

JEWISH FUNDAMENTALISM AND THE ISRAELI POLITY¹

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Introduction

The effort to understand Jewish fundamentalism and its impact on Israeli society is fraught with challenges. Not the least is defining the subject in a manner which is both methodologically rigorous and politically relevant. Fundamentalist beliefs and aspirations are not the same as the beliefs and aspirations of other religiously serious people, but they aren't always distinguishable from them either. Secondly, religious beliefs and aspirations may be hard to disentangle from national and ethnic beliefs and aspirations.

Israeli society has been profoundly influenced by Jewish religious symbols and ideas, especially since 1967, independently of the growth of Jewish religious fundamentalism.² In addition, Judaism, in Israel, has been increasingly interpreted in nationalistic and ethnically chauvinistic terms. This development has been influenced by the growth of religious fundamentalism but is not entirely accounted for by that growth. That is the subject of another study.³ This essay is concerned with the direct impact of religious fundamentalism on the Israeli political system. Its primary purpose is to describe the demands which fundamentalist spokesmen have raised and the manner in which the non-fundamentalist sector has responded to these demands. What should be noted, however, is that social and cultural changes in the last twenty five years within the secular public in general but among the secular nationalists in particular, have generated a climate of sympathy for

religion and a legitimacy to the airing of fundamentalist ideas which did not exist in the past.

The Subjects of this Study

According to most estimates, somewhat less than 20 percent of Israeli Jews define themselves as religious (dati). The last few years have seen the rise of fundamentalist or fundamentalist-like tendencies among them. These tendencies come from two directions. One is in the increased influence of the haredim (sing:haredi; sometimes called ultra-Orthodox). Haredim look to the religious tradition as the exclusive source of legitimacy and are at least nominally hostile to "Zionism," which they view as an ideology that conceives of the Jews as a people defined by a national rather than a religious essence and that aspires to the normalization of Jewish life.⁴ (About one-third of Israel's religious population could be described as haredi but in the absence of reliable surveys -- haredim generally resist being surveyed -- and precise definitions, this must remain a rough estimate). The other strand of fundamentalism is associated in the public mind with Gush Emunim.⁵ Gush Emunim was organized in 1974 to further Jewish settlement in the West Bank and Gaza strip, areas that Israel occupied following the June, 1967 war. Gush Emunim is led by religious Jews who hold diverse opinions on many religious matters but who share the conviction that the areas which Israel occupied as a result of the 1967 war must be settled by Jews and must become an integral part of the State. This view has been associated with a theological position that not all Gush Emunim activists share -- the position that we are living in a messianic age, i.e., a period of imminent Redemption, that the settlement of

the occupied territories by Jews is a religious mandate, itself a stage in the coming Redemption, and that God will not forsake the State of Israel if it develops policies in accordance with these beliefs. We will use the term Gush Emunim as a shorthand label for this theological position because that is the way it is used in the media. In fact, it is more accurately ascribed to the theological disciples of the late Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook who were the founders of and continue to dominate the leadership strata of Gush Emunim but are a minority among its supporters.

Within these two strands of fundamentalism, the haredi and Gush Emunim, we can identify a variety of individuals and groups and a range of opinions.⁶

If we focus on the more extreme elements in each strand -- the most haredi, the most faithful to the tradition, the most vigorous in opposition to any innovation on the one hand and the most messianic and ultra-nationalist on the other -- then we will find that the two strands share little in common. The most extreme haredim, are hostile to the State of Israel. Their antagonism to any suggestion of Jewish nationalism has led a handful of them to favor dismantling the Jewish state. They constitute a tiny minority of haredim but they fall within the camp of haredi fundamentalism. Even among less extreme haredim, those who define themselves as loyal citizens of Israel, there is a tradition of political passivity with respect to non-Jews, an anxiety about antagonizing the nations of the world, and a desire to find a peaceful accommodation with the Arabs, even if it requires surrendering territory which Israel has held since 1967.⁷

At the other extreme, among many of the most extreme ultra-nationalist messianists, opposition to any surrender of territory, retaining the Greater Land of Israel under Jewish sovereignty and settling the length and breadth

of the land with Jewish settlers, supercedes every other religious obligation. The belief of a few of them in the imminent coming of the messiah encourages activity of the most extreme form. "I am not afraid of any death penalty, because the messiah will arrive shortly," proclaims Rafi Solomon, charged with an attempt at the random murder of two Arabs.⁸ Nationalism, to them "is the highest form of religion."⁹ Among individuals and groups at the extreme end of the ultra-nationalist continuum, we find those who are prepared to compromise on virtually every other religio-political demand. In order to further their cause they have not only formed alliances with secular Jewish nationalists, but they have justified this alliance as the fulfillment of a positive religious commandment. Religious Jews who are active in ultra-nationalist non-religious parties, and they include a number of prominent rabbis, tend to be most moderate in raising "religious" (as opposed to "nationalist") demands on the Israeli polity. Indeed, these demands never exceed that which the secular members of these parties have been willing to concede.

One could, therefore, make a rather convincing argument for distinguishing between two Israeli Jewish fundamentalist-like strands and arguing that they have virtually nothing in common with one another at the political level.

The argument which I offer here is a different one. The emergence of militant fundamentalist-like groups on the Israeli scene in the last few decades needs to be assessed not only in terms of what the extremists and ideological purists have asserted but on how it has effected that Israeli Jewish public which defines itself as dati, i.e. religious. If Israeli-Jewish fundamentalism is treated in this way, one can point to the emergence of

tendencies which integrate both fundamentalist strands, modifying and moderating them in the process. Viewed from this perspective, therefore, one can discuss the political impact of Israeli-Jewish fundamentalism without necessarily distinguishing one type of fundamentalism from another.

There is justification for this approach in the growing usage of a label that was invented, as a derogatory term less than ten years ago -- haredi-leumi (a nationalist haredi). To the best of my knowledge, the term was first used by a moderate, anti-haredi leader of the religious-Zionist youth movement, Bnei Akiva. He was very concerned with the growth of haredi tendencies within his movement and unhappy, though perhaps less distressed, by the emergence of ultra-nationalist tendencies as well. The term haredi-leumi was certainly intended as a term of opprobrium. The term is now born with pride by a growing number of religious schools, by a rapidly growing religious youth movement, Ezra, and by an increasing number of religious Jews who, according to a poll conducted by the religious weekly Erev Shabbat, decline to identify themselves as either haredi or religious-Zionist but prefer to be called haredi leumi.

No less persuasive are developments among religious parties in Israel. In the elections to the 120 member Knesset in November 1988, the religious parties won 18 seats. These 18 seats were distributed as follows:

Shas 6

Agudat Israel 5

National Religious party (NRP) 5

Degel Hatorah 2

Agudat Israel and Degel Hatorah are acknowledged haredi parties. Their constituents are predominantly ashkenazic, that is of European or American

(primarily East European) descent. Shas is identified by the media as a haredi party and its leaders label themselves haredi¹⁰ although the label, in this case can be misleading. Shas' constituents are overwhelmingly sephardic, that is of Asian or African (primarily North African) descent. Most are not haredi but leaders of all three parties, Agudat Israel, Degel Hatorah and Shas are, at least nominally, anti-Zionist when the term "zionism" is used in an ideological sense. Together, they won 13 seats. The two largest parties of the three -- Shas and Agudat Israel appeared so much closer to the leading secular nationalist party of the right, (the Likud), than to the leading party of the more dovish left (Labor), that most observers dismissed the possibility that these religious parties would join a government led by Labor rather than Likud. Leaders of Shas and Agudat Israel have been inconsistent on the issue of Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. Shas' premier religious leader reversed himself and has adopted a dovish position in the last few years but this has come over the objections of his party's supporters who have constrained his activity in the political arena. Furthermore, what Shas lacks in territorial aggressiveness it balances by ethnic xenophobia. Its television campaign was critical of the Israeli government for not adopting harsher measures in the suppression of the intifada. Agudat Israel's leaders are generally hawkish.¹¹ Degel Hatorah, the smallest of the haredi parties, does espouse a dovish position. But like the religious leadership of Shas, this position does not stem from an interest in the Palestinians or any belief in the legitimacy of their rights to the Land of Israel or for that matter out of any concern with the abuse of human rights that has accompanied Jewish rule over a recalcitrant national minority. The dovish position stems from the fear of antagonising the non-

Jewish world, the United States in particular, and from the possible outbreak of bloody warfare which would result in the loss of Jewish lives. To those fundamentalists who object to surrendering territory, be they haredim or ultra-nationalists, their objection is of prime religious salience. To the fundamentalist who have adopted dovish positions such as the religious leaders of Shas and Degel Hatorah, surrendering territory is an issue of secondary concern.

In the 1988 elections. the Likud won 40 kneset seats and Labor 39. Each these two large parties now turned to the smaller parties in the hope of forming a governing alliance with some of them (i.e. control of at least 61 seats in the kneset), and without the participation of the other major party. Shas won six seats compared to four in the previous election. Its leaders were tempted by generous promises from the Labor party with regard to religious legislation and especially promises of public funds and political appointments. However, demonstrations by Shas' own supporters and a reminder that the party leadership had explicitly promised, during the campaign, that it would not join with Labor rather than the Likud, restrained the party leaders from taking this step.

The next largest haredi party, Agudat Israel, increased the number of its seats from two to five. Agudat Israel received support from two important groups whose religiously based opposition to any Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories equals that of Gush Emunim. These two groups do not view the state of Israel, or the present era, in the same messianic and apocalyptic terms as Gush Emunim, nor do they attribute the same metaphysical significance to events which began a century ago when non-religious settlers initiated the present Zionist settlement of the land. But they are no less

adamant about the religious imperative of maintaining Jewish sovereignty over the territories.

The growth of support for haredi parties was an indication of their ability to attract voters from non-haredi segments of the population. This would have been unlikely had they not adopted a de facto nationalistic orientation and the muted their opposition to Zionism.¹²

At the religious-Zionist end of the continuum, the National Religious Party (NRP) and its constituents -- who until the 1970's were characterized by religious moderation, by an accommodationist rather than a rejectionist orientation toward modernity and secular culture -- show increasing signs of rejecting modernity and adopting a rather reactionary interpretation of the religious tradition. This is evident in the increased allocation of school time to study of sacred text in religious-Zionist schools¹³ on increasing insistence upon separating the sexes in institutions identified with religious-Zionism and in the more stringent standards of religious observance to which many religious-Zionists now adhere.¹⁴ There are moderate elements with the NRP but its foreign policy platform has been increasingly radicalized and now resembles that of the Likud and even of secular parties to the right of the Likud. its position on other though not all matters increasingly resembles that of the haredim. The counterpart to the nationalization of the haredim is, in some sense, haredization of the religious-Zionists. But this development has been accompanied by the toning down of messianic expectations. Thus, a leading figure in circles which heretofore spoke of the imminent Redemption now writes that:

we don't know how much time will pass until we arrive completely at a state of rest and security. Perhaps many generations. "But I believe

with full faith in the coming of the messiah, and even though he tarries", despite all the delays, "with all this", despite all the crises -- "I await him each day that he may come".¹⁵

The author invokes, within his quotation marks, a traditional article of faith. It reminds the reader that belief in the coming of the messiah is indeed basic to the tradition. But this very reminder tempers expectations for his immediate coming. Nothing is quite so religiously incendiary, or raises as many historically based suspicions of heresy among haredim, as the fear of "false messianism". But Jews always believed that the messiah would come, "even though he tarries." The admission that "he tarries" integrates the writer's theology into that of traditional Judaism.

It is partially because of statements by attempted murderer Rafi Solomon, cited above, or the religio-nationalist "underground" uncovered in 1984,¹⁶ that religious-Zionist fundamentalists appear to have moderated their messianic though not their nationalist doctrine. Growing numbers of Jews may continue to espouse acts of violence and if Jewish Arab relations continue to deteriorate we will find an escalation of terror and counter-terror. However, these activities are no longer, for the most part, legitimated in theological terms.

These developments justify a conclusion that the growth of Jewish fundamentalism can be treated as a phenomenon that cuts across past differences between its Zionist and anti-Zionist strands. Elsewhere I have defined the spirit that is increasingly dominant in Israeli religious circles as an orientation toward ethnic particularism which includes suspicion and hostility toward non-Jews, cultural isolationism including a suspicion of universalist moralist values, and, as already indicated, territorial

irredentism.¹⁷ We would expect these general orientations which are admittedly more pronounced among some groups and less among others, to find political expression in demands of the fundamentalistically oriented religious population. But before we turn to that subject, it is important to grasp the significance of the approach being urged here. According to this approach, the impact of Jewish fundamentalism on Israeli public policy is mediated by the larger religious public and the religious parties in particular. The religious public has certainly been influenced by the fundamentalistic-like orientations of the haredim and Gush Emunim, but it has also moderated these tendencies and reformulated them in terms that are more acceptable to the general society. The religious parties have retained much of the nationalist-political vision of Gush Emunim, i.e. continued Jewish sovereignty over the Greater Land of Israel, but neutralized its radical religious, i.e. messianic message. Opposition to any surrender of territory tends to be phrased in terms of Israeli security as much as in terms of Divine promises -- and the relationship between Jewish settlement in the West Bank or Jewish sovereignty over the Greater Land of Israel and the imminent Redemption (i.e. the messianic vision of Gush Emunim), is generally absent. In the case of the haredim, anti-Zionism is muted and demands for expanding religious legislation are surrendered at the bargaining table without much resistance. Let us see how this has effected Israeli society at large.

Religious Demands on the Israeli Polity

One could make the case that the religio-nationalist demands of Gush Emunim and its supporters have successfully influenced Israel society

independently of the religious parties and even, perhaps of the religious public.¹⁸ Gush Emunim spearheaded the settlement of the occupied territories. Less than twenty percent of the estimated 80,000 Jewish settlers in Judea, Samaria and Gaza in 1990 are thought to be active supporters of Gush Emunim, (the political group, not the even smaller band of theological messianists), but its sympathizers dominate the local and regional councils in the territories as well as its cultural life. In 1989, Gush Emunim enjoyed the deference of a group of 31 Knesset members which calls itself the Land of Israel Lobby. That lobby is composed of members of right wing as well as religious parties. It remains the spear head of opposition to any Israeli concessions to the Palestinians. Hence, it might be argued, in at least one area, the Jewish fundamentalists have achieved a great victory and have left a major impact on the Israeli political system independently of the religious parties.

But one can view the success of the religio-nationalist fundamentalists in this area in a different light. First of all, it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish the program of Gush Emunim from the program of secular ultra-nationalists. As noted above, Gush Emunim itself resorts less frequently to religious rhetoric. From the very outset, its success depended on the sympathy and cooperation of non-religious Jews. These secularists were not influenced by Gush Emunim's religious program or religious vision. They were impressed by the zeal and self-sacrifice of Gush Emunim members but what was most important was the coincidence of their goals and those of the religious nationalists. This is increasingly true. The intifada has led to rising Jewish-Arab tensions and these, in turn, have strengthened the sense of many Israelis, especially of the ultra-nationalists, that any concession

to the Arabs is dangerous since their ultimate goal is the destruction of the Jews. In addition, the rise in tensions has triggered ethnic loyalties and xenophobic tendencies among many Jews which leads them to support any program which is anti-Arab. All of this leads to a conclusion that Gush Emunim has not succeeded in imposing a fundamentalist program on the Israeli political system but instead has succeeded through a coincidence between its objectives and those of non-religious nationalists. Furthermore, the religio-nationalist fundamentalists have significantly modified their own religious message.

Rather than resolving the issue -- should or should not Gush Emunim's success be treated as the success of religious fundamentalism -- the remainder of this paper is devoted to an analysis of demands raised by fundamentalists which fall quite clearly into the category of religious demands at the domestic level, demands which set them apart from the remainder of the Jewish population.

Peculiarly enough, one demand that is not heard from the religious parties is for a state ruled by Jewish law. All the religious parties pay lip service to this as an ultimate goal. A state ruled in accordance with Jewish law, constitutes, to borrow a notion of Ann Mayer, a symbol and a focus of emotional commitment¹⁹ but it is not at all clear what it means. In fact, as critics have pointed out, in the unlikely event that the religious parties ever obtained enough votes to impose Jewish law upon the state, they would have trouble interpreting its consequences for the conduct of the state. Whereas religious leaders often proclaim that the Torah covers all aspects of life and therefore, is suitable to serve as the law of the land, in practice, the application of Jewish law to a modern state would require so extensive an interpretive enterprise and possible changes, that rabbinical leaders have

been hesitant to undertake the ground work necessary to transform their vision into a series of specific policies.²⁰

As we noted, slightly less than 20 percent of Israeli Jews define themselves as dati, i.e. religious. The majority of Israeli Jews are not "religious" in belief or behavior. Many, probably most of them, harbor a feeling of sympathy for the religious tradition. Indeed, when asked about their religious identification between 35 to 40 percent prefer to define themselves as "traditional" rather than "secular". Many are distressed, though not to the point of doing much about it, by the increased ignorance and alienation with religious rite and custom which they find among their own children. But even this general mood is often accompanied by anti-clerical feeling. Under the circumstances, religious leaders are reluctant to demand the imposition of Jewish law, even if they might harbor the hope for such an eventuality. What they have called for, in more outspoken terms, is the maintenance of what is called a "Jewish street", i.e. the conduct of public life in accordance with Jewish law. In fact, as we shall see, they have been more anxious to maintain victories they have already secured rather than expand the scope of religious law.

It is far easier for many non-religious Jews, especially political leaders anxious to form an alliance with religious parties, to acquiesce in demands of that sort -- in part because they may be personally sympathetic to them and in part because such demands are not perceived as an infringement of freedom or as religious coercion. Yielding to them, in other words, requires no basic sacrifice of principle on the part of secular leaders. Political conflict over issues of religion and state in Israel is, in many respects, a conflict over what is public and what is private. What do religious parties

and/or the religious public consider to be basic to maintaining the image of Israeli public life as Jewish, and what does the non-religious public consider basic to the private rights of an individual?

It is quite remarkable how little all this has changed despite the new fundamentalist spirit which has penetrated the religious public. Part of the reason rests on the importance which some of the religious parties now place on their "nationalist" agenda -- an agenda which, by their definition is, of course, "religious". Nevertheless, they are sufficiently sensitive to the distinction between "national" and "religious" in the eyes of the secular public to avoid jeopardizing their "nationalist" agenda by emphasis on their "religious" one. Even if one accepts that settling and/or annexing or at least refusing to surrender parts of the Greater Land of Israel is a "religious" issue, the emphasis on this issue rather than others suggests an order of priorities. In addition, even the haredi parties now seek the support of non-religious Jews and greater integration into the Israeli political system, if only to benefit from the spoils of office. Shas's success in this regard is attributable, at least in part, to its emphasis on Jewish ethnicity and the use of ethnic rather than narrowly religious symbols. This, as well as the decline of ideology among, for example, Agudat Israel and the increased weight it gives to pragmatic considerations is reflected in the rather modest demands which even haredi parties make for expanding the scope of Jewish law.

Consequently, as already suggested, the key demands of the religious parties in the 1988 Knesset elections, were defensive demands. In many instances, the religious parties simply sought to retain the fruits of legislative and administrative victories they had secured in the past. The

most important of these included Sabbath closing laws passed by municipal councils which a 1988 court decision held invalid because the Knesset had never explicitly empowered local councils to pass such laws. Closely related was the demand for the expansion of the authority of rabbinical courts in matters of personal status (especially marriage and divorce), an authority which has been eroded as a result of decisions by secular courts. (The legal status of the latter is superior to the former.) However, for the haredi parties, two of the three in particular, the most important defensive demand was the continuing assurance that yeshiva (pl: yeshivot) students (students at schools for advanced religious study which means virtually all haredi youth) would continue to benefit from draft exemptions as long as they are enrolled in yeshivot.

A second type of demand included increased benefits, or what the religious parties called "equalizing" public funding for their educational and philanthropic institutions to those which the non-haredi sector receives. The haredi parties also called for greater housing benefits for young couples and Shas was especially interested in government recognition of its schools as an independent system eligible for public funding but administrative autonomy. These demands, while marginally burdensome to the Israeli tax payer, hardly presaged a major shift in relations between religion and state.

An effort to expand religious influence in Israeli society was reflected in two types of demands. One was of a generally symbolic nature. For example, amending the "Law of Return" to preclude recognition by the State of Israel of non-Orthodox conversions performed abroad (popularly known as the "Who is a Jew?" law), would have affected no more than a handful of Israelis but was of great symbolic importance because it would have

established the authority of Orthodox rabbis in determining whom the State of Israel recognizes as a Jew. The second type of demand was in the area of culture and education. Proposals in this regard were rather vague. They included the demand that the government ought to do something about introducing more Jewish (read religious) education. The National Religious Party also talked about the need for more national (read ultra-nationalist) education. There were also hints at the need to preserve Israeli culture against "negative influences" (an allusion to pornography and probably to anti-religious and/or anti-nationalist expressions as well). Opposition to the construction of the "Mormon University" (in fact, a branch of Brigham Young University) on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem also falls into this category. These demands, it should be noted, were phrased very carefully, generally in a positive rather than a negative vein, under category headings that talked about the need for the unity of the Jewish people. Except for the proposal to amend the "Who Is a Jew?" law, these demands were quickly surrendered in the negotiations over the establishment of a coalition government following the election. Furthermore, although Agudat Israel and some leaders of the National Religious Party did feel strongly about the need to amend the "Who Is a Jew?" law, neither of them conditioned their joining the government on a change in the law. Of course, once Likud and Labor agreed to form a "unity government" together, the bargaining position of all the smaller parties including the religious parties was severely weakened.

To conclude this point, despite the success of the fundamentalists in controlling the religious parties, the demands that these parties made upon the political system were relatively modest. How does one account for this?

Two types of factors ought to be mentioned. One set of factors is

political. This includes the effort by at least two religious parties, Shas and Agudat Israel to attract non-religious voters. This means that their platform and campaign had to be phrased in religiously moderate terms. The success of both these parties in attracting such voters, the fact that for at least a few non-religious Jews these parties had become outlets for a display of ethnic pride, social protest and/or, as in the case of Paisley in Northern Ireland, their leaders were exemplary figures rather than representatives,²¹ led the parties themselves to temper the narrowly religious focus of their demands. This was evident during and immediately after the election campaign. In addition, the religious parties feared a secular backlash should their demands appear excessive. The religious parties are aware of their minority position in the society and are anxious to avoid confrontations with the non-religious majority at both the political as well as the social level -- a confrontation which they can only lose. Indeed, the more they, the haredi parties in particular, share in the benefits derived from participating in a government coalition, the more reluctant they are to jeopardize this participation by raising demands which the majority will refuse to meet.

A second set of factors is theological rather than political. It stems from the conviction which all but the most extreme fundamentalists share about the supreme importance of Jewish unity. This is not an empty slogan or even a tactical device. It is perceived, especially by the religio-nationalists, as a religious mandate. It has led the more moderate among them to insist that even though a course of action was both politically and religiously appropriate, it could not be imposed on a recalcitrant population lest it lead to conflict among Jews.²²

The "Secular" Response

Despite the rather modest demands of the religious parties, the increase in the number of Knesset seats which they won in the 1988 elections (their number grew from 13 to 18), evoked near hysteria. The assumption of virtually everyone, from political analyst to the man-in-the street was that the Likud would form a narrow coalition government with the religious parties and three small parties of the radical right. The images of the future reflected in various newspaper columns included: religious control of the school system; increased expenditures for yeshivot at the expense of universities; greater censorship of the press, movies and the theater; an expansion of the authority of religious courts; new laws restricting the opening of public places on the Sabbath; and amending the "Who is a Jew?" law resulting in sharp conflict between Israel and Diaspora Jewry and the consequent reduction of political and financial support from the Diaspora.²³

For example, on November 3, 1988 the Jerusalem Post, the only English language daily newspaper, editorialized that the religious parties:

...will vie for the lead in wrenching Israel away from its commitment to the Declaration of Independence and into an undertaking to Halakha [Jewish law].

Headlines in Haaretz, Israel's most prestigious daily, referred to "extortion of the religious", or that "parents have reason to be anxious in the face of the possibility of the narrowing of our childrens' horizons". The more popular daily, Maariv headlined stories with banners attributing such statements to religious Jews as:

"You didn't want the kosher law -- now you'll get the supervision of

our courts. You didn't want yeshivot, soon we will buy the buildings on Mount Scopus" [a reference to the Hebrew University] or "Now we are transforming democracy and a minority will rule over the majority".

A number of mass demonstrations took place in which two types of demands were heard. One was for revision of the electoral system. Proposals to revise the system were on the political agenda independently of the 1988 elections results. What the election did was stimulate public demands for electoral change (for example district elections or the direct election of the prime minister) that would limit the capacity of small parties in general and the religious parties in particular to form the balance of power in a government. Secondly, the backlash against the religious parties in general and the haredi parties in particular stimulated calls for the drafting of yeshiva students, who under the present law, are exempt from military service.

The fear of a Likud led coalition dependent upon the support of religious parties for its existence strengthened the hands of a group within the Likud who favored a broader coalition with Labor. There were a number of reasons why they favored such a coalition but it is unlikely that they would have succeeded in winning the support of the Likud's Central Committee if not for the public fear of a narrow government in which religious parties would have a major voice.

In this case, therefore, politicians of the moderate right exploited the suspicions which most Israelis harbor toward the religious parties and toward a growth of clericalism, to further their own political agenda. The moderate left, as we shall see, has also sought to exploit the public's fear

of religion -- in their case, to unite secular Israelis in opposition to ultra-nationalism. The strategy of appealing to secular nationalists in an effort to turn them against religious-nationalists will probably fail. The fact is that the secular right is more ultra-nationalist and anti-dove than it is anti-clerical. Furthermore, what the secular left has never understood is that many of the fears that it harbors about religion and clericalism are not shared as intensely by the secular right. The ultra-nationalist secularists perceive religion as an important part of the national heritage and a source of unity among Jews. They are less concerned than is the left over, for example, limiting freedom of expression. To their mind, a more important issue is protecting national values or what they call "the spiritual treasures of the nation" from defamation, thereby strengthening the "national will". But the point here is not whether the propaganda of the secular left is effective. Rather, the point is that the secular left believes that many other Israelis share their antipathy toward and fear of fundamentalist-like religion. They are at least partially correct in that assessment.

The final question, therefore is: if religious demands on the body politic are as moderate as those portrayed above, how do we account for the grave concern which the election returns generated or the effort by many intellectuals (see below), to exploit fears of religious extremism?

Religious Fundamentalism: Image and Reality

The image of religious fundamentalism in Israeli society has two aspects. First, it is portrayed as demanding the imposition of Jewish law on

all aspects of society. The Jewish religion, according to this point of view is anti-democratic, and the rabbis seek to rule the entire population. "Khomenei-like" embraces the image that many secularists have of the political ambitions of the religious establishment. Secondly, the fundamentalists have been portrayed as successful. The forces of light, liberalism, modernity, and Jewish universalism are in constant retreat before the onslaught of fundamentalist Judaism which means medievalism, closemindedness, cultural isolation, and Jewish particularism.²⁴ We noted above that the moderate left has invoked the fears of fundamentalism in an effort to incite the secular ultra-nationalists against religious ultra-nationalists. Here, for example, is how world famous author Amos Oz, generally considered a moderate leftist and by no means an extremist, describes the threat from the religio-nationalist fundamentalists.

A small sect, a cruel and obdurate sect, emerged several years ago from a dark corner of Judaism; and it is threatening to destroy all that is dear and holy to us, and to bring down upon us a savage and insane blood-cult.

People think mistakenly, that this sect is struggling for our sovereignty in Hebron and Nablus, [Arab cities on the West Bank to which Jews have emotional ties dating from the Biblical period]...But the truth is that, for this cult, the Greater Land of Israel is merely a sophisticated ploy to disguise its real aims: the imposition of an ugly and distorted version of Judaism on the State of Israel...

The real aim of this cult is the expulsion of the Arabs so as to oppress the Jews afterwards, to force us all to bow to the authority of their brutal false prophets.

Oz goes on to talk about:

the shocking success this cult has had in ...pull[ing] the wool over the eyes of hundreds of thousands of Israelis who would quake with alarm were they to recognize... the face of the cruel and freedom-hating fanatic Jewish Hizbullah.²⁵

Obviously such images, even if they fail to dampen the nationalist fervor of the secular right, reinforce the notion of the danger from fundamentalists. The media in general, and Israeli intellectuals, most of whom are identified with the political left, have always been anti-religious, and the rise of religious fundamentalism feeds these anti-religious sentiments and provides them with new elements which they can caricature. They are reinforced by a number of factors and given credibility by others. The reinforcing factors are first, the activity of Khomenei who posed a living model of what religious fundamentalism can lead to and the fact that a fundamentalist group can take power. The second factor is the statements of the religious fundamentalists themselves which play directly into the fears of their opponents. This is not only true of statements by the extremists, Even the moderate fundamentalists employ a rhetoric which strengthens the suspicions of the non-religious. In the case of the haredim, their nominal opposition to "Zionism", even though it has no practical consequences today, is an irritant to the vast majority of Israelis to whom Zionism is a term which symbolizes their attachment to the Israeli state and society. In the case of the fundamentalist-nationalists, Gush Emunim and their sympathizers, invoking a messianic rhetoric even though, as indicated above, there is less and less of this, strikes the non-religious Jew as an indication of irrationality. Thirdly, the fundamentalists' success, albeit a modest one, in

attracting former secularists, has generated enormous publicity and raises fears of children turning against their parents, or sons leaving this-worldly pursuits to take up studies in religious institutions. Finally, there is a deep residue of resentment and hostility toward haredim because of the refusal of so many of their young men to serve in the army.

In Israel, one's religious orientation is viewed, at least by the "other" as a total rather than a partial identity. Religious and non-religious tend to lump the "others" into one stereotype and thereby assume that by defining the "other" as religious or non-religious, certainly as haredi or secular they have identified all that is important about the other party. At the risk of over-simplifying, the dominant images each side has of the other are negative. Among non-religious, these include the haredi image (the image of the religious fanatic), the Gush Emunim image (the image of the nationalist fanatic) and the Shas image, (the image of the poorly educated, superstitious, Sephardi). Images and caricatures of the "other" also exist among religious Jews. They perceive the secular Jew as a political leftist, a person of relatively loose morals, one whose family relations are shaky, whose children are potential drug users, and who is distant and hostile to the Jewish tradition.²⁶

Caricatures of religion and religious Jews can be maintained for a few reasons. The social distance between religious and non-religious Jews is generally great. There are few occasions for intimate associations between most religious and non-religious Jews. They are separated by play group and school from the earliest age. The army is one of the few places where these two publics are likely to meet in any kind of intimate relationship and that is limited by the fact that most religious girls do not serve in the army,

haredim do not generally serve in the army or if they do they perform specialized functions of a religious nature and many young religious men who do serve in the army undergo their basic training in units comprised primarily of other religious soldiers. This is less true among the Sephardi segment of the population and Sephardim, in the past, were far less effected by the negative images of religious Jews. But this too is changing. Social distance means that reports from the media, from other secondary sources, anecdotes, and superficial impressions are likely to determine the images that each side has of the other.

This is related to and reinforced by everything we know of public attitudes among Israeli Jews. Virtually every public issue -- whether or not Israel should construct the Lavi airplane, extradite convicted killer William Nakash to France, negotiate with the PLO, surrender territory in exchange for peace, limit the rights of Israeli Arabs to vote or be elected, limit the freedom of the media, censor pornography -- finds the same population groups arranged on the two sides of the issue. Those who are better educated, of Ashkenazi background, and define themselves as non-religious are likely to adopt one position and those with the least formal education, of Sephardi background who define themselves as religious are likely to adopt the opposite position. (Haredim are generally omitted from such surveys. Pollsters don't often reach them and when they do, haredim are less likely to respond.) There are two sets of related issues around which the Israeli polity is divided. These are the balance between a commitment to the Jewish historical and religious tradition and the security needs of the Jewish people on the one hand and the extension of cultural, civil and political liberties to every person and the risks one is willing to take in

order to achieve a political settlement with the Arabs on the other. On this critical and highly emotional set of issues, the socio-demographic factors of education, ethnicity and religious orientation do not overlap, they are cumulative. Obviously not all religious Jews lack extensive secular education, nor are all of them Sephardim. Indeed, the majority of haredim are of Ashkenazic origin. It is equally clear that among the non-religious not all are well educated Ashkenazim. But when each side thinks of the other, they tend to think in stereotypes, and the image of religious and non-religious is likely to accompany an attendant package with educational and ethnic components. In other words, the images of religious and non-religious not only distinguish between groups with different beliefs and religious orientations, but between two cultures, styles of life, forms of identity, and political values -- and the image of the "other" is threatening.

There is a danger in overstating this condition. It isn't true of all Israelis and we don't have the in-depth attitude surveys to indicate how widespread these images really are. But these images are not only most prevalent among the secular and fundamentalist extremists but among the cultural elite of the non-religious and the spiritual elite of the religious. Each in their own way, intellectuals among the secular and the rabbinical leaders of the religious have the most to lose from concessions to the other side. This is especially true of secular intellectuals who feel far more threatened by fundamentalistic-like tendencies, by any hint of censorship or religious coercion than does the general public. The general public is likely to object to inconveniences which a stronger political influence of religious parties might impose upon them. It is among the intellectuals that one finds a sense that their very way of life, and their deepest image of what

constitutes a proper society is threatened.

The Future of Fundamentalism As A Political Phenomenon

"Observers cannot predict future developments in the middle east," one pundit has noted, "they can't even predict the present". This is especially true when the major actors in the drama include religiously motivated people whose ultimate commitments are to meta-political beliefs and to the authority of spiritual leaders who are often insulated from political pressures. One can, however, reflect upon the future based on the experience of the past. There is nothing in its recent history to suggest that fundamentalism will become a more significant factor in Israeli politics than it is today. To the contrary, it seems likely to become less significant. The haredi oriented parties are becoming more rather than less involved in the political system. As their appetite for the spoils of office and the direct benefits of increased public funding grows, their demands to impose religious legislation of a far reaching nature, the kind of legislation that would do more than inconvenience the non-religious public, is likely to lessen. As long as Israel does not undergo a religious revival in which large numbers of Jews embrace a religious way of life, the ability of religious parties to retain power will depend on a modicum of good will on the part of non-religious Jews. Nothing destroys that good will more than demands for increased religious legislation. There is no evidence that the non-religious segment of the Israeli population has become any more observant of religious norms. On the contrary, there is evidence that the second generation of the non-religious, i.e. secular children of secular parents, are totally indifferent

to the Jewish religious tradition in their private lives and appallingly ignorant of its foundations.²⁷ As long as the religious fundamentalists are politically accountable, in some way, to this population group, they may continue to pay lip service to the demand for religious legislation but satisfy themselves with a defense of their narrower communal interests. Democracy not only limits the achievements of the fundamentalists, it even moderates many of their demands. There is always a possibility that the haredi parties might resign from the ruling coalition. In-fighting among haredim, an unstable structure of internal authority, and acute dissatisfaction with some symbolic act of the government could lead to this. But it has become extremely unlikely that any haredi party or for that matter any religious party would actually join in vigorous opposition to the government. Agudat Israel, incensed by Shamir's broken promises to them following the 1988 elections, did resign from the government, but this was interpreted as little more than a symbolic gesture of annoyance. Agudat Israel was confident that the Likud would not invoke retaliatory measures and the Likud was confident that Agudat Israel would limit its critique to complaints against the integrity of the Prime Minister. No religious party today is prepared to remain in the political wilderness, bereft of the benefits that ties to the government bestow upon it.

With respect to the nationalist demands of the religious fundamentalists, these show no signs of moderation, but are likely to be transformed more and more from messianic to secular-nationalist demands. Less and less seems to distinguish the religious from the non-religious ultra-nationalist. Should Israel reach an accommodation with the Palestinians involving its withdrawal from the presently occupied territories, civil

disturbances among Jews are likely to follow. It is by no means clear whether the religious nationalists or the secular nationalists are more likely to engage in such disturbances, particularly if violent means are employed.

Postscript

Political developments between March and June of 1990 permit a test of the major conclusions of this paper. In March, 1990 the Labor party, in effect, resigned from the government. Its resignation was triggered by Likud leader, Prime Minister Shamir's opposition to a Cairo meeting between Israeli and Palestinian representatives. Labor, however, only resigned after its leader, Shimon Peres, became convinced that a majority of the Knesset would support a "no confidence" motion in the Shamir government, and that a majority would support a new government under his leadership. On March 15th a majority did, indeed, pass a motion of "no confidence". Peres had a block of 55 members from Labor and secular parties to the left of Labor. Shamir had a block of 48 members from the Likud and secular parties to the right of the Likud. Peres, therefore needed to secure six votes from among the 18 members of the religious parties to form a "narrow" government (one without the Likud). Shamir, in turn, needed 13 of the religious party votes to form a "narrow" government under his leadership. Peres failed to secure the necessary Knesset votes. As of this writing (June 1, 1990), Shamir has a mandate to try and form a new government. If he fails to form a "narrow" government he may seek another "unity" government with Labor or he may call for new elections.

For over a year, preceeding the fall of the Shamir government, Peres,

courted the haredi parties in his effort to overthrow the "unity" government of Shamir and to win support for a "narrow" government under his leadership. Peres received an unintended assist from the distrust which other party leaders harbor toward Shamir. In negotiations which preceeded the formation of the 1988 government Shamir lied to virtually everyone, in some cases so blatantly and fragantly that many party leaders, those of Agudat Israel in particular, felt that since nothing Shamir said was believable, it was preferable to negotiate a deal with the Labor party. Peres promised the haredi parties control of important ministries and generous funding for their educational and welfare institutions. But bearing in mind that Peres needed the support of Agudat Israel to form a government, the legislative promises which Agudat Israel extracted from him appear minor. Labor promised not to press for a civil liberties law which the religious parties fear would be used by the courts to overturn existing religious legislation, it promised to establish a radio channel devoted to strengthening Jewish consciousness, to make no changes in the electoral law without first consulting the leaders of Agudat Israel, to support passage of a law prohibiting the marketing or sale of pork products, to establish a joint committee to recommend laws that would outlaw "advertisements for abomoniations" (a reference to advertisements which the haredi public consider lewd), and to establish a joint committee to study ways of lessening Sabbath desecration (intended primarily to prohibit bus transportation on the Sabbath. At the present time busses are prohibited from operating on the Sabbath in all cities except Haifa, but they generally begin traveling an hour or two before the Sabbath ends. The proposal was aimed at prohibiting these early departures.)

Based on these promises, Agudat Israel announced its readiness to join

a Labor government but Peres was unable to secure the support of any other religious party. The unwillingness of Degel Hatorah to support a Labor government is most interesting since Degel Hatorah's supreme religious leader, Rabbi Eliezer Shach, does not oppose surrender of the West Bank and Gaza strip. His ostensibly dovish views are, if anything, to the left of Peres'. Nevertheless, Shach adamantly refused to permit Degel Hatorah to join a government led by Peres. In a major address to his party, which was aired live on Israeli television and provoked vigorous attacks from secular intellectuals and the President of Israel, Shach's position on the paramountcy of observing Jewish law, and his disdain for those who violate the law, was made clear. In this matter, the Labor party, by virtue of its past behavior in the 1940's and 50's was deemed less trustworthy than the Likud. A view attributed to Rav Shach was that the "nations of the world" would force Israel to surrender the West Bank and Gaza regardless of who was in office. Therefore, peace and order within Israel could better be maintained if it was the Likud rather than Labor that presided over the surrender of the territories. This suggests how trivial, in his opinion, the issue of the territories is from a religious perspective -- more evidence of the fact that haredi parties march to tunes which are different than those of the non-haredim and another indication of the problematic of measuring them by their stance on issues which are critical to the non-haredi public.

In the case of Sephardi haredi party, Shas, developments in 1990 paralleled those following the 1988 elections. The religious leader of Shas favored the formation of a Labor led government. He himself was a dove, and the extravagant promises of money for Shas institutions and patronage for their political representatives -- rumored to include the Ministry of the

Treasury -- were very tempting. This led Shas to abstain in the no confidence vote and they were responsible for the fall of the Shamir government. But pressure from Shas constituents who are both hawkish and xenophobic, and from Rav Shach who is revered by Shas' leaders, led to the party's refusal to support a Peres government. Shas, itself, was left badly scarred and its own religious leader's authority severely undermined.

Peres' undertook fewer efforts to enlist the support of the National Religious Party (NRP). It was assumed that its hawkish position precluded its joining a labor government. However, when it looked as though Peres was going to succeed in forming a government, political observers predicted, and voices within the NRP demanded, that the NRP join the government after its confirmation by the Knesset.

The behavior of the NRP between March and June casts doubts on its radicalism. Once it became clear that Peres was unable to form a narrow government and the task of forming a government was transferred to Shamir, the NRP invested great effort in seeking to convince or even coerce Shamir into reviving a "unity" government with Labor. This seems surprising. After all, a "unity" government would not be as forthcoming as a narrow right wing government in establishing Jewish settlements in the territories, it might even agree to their surrender, in whole or in part, and it would certainly not annex them. The NRP, therefore, emerged from the political negotiations in the spring of 1990 as less radical than this paper has suggested. But its behavior did confirm another point made in the paper -- the decline of messianic nationalism. The NRP was aware of the fact that a narrow right wing government in which radical secular nationalists such as Ariel Sharon would hold key positions, would isolate Israel in the international arena. Under

such conditions Israel would be in no position to effect any kind of nationalist program of any duration. Such thinking indicates that the NRP has eschewed messianic expectations. It was no longer considered sufficient for Israel to do what was religiously proper and to anticipate God's help in the ensuing conflict.

In the last analysis, however, although all the religious parties preferred a unity government they were prepared to join Shamir regardless of whether he succeeded in forming a narrow government without Labor or was forced to renew the broad coalition with Labor. The only difference between them was that Agudat Israel indicated that it would only join a narrow Shamir government some time after its formation. The price which Agudat Israel extracted from Shamir was a bit more but not much more than that which they had extracted from Peres. The munificent sums of money which Labor showered on the haredi parties were retained but not enlarged. At the legislative level, Agudat Israel secured legislation tightening the present abortion laws but these, in fact, are quite liberal, and it is generally believed that the tightening will have little more than symbolic effect. Finally, the Likud sent an abject letter of apology to Agudat Israel for its broken promises.

In conclusion, events during the spring of 1990 placed the religious parties in a position of potential power which is unlikely to ever again be equalled. The religious parties responded like traditional conservative religious parties rather than radical fundamentalists. They were given the power to choose which of two major foreign policy alternatives would be followed. They sought to avoid making a choice. They had the power to determine which party was to rule the country and they preferred to avoid even this decision. They translated their enormous power into more money for

their educational, cultural and welfare institutions, more positions in government for the party faithful, and incremental changes in legislation affecting the narrowest of religious interests -- pornography, abortions, sale of pork products and enforcing laws against public transportation on the Sabbath. In the long run, the most important outcome of the spring time developments may be the strengthening of popular demand for electoral reform as a secular backlash to the perception of religious party power. For example, the proposal for the direct election of the prime minister has become extremely popular. Its enactment would severely reduce the bargaining positions of the religious parties and, in turn, of the fundamentalists.

Endnotes

1. My colleague, Professor Ilan Greilsammer read this paper with great care and offered a number of very helpful comments. We remain in disagreement over a few points.
2. On this development see Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State (Berekeley" University of California Press, 1983).
3. Charles S. Liebman and Steven M. Cohen, Two Worlds of Judaism: The Israeli and American Experiences (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).
4. Samuel C. Heilman and Menachem Friedman, "Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Jews: The Case of the 'Haredim'," **[editor: complete the citation of this article from volume one]**
5. On the history and present activity of Gush Emunim see Ehud Sprinzak, The Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) and Gideon Aran, "Jewish Zionist Fundamentalism: On the Bloc of the Faithful (Gush Emunim)," **[editor; complete the citation for this article from volume one]**
6. Rabbi Meir Kahane and his party Kach, ruled ineligible to run in the 1988 elections because of its racist program, does not fit neatly into either of these categories although, as we shall see, the categories themselves are dissolving. In any event, whereas Kahane's program of expelling the Arabs and conducting a campaign of collective punishment against all of them strikes a sympathetic chord among many Jews, high school students, the economically poorer groups and Jews originating in Arab speaking lands in particular, it deserves to be treated independently of a study of the political impact of religious fundamentalism. While Kahane is certainly a religious fundamentalist it is not at all clear that his popularity is related to his fundamentalism. It would both lengthen and unduly complicate this study to add a consideration of Kahane and his movement. For a comprehensive discussion of Kahane within the framework of Israeli politics and the emergence of ultra-nationalism see Sprinzak, ibid.
7. None of this is true of one haredi group, Habad, the followers of the Lubavitch rebbe. They are suis generous and merit separate treatment.
8. Yediot Aharonot, (July 6, 1989), p. 17.
9. Gideon Aran, From Religious Zionist to A Zionist Religion: The Origin and Culture of Gush Emunim A Messianic Movement in Modern Israel. (Hebrew University Ph.D. dissertation, in Hebrew, 1987), p. 524.
10. For example, Aryeh Deri, a leader of Shas, Minister of the Interior at the time he was interviewed, and one known for his moderate rather than extremist position is quoted as saying the following in an interview.

I never pretended to be something other than what I am. I am a representative of Shas. I am a haredi. I tried and I try to function in the public interest and not work only for the haredi public. We must take upon ourselves the burden of the state. (Yediot Aharonot, "Sabbath Supplement," December 22, 1989, p.4.)

11. For example, the head of Agudat Israel's Council of Torah Sages, the Gerer rebbe, who is the charismatic authority for the most important faction within Agudat Israel announced that no part of the land of Israel could be transferred to foreign rule. Maariv, December 22, 1989, p. 10.

12. Yosef Fund, Agudat Israel Confronting Zionism and the State of Israel -- Ideology and Policy (Bar-Ilan University, Ph.D. dissertation, in Hebrew, 1990).

13. Michael Rosenak, "Jewish Fundamentalism in Israeli Education," **[editor: complete the citation for the article in this volume]**

14. Aran finds these same tendencies in Mercaz HaRav, the educational institution out of which Gush Emunim's leadership emerged. Aran, op. cit., From Religious Zionist To A Zionist Religion.

15. Rav Shlomo Aviner, "BaMidbar -- Jerusalem Independence Day," Shabat B'shabbato, (June 2, 1989), in Hebrew, p.1.

16. For a description of the underground and its impact on Gush Emunim see Sprinzak, op. cit.

17. Charles S. Liebman, "Jewish Ultra-Nationalism in Israel: Converging Strands," William Frankel (ed.), Survey of Jewish Affairs 1985 (London: Associated University Presses, 1985), pp. 28-50.

18. See especially Ian Lustick, For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988).

19. Ann Elizabeth Mayer, "The Fundamentalist Impact on Law, Politics and Constitutions in Iran, Pakistan and the Sudan," **[editor: complete the citation for the article in this volume]**

20. The point is frequently made by that outstanding polemicist and religious iconoclast, Yeshayahu Leibowitz. It is made in more temperate terms in Moshe Samet, The Conflict Over the Institutionalization of Judaic Values in the State of Israel (Jerusalem: The Department of Sociology, Studies in Sociology, in Hebrew, 1979). Evidence is to be found in a speech by Zerach Wharhaftig to the World Conference of Mizrachi in 1949. Wharhaftig, who served as Minister of Religion for many years was one of those most active in the effort to integrate Jewish law into the law of Israel. His speech is summarized in Zerah Warhaftig, A Constitution for Israel: Religion and State (Jerusalem: Mesilot: The World Center of Mizrachi -- Hapoel Hamizrachi, in Hebrew, 1988), 351-357 but see especially pp. 356-357, and the refusal by the presidium to permit discussion

of the topic, p. 357.

21. [editor: cite the Steve Bruce article in this volume. I do not have a revised version of the text]

22. The point recurs constantly in articles written by moderate and even some of the less than moderate sympathizers with Gush Emunim on the pages of Nekuda, the monthly journal of the settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. In the case of moderate fundamentalists such as Yoel Bin-Nun, the desire for Jewish unity led him to finally resign from Gush Emunim. It is what led Rabbi Yehuda Amital, seven years earlier, to oppose the War in Lebanon.

23. For a study of how the Israeli press projected this image of the future see Samuel C. Heilman, "Religious Jewry in the Secular Press: Aftermath of the 1988 Elections," Charles S. Liebman (ed.), Religious and Secular: Conflict and Accomodation Between Jews in Israel (Jerusalem: Keter, 1990), pp. 45-56.

24. A good summary of this point of view is found in Uri Huppert's largely polemical work, Back to the Ghetto: Zionism in Retreat (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1988). For a more balanced presentation of this point of view see Amnon Rubinstein, The Zionist Dream Revisited: From Herzl to Gush Emunim and Back (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), and for a scholarly presentation see Gershon Weiler, Jewish Theocracy (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1988).

25. The excerpt is from a speech delivered at a Peace Now rally on June 3, 1989. The full text appeared in translation in The Jerusalem Post (June 8, 1989), p.4.

26. This is even true among religious sephardim who, until recently, were distinguished by their greater understanding of and sympathy for the non-religious. See, for example, Shlomo Deshen, "To Understand the Special Attraction of Religion for the Sephardim," Politika, no. 24 (January, 1989), 40-43.

27. Ephraim Tabory, "Living in a Mixed Neighborhood," Liebman (ed.), op. cit., pp. 113-130.

Fundamentalism - Fundamentalism - Jewish fundamentalism in Israel: Three main trends in Israeli Judaism have been characterized as fundamentalist: militant religious Zionism, the ultra-Orthodoxy of the Ashkenazim (Jews of eastern European origin), and the ultra-Orthodoxy of the Sephardim (Jews of Middle Eastern origin) as represented by the Shas party. All three groups stress the need for strict conformity to the religious laws and moral precepts contained in the sacred Jewish texts, the Torah and the Talmud. Instead of waiting for God and the messiah to lead the Jews back to the land of Israel, Zionists argued, Jews should take it upon themselves to return there.