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Edited by FRANZ SCHURMANN and ORVILLE SCHELL

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life was reversed. Increasingly impatient with the inability of the U.N. to resolve the problem, and increasingly concerned about the possibility of Arab strangulation, more and more Israelis, of all political groups, demanded that their government take unilateral action. Once again, frightened about their own survival, the Israelis were forced into the conviction that no one was going to help them. Once again, they felt surrounded by Moslem and Christian enemies, and so once again they turned to Dayan, their own authentic military leader.

Dayan is completely a product of Israel: born on the first *kibbutz* founded there, he personifies the tough, arrogant *sabras*, the native-born Israelis who have never been able to understand why the European Jews went passively to their deaths. So, under Dayan's leadership, and evidently without any help from other countries, the Israelis won an extraordinary military victory, particularly punishing the Syrians whom they hold most responsible for provoking the war. (There is an especially bitter animus in the Syrian-Israeli relationship that makes even the relationships between Egyptians and Israelis pale in comparison: in the past, any Israeli who wandered innocently across the Syrian border could expect brutal treatment, and a captured Israeli spy knew that the cruelest kind of punishment was the price to be paid before death.)

But now that the military war is over, how will the political war be resolved? What will the Israelis do, now, about the Arab refugees? How will the Arabs be psychologically able to remain at peace with the Israelis who have humiliated them, so much more devastatingly than ever before? Will the solution to the problem entail a new form of imperialism imposed upon the Middle East by a U.S.-Soviet bloc, forcing its joint will upon Arabs and Israelis alike? Or will the U.S. and the Soviets continue their terrible arms competition in the Middle East until another war breaks out?

Many years ago, David Ben Gurion told a prominent American Jewish leader who disagreed with him about the future of relations between Jews and Arabs: "The difference between us actually is not so much one of aims but of means. You, too, want a state; you too do not wish to remain under a British mandate. What you want is a bi-national state, and that, too, is a state. You be-

lieve that peace with the Arabs would bring it about. I cannot believe in the existence of a bi-national state, and I do not at all believe that peace with the Arabs would bring it about. But I do believe something which you do not believe, and that is that the Jewish state will bring us peace."

But so far it hasn't, and it never will, by military force, despite those who believe in a "Pax Israel," despite those who see in the recent victory a lesson for Israel to follow in the future.



## ISRAEL IS NOT VIETNAM

by Michael Walzer  
and Martin Peretz

**I**N THE WEEK BEFORE war broke out in the Middle East, the two of us, along with several thousand American university teachers, signed a statement calling upon the United States government to take immediate action to end the Egyptian blockade of the Straits of Tiran. We have been involved in heated argument ever since, with friends (and enemies) on the right and left.

We have been asked: "How can you demand unilateral military action in the Middle East and oppose it in Vietnam?"; "Why should the 'national liberation' of the Arabs be resisted and that of the Vietnamese not be resisted?"

At first, these weren't queries we took entirely seriously since they came only from the right, from "sources close to the White House," and from low-flying hawks. There seemed to us nothing inconsistent in asking for American action against Egyptian aggression in the Gulf of Aqaba and opposing American aggression in Vietnam, nothing illogical about condemning intervention in a Vietnamese civil war—not without reason has the left insisted that it is, or was, a *civil* war—and urging resistance to an Egyptian attack upon Israel.

We were, perhaps, naive to think that

the United States, which might well give lessons to Nasser on how to run a blockade, would help in breaking one, but not logically inconsistent. And if we were quicker to rush to Israel's defense than we might have been on behalf of another country, that was *of course* because of our loyalties, emotional and moral. But we are against all blockades in time of peace—in Berlin, in the Caribbean, in the South China Sea, in Aqaba. We would have preferred that the U.N. act to end the Egyptian blockade last May, but since that was impossible and the U.N. impotent, there seemed to us no valid objection to unilateral action by a great power—at least insofar as that action seemed more likely to prevent a war than to start one. The Munich analogy, consistently misapplied to Vietnam, has some application here—except that this time the Czechs fought back and won, saving the great powers from embarrassment and guilt.

The argument from the right made no sense to us at all; it was nothing more than a predictably crude attempt to take advantage of our trouble. But we were surprised to find that many people on

the left agreed that the cases of Vietnam and Israel were similar. They shared the mad "consistency" of cold warriors and argued that the governments of Marshall Ky and Levi Eshkol were alike in one crucial respect: they were both bastions of imperialism, on guard against the rise of the Third World. Or, more cautiously, that Israel was only the most recent European colony, the Jews the most successful *colons*. Their fate, we were told, was a tragic one, because Nazism and the more civilized forms of European anti-Semitism had left them no alternative but Palestine, and there they were doomed to enact the role of the oppressor, only to be destroyed on the inevitable day of Arab liberation.

Since views like these are in fact widely shared on the American left (we were delighted to see them disowned in a statement of support for Israel signed by Jean-Paul Sartre and some 50 other French leftist intellectuals), we feel it imperative to outline, briefly and quickly, the key arguments against them:

1. The Jewish colonization of Palestine differs from other colonizations in Africa and Asia in that the immigrant



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