ARE YOU A RITUALIST OR A RATIONALIST?

In the London *Jewish Chronicle*, playwright Arnold Wesker illuminates the schism which has "existed between Jews since Abraham"(and which the prophet Isaiah alludes to, he says, in his "Come now, and let us reason together" quotation).

It is the schism between the "ritualists and the rationalists, the practicing Orthodox and the practicing moralists, the observers of outward show and the haranguers against inner corruption; between the priests as protectors of the status quo and the prophets...whose energies were given more to criticizing man than paying homage to God; who celebrated what was created rather more than the creator."

Of these two roots, Wesker suggests, the one of prophecy has "taken the strongest hold in the Jewish personality" and resulted in possibly "the most predominant of Jewish traits, the free spirit...with its demands for social responsibility, for 'justice at the gate', for celebration at God's breath-taking creation, his endowment of individuality..."

It is this freedom which prompts us to "demand the right to go our own way, insist upon respect for the 'still small voice' within, which Elijah heard within himself, and declare we are made in the image of God."

SURVEY OF JEWISH AFFILIATIONS, PRACTICES

Of those responding to a survey conducted for the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of Jews in the five boroughs of New York City and three neighboring countries -- estimated to have about 1.6 million Jews -- 28 percent said they were Reform Jews, 36 percent described themselves as Conservative and 13 percent Orthodox, with 23 percent listing themselves as "other," according to a story in the *New York Times*.

Far more than half of those responding said they observe the fast on Yom Kippur, attend High Holy Day services, light Hanukka candles, and attend a Passover seder.

Less than 40 percent, however, said they observe the Sabbath by lighting candles.

WINGING IT WITH THE PRESIDENTS CONFERENCE

Proving yet again that contributions to an organization do not always buy exactly what one would expect, a full page ad (the going rate: $23,362) was placed in the *New York Times* by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations to say:

EL AL -- WE MISSED YOU!

and welcome back the Israeli airline after it had ended its employee strike. *The Conference's entire budget for the year, from dues contributed by member Zionist Organizations, including the Association of Reform Zionists of America, is exactly $350,000, according to Yehuda Hellman, executive vice chairman, who described the role of the Conference recently in an interview with the* Long Island Jewish World *as, historically,"to speak for all six million Jews," and, currently, to debate and form a consensus on the relationship between American Jewry and Israel.*

'MORE AND MORE JEWS' NEEDED TO ENDORSE JERUSALEM PROGRAM: WZO'S SULTANIK

The 1982 *Israel Yearbook*, which provides an "authentic, comprehensive and instructive cross-section of life in the State of Israel," carries an article by World Zionist Executive member Kalman Sultanik in which he says that "our task is to get more and more Jews to endorse the Jerusalem Program and to realize the centrality of Israel in Jewish life."

[The Program is the charter of the Zionist movement, calling for the ingathering of Jews ("exiles") into Israel and stating that Israel is central to Jews and Judaism. The Council has pointed out the need for de-emphasizing these political tenets which compromise both the religious beliefs and citizenship status of many American Jews.]

Sultanik, stating that "Zionism concerns every Jew personally" and "seeks to be involved in all facets of Jewish life the world over," notes that only a small percent of Jews is Zionist. This does not, it would seem, call for change but rather for "concerted effort":

> There are now some four million Jews over the age of 18 in the countries of the free world outside Israel. The last Zionist census conducted in 1977/8 showed that the worldwide Zionist membership was a little over one million, not counting the collective membership of Jews affiliated with the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform movements, the World Maccabi Union and the World Sephardi Federation...Concerted effort is required for committed Zionism to reach out to the broad masses in order that Zionist ranks might be swelled.

BRAVO, GEORGE ZEIDENSTEIN...who wrote to the *New York Times* in response to an Op-Ed article by Rabbi Alexander Schindler and a reply by the World Zionist Organization-American Section official Bernice Tannenbaum:

> I am troubled by [their] debate..That debate implies that I, a Jewish American, am willy-nilly threaded into some fabric created by others in which the warp and weft are Diaspora and Zionism. Their argument grants me no more individual worth than might those who would despise me because of the Jewish elements of my heritage.
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> The fact is that I do not feel dispersed from anywhere. My homeland is America, and I am prepared *not* to have anywhere else to go...This, not Israel, is my country, and I stake my all on it. I am, in fact, already in my land "as of right and not on sufferance"; it is here, not elsewhere, that I must be prepared to resist any effort to reduce that right. Israel should not be thought of as central "in the lives of Jews everywhere." To do so would be to equate Jewishness with Zionism, a religious faith with a political movement.
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> The awful history of persecution suffered by Jews can never be forgotten. But it is a mistake in my view to believe that the white heat of the Holocaust forged a single national or cultural character for people of widely disparate backgrounds who share a religion along with a history imposed upon them by others.