The Ideal of Halutziut or Dedicated Pioneering

In the following excerpt, Ben Gurion eloquently defines hafutziut as a function of human liberty, social equality, and public spirit.

Only with the powerful aid of science can we dispel the destitution and neglect of this Land and withstand the impact of its near and distant environs. We must apply our finest minds to scientific discovery and innovation, uphold the hegemony of science and set its mark on all we do.

But that is not all—there must be the pioneer spirit. By science, man governs nature; by halutziuth, himself. Science serves the needs of humanity good or evil; halutziuth awakens the dormant strength of will and mind, the sleeping soul of man, and guides them in a new flowering to end that ethics and history discern. Science is almighty instrument and does wonders, but it is blind and subject, docile as clay in the potter’s hand. Halutziuth charts the actions of man, judicially it measures their spiritual content and inspires him to his highest fights. It unites his intellectual and moral greatness and fights. It unites his intellectual and moral greatness and makes him even greater. It will not compromise or yield, it will not despair; it does not bow down to circumstances. It challenges and rebels, it dares and it transforms, it sees coming events, and perfection is its aim. To alters the present for the sake not of today’s wants, but of generations to come, not gratify the individual but for the common good, not for personal gain but to profit all society and each member of it. It makes every scientist a saint, every man a giant.

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Halutziuth will not recognize the conventional grouping of men into a talented elite, the thinkers and leaders, on one hand, and the colourless clay of lesser mortals on the other. As in nature, so in man are concealed forces and skills where of little has yet come light, unplumbed depths of impulse and ambition, dynamic aptitudes waiting for release and the stimulus of creating....

...... Halutziuth elects the line of greatest resistance, to make its triumph the greater. Heroism is not the monopoly of a few, but the gift of every man who would use it...... There are no peaks to which man cannot climb, no handicap he cannot surmount—that is the simple, proven faith of halutziuth; its first commandment is to defy circumstances and facts, to refashion our lives as our historic vision bids.

It is a product of human liberty. Its outpourings are willed by self-control, that checks impulses or heightens them. That draws creativeness and courage from the wellsprings of the soul. Without freedom we cannot discipline ourselves. A robot cannot be a pioneer, for patterns his life to others designs, a decadent personification of submission, impotent over his own desires and thoughts. A robot can do great things, like any lifeless machine, but only in the hands of a skilled engineer. He is no creator, but raw stuff. The pioneers makes his own life and his friends’.

And man must be equal, to be pioneer. Where discrimination is rife and creation only for a favoured few, the fountain of halutziuth is choked and runs dry. Only where men are peers does the rich fountain flow of man’s secret worth. and last, the co-operation of man is necessary; his trust in society, an attachment to his fellows, a will to unity.

Halutziuth is service to commonalty, that is its beginning and its end...
ANNEXURE - 2

SOURCES OF JEWISH SOCIAL IDEALISM

From hoary antiquity, the vision of a moral order permeated the thought and affected the practice of Judaism. Ethical constraints were interposed between the privileged and the strong, on the one hand, and the weak unfortunate and the defenceless on the other. The exercises of power-political, economic or social- was to be curbed by the requirements of justice kindness and humility, for all human life and sanctity and might did not sanction the degradation of human personality or the employment of one man as the instrument of another.

In this streams of ethical idealism, the current of what we call today social justice was always evident. In Biblical times, the perennial plaint was against oppression and exploitation, against the urge to dominate and the lust for gain. The positive injunctions-to surrender the gleanings of the field, to protect the widow, the fatherless and the stranger, to deal justly with the hired servant not to betray the fugitive slave-were actuated not only by the spirit of charity but also by a human regard for the feelings of the objects of charity.

Benevolence and charity became functioning ideals among Jews wherever they dwelt, and philanthropy (zedakah) an obligatory form of religious practice; in deed, a symbol of righteousness. The emphasis, at least in precept, was upon anonymous giving so that generosity would not be tarnished by a display of wealth and power. And the most meritorious benefaction was that form of assistance which enabled the poor to help themselves.

This preoccupation with poverty and with the humiliations attendant upon economic inequality and inferior social status was reinforced in the
Jewish heritage by a yearning for human freedom and equality. The ideals of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man were proclaimed with passion by Hebrew prophets and expounded and elucidated by Rabbis and sages in countless homilies and maxims. Nor did these ideal remain purely precept. The equitable distribution of property was living issue in Biblical times. Freedom to differ within the confines of basic religious premises was recognized and, on the whole tolerated in Talmudic and later period. And labour-physical toil in the field or in the artisan’s shop-was not only commended for the masses but also esteemed as a proper means of self-support for the religious and intellectual leaders, the Rabbis.

Nineteenth-century Europe witnessed a struggle between liberalism and reaction, and in this struggle the overwhelming majority of Europe’s Jews espoused the liberal cause. There were, of course compelling political and economic motivations for the liberal inclinations of the Jews, but the social idealism of Jewish tradition must be ruled out as a factor.

Similarly, the socialist theories of the latter half of the nineteenth century attracted an element among the Jewish intellectuals, especially in Eastern Europe. As a rule, Jews who espoused socialism were “assimilationists,” that is they rejected Jewish nationalism and looked to the socialist revolution and reconstruction to solve the Jewish problem. Early in the twentieth century however, a synthesis of Zionism and socialism was attempted, and Labour Zionist grouping emerged. Labour Zionism struck deep roots in Palestine and played an important role in the development of the National Home. And in labour Zionism, the ideal of social justice, which formed so vital a part of the Jewish heritage, emerged as guiding principles for practical action.
Finally, the fact that so many of the early Jewish settlers in Palestine were emigrants from Craziest Russia had an important bearing on the subject. The ancient prophets had been won to remind their hearers of the bondage in Egypt: “remember that thou waste a slave in the land of Egypt” had been a refrain apparently of telling effect in denunciations of economic or political oppression. The fugitives from the Craziest inferno needed no reminder of Russian oppressions and humiliations. These had scared their minds and bodies and instilled a hatred of political tyranny and economic exploitation. It was the men and women of the Second Aliya (wave of immigration), set in motion by the Kishenev pogrom (1903) and the failure of the Russian Revolution of 1905, who initiated the novel communal type of agricultural settlement. These idealists were determined to build a new life in Palestine free of the insecurities and inequalities of the Russian ghettos, a life founded of the self-labour, freedom, equality, and co-operation.
ANNEXURE - 3

THE PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE, MAY 14, 1948

The independence of Israel was proclaimed on Friday afternoon (Sabbath Eve), May 14, 1948, at a meeting of the Provisional State Council held in the Tel Aviv Museum. “At four o’clock precisely Ben Gurion, flanked by his twelve fellow Ministers of the new Jewish State, stood up. The small hall was packed with history. Ben Gurion, in a blue lounge suit, began to read in a matter-of-fact voice, for five minutes he recalled centuries, tragedies and aspirations in short tense paragraphs that moved like a Greek Drama to their predestined Climax... “Ben Gurion Paused for a moment... And then in ringing tones (he Proclaimed the establishment of Israel).

... The Proclamation had taken seventeen minutes.

... Immediately after the reading and signature of the declaration of independence Ben Gurion announced the new state’s first Government decrees. The British White Paper of 1939 was declared forthwith annulled. The laws restricting Jewish immigration into Palestine and prohibiting the purchase by Jews of land in certain parts of Palestine were abolished and abrogated....”

The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and national identity was formed. Here they achieved independence and created a culture of national and universal significance. Here they wrote and agate Bible to the world.

2 J. Kimche, Seven Fallen Pillars (New York, 1993), pp., 236-238.
Exiled from the Land of Israel the Jewish people remained faithful to it in all the countries of their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return and the restoration their national freedom. Impelled by this historic association, Jews strove throughout the centuries to go back to the land of their fathers and regain their statehood. In recent decades they returned in their masses. They reclaimed the wilderness, revived their language, built cities and villages, and established a vigorous and rural life. They sought peace yet were prepared to defend themselves. They brought the blessings of progress to all inhabitants of the country and looked forward to sovereign independence.

In the year 1897 the First Zionist Congress, inspired by Theodor Herzl's vision of the Jewish State, proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national revival in their own country.

This right was acknowledged by the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917 and reaffirmed by the Man-date of the league of Nations, which gave explicit inter-national recognition to the historic connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and their right to reconstitute their National Home.

The recent holocaust, which engulfed millions of Jews in Europe, proved anew the need to solve the problem of the homeslessness and lack of independence of the Jewish people by means of the re-establishment of the Jewish State, which would open the gates to the Jews and endow the Jewish people with equality of status among the family of nations.

The survivors of the disastrous slaughtering in Europe, and also Jews from other lands, have not desisted from their efforts to reach Eretz-Yisrael, in face of difficulties, obstacles and perils; and have not ceased to urge their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toll in their ancestral land.
In the Second World War the Jewish people in Palestine made their full contribution to the struggle of the freedom-loving nations against the Nazi evil. The sacrifices of their soldiers and their effort gained them the right to rank with the nations which founded the United Nations.

On November 29, 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a Resolution requiring the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. The General Assembly called upon the inhabitants of the country to take all the necessary steps on their part to put the plan into effect. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their independent State is unassailable.

It is the natural right of the Jewish people to lead, as do all other nations, an independent existence in its sovereign State.

ACCORDINGLY WE, the members of the National Council, representing the Jewish people in Palestine and the World Zionist Movement, meet together in solemn assembly today, the day of termination of the British Mandate for Palestine; and by virtue of the natural and historic right of the Jewish people and of the Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

We HEREBY PROCLAIM the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine, to be called Medinath Yisrael (The State of Israel).

WE HEREBY DECLARE that, as from the termination of the Mandate at midnight, the 14th-15th May, 1948, and pending the setting up of the duly elected bodies of the State in accordance with a Constitution, to be drawn up by the constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October, 1948, the national
Council shall act as the provisional Government OF THE Jewish State, which shall be known as Israel.

THE STATE OF Israel will be open to the immigration of Jews from all countries of their dispersion; will promote the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; will be based on the principles of liberty, justice and peace as conceived by the Prophets of Israel; will be based on the principles of liberty, justice and peace as conceived by the Prophets of Israel; will uphold the full social and political equality of all its citizens, without distinction of religion, race or sex; will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, education and culture; will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and will loyally uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter.

THE STATE OF Israel, will be ready to co-operate with the organs and representatives of the United Nations in the implementation of the Resolution of the Assembly of November 29, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the Economic Union over the whole of Palestine.

We appeal to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in building their State and to admit Israel into the family of nations. In the midst of wanton aggression, we yet call upon the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve the ways of peace and play their part in the development of the State, on the basis of full and institutions-provisional and permanent.

We extend our hand in peace and neighbourliness to all the neighbouring State and their peoples, and invite them to co-operate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all. The State of Israel is prepared to make its contribution to the progress of the Middle East as a whole.
Our call does out to the Jewish people over the world to rally to our side in the task of immigration and development and to stand by us in the great struggle for the fulfillment of the dream of generations for the redemption of Israel.

With trust in Almighty God, we set our hand to this Declaration, at this Session of the Provisional State council, on the soil of the homeland, in the city of Tel Aviv, on this Sabbath Eve, the fifth of Iyar, 5708, the fourteenth day of May, 1948.

Signed:


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