian and was baptized. It happened in the rough days of Roman emperor Diocletian, and she was martyred in the persecutions. The ruins of the oldest Byzantine church of St. Barbara are still seen on a hill a mile away from the village . . .

“I wrote the lines above almost a year ago, when the Israeli army began its campaign of devastation in the hills of Western Samaria. On May 31, they dismantled St. Barbara, a rare relic of Christian past of the Holy Land.

“I do not know whether the sappers were the same soldiers who for proverbial 40 days and 40 nights, from Catholic to Orthodox Easter, besieged the Nativity. I have no doubt this destruction is connected with the Bethlehem siege. It passed so quietly, with so little attention, that it would be strange not to continue.

“It is true, the Jews can’t stop trying to undo Christianity. Our worst enemy is the Church, wrote Freud, and Gretz the historian seconded, Christianity must be destroyed. It is better to serve Hitler than Christ, concluded the most prominent modern Jewish theologian.

Not only churches. In nearby Nablus, they destroyed the Green Mosque, the oldest exant building, built above the cave where Jacob lamented his lost son Joseph.

One of the great shrines of Palestine, contemporary with St. Barbara, it was a Byzantine church, and later served as a Samaritan synagogue, the center of worship for local Israelites, not Jews.

Samaritan priests pointed it out to me. A holy place is always attended in the Holy Land, and it again was converted to a church and beautified by Queen Melissa, the pious flirt and the builder of the Holy Sepulchre. It reverted to a mosque 800 years ago, when the cathedrals of Chartres and Köln were erected. The mosque celebrated its 1,500-year anniversary, when an Israeli tank ravaged it. It just to show their impartiality, they also bombed St. Philip Episcopal Church in Nablus and put under curfew St. Luke Hospital.

A year ago, I saw just outside the village of Aboud two giant American-built Caterpillar bulldozers slowly devouring the olive trees.

Expulsion of Palestinians is a part of the task, as Palestine cannot survive without Palestinians.

Israel Shamir is an Israeli journalist based in Jaffa. His revealing criticisms of the heavy-handed policies of the Israeli government have earned him the wrath of Zionism’s fervent supporters.