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treatment is warranted. The best expression of this position in the mid to late twentieth century is found in the writings of Elmer Berger, to whose writings the Ruethers should have made reference. Third, in their second edition the Ruethers could have fortified their own analysis in many areas by utilizing some of the substance and referring to other analyses contained in some excellent books published from 1990 to 2002. Three such books are *Zionism and the State of Israel* by Michael Prior (Routledge, 1999), *The Founding Myths of Israel* by Zeev Sternhell (Princeton, 1998), and *Syria and the Palestinians: The Clash of Nationalisms* by Ghada Hashem Talhami (University of Florida Press, 2001). Fourth, in a few instances the Ruethers overstate serious allegations: On page 86, to cite but one example, they assert: "The main line of Zionist leadership, Weizman and Ben-Gurion, Meir, Begin, Shamir, Peres, and Rabin, believed that there was room for only one national movement, the Jewish national movement, in Palestine." Although certainly rejecting binationalism, Begin, Shamir, Peres, and Rabin in differing ways recognized and attempted to deal with Palestinian nationalism. Fifth, the disastrous effects for both Palestinians and Israeli Jews of Palestinian armed struggle, highlighted most recently by suicide bombings, deserve more emphasis. This would not detract from the authors' severe criticism of Israel's overly repressive actions against Palestinians, including but not limited to the killing and wounding of civilians. A more profound plea for Palestinian nonviolent actions, which have the potential for producing positive results, would be a welcome addition to this book. The above criticisms notwithstanding, *The Wrath of Jonah* is a valuable addition to the literature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

ZIONISM IN DECLINE

Beyond Survival and Philanthropy: American Jewry and Israel, ed. Allon Gal and Alfred Gottschalk. Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College Press, 2000. x + 261 pages. Contributors list to p. 264. \$35.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Lenni Brenner

This book comes out of a 1996 conference on the crisis in relations between American Jews and Israel. The editors are Allon Gal, who directs Ben-Gurion Univer-

sity's Center for North American Jewry, and Alfred Gottschalk, professor of Jewish intellectual history at Hebrew Union College. Twenty-eight contributors are officials of pro-Zionist organizations or academics at Israeli and U.S. Jewish schools. Two of them, Steven Cohen and Charles Liebman, express their collective problem:

American Judaism takes its . . . cultural environment as a given . . . these values tend to undermine American Jewish ties to Israel. . . . American Jews, as a whole, are only comfortable in supporting Israel when Israeli policies are perceived as consistent with universalist and moralist values. . . .

When unconstrained by Jewish particularist values, universalism undermines the idea of a special relationship between American Jews and Israel. . . . After all, if all people are to be treated equally without regard to race, religion, national origin, sex, and most recently, sexual preference, how can American Jews feel totally comfortable in maintaining a special relationship with, let alone granting preference to, Israelis? (pp. 12-13)

Worse yet, U.S. Jews "have such difficulty appreciating the virtual monopoly the Orthodox exercise over the meaning of Judaism in Israel" (p. 14). The diagnosis is scientific. But with dozens of mediocre "Responses" to Zionism's demographic impasse, the book becomes a sociological caricature of the Talmud's piling on of commentaries.

New Jersey's *Jewish News* editor David Twersky loathes "The tendency to see 'Jewish' as too small a category" (p. 111). But "reestablishing the dialectical relationship . . . between our liberals and the tradition" is just wishful thinking, here or in Israel (p. 115).

America's Jews are its most educated stratum, increasingly science-oriented. Israel has the world's highest percentage of university graduates. Hence, growing percentages in both countries see Zionism and Judaism as intellectual broom closets, precisely because of Israel's "pre-enlightenment, Middle Eastern style compact of religion and state" that Zionism's in-house scholars support or, at most, feebly bemoan (p. 115). Thus, Professor Michael Myers of Reform/Progressive Judaism's Hebrew Union College sees his minuscule sect as "an alternative to secularism and Orthodoxy" in Israel. The "particularist" wants no more than to "shape and

Lenni Brenner is the author of *Jews in America Today* (Barricade Books, 1986) and editor of *51 Documents: Zionist Collaboration with the Nazis* (Barricade Books, 2002).

implement religious curricula in the secular schools" there. He declares that,

Host cultures, especially that of America, represent a more serious threat to our collective Jewish existence than ever before. Not only are Jews more socially acceptable than ever in the past, but so is Judaism. The problem is that Jewish tradition is seen as narrow and prejudiced the moment it makes any claim to exclusivity, the moment it makes any claim to superiority. (p. 226)

America's religious freedom has taken hold. Ethno-religious particularism of any kind is an intellectual loser in a cosmopolitan United States. A 1995 American Jewish Committee poll found only 22 percent of America's Jews calling themselves Zionists, down from 90 percent in 1948. The City University of New York's American Jewish Identity Survey (2001) declared that only 51 percent of our Jews say their religion is Jewish. Given decades of ever increasing repudiation of Judaism, by now, December 2002, or momentarily, most of the country's Jews will have rejected it. The abandonment of their hereditary religion by our richest and most educated stratum is a major sociological event with immense implications for the United States and the Middle East.

The hockey brawl over the United Jewish Communities' demographic survey of American Jews, partially released in October 2002, partly repudiated, further expresses the Zionist establishment's inability to accept the reality that they irrevocably have lost their own secularly educated youth. But why are these youths not coming to the Palestinians' side? Most react to Israel's legal Orthodoxy and discrimination against their Judaic sect, or reject religion as incompatible with their science courses. As with former members of other family ideologies, they have no built-in reason, in America, where religion cannot be legally imposed on them, to combat Zionism because they were raised up in it. And, of course, neither the repulsive corruption of the Palestinian Authority nor Hamas's fanatic suicide bombs can appeal to these worldly intellectuals.

In the end, the book's lesson is the opposite of what its writers intended. If separation of religion and state and equality before the law for all, regardless of religion or ethnicity, have defeated Zionism among young educated American Jews, then a democratic secular binational movement in Palestine/Israel, for one democratic secular binational state, from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, at

least can hope to defeat Zionism among educated Israelis, young and old.

WHITEWASHING AN ASSAULT

The Liberty Incident: The 1967 Israeli Attack on the U.S. Navy Spy Ship, by A. Jay Cristol. Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 2002. 295 pages. Appendices to p. 223. Chapter notes to p. 272. Bibliography to p. 285. Index to p. 294. \$27.50 cloth; \$18.95 paper.

Reviewed by James M. Ennes, Jr.

Ahron Jay Cristol—judge, lawyer, and 1950s naval aviator—has sought for more than fifteen years to debunk the eyewitness accounts of survivors who claim that the attack on the USS *Liberty* was deliberate and that the Israeli version of events is untrue. *The Liberty Incident*, demeaning even in its title, is the grand culmination of that long effort.

This is not the place to look for an objective treatment of this story. Cristol accepts as fact the Israeli narrative in almost every detail, while rejecting as unreliable the eyewitness accounts of survivors and those who support them—which include such credible figures as a former secretary of state, former Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, a former Navy judge advocate general, and directors of leading intelligence agencies. According to Cristol, eyewitnesses are notoriously poor witnesses who cannot be believed.

Consistent with that notion, most of his interviews were with Israelis. Although he attended a reunion of *Liberty* survivors in 1991, his "research" was devoted largely to anonymous Happy Hour schmoozing. For instance, while Cristol cites an interview with *Liberty*'s Bryce Lockwood, an Arabic linguist, Lockwood insists that no such interview took place.

For the author of a book dealing with naval intelligence, he demonstrates almost total ignorance of intelligence systems, procedures, and communications. For instance, he denies the very existence of the Critical Intelligence Communications System (CRIT-ICOMM), which was the essential backbone of the entire national intelligence program,

James M. Ennes, Jr. was an officer on the bridge of the USS *Liberty* during the Israeli attack and is the author of *Assault on the Liberty: The True Story of the Attack by Israel on an American Intelligence Ship* (Random House, 1980; Ballantine, 1986; and Reintree Press, 2002).