

## ISRAEL

ISRAEL DIVIDED: IDEOLOGICAL POLITICS IN THE JEWISH STATE, by Rael Jean Isaac. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976. 163 pages. Append. Notes. Bibl. Index. \$10.95.

Reviewed by Mark A. Bruzonsky

Earlier this year, two massive protests each involving tens of thousands of Israeli Jews symbolized the deepening divisions within Israeli society over the future of the Jewish state. These events seem partial confirmation of Rael Jean Isaac's overall prediction in her fascinating book *Israel Divided* "That ideological politics will replace consensual politics in Israel . . . (p. 157)."

Gush Emunim and the followers of the nationalistic Land of Israel Movement marched through the West Bank proclaiming the right of Jews to all of Palestine. It was a defiant challenge to the Israeli government as much as to the Arab population. As a counter-demonstration, those who comprise the more amorphous Israeli peace movement took to the streets of Tel Aviv. They demanded that the government stand firm against unauthorized settlements in the occupied territories and take the initiative in seeking a road to eventual peace with the Arab states and the Palestinians.

Isaac's significant study provides the essential background for understanding why ". . . there now looms a confrontation of two opposing ideologies, each adopted by major elements within the [Israeli] political system (p. 2)." *Israel Divided* provides as well a necessary framework for appreciating the increasing likelihood of US-Israel confrontation during the coming few years over basic issues of Israeli-Zionist policy.

The bulk of this well-conceived and highly informative book focuses on the history of the two movements—their origins, leadership, ideologies and impact upon government policy and public opinion. It is based on extensive interviews conducted in Israel with the leaders of the movements and on an intimate knowledge of the Israeli scene. Unfortunately, though the book was published in mid-1976, coverage is more thorough of the between war years than of post-October War developments.

Throughout most of the book, Isaac successfully masks most of her own ideological leanings which erupt in the concluding chapter. She describes how between wars the Land of Israel Movement gradually brought the government to begin implementing its policies without ever achieving acceptance of the Movement's political and ideological premises. And then she outlines how the October War marks the renewal of external constraints which have gradually forced the government to become responsive to the peace movement at the very time when the Land of Israel

Movement was achieving increasing public support.

After an overall Introduction and a chapter on "Normative Zionism"—describing the historical and religious bond between the Jewish people and Eretz Israel—Isaac thoroughly examines the development of both the Land of Israel Movement and the peace movement in the aftermath of the June 1967 War. As she rightly insists, both ideological movements stem from a traditional Zionist orientation well within the normative Zionist consensus of earlier years. This "Normative Zionism never denied the claim of the Jews to title over an undivided land of Israel: it merely put the claim aside . . . (p. 18)" after the armistice agreements of 1949. Then, ". . . when, against Israel's plan or will, sovereignty (sic) was achieved over the whole Land of Israel, dilemmas were posed for a Zionist government as the problem became that of renouncing sovereignty over the core areas of the ancient land, when it is upon the ancient right that the claims to sovereignty of a Jewish state ultimately stand (p. 18)." Consequently, Isaac feels justified in asserting that ". . . from an ideological point of view, the chief strength of the Land of Israel Movement is that it represents in fact normative Zionism" whereas "the peace movement . . . derives from the deviant but traditional strain that saw the basic task of Zionism as reaching agreement with the Arabs (pp. 18-19)."

What Isaac achieves with this formulation of Zionist history and the contemporary ideological schism is the foundation for her final chapter's conclusions: (1) ". . . peace in the Middle East is a mirage for the foreseeable future (p. 162)," (2) ". . . U.S. efforts to achieve it will put Israel in a more disadvantageous position when she fights the next war (p. 162)," (3) ". . . the prospects for fulfillment of the ideology of the Land of Israel Movement at this writing look bleaker than they in fact may be. . . . Israel's sovereignty will presumably be exercised over borders considerably beyond those contemplated in any currently considered 'peace settlement'—or not be exercised at all (pp. 160, 162)," and (4) ". . . even unreserved United States pressure cannot be expected to persuade Israel to allow the full program of the peace movement to be implemented, including establishment of a new Palestinian state (p. 159)."

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