

over into hubris and beyond.

Some people may detect the blackest irony in the fact that Israel's incredible achievement in maintaining a sophisticated democracy in a region most of whose members fall short of democratic norms could be actually aggravating its dilemma. In Israel, even the most sensitive of policies attract constant, widespread and noisy advice. But I do not find this ironic so much as hopeful. People who have grown up with democracy as their right (as the Israelis have) should find it hard to deny it to others. Perhaps Mr. Benvenisti's deep question was already answered by Israel's present Prime Minister when he said in his book, *David's Sling* that "the viability of a nation will be gauged today by its standards rather than by its size."

This is the essence of the preoccupation which democratic socialists have in

the Israeli experience. The state of Israel was born at a conjunction of events forcing governments to appreciate that, though science had turned the world into a community, the world had not yet learned how to be neighbors. Into this situation, a state was born whose leaders and founding philosophers were determined on social organisation built, not on competition and regression, but on co-operation, fraternity and the constructive elements in human life. Social equality was a reason for the birth of Israel as well as a continuing essential element of policy. This objective is not only implicit in the ideal of democratic socialism; it is also essential for its future. I hope this helps to explain the abiding fascination with the Israeli experience and great goodwill felt throughout the democratic socialist movement.

Japan's Perception of Jews and Israel

Although we have never had any sizeable Jewish population in Japan, since the late 19th century there have been a certain number, even small communities — chiefly of foreign residents — in such concessionary settlements as Nagasaki or Yokohama. There was never anybody like Benjamin Disraeli or Leon Blum on our political scene. We have never been forced to face the situation in which we had to compete with Jewish individuals for positions or resources. Such a total lack of experience of coexistence with the Jewish people in a society is itself rather exceptional among the advanced nations in the world. Since the end of the last century, however, we have somehow deve-

loped certain images of Jews without having had any real contact to speak of, with them. How was this possible? The answer is very simple. We learned. We imported the various notions about Jews along with a multitude of other concepts invented in the West. As the West was accepted as the model for Japanese modernization, there was a period in which almost everything imported from there tended to be perceived as sophisticated, advanced, and fashionable. Technologies, ideologies, literature and to a certain extent even such a notion as anti-Semitism came to be seen as such. *The Merchant of Venice* by Shakespeare, for instance, was amongst the first works of European literature introduced to the Japanese in the early days of the nation's modernization. As early as 1877, the play, albeit in an adapted form, was first introduced. It soon became a very popular work for translators and theatre people alike, and within less than 30 years more than half a dozen different or revised translations were published. It eventually became incorpo-

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rated into the Japanese school curriculum, and even today Japanese high school students often study the same Shakespearean play routinely assigned to their great grandparents in Meiji Japan. Eve Kaplan, a Harvard Ph.D. candidate who did some interesting research on anti-Semitic definitions of Jews in various foreign languages — Japanese dictionaries, pointed out that such offensive synonyms for Jews as *koorigashi* (usurer), *shusendo* (miser), *akutokushoonin* (dishonest merchant) are no coincidence but actually conjured up by the images of the Jewish pawnbroker, Shylock, in the *Merchant of Venice*. She remarks: "In the Japanese mind, Shylock may be the epitome of all the unflattering anti-Semitic definitions which made their way into foreign language dictionaries published in Japan and which also persist (albeit only occasionally) in recent editions of dictionaries published in the West." The impact of the introduction of the play was indeed very significant. Before then, nobody cared about differences among the Westerners. They were all alike; they were all *gaijin* (aliens, or outsiders), and the only distinction between them was the language they spoke. Anglo-Americans spoke English, French spoke French, Dutch spoke Dutch and so on. Although presumably a number of Jews came to visit or even reside in Japan, they did not have a language of their own. Jewish Americans spoke English, German Jews used German ... and after all, there was no practical point to make any distinction between Jews and non-Jews. With the introduction of the *Merchant of Venice*, however, for the first time Japanese began to realize that Westerners had their own social outcast

group, and tended to perceive the problem by applying an analogy of Japanese outcast classes such as *Etta*, *Hinin* or *Ainu*.

So, Japan's perception of Jews was originally a product of importation and translation. Problems arising from this fact are, I think, two-fold. First, without a Jewish community at hand, it is impossible to verify such imported images. Even the materials needed for the refutation of the images must be imported. The only way to get direct information to verify or reject the images was, in those days, to go abroad to the places where Jewish communities as such exist and to see. However, when you go to such places, mainly Europe, you are immediately exposed to the formidable socio-cultural prejudices from which originated the images we imported. A most likely outcome is, therefore, the intensification of the image you had beforehand. This was indeed what happened, to those Japanese who went abroad before the Second World War as diplomats, businessmen or as military personnel, and I suspect, to a certain extent, it is still the same now.

The second problem is that, because the ideas were imported and transplanted by way of letters, and because the imported ideas were not so readily accessible to the masses, the concept of Jews or anti-Semitism was known only to the educated sector. Only literary people were likely to get acquainted with such fashionable Western notions. As the modernization process proceeds, however, the rate of literacy has increased and we have succeeded in producing a massive quasi-intelligentsia class with access to imported ideas and, in many cases, translated materials.

The orientation of those "quasi-intelligentsia" was not to analyse or study the situation and phenomenon in depth with necessary verifications as was the case with "real intellectuals" if you pardon my terminology, but to manipulate all those novel concepts from the West to accommodate and explain what they called "real aspects of the world" or "true picture of life," and thus to present themselves as an educated class. Prof. Maruyama Masao, one of the intellectual giants in post-war Japan, correctly pointed out that it was this "quasi-intelligentsia" class who, together with some military leaders and ordinary masses, sustained the Japanese course of facism during the 30s and 40s. In any case, the emergence and expansion of this "quasi-intelligentsia" indeed corresponded more or less with the period of international upheavals in the early 20th century. If this was the case, "Jewish perception" steeped in anti-Semitism was among those imported notions and therefore was supposed to be a sophisticated concept or a kind of product of knowledge. Then as the lower-middle literary class expanded more people were exposed and affected by anti-Semitism as such — at least in the short run. Because this this was the case, because we had this rapid emergence of "quasi-intelligentsia" and because it took place in a period of international changes and crisis such as the Russo-Japanese War, the First World War, the Russian Revolution etc., every event which was unusual, suspicious or dangerous to stability was to be explained in terms of "Jewish Conspiracy" and "Jewish Peril." Colonel Yasue Norihiro, one of the typical examples of the quasi-intelligentsia, translated the

infamous fabricated document *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in 1924. Given the prominent role which Jews played in the Russian Revolution, and also given those anti-Semitic myths and practices which were current at that period in major Western countries, it was only too natural that people jumped to accept theories such as that of "Jewish Conspiracy." Wars, revolutions, assassinations, moral degeneration, suffragette movements, labour disputes, feminist campaigns, free love, birth control and all subversive activities were in some way or another connected with conspiring Jews. It was most unfortunate in this respect that "a first genuine contact" between Jews and Japanese was said to have occurred during Japan's attempt to intervene in the Russian Revolution with its Siberian Expedition, 1918-22. Soviet Russia was defined by the "quasi-intelligentsia" as a "Den of Jewish Conspiracy," and many leading advocates of the "Jewish Peril" theory sprang from the experience of this campaign in Siberia.

Although this was true of the "quasi-intelligentsia," real intellectuals reacted quite differently at the time. Yoshino Sakuzo, a leader and most famous ideologist of the Taisho Democracy (the democratic movement in the Taisho Era, which occurred between Meiji and Shoowa), argued vigorously against the Jewish Conspiracy theorists. He concluded that the so-called *Protocols* were a fake, forged to instigate distrust against Bolshevism with the help of traditional Western antipathy against Freemasonry and Jews, and further pointed out that it was ridiculous to say the prophecies in the *Protocols* had come true, because what had occurred in the world

was certainly not in the interests of Jews. He grasped the heart of the matter quite correctly and emphasised that the non-Jewish author of the *Protocols* urged the necessity of monitoring and fighting against Jewish outrages, most of all in the cause of freedom and progress. Ironically both causes were the very things the Japanese translator did his best to repudiate. Prof. Yanaibara Tadao, who later became a president of Tokyo University, was another example of someone who criticised the Jewish Peril arguments, and made a first serious study of Zionism showing a real understanding of Jewish history. "Those who fear Jewish conspiracy," he wrote, "are those who suffer from nightmares of persecutions they themselves inflicted on Jews." Yoshino and Yanaibara were just two examples of quite a sizeable number of intellectuals who spoke out against the Jewish Peril advocates. Thus a fairly clear dichotomy can be seen between the intelligentsia such as scholars, serious journalists, theologians and so on, and the "quasi-intelligentsia" represented by military officers mouthpiece ideologues, continental wanderers (*Tairiku Roonin*) for ultranationalist activists. As Japan's militarism or fascism grew in the 30s and 40s, and as the tie with Nazi Germany was strengthened, the "quasi-intelligentsia" grew more hostile to the intellectuals, asserting that they were manipulated by the international Jewish conspiracy. The quasi-intelligentsia became one of the main pillars of Japanese ultranationalism. Prof. Maruyama argues that their theory of an International Jewish Conspiracy served as a rationalization for the policies meant to "protect" the pure national polity based

on Shintosistic emperor worship, against any impure, demonic influences from outside. It is indeed a paradox that the concept of anti-Semitism, itself imported from the West, was finally used as a rationale to deny cultural and spiritual influence of the West.

With the end of World War II which resulted in a total collapse of the Great Japanese Empire, and with the disclosure of what the Nazis actually did to Jewish communities in Europe, the whole tendency was drastically reversed. Holocaust literature, such as *Anne Franks' Diary*, Victor Frankle's *A Psychologist Experiences the Concentration Camp* and many others were translated into Japanese during the 50s and widely sold. The concept of "Jews" came to be immediately associated with the notion of "Holocaust" and the image of "victims" or "scapegoats," although the trial of Adolf Eichmann and subsequent execution in 1961, left somewhat awkward feelings among the Japanese.

Well, one might ask "Where did all those quasi-intelligentsia go?" They remained but in a different guise. They simply changed sides. Naval Captain Inuzuka Koreshige was a typical example. Although he was originally a close colleague of Colonel Yasue in advocating the idea of a Jewish Peril, he began to claim that in fact he was a true admirer and friend of the Jewish people and acted as their protector in those difficult days. It was certainly a fact that Japan acted very differently towards the Jewish problem than did her allies during the war, and Captain Inuzuka helped to protect the Jews of Shanghai against Nazi demands, as he claims in his essay "*Japanese Auschwitz was a Paradise*" which was published in 1961. But the Jews

were protected mainly by two factors, a) as a kind of hostage in expectation of a fat ransom in the form of American Jewish intercession on behalf of Japan, and b) partly because of a rather complicated Japanese nationalistic feeling such as "After all, Japan is no dependent of Germany." Matsuoka Yoosuke, who was the Foreign Minister of Japan directly responsible for signing the Triple Alliance, once told a Jewish businessman that, although he certainly was responsible for the Alliance Pact with Hitler, he had never promised him to become an anti-Semite in Japan. People like Sugihara Sempo, Japanese consul at Kovno, Lithuania, did try very hard to save Jewish refugees escape their fate in Nazi Europe. Above all, there was a decision at government level to deal with Jewish refugees as fairly as with any other aliens, and the Japanese authorities in Manchuria are even said to have been more generous to Jews than to Chinese or Koreans. So, although the Japanese record is better than that of the Nazis, it by no means exempts such personalities as Inuzuka from being condemned as an anti-Semite, nor does it help to sustain his claim that Japan was a true friend of the Jews. Japan simply dealt with the Jewish Question differently from her allies because her national interest was different.

Inuzuka's "change of heart," however, does imply a rather significant feature of Japanese perception of the Jews. He was an anti-Semite all right, but he was hardly a Jew-hater. There is good reason to believe that he had good relations with the leaders of the Jewish community in Shanghai, despite the fact that he still maintained his strong "Jewish Peril" argument. When he was put

on trial as a war criminal for what he allegedly had done as a commander of the naval garrison in Manila, he saved himself by showing the tribunal evidence of his pro-minority attitude, that is, a silver cigarette case presented to him by a member of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis, which was engraved with the words "in gratitude and appreciation for his service to the Jewish people." We might as well call him and his kind of people "anti-Semites without hate". If you did not have any personal hate and sometimes even remained friends with those you are supposedly against, it is not such a difficult thing to change your side overnight. You have a concept, imported and learned through letters, but without the emotional involvement which originally accompanied the notion. Various Japanese concepts about Jews can be described as something like empty glasses. They change their colour according to their contents.

Given the shift of emotion from engineered antipathy of "Jewish Peril" to tremendous sympathy for "Victims of the Holocaust," such discriminatory terms for Jewish people as miserly, crafty, or arrogant turned into compliments such as rational, wise or proud. But they are just the other side of the same old coin, ain't they?

Therefore, I think we can argue that the decisive factor for Japan's perception of Jews and of Israel, is emotion. Emotion with which you fill glasses. If the "Holocaust" swayed the emotion from one side to the other, then the Six Day War and the Palestinian problem did the opposite. Japan's attitude toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, which is somewhat sympathetic to the Arab side, especially since the Yom Kippur War and the sub-

sequent oil crisis, should not be interpreted only in terms of Japan's thirst for Arab oil or ever-increasing trade with Arab markets. The sympathy of quite a large part of the Japanese population tends to lie with the Palestinian Arab refugees. In February 1978, NHK, the National Broadcasting Company of Japan, produced a television documentary which was quite illustrative of this point. The title of the documentary was "30 Years in Exile; an Old Palestinian's Journey to the Homeland" in which they quite vividly and emotionally depicted the life of an old chap called Muhammad Abbas since his expulsion from his homeland, when the State of Israel was established. The final scene was really moving, with a tearful exclamation of the man on the Allenby Bridge being refused entry into Israel. Such programmes were certainly presented with the aim of stirring up emotional sympathy for Palestinians, but the emotion as such was already there. The key word for this emotion is the continuing "military occupation" or "expropriation of land" in the "Territories," which tend to stimulate the Japanese inner guilt consciousness as past expansionists. In fact, when the war in Lebanon broke out in 1982, some Japanese newspapers immediately associated the event with the Manchurian Incident of 1931. There was, of course, not much logic in it, but logic or no, you can clearly see what the emotion is.

When it comes to scholars, however, some logic is needed, even though logic only serves as a justification or rationalization of the emotion itself. Let me now turn to some of the arguments by so-called "Middle Eastern experts" in Japan.

A logic widely shared among such scholars is that Israel is an artificial state, and its problems tend to be understood or explained accordingly. If the nation is artificial, they argue, then distortions must occur, strains must develop. After the Six Day War and particularly after the Yom Kippur War, according to those "experts" Israel came to show a number of signs of the destined downfall. The collapse of the myth of an ever-victorious army, retirement of the founding fathers' generation, economic crisis, intensification of social disintegration, and increasing discrepancy between the Diaspora and Israel are all thought to be symptoms of the congenital disease within the State of Israel. How do they see the condition of the disease? I can show you one of the typical descriptions from the writings of my own senior colleague at the I.D.E. (Institute of Developing Economies)

It was only by inflaming the people's sense of threat for the existence of their country that Israeli leadership could manage to mobilize the nation and succeed in political unification of the state. The external threat has been a national consensus for such a militaristic colonial power as Israel. However, it is now clear that the threat comes from within, and not from outside. The threat is no longer a military problem but an economic one. If Israel is to stick with its militaristic nature, and to deliver a tremendous amount of resources to its defense sector, then it necessarily affects the productivity of economy as a whole, and intensifies inflation. Inflation leads to engulf class-differentiation, thus resulting in social disintegration and increased political instability.

It might well be said that there is some truth in the argument here, but it is also

inaccurate. The whole point of this chap, Hayashi Takeshi, was to expose what he calls the "supra-militaristic nature" of Israel, and therefore objectiveness and the seriousness of the military threat felt by Israelis were deliberately omitted, so as to leave an impression that the whole thing is a sort of fabrication made up by Israel.

He goes on to say:

After the Six Day War, the Diaspora Jewish community, which occupies a central position in the world economy, decided to change their principle of financial support for Israel.

Here you see his perception of "Jews." According to him, this "change in principle" was a shift in the nature of the Diaspora's financial support from aid to investment. This meant for Israel abandoning the effort to construct an autonomous national economy based on agricultural development sustained by kibbutz or moshav movements. Instead a new economic strategy was designed to integrate the Israeli economy into the Western capitalist economy. I, personally, do not see any incompatibility between the construction of a national autonomous economy and integration of this economy into the Western or world economy, but he sees a fatal distinction between the two. He needs to distinguish one from the other because for him the kibbutz or the moshav represent an image of self-help, sacrifice, communalism and so on and does not fit in with his perception of an Israel, seeking to coordinate with the Western Jewish community "which occupies a central position in the world economy." He almost suggests that such movements as the kibbutz movement were a by-product of the arti-

ficially imposed establishment of the state, a kind of disguise for the state which is by definition imperialist and colonialist. When the time came for the real intention of the establishment of the State to be pursued, such a disguise receded into a shadowy background.

At any rate, the efforts to assimilate the Israeli economy into the Western economy by massive investments of the Diaspora, according to Hayashi, resulted in serious economic instability because the whole process corresponded with the oil crisis which itself derived from the justifiable reaction of Arab nations against the existence of the State of Israel.

Hayashi's argument perceives the political and economic instabilities of Israel as no accident, but inherent in the very nature of the State itself. He sees Israel as a patient dying from a congenital disease. The prescription here is quite clear. Neither surgery nor medicine can help. A drastic revolution of physical constitution is necessary. That is to say, the dismemberment of the State of Israel and the establishment of a new State consisting of Jews and Arabs — a new Palestinian secular nation. Now, I don't believe he is fully aware of what he is saying here. But whether or not he is aware of it, he is suggesting to some other people with whom he has no contact, to stop being themselves and become someone else. Unfortunately, I am very sorry to say, he is not alone in holding such a view. It is, on the contrary, a view held by a large number of Middle Eastern Scholars in Japan, not to mention the mass-media. It is fairly obvious that such an attitude is not a matter of scientific or academic discus-

sion, but rather a choice of ideological positions.

As a result of my various personal contacts with them at seminar-discussions, symposia and private conversations, I know that their ideology is not based on any objective observation. At the end of the discussions or debates, I was always asked by them "After all, on which side do you stand?" Recently a correspondent of a major Japanese newspaper came to my office and asked my views and evaluation of the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israel conflict. Suddenly, in the middle of the conversation, he accused me of "taking an Israeli standpoint." I tried to persuade him, unsuccessfully, that I was not taking any other than a simple ordinary Japanese scholar's standpoint. But, according to him, the fact that I chose to come to Israel to do my research and worked in an office in the main Israeli university itself indicates my position on the problem. Finally, he concluded, "Your logic is clear enough. But bear in mind that the logic itself derives from the fact that you are being taken in by the oppressor's side, whether you are aware of it or not. I am speaking of the logic of a people who are being killed by the oppressor."

Now, such an attitude categorizing people either on the killer's side or on the side of those being killed was popular among "progressive intellectuals" in the 60s and 70s. When, however, they try to apply this dichotomy to the Israeli case, they immediately face a tremendous paradox. Namely, they have to find a way to coordinate the image of "oppressor" with that of "victims" deriving from the shocking history of the Holocaust. Here they are faced with a necessity of inventing or engineering a

consistent logic to bridge the gap between two rather contradictory images. How can you explain that the people who were victimized and massacred in concentration camps turned out to be a nation which exercise the "logic of the killer's side?" How can you account for making a kind of scapegoat of old imperialism into a cat's paw of neo-colonialism? Historical reality is very often accompanied by various conflicts and complications. Such self-contradictions themselves provide a momentum to keep the history going. Any attempt to find consistent and coordinated logics in the process of history very easily tends to degenerate into trite political propaganda. In order to avoid getting labelled as "anti-Semites" or "anti-Jewish" — for those labels were totally identical with Nazism, fascism and other things which they themselves accuse as being the "killer's side," those scholars who engineered the trick had to manipulate logic in an extremely complicated manner. Indeed they went as far as to produce some equations such as "Zionism equals nazism" or "pro-Israel equals anti-Jewish" sort of arguments. Typical and most influential examples of this kind of argument are known as "Itagaki theory" or "Itagaki-ism" developed by Professor Itagaki Yuuzo, a full professor in International Relations and Middle East Studies at Tokyo University, the most prestigious university in Japan. Just after the Six Day War, he wrote as follows:

They often say that the confrontation between Arabs and Israelis is a destined conflict between Arabs and Jews or an ethnic, national and religious rivalry. Such "commonsense" is indeed a big myth of the world today. It is nothing but

a fabrication made up by the political strategy of 20th century American-European powers... the essential problem of the Arab-Israel conflict lies in the very existence of the Zionist State of Israel on the magnetic field of great powers and the real nature of the conflict has to be understood as a struggle of the Arab people against this Israeli-Great Powers alliance.

It goes without saying that he is repeating the logic of Nasserist Arabs and, to a large extent, the logic of Soviet Russia at the time. He then, however, started developing his unique oratory and refused to be labelled as an anti-Semite by asserting that those who criticize his argument ought to be called real anti-Semites. According to Itagaki, European and American societies who should have originally been responsible for solving the "Jewish Question" within their own framework, failed to do so. Now the Question is preserved unsolved in their societies but secretly they substitute this "Jewish Question" with "Israel Question." Therefore, Itagaki argues, to foster the illusion that the establishment of the State of Israel can provide a solution to the Jewish Question" is itself nothing but the other side of the coin of anti-Semitism. Of course, here is a half-truth that the introspection of Western society about their experience of anti-Semitism developed into a somewhat expiatory attitude towards Israel. What Itagaki points out, however, is what he came to term as the "anti-Semitic nature of Zionism". He says this very clearly in the article entitled "Nazism and Zionism" which was published in 1978, in one of Japan's leading monthly magazines "Sekai" (World).

Zionists in fact welcomed Nazi-Germany's anti-Jewish policies of pogrom, boycotts and expulsion for they perceived it as leading to the national awareness of "Jewish people" and "Jewish Nation." It provided a momentum to facilitate the exodus to Palestine which hitherto hardly made progress, and therefore to the Zionists, the emergence of Nazi-Germany was thought to be a "victory." On the side of Palestine as well, the Jewish Agency and other Zionist organizations competed to gain contact with the Nazi administration, although restraining each other. One cannot but admit that Zionist activities had an aspect which indeed desired to see the intensification of social discrimination against the Jewish people.

I want to emphasize that these passages are presented not as a rhetoric of outright propaganda but as an "academic observation" by a prominent professor who originally majored in international history and now actually teaches international relations of the Middle East in the supposedly highest seat of learning in Japan. I think that you can clearly infer from this the so-called "academic standard" of Middle Eastern studies of our country.

Anyway, Itagaki refers to various "evidence" to sustain his logic. He refers to some writings of Alfred Rosenberg, the infamous Nazi ideologist. He refers to activities of Eichman in Vienna to cooperate in sending Jewish people to Palestine. He refers to Hitler's decision to pursue the expulsion policy of Jews to Palestine. The Holocaust, he argues, was merely a result of the failure of his expulsion policy. The point that one should take note of is what he calls a complicity or even a partnership between Nazism and Zionism. Western

societies, despite the fact that they had an obligation to assimilate the surviving Jews into their own societies when the war ended and thereby to overcome the "Jewish Question," instead chose to set up a new Ghetto, namely Israel, while shelving the Question itself. Thus, according to Itagaki, the same baton was handed over from Nazis to Zionists. The Palestinian Arab population, who had hitherto nothing to do with the Jewish Question, was forced to pay for this Nazi-Zionist blunder by having this Ghetto imposed on them. His conclusion is that the Palestinians should be given the right to judge the irrationality and unreasonableness of the "Jewish Question." Here he completes his logic: anyone who does not deny the existence of the Zionist State of Israel is an anti-Semite, and Palestinian fighters are indeed the heroes who fight against anti-Semitism. Such is the basic sequence of "Itagaki-ism," — if any.

It might well have been true that, under the given circumstances, the Jewish leadership made every possible effort to rescue their people and sometimes even tried to "negotiate" or "cooperate" with the Nazi Administration in order to secure their means of escape from an otherwise destined death. But a fatal defect of Itagaki's argument is in the fact that he simply omitted all those historical situations and picked only one aspect out of the whole very complicated process to say "Look, they were collaborating." In short, his manipulation of logic functions as a kind of accusation of "anti-Semitism" against the people who might very likely have levelled the accusation against him. The harsher and the harder the accusations of anti-Semitism against Israel and its supporters, the

more he feels exempt from being condemned as an anti-Semite.

I would not suggest that Itagaki-ism is as predominant as it used to be. After the Yom Kippur War and consequent Oil Crisis, a national concern about the Middle East region naturally necessitated the standard of Japan's Middle Eastern Studies. A massive wave of young scholars and journalists have since poured into the field. Most of them, were at first under the influence of Itagaki-ism, simply because when that generation was studying, Itagaki and his supporters were the only people who taught Contemporary Middle East Studies in universities. But the situation has changed somewhat with the expansion of the number of scholars, accumulation of knowledge and information, and changing international circumstances. The change in quantity will, I hope, in the end bring about a change in quality. This, however, is not yet the case. The Japanese Association of Middle Eastern Studies was only established in the last year, under the strong influence of Prof. Itagaki and his close colleagues, and this is, so far, the only academic society for Middle Eastern Studies in Japan. The International University in Niigata, which is the first graduate school sponsored by united efforts of the Japanese financial world, inaugurated the Center for Middle Eastern Studies only a couple of months ago, but the Ambassador of Israel was deliberately excluded from the invitation list for the inauguration ceremony, whereas the Ambassadors of all the Arab countries and a representative of the PLO Tokyo Office were among the guests of honour. As a Japanese I unequivocally condemn such intellectually devious deeds. The hack-

neyed propaganda-like theory, Itagaki-ism will simply lead us nowhere but to the perpetuation of the dichotomy in the Middle East. Japan is in a position to provide both opportunities and facilities for those Israelis and Arabs who desperately seek the way to improve the relations, to promote their dialogue and mutual better understanding. Why do we have to destroy such opportunities and facilities? Why do we have to totally identify ourselves with one side or other and to mimic the propaganda of either side?

I deplore the Japanese proclivity not to see how difficult the situation is both for Arabs and Israelis, but let me add that I, personally, do not happen to believe that such an emotional sympathy with the Arabs is a baseless one, for the simple reason that no occupation is a good occupation. Israel has some pretty impres-

sive politicians, but poor politics, both internally and externally.

In view of the Jewish people's outstanding history and its experiences in modern times, the world is justified in expecting much greater initiative and imagination for peace from Israeli leaders. Israel can, and in my opinion must, give up at least some parts of the Territories.

One of the foreign professors in Japan once forcefully made the point that it is impossible for a Westerner to learn from the Japanese because as soon as he arrives he cannot stop himself from trying to teach them. Maybe I am behaving in the same way, but I hope that my message will be taken in its true spirit; namely an appeal and not a sermon. In the meantime, I promise I shall not rest until I have exerted every possible effort to sort things out in Japan.