

# Correspondence

## Of Jews and the State of Israel

To the Editors: A relative of mine introduced me to *Worldview* early this year, and I immediately subscribed. It is an outstanding collection of distinguished thought.

As an active member for many years of The American Council for Judaism, I am particularly interested in *Worldview's* hospitality to non-fanatical views about the Middle East. The most recent contribution to sanity in this area is the article by Prof. Horowitz ("Israel Developing") in the September issue. I applaud the conclusions numbered two and three which he arrives at, together with the substance of his preparatory reasoning. And of course I congratulate him on his recognition of the contradiction between Jewish power and Jewish morality, a point which has, even decades ago, been clearly stated publicly by spokesmen for my organization and guest writers in its publications.

I have but one reservation about Prof. Horowitz's discourse. To my way of thinking he has fallen into the Israeli trap, in which the national interests of a political nation are equated or identified with a religion. I am by far the most religious member of my family, and at the same time, and largely for that reason, I am the most free of the peculiar "irredentist" policies of Israel. To me, the fall of Israel (which is not going to occur in the foreseeable future) would be the same kind of tragedy that Prof. Horowitz describes as that which would be experienced by nonreligious Jews. It would indeed be a terrible thing if Israel were to fall, but no more terrible than, for instance, the two falls of Czechoslovakia have been. I am not a shareholder in Israel; if Israel should fall, I would grieve, as I do for Czechoslovakia, but as a Jew I should not be damaged any more

than my Christian neighbor would be. And there are many Jews—and I know many of them—who share this conviction, profoundly. There is even a strictly Orthodox group here, the Friends of Jerusalem, with similar views.

This is why I do not go along with Prof. Horowitz's first conclusion. Israel and black Africa or red China or white Finland can have whatever relationship they please. To the degree that such relationships might affect the United States, they affect the Jewish citizens thereof—no more and no less. To conceive of any relationship between two foreign countries as bearing on the relationship of different categories of citizens of our country to one another is stretching the long arm of coincidence past the breaking point. Any catalyst from any foreign country in solving our domestic problems will avail us Jews nothing, nor, I believe, do we even want it to be attempted. If fellow-citizens of America, of different colors and/or religions, cannot arrive at a satisfactory symbiosis directly on their own ground, by their own efforts and on their own predicaments, then all of us are on the wrong planet.

Richard Korn  
New York, N.Y.

Irving Louis Horowitz Responds:  
Needless to say, it is always a delight to receive kind and good words on an article—particularly when the commentary is as articulate as Mr. Korn's.

I agree with Mr. Korn that there is a sense in which the downfall of any nation-state—particularly one of real substantive worth—is as catastrophic as the downfall of any other; and at the level of the nation-state, the comparison he makes between the possible fall of Israel and, let's say, the fall of Czechoslovakia to Hitlerism in 1938 is indeed comparable. However, I do believe that there are both religious and ethnic dimensions that make it difficult to speak of the fall of Israel as simply the fall of a nation-state. Indeed, the very dimensions I was alluding to in my article indicate that the entire

Middle East cannot be spoken of simply in nation-state terms. There are matters of people as well as nations involved; and I think in this the irony is that both the Israelis and the Arabs have a shared sense of peoplehood and destiny, which indeed makes the solution to the national question all that much more difficult and complex.

## More on India

To the Editors: *Worldview's* three articles on India in the August issue contribute to the stocktaking following the 1971 crisis and its results. Doubtless, as Gunnar Myrdal says, Gandhi might be disappointed in evidence of corruption and violence and the postponement of economic and social reforms. Yet the reforms (some of which the Mahatma might not have understood or endorsed) are under way in a new wave of postwar confidence and some euphoria. Perhaps the new India will make progress on its long-standing ambition to become more self-reliant.

James V. Schall comments that India's use of military force means that it "deliberately renounced" an ethical quality to its public policies but doubts that the change is a substantial loss because the quality was exaggerated. Yet the ethical quality was often blended with realism, as in the first Kashmir episode and the taking of Goa. India applied this mix in the East Bengal affair, helping victims of repression while the world did nothing and also reducing Pakistan by half. Ernest W. Ranly's discussion of the Fourteen-Day War as a justified war can be placed into the context of Indian traditions without distorting them. To interpret Indian behavior in 1971 as contrary to its own values would be to miss their subtleties.

More might have been said by the writers about the Nixon Administration's callous and inept response to the crisis. Washington's recognition of Bangladesh has helped American-Indian relations. But they could im-

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