

law makes it almost impossible to have college education before being drafted» (*ibid*). Traditionally, the Israeli air force gets first crack at high school graduates, selecting the top 10%. There is also the Talpiot program whereby the brightest high school graduates get military and scientific training to prepare for defense research. This program has been in operation for several years, but only recently did the censor permit publication of details about it (*Jewish Week*, September 13, 1985).

Completion of military service carries with it a range of privileges, including access to housing and scholarships - a system that serves to exclude Palestinian Arabs who are Israeli citizens, since they do not serve in the army. In addition, it is only after completing military service that soldiers get certificates allowing travel abroad. Educational standards may even be tampered with in relation to military needs. For example, following two years of almost full mobilization to pursue the war and occupation in Lebanon, the Technion (the main Israeli technical teaching institute) decided to assist candidates who had completed military service by awarding an additional three points to their final marks for each year of service they had done (*Haaretz*, August 21, 1984).

Jewish religious values are also eroded by the needs of the militant settler society. One example concerns the Hesder Yeshivot, religious students who were previously 'closeted away' to pursue their religious training. With the increasing militarization of the Israeli society and the evocation of religion to serve extreme right-wing goals, these students are now in paramilitary 'religious' settlements from the Gaza Strip to the Golan Heights. They combine military service with religious instruction, signing up for four to five years rather than the required three. They spend five months annually in the army and the rest in their settlement where they are on call for emergency mobilization; most of them are constantly armed. According to top army people, «We are getting some of the best material in the army today from the Hesder Yeshivot» (*Jewish Press*, September 19, 1986).

'STATE WORSHIP'

In this study, we have focused on the material factors which predispose 'Israel' to play its aggressive role, meanwhile forging a consensus in the population at large to the same end. Accounting for this latter phenomenon would require a thorough review of the racist Zionist ideology itself, and how it has permeated Israeli social and cultural life, including the school curriculum and the media. This subject is too extensive to be included here, despite its importance in maintaining a settler population which is constantly ready to go to war for the sake of the state and imperialist aims. The social stability and reliability of the Israeli society are, of course, a main asset to imperialism.

Raphael Shapiro gives a number of reasons for what he terms «state worship» which accounts for the lack of dissent in Israeli society and general willingness to participate in the state's designated goals: «First, the organization of the processes of immigration and colonization gave rise to a huge

bureaucracy, accustomed to manipulating large population groups. Second, the constant conflict with the Arab world has tremendously boosted the prestige and power of the military; a large and growing part of the social, bureaucratic and political elite is made up of retired generals...» (*Forbidden Agendas*). Shapiro poses the question of why 'Israel' has until now «shown only partial symptoms of fascist tendencies» and attributes this to the lack of serious internal opposition as well as the blunting of internal contradictions due to external aid. On the other side, one can conclude that the chance for change in Israeli society is fundamentally bound up with the advance of the Palestinian liberation movement, rather than to internal Israeli factors left to themselves.

THE POLITICAL—MILITARY ELITE

For 'Israel' the early eighties were marked by the invasion of Lebanon, an aggravated economic crisis and the rise of the supposedly autonomous armed settler movement. In this situation, there was much speculation about the possibilities of a military coup and/or the rise of fascism. We would contend that outright implementation of these two options is superfluous, for they already exist in forms especially geared to the needs of the Zionist project. A military regime is not needed in view of the existence of a closely integrated political-military elite; it would only harm the Zionist state's international image, and thus complicate its alliances and foreign aid, etc. Semi-fascist control is already exercised against the internal enemy in the form of the military dictatorship which exists in the 1967 occupied territories, and when needed against Palestinians living in the state itself. On the other hand, maintaining a democratic facade for Jewish citizens is an integral part of fully mobilizing their capacities for the Zionist project.

Those who were shocked by Israeli conduct in the 1982 war in Lebanon cited in particular the role of Defense Minister Sharon and Chief of Staff Raphael Eitan who directed the advancing army way beyond the geographical and time limits approved for «Operation Peace for the Galilee.» However, a deeper historical perspective reveals that similar «manipulation» of adopted objectives by the military leadership have often occurred before. For example, in the 1967 war, the approved military plan called for penetrating the Sinai without conquest of the Gaza Strip or reaching the Suez Canal. There were those in the political leadership, notably then Labor Minister Yigal Allon, who disagreed with this plan, because they favored controlling the canal. In any event, 'Israel' went to war on June 4th, and on June 8th, the army had reached the canal, not to mention occupied the Gaza Strip. According to Haim Benjamini, retired brigadier general, «The Israeli military elite, being 'how' decision-makers, made a crucial contribution to the overturning of the process (of civilian-military decision-making). However, Benjamini also notes that some in the political leadership advocated the military advance that was implemented, so his other conclusion is more to the point: «A narrowing of the structural differentiation between the political institutions and the military elite nucleus, usually