SPRING 1967/2017 • NUMBER 7

PROVIDENCE

A JOURNAL OF CHRISTIANITY & AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY



ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-TWO HOURS & FIFTY YEARS:

A CONVERSATION WITH MICHAEL OREN

THE SEVENTH DAY & COUNTING: THE ELUSIVE PEACE OF THE SIX-DAY WAR JOSHUA MURAVCHIK

A POPE & A PRESIDENT:

JOHN PAUL II, RONALD REAGAN, & THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM PAUL KENGOR

Also: Robert Kaufman backs Thomistic offense • Christopher Kolakowski remembers Bataan • C.S. Lewis celebrates the 1st Servant • Alan Dowd interrogates American intervention • Mark Tooley on American interests • General MacArthur constructs a man • Mark Coppender offers aide to those Snowed-in • George Eliot lauds a spot of native land & Robert Nicholson puts six days in proper context

PROVIDENCE SPRING 2017 | NUMBER 7

FEATURES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-TWO HOURS & FIFTY YEARS:
A CONVERSATION WITH MICHAEL OREN

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK
THE SEVENTH DAY & COUNTING:
THE ELUSIVE PEACE OF THE SIX-DAY WAR

18

PAUL KENGOR

A POPE & A PRESIDENT:

JOHN PAUL II, RONALD REAGAN,

& THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM



Army Chief Chaplain Rabbi Shlomo Goren, surrounded by Israeli Defense Force soldiers of the Paratroop Brigade, blows the shofar in front of the Kotel ha-Ma'aravi, or Western Wall, during the Six-Day War, June 7, 1967. Built by Herod the Great, the Kotel is a segment of a much longer, ancient, limestone retaining wall that encased the hill known as the Temple Mount. Under the British Mandate of Palestine, the blowing of the shofar at the Kotel was criminalized, and from 1948-1967, when the Old City of Jerusalem was controlled by Jordan, Jews were denied access to the Wall entirely. Today, in accordance to agreements with Muslim authorities, the Kotel is the holiest place on earth where Jews are allowed to pray. Photo Credit: David Rubinger, Government Press Office.

ESSAYS	
MARK COPPENGER SNOWDENISM: A MORAL ASSESSMENT	37
CHRISTOPHER L. KOLAKOWSKI FLICKERING FORLORN HOPE: THE BATTLE OF BATAAN	44
MARK TOOLEY AMERICAN INTERESTS & HUMAN RIGHTS	50
ALAN DOWD IN THE INTEREST OF HUMANITY	54
ROBERT G. KAUFMAN IN DEFENSE OF AQUINAS: PREEMPTION, PREVENTION, & DECISIVENESS AS JUST WAR STAPLES	64
REVIEWS Jonathan Leeman AN EXCEPTIONAL CRISIS John Wilsey's American Exceptionalism and Civil Religion: Reassessing the History of an Idea	71
BOOKSHELF —	
THE QUARTERMASTER'S BOOKSHELF: Recommendations for further reading & a survey of newly available books	75
AD ORIENTEM	
ROBERT NICHOLSON JUSTICE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT	80
SPONSORED BY	

THE INSTITUTE ON

Religion & Democracy

PUBLISHERS

MARK TOOLEY
ROBERT NICHOLSON

EDITOR

MARK TOOLEY

MANAGING EDITOR

MARC LIVECCHE

DEPUTY EDITOR

MARK MELTON

SENIOR EDITORS

KEITH PAVLISCHEK JOSEPH LOCONTE

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

SUSANNAH BLACK

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

MARK AMSTUTZ
FRED BARNES
NIGEL BIGGAR

J. DARYL CHARLES PAUL COYER

MICHAEL CROMARTIE
DEAN CURRY
ALAN DOWD

THOMAS FARR MARY HABECK

REBECCAH HEINRICHS WILL INBODEN

JAMES TURNER JOHNSON
HERB LONDON
TIMOTHY MALLARD
PAUL MARSHALL

FAITH McDonnell Walter Russell Mead Paul Miller Joshua Mitchell

Luke Moon Eric Patterson Mackubin Thomas Owens Greg Thornbury

INTERNS

MATTHEW ALLEN GEORGE BARROS JOSHUA CAYETANO SAVANNAH HUSMANN JESSICA MEYERS LOGAN WHITE

LAYOUT & DESIGN

Joseph Avakian

PRINTED BY

LINEMARK

Basic subscriptions are \$28 for a year, four issues. Student rates available. For more information contact: PROVIDENCE@THEIRD.ORG

WEBSITE:

PROVIDENCEMAG.COM

ISSN 24713511

THE KING'S COLLEGE

NEW YORK CITY

- FEATURE



Paratroopers Zion Karasenti, Haim Oshri, and Itzik Yifat stand in awe at the newly-captured Kotel, or Western Wall, on June 7, 1967. This image would become iconic for Jews around the world. Photo by David Rubinger. Source: Israel Defense Forces Archives.

THE SEVENTH DAY & COUNTING: THE ELUSIVE PEACE OF THE SIX-DAY WAR

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK

On May 13, 1967, Anwar Sadat, the then-Speaker of Egypt's National Assembly, returned from a visit to Moscow to pass along to Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser a bit of intelligence that the Kremlin had revealed to him. Israel, it said, was mobilizing forces on its northern border to attack Syria. This "intelligence" was completely false, and to this day we have only contending theories about the Kremlin's motives in concocting it. But it set off a chain of events unforeseen by any of the actors, including especially the Soviet government, which came away one of the episode's big losers.

Within a day, Arab officials were publicly repeating the accusation, although Israel's leaders strenuously denied it. Israel even invited Soviet representatives to join them for a flight to the border to see for themselves that no Israeli forces were massed, but the offer was spurned. Within two days, however, tanks could be heard rumbling through Cairo, and Egyptian forces began to flood into the Sinai desert. Cairo Radio broadcasted:

The existence of Israel has continued too long. We welcome the Israeli aggression. We welcome the battle we have long awaited. The peak hour has come. The battle has come in which we shall destroy Israel.

Then, Nasser demanded the withdrawal of the UN Emergency Force. These soldiers had taken up positions on the Egyptian side of the border with Israel as part of an agreement settling the 1956 Sinai War. Israel had seized the entire peninsula but evacuated it in exchange for the placement of the UN force and the lifting of Egypt's 1951 ban on Israeli shipping through the Straits of Tiran. (The Straits, a narrow waterway through which Israel could reach the Indian Ocean, were legally international waters, but they were bordered on one side by Egypt and readily controlled from there.)

UN Secretary General U Thant promptly complied with Nasser's demand, having little other choice since most of the forces came from India and Yugoslavia, two close allies of Egypt. A few days later, Nasser announced that Egypt was renewing its blockade of Israeli shipping through the Straits of Tiran, which under international law constituted an act of war.

These belligerent acts were reinforced by a drumbeat of incendiary broadcasts and proclamations. Nasser boasted that "[t]he

armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon are poised on the borders of Israel...while standing behind us are the armies of Iraq, Algeria, Kuwait, Sudan and the whole Arab nation." And he warned that if war came, "Our basic objective will be to destroy Israel." Would it come? Egypt's main official newspaper, Al Ahram, said it was "inevitable." Likewise, other Arab officials made similar boasts; for example, Iraq's President Abdul Salam Arif said, "Our goal is clear—to wipe Israel off the map." Ahmed Shuqairy, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, echoed this phrase, adding piquantly, "no Jew will be left alive."

Israel, meanwhile, sent appeals for peace in public statements and through diplomatic channels. A major radio address by Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, perhaps the least charismatic of that country's leaders, sounded so conciliatory and was delivered so haltingly as to project fear. Itzhak Rabin, then the young and dynamic chief of staff of Israel's armed forces and later a celebrated prime minister, disappeared from sight for a few days. It was said he had overdosed on coffee and cigarettes. It is now generally acknowledged that he had a nervous breakdown, although he recovered in a few days.

Israel was indeed afraid. It had prevailed in its war of independence of 1948, but one percent of its people had perished. It had triumphed again in the 1956 Sinai campaign, but with the tactical advantage of taking the initiative and with Britain and France having its back. Now, the Arabs had the initiative, and no one had Israel's back.

In those first decades of Israel's life, Israel's main patron and arms supplier was France, while the United States, unlike today, attempted to be evenhanded in the Israel-Arab conflict. But when Israel's envoy met urgently with French President Charles de Gaulle, he warned that France would withdraw support if Israel fired first. De Gaulle embargoed further arms deliveries to Israel, even of those already bought and paid for. U.S. President Lyndon Johnson, his hands more than full with the Vietnam War, also warned that Israel

would not have America's support if it initiated hostilities. But Israel's military planners calculated that whichever side struck first was likely to win.

The country still hoped to avoid war, but the Arab mobilization on its borders and the blockade of the straits constituted a *casus belli*, not only in a strict legal sense but for practical reasons, too. Like so many other countries, Israel depended on imported oil, and that oil necessarily came mostly from the east, meaning through the straits. And, too, Israel could not withstand a prolonged mobilization of forces since, unlike the Arab armies, Israel's consisted mostly of mobilized civilians. If they were mobilized for long, the economy would grind to a halt.

President Johnson appealed to Israel to bide its time while he organized a flotilla of ships from the U.S. and several allied countries to sail through the straits and break the blockade. But after days passed, it became apparent that Washington had no luck in assembling any participants. Meanwhile, another ominous event occurred.

Jordan had long been the most moderate of the Arab states. King Hussein's grandfather and predecessor, Abdullah, had been the sole Arab leader prepared to accept a compromise with the Zionists. For this he had been murdered before the eyes of the then-teenaged Hussein. The boy, who soon acceded to the throne, continued his grandfather's moderation but was cautious about offending more militant Arabs and inviting his grandfather's fate. Now, in the heat of the moment, Hussein flew to Cairo, patching over longstanding antagonism with Nasser, and announced that he was placing Jordan's military under Egyptian command.

For Israel, the fat was now truly in the fire, and early on June 5, ignoring ongoing Western appeals for patience and claiming falsely that the other side had opened fire, Israel struck. Its target was the Egyptian air force. Although Israel was outnumbered in personnel, guns, tanks, planes, and other weaponry, it held clear advantages in the élan of its soldiers



Israeli troops advance on the Golan Heights. Photo by Assaf Kutin. Source: Israeli Government Press Office.

and in intelligence. In particular, Israel's commanders knew exactly where Egypt's air forces were stationed, the times its planes would be on the ground, and even the hours Egyptian pilots would be busy breakfasting. In that first wave of strikes, Israel's bombers all but destroyed the Egyptian air force on the ground and thus determined the war's outcome. Egypt's superior tank numbers counted for little while Israel controlled the skies over a vast desert battlefield with little place to hide.

While focusing on Egypt, its most powerful enemy, Israel held Syria at bay and attempted to keep Jordan out of the fight altogether. Placing hopes in King Hussein's disposition to moderation, Israeli officials appealed to him through American diplomatic channels, promising not to attack Jordan if he did not attack. Had he heeded them, the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including the old city, would still be part of Jordan today.

But Hussein ordered his forces into the fray. Perhaps he believed Nasser, who called to tell him falsely of great Egyptian victories at the war's outset and to urge him to get in on the spoils. (Hussein's early gesture of placing Jordanian forces under Egyptian command had been all for show; they remained firmly in

his hand.) Or perhaps he sensed that Nasser was lying but calculated that it would be less costly to absorb defeat in the field than to incur the suicidal ignominy of abandoning the Arab cause.

Jordan's offensive unleashed the war's closest-quarter battles, the most costly ones for Israel, and the ones of most portentous result, as Israel's soldiers wrested East Jerusalem and the surrounding area from Jordan. Emblematically, Jewish soldiers danced with Torah scrolls before the Western Wall, this remnant of Judaism's holiest site returned to Jewish hands after two millennia.

Then, with quiet on the Egyptian and Jordanian fronts, Israel turned to Syria, which had, with Soviet connivance, triggered the war. Syrian guns atop the 2,000-foot-high Golan Heights habitually shelled Kibbutz Ein Gev immediately below as well as scores of other farms and settlements within artillery range. Fighting up this steep and rocky incline was a daunting military challenge, but by this stage momentum and confidence, as well as air power, rested entirely with the Israelis while on the other side morale was sinking. Once at the summit, Israeli forces fanned out to occupy a swath of elevated plain of perhaps 500 square miles. When fighting concluded

on this front, the guns of the Six-Day War fell silent.

Of course, the guns didn't just fall silent. Rather, firing ceased in accordance with a resolution of the UN Security Council. Resolution 242, introduced by the United Kingdom and supported by the United States, affirmed in its preamble "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war," then called on "withdrawal of Israel armed forces from territory occupied in the recent war" and the "termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and

that amendment, and it was dropped. The intent of the sponsors was that Israel should withdraw from *some* of the occupied territory, probably from *most* of it, but not necessarily from *all* of it.

Israel's representative, Abba Eban, a man from the dovish side of the Israeli spectrum, deplored Israel's prewar borders as "Auschwitz borders" because they left the country only nine miles wide at its center and thus painfully exposed to attack. Moreover, those borders had little legal dignity, having derived from the ceasefire lines of the 1948 war that had never been codified into any treaty. From



President Gamal Abdel Nasser in a jocular moment with Egyptian jet pilots at Bir Gifgafa air base in Sinai on May 22, 1967. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force."

What this all meant was that the Arabs had to make lasting peace with Israel, accepting its presence within the region, while Israel had to withdraw from territory it had seized from Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, territory far larger than Israel as a whole had been at the war's outbreak. There was, however, a nuance to the text. The Soviet representative proposed inserting the word "the" before the phrase "territory occupied in the recent war." But the resolution's sponsor rejected

Israel's view, its victory in a war in which the other side had threatened its annihilation justified its insistence on redrawing the map to make itself less vulnerable.

And what about the "inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war"? Well, for one thing, that language was only in the preamble, perhaps a statement of general principles rather than a binding determination. And, too, there is perhaps a modicum of difference between offensive and defensive war. Is acquiring territory in the course of self-defense the same as acquiring it "by war"? Scarcely more than twenty years earlier, the borders of Europe were redrawn especially to the benefit

of the USSR, but these acquisitions in the course of self-defense were little challenged (even though the largest Soviet acquisition came at the expense of Poland, which was a victim and not an aggressor).

The intent of the resolution was to lay the groundwork for a negotiation in which Israel would pull back in exchange for Arab recognition and peace. When an interviewer asked Israel's defense minister, Moshe Dayan, what comes next, he replied that he was "waiting for a phone call" from Arab leaders to launch the bargaining. But that call never came. Instead, the Arab League met in Khartoum two months later and issued a defiant declaration: "no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiation with Israel." In short, just as the war had disappointed the hopes of the Arabs to be rid of Israel, so it disappointed Israel's hope the Arabs would be forced to come to peace terms.

It did, however, establish Israel's military superiority. The country was never again to appear so vulnerable as it did on the eve of that conflagration. Indeed, the pendulum was to swing in the opposite direction. Israelis, so filled with fear during the run up to war, now grew complacent.

This was personified for me by Tzvika, the diminutive nickname for the common Israeli name, Tzvi. In 1972, I led a delegation of Young Socialists from the U.S. on a tour of Israel hosted by the youth section of Israel's ruling Labor Party, and Tzvika was one of our hosts and guides¹. Like every Israeli, he had served in the military and, as a tank commander, was active in the reserves. Redheaded and slight of build, he was warm, outgoing, and playful, and exuded the confidence characteristic of post-1967 Israel. He told me that if the Arabs started another war, Israel would win in fewer than six days, but if the Soviets joined them in combat it would take a few weeks.

A year later, Egypt, having sent Soviet advisors packing, launched an attack in coordination only with Syria. It was Yom Kippur, and Israel, taken by surprise and thinly defended, was nearly overrun. My lovely friend Tzvika,

so I learned later, was quickly mobilized to the front. His tank paused somewhere in the Sinai, and Tzvika emerged from the turret to survey the battlefield. As soon as he did, an Egyptian sniper's bullet tore through his neck, killing him instantly, a heartbreaking token of that brief moment of Israeli hubris that followed the great victory of 1967.

Israel survived in 1973 thanks to the individual heroics of young soldiers who held off vastly superior forces while Israel's citizen army mobilized and thanks also to a massive emergency airlift of American arms ordered by President Nixon. Although Nixon was later revealed to have spoken disparagingly of Jews, he was a savior to Israel. When Kissinger proposed proceeding cautiously and secretively with the shipments, Nixon overruled him, saying, "It's got to be the works... We are going to get blamed just as much for three planes as for 300."

Israelis later spoke with wonder and gratitude for the air bridge of C-5s and C-141s, immense transporters that disgorged a desperately needed resupply of arms, tanks, and even of fighter planes. Planes were airlifted within planes like massive matryoshka dolls. Such ponderous shipments required refueling en route, but no European country would allow the American planes access. Indeed, they even denied overflight rights until Nixon twisted the arm of our most vulnerable ally, the anachronistic military regime of Portugal, which granted refueling stops in the Azores.

Why were America's allies so uncooperative? Because they were desperately afraid of the oil boycott that the Arabs unleashed in conjunction with the war. But the shift of European countries away from friendliness to Israel toward embrace of the Arabs had begun already in 1967 with de Gaulle. The consummate *realpolitiker*, de Gaulle made plain that French interests must come first, and these dictated aligning with the side that had greater numbers and resources. Until 1967, France had been Israel's primary patron and armorer; but in the aftermath of that war, the United States and Israel drew close, and France became a champion of the Arabs.

In the years following the Six-Day War, other Europeans began to follow Paris's lead, spurred by their fear of terrorism. The upsurge of international air piracy, bombings, and other forms of terrorism was another indirect consequence of that war.

Over the preceding decades, the dominant idea in the Arab world had been pan-Arabism, also called Arab nationalism. If all Arabs would join in a single omnibus state, they could regain a place of power and glory among the nations of the world. This was the hot idea of the time, firing the imaginations of young people in the coffee shops of Cairo, Baghdad, and Damascus, much as radical Islam was to do a generation or two later. One strain of this ideology was Ba'athism, which came to dominate Syria and Iraq, but there were others, too, and the leading exponent of Arab nationalism was Egypt's Nasser, who was the most popular leader ever in the Arab world—and remains so to this day.

The first task of Arab nationalism was to eliminate Israel, and the Arabs' ignominious defeat in 1967 was seen above all as a humiliation of Nasser. Indeed, he resigned as president before street crowds, probably in part ginned up by Egypt's intelligence agents and in part spontaneous, beseeched him to resume office. Resume he did, but all the air had gone out of the balloon of Arab nationalism.

This deflation made space for the reassertion of other nationalisms among the Arabs, and in particular for the birth of Palestinian nationalism. Until this point, Palestinian nationalism scarcely existed. At most it had been a thought tossed out by miscellaneous Arab thinkers now and again since World War I, but it had gained no traction.

True, the Palestine Liberation Organization had been formed in 1964. But it was not founded at the initiative of Palestinian Arabs, but rather of Nasser. He appointed the PLO's first head, Ahmed Shuquairy, a pan-Arab factotum who had served at various times as a diplomat for Syria and Saudi Arabia and an officer of the Arab League. The PLO's purpose was not the liberation of "Palestinians," but rather of

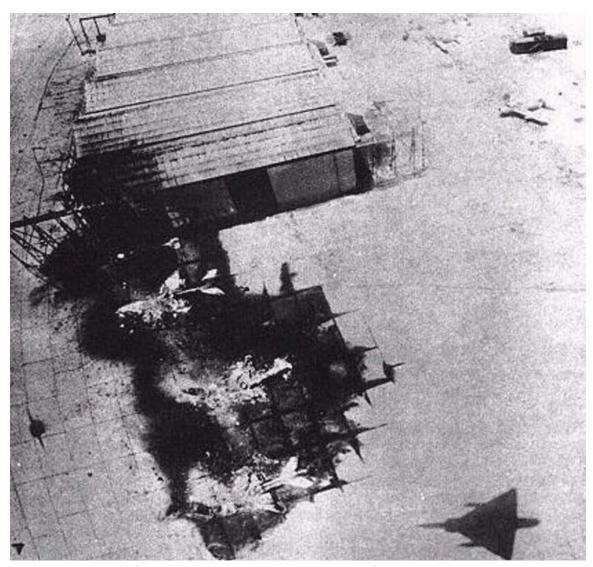
Palestine, a territory unacceptably occupied by the Jews. The PLO's founding document made no mention of a Palestinian state or Palestinian sovereignty.

One of the miscellaneous thinkers who had hit on the idea of Palestinian nationality was a young teacher who had grown up in Cairo and lived now in Kuwait, Yasser Arafat. He became the leader of a small group in Kuwait of men whose origins were in Palestine, and they called their group "Fatah." It published a newsletter propounding the idea of Palestinian nationality, and in 1967 some of its numbers traveled to the front to join the brief fight against Israel. Their military contributions were nil, but enabled them afterwards to don a cloak of bravery while most of the Arab armies were in disgrace.

So marginal had Fatah been that it had been excluded from the PLO, but in the war's aftermath it was admitted and by 1969 had taken over, with Arafat becoming PLO chairman. It set to work fostering a sense of Palestinian identity among the Arabs of Palestine, in part through propaganda and in part through "propaganda of the deed," that is, spectacular acts of international terrorism in the skies and across Europe and the Middle East.

These hijackings and killings drew the world's attention to the Palestinian cause, brought fame on the perpetrating groups, stirred the blood of Palestinian Arabs, and served to intimidate Europeans and moderate Arabs. The most famous of these acts was the 1972 attack on the Israeli team at the Munich Olympics in which eleven Olympians were slaughtered, and its aftermath reflected tellingly the temper of the times.

Of the eight perpetrators, five died in a shootout with German security personnel, while three were taken into custody. The trio was held for all of a month before being exchanged in an airplane hijacking that the German government appeared to have collaborated in staging. Arafat's deputy, Abu Iyad, explained, "German authorities, moved by a sense of guilt or perhaps out of cowardice, were clearly anxious to have the captured



Jocularity turns sober. Bir Gifgafa air base 14 days later, June 5th. MiG-21 warplanes lie destroyed on the tarmac as the shadow of an Israeli Mirage III passes overhead. Egypt's air force of nearly 500 combat aircraft was destroyed in the space of three hours. Over the course of the war, the Israeli Air Force of 196 combat aircraft decimated a coalition of approximately 600 combat aircraft. With air superiority gained at the outset, the Israeli Air Force would help devastate Egyptian, Jordanian, Syrian, and Iraqi ground forces.

Fedayeen off their hands." The German reaction was far from atypical. The New York Times reported in 1973, "Although most Arab terrorists responsible for hijackings, kidnappings, and the seizure and execution of hostages over the last few years have been captured or have given themselves up, few have suffered meaningful punishments."

Rather than combat Palestinian terrorists, Europe took the tack of appeasement. This expressed itself not only in the treatment of arrestees but also on the diplomatic level in a move away from support for Israel to an embrace of the PLO. This appeasement may have served to deflect terrorist acts away from European soil, but it also served to legitimize terrorism, which became a growing international scourge in the decades that followed.

Through all these years, and one horrifying act after another, the UN has never been able to agree on an international convention against terrorism, despite much trying and a particularly strong push in 2005 by then-Secretary General Kofi Annan. The reason is that the Muslim states, determined to maintain the legitimacy of Palestinian terrorism, have insisted that terrorism must be defined by the validity of the cause rather than the nature

of the act. In recent times, Arab and Muslim terror, albeit not Palestinian, has come back to bite Europe ferociously.

It was not only by intimidation that the Palestinian cause gained adherents, but also by ideology. Arafat's predecessor and sometime mentor as leader of the Palestinian Arabs was Haj Amin el-Husseini, grand mufti of Jerusalem. In World War II, al-Husseini aligned closely with Hitler, basing himself in Germany, doing propaganda broadcasts from there, and even traveling in Europe to recruit Muslims for an SS brigade. In the 1970s, however, Arafat, guided by Algerian revolutionaries who had vanquished France, repositioned the Palestinian cause from Right to Left. He made pilgrimages to Hanoi, Beijing, and Moscow, and the PLO claimed a place alongside the Viet Cong and other Communist and revolutionary guerrilla movements across the "Third World."

The Soviet Union, although having lost the romantic appeal it enjoyed in the 1930s and 1940s to younger Communist regimes in Cuba and Vietnam, nonetheless still commanded an unmatched worldwide network of propaganda resources. These were now deployed in calumniating Israel. As their role in instigating the 1967 war with false tales illustrated, the Soviets were already aligned against Israel. But the outcome of the war redoubled their antipathy, expressed in a crude and anti-Semitic propaganda campaign against the bugaboo "Zionism." Its capstone was a resolution pushed through the UN General Assembly in 1975 by the Soviets and the Arabs condemning Zionism as "racism."

The reason behind Moscow's venom was that along with Nasser and the Arabs, the Kremlin was the war's big loser. The Arabs were equipped with MiG aircraft and other Soviet arms, while Israel deployed French Mirage jets and other western equipment. Israel's overwhelming victory was seen to signify the inferior quality of Soviet weaponry.

The harm to the Soviets went beyond this humiliation. Israel's against-the-odds triumph lit a spark among Jews in the Soviet

Union, who numbered a few million. Because religion, especially the Jewish religion, had been suppressed and derided in official propaganda for fifty years, few of these Jews worshipped or had much knowledge of Jewish faith or culture. But they knew they were Jews; indeed, the regime forced them to know because the identity "Jew" was stamped into their internal passport, a document every Soviet subject had to carry.

A movement was kindled among them to explore their Jewish identity, to study Hebrew, and, most astonishing, to move to Israel. The Soviet Union did not allow its citizens to leave, but this marked it as more repressive than non-Communist dictatorships and blackened its reputation as the Jewish demand to emigrate brought it to light. Despite the refusals and arrests, the movement of Soviet Jews seeking to go to Israel grew, nurtured by support from Jews abroad. It became the first substantial protest movement in the history of the Soviet state and ate away at the sinews of totalitarianism.

Israel's victory even served as inspiration to non-Jews under the Soviet yoke. Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia had each been subjected to Communist rule by the Soviet army at the end of World War II. Hungary had rebelled, and Poles had rioted against Communism, though these risings were each time brutally quashed. For the most part, they were kept in thrall through the aura of Russian and Communist invincibility, conveying relentlessly the message that opposition to the status quo was hopeless.

Now, however, little Israel had thoroughly defeated much larger opponents who were seen as Soviet surrogates. This planted the idea that resistance was not hopeless at all, however much it might seem against the odds. Indeed, the Czechs peacefully but massively rebelled a year later. And the Poles mounted repeated waves of resistance through the 1970s, culminating in the rise of Solidarity.

Thus, all of the initiators of the Six-Day War had reason to regret their acts. Nasser was to die of a heart attack in 1970 without ever



The breach. Israeli paratroopers enter the Lion's Gate on June 7, 1967. Source: Israeli Government Press Office.

having recaptured his former prestige. The Syrian regime was overthrown in 1970 by its Defense Minister, Hafez al-Assad, who eventually passed power to his son, creating a dynasty that has presided over the destruction of that country. The Soviet Union collapsed in 1989, its ramparts weakened by the protest movements of Soviet Jews and Eastern European dissidents that the war had aroused.

Security Council Resolution 242, the fruit of that war, remains the basis on which hopes for an eventual peace between Israel and the Arabs rest. Those hopes were partially fulfilled when the remarkable Anwar Sadat, who had carried the Kremlin's poisoned "intelligence" of May 1967, succeeded Nasser and, after making one more war, opted decisively for peace. In the 1990s, Israel offered Syria the return of the Golan Heights, but the deal foundered over the division of the narrow sliver of land separating the heights from the Sea of Galilee. Given recent events in Syria, it is unlikely any Israeli government will ever renew the offer. Also in the 1990s, Prince

Hussein signed a peace treaty with Israel, but he had already ceded claim to the West Bank and East Jerusalem to the PLO, thanks to the "climate of terror" that the PLO had created (in the boastful words of Abu Iyad).

Peace with the Palestinians remains the elusive piece needed to bring this century-long conflict to an end. But the Palestinians are also at war with themselves. One faction—Hamas—swears it will never make peace with Israel. The other—Fatah, now led by Arafat's successor, Mahmoud Abbas—says it wishes but refuses to negotiate. The Six-Day War reshaped the conflict, but sadly its final resolution remains somewhere over the horizon.

Joshua Muravchik is a distinguished fellow at the World Affairs Institute and the author of, among other works, Making David Into Goliath: How the World Turned Against Israel.

1. I am no longer a socialist and, alas, no longer young, but I hasten to add that even then the group I was part of was not very far out. We were not Communists, but rather in the mold of European social democrats.