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Jewish Attitudes Toward the Vietnam War

by

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of the requirements for ordination

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For Anne

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DIGEST

The Vietnam War brought about important changes in the perception of Americans regarding their country, their government, and themselves. The debate over whether the United States should have been involved in that war is well known and extensively studied.

What has not been explored is the role which Jews and Jewish organizations played in that debate. This thesis attempts to correct this deficiency through an analysis of the various Jewish responses to the Indochinese conflict. There were many Jews who took stands on the war as American citizens. Of primary concern in this study, however, is how and why Jews responded as Jews. The focus is not merely on what Jews said about United States intervention in Vietnam, but on the motivations underlying Jewish attitudes toward the war. What, in other words, made the responses of individual Jews and Jewish groups "Jewish?"

The thesis also explores the wide spectrum of attitudes mirrored in the Jewish community and endeavors to explain the reasons for that diversity of opinion. Was the response of the religious Jew, for example, different from that of the secular Jew? What were the differences between the attitudes of the American Jewish religious movements--Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist, and Reform? Why were some Jews prone to advocating violent

civil disobedience, others uncomfortable about criticizing U.S. foreign policy, and yet a third group actively supportive of the war?

There was, of course, a shift in Jewish opinion over the course of the war. An important goal of this work, as a result, is the delineation of those factors which contributed to these changing Jewish perspectives.

The conclusion examines why Jewish responses to the war, though similar to those offered by other Americans, were unique in their formulation. It ends with a discussion on the historical implications of the variety of Jewish attitudes toward the Vietnam War.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AJA	American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio
AJCommittee	American Jewish Committee
AJCongress	American Jewish Congress
<u>AJYB</u>	<u>American Jewish Yearbook</u>
CALCAV	Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam
<u>CBW</u>	<u>Congress Bi-Weekly</u>
CCAR	Central Conference of American Rabbis
CCARY	<u>Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook</u>
CO	Conscientious objection
<u>Comm</u>	<u>Commentary</u>
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam)
FOR	Fellowship of Reconciliation
<u>Had</u>	<u>Hadassah</u>
HUC-JIR	Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
<u>JCur</u>	<u>Jewish Currents</u>
<u>JFron</u>	<u>Jewish Frontier</u>
JPF	Jewish Peace Fellowship
<u>JPO</u>	<u>Jewish Post and Opinion</u>
<u>JSpec</u>	<u>Jewish Spectator</u>
JTA	Jewish Telegraphic Agency
JTS	Jewish Theological Seminary
JWV	Jewish War Veterans
MBR	Massachusetts Board of Rabbis
NCJW	National Council of Jewish Women

NCNP	National Conference of New Politics
NCRAC	National Community Relations Advisory Council
NFTS	National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods
NLF	National Liberation Front
<u>NYT</u>	<u>New York Times</u>
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
<u>PRA</u>	Proceedings of the Rabbinical Assembly
RA	Rabbinical Assembly
RAA	Rabbinical Alliance of America
RCA	Rabbinical Council of America
<u>Recon</u>	<u>Reconstructionist</u>
RJU	Radical Jewish Union
RRC	Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
SANE	Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy
SCA	Synagogue Council of America
SCO	Selective conscientious objection
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society
<u>Trad</u>	<u>Tradition</u>
UAHC	Union of American Hebrew Congregations
UOJCA	Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America
VC	Viet Cong San (Vietnamese communists)
VNW	Vietnam War
YU	Yeshiva University
ZOA	Zionist Organization of America

PREFACE

In May 1972 Rabbi Gilbert Kollin of Congregation Beth Israel in Flint, Michigan predicted:

In a hundred years no one will ever care about, much less remember, what stand we took as a Jewish community [on the Vietnam War]. . . . It is the "non-Jewish Jews" who are really hung-up on the war thing. They would not make any serious contribution to Jewish survival in America even if the whole Jewish community declared a general strike and came out into the streets. They are only interested in the Jewish community to the extent that they can use it to serve their causes. I doubt if they will be responsive when the Jewish community needs them.¹

This thesis is, to a large extent, an attempt to answer the claims made in these comments. I know of no way to ascertain whether in 2072 anyone will truly remember or care about Jewish attitudes toward the war in Southeast Asia, but for this generation of American Jews such knowledge is important. A more complete comprehension of how and why Jews reacted as they did during the Vietnam era can only help us to better understand who we are and why we think the way we do.

In the past generation no event has had a more profound impact on America and Americans than the Vietnam War. It brought about significant changes in the perception of Americans regarding their country, their government, and themselves. Although U.S. military involvement in Vietnam

ended more than a decade ago, the debate the war fueled in the United States continues to influence our society. Jews in this country cannot escape this fallout from the explosive Vietnam era. The war's impact on American life and beliefs is, however, well known and extensively studied.

This thesis takes a different perspective. It is concerned with how Jews in the United States responded to the war as Jews. The central issue is whether Jewish responses to the conflict in Southeast Asia were motivated by non-Jewish, secular, American concerns, or whether the religious values and/or historical realities of Jewish life colored the attitude of Jews toward the war. Is it true, in other words, that the only Jews who really opposed the war were "non-Jewish Jews," Jews by birth who were unaffiliated with, indifferent and perhaps even hostile to the Jewish community? Or were Jews, who identified as Jews, through affiliation with the organizations of the American Jewish community, also concerned with the war and its implications?

As a result, this study concentrates on the statements of Jewish organizations and the Jews who were members of those organizations. Jews who expressed their opposition to or support of the war primarily in the secular sphere are discussed only insofar as their Jewishness affected their stance on the issue.

American Jewry was by no means united in its response to U.S. involvement in Indochina. My focus, therefore, is not simply on a comparison of Jewish attitudes with general American opinions regarding the war, but is also on the

diversity of responses within the Jewish community. The thesis deals with the broad spectrum of Jewish groups in America--religious, ethnic or cultural, and Zionist. It examines the general tendencies of the four religious groups in America--Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, and Orthodox--as well as the rabbis and lay leaders whose feelings ran counter to their movement's policy. Special notice is taken of the Jewish Peace Fellowship, a non-denominational religious organization which, though small, represented an influential pacifist and semi-pacifist cadre of antiwar activists. Of equal interest are the ethnic or communal organizations, such as B'nai Brith, the American Jewish Congress, and National Council of Jewish Women, whose membership reflected a wide range of political and religious opinions, plus smaller, limited-interest groups, like the Jewish War Veterans and the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service. Zionist organizations are of particular interest because their close ideological commitment to the State of Israel yielded a somewhat different perspective on the Vietnam War and its implications for the Jewish community.

Zionist groups had unusually strong links with Israel and Israeli concerns, but nearly all American Jews felt that Israel was a central element of their identity. It is impossible, therefore, to separate completely American Jewish attitudes to the Vietnamese conflict from what was happening in Israel at the same time. American Jewish antiwar critics were forced, for example, to reconcile their support for the Israelies during and after the Six Day War with their opposi-

tion to the Vietnam War. It is, furthermore, impossible to explain the rise of the Jewish radical movement, which was universally opposed to the war in Southeast Asia, without an understanding of the impact the Six Day War had on American Jews. Finally, the Israeli government's desire to maintain close economic and strategic ties with the United States affected the willingness of Jewish groups to speak publicly against the war. American Jewry's concern for Israel is, therefore, a topic which must be understood if one wishes to comprehend the Jewish response to Vietnam.

Jewish opinion did not, of course, remain the same throughout the 1960's and 1970's. Thus, a central concern of this work is to trace the shift in attitudes as America was increasingly embroiled in Southeast Asia and to examine those factors which were instrumental in causing that change. Why certain events had an impact on some Jews, but not others, is an intriguing question which I also address. Hence, the material is arranged chronologically rather than thematically in the hope that the reader will more easily understand how and why Jewish attitudes about the war changed as they did.

The first chapter serves three purposes--first, to provide background to the Vietnamese conflict; second, to summarize Jewish reaction to war in the twentieth century, and last, to examine the response Americans in general and Jews in particular made to the growing U.S. presence in Vietnam prior to the escalation of the war in March 1965.

The discussion in chapter two focuses on the emerging

lines of opinion on the war which split America and the Jewish community. The central topics of debate during this period--the morality of the war and the propriety of dissent--are discussed at length. The Six Day War between Israel and her neighbors in June 1967 led to significant changes in American Jewry and represents the cut off date for this chapter.

Chapter three deals with a period when opposition to the war (largely because of the Tet Offensive in early 1968) became the dominant point of view in American society. In the organized Jewish community, on the other hand, the period was, with few exceptions, a time of little change on this topic. Those who took public stands either for or against the war at an earlier date now simply reiterated former positions. Individual Jews slowly moved to a more moderate or liberal position on the war, but for the time being, most Jewish organizations were unresponsive to this shift in Jewish public opinion. One issue which did continue to garner Jewish attention was the draft and topics related to it. In the Autumn of 1969 a combination of several factors--the blossoming of a Jewish radical movement, frustration with the lack of progress made by President Nixon in getting America out of the war, and the growing confidence among some Jews that U.S.-Israeli relations would not be hurt by antiwar protests--contributed to the participation of more Jewish groups in a renewed antiwar effort. The Fall of 1969 represents, as a result, a time of change in Jewish organizational responses to the war.

The fourth chapter concentrates on the Jewish position on the war during the period of withdrawal of American forces from late 1969 until just before the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in January 1973. Few Jewish groups remained actively prowar in this era, but many were still reluctant to issue any statements against U.S. policy. This chapter focuses on the burgeoning Jewish radical movement which combined Jewish values with an anti-Vietnam perspective. It closes with an examination of the growing indifference of the general Jewish community to the war in 1971 and 1972 and the frustration this caused among antiwar activists.

Although the war in Vietnam did not end until April 1975, U.S. military involvement ended over two years before. After the signing of the Peace Accords, however, came new problems--the question of amnesty for draft evaders, hundreds of thousands of Indochinese refugees, and a holocaust in Cambodia. Postwar problems and Jewish responses to them are, therefore, the primary topic of this fifth chapter. This chapter closes with a brief summary of some postwar reassessments of the American Jewish response to the Vietnamese conflict.

The final chapter endeavors to draw some conclusions about Jewish attitudes toward the Vietnam War. Can it be said that there was a uniquely Jewish response to the war, i.e., distinguishable from those made by non-Jews? Beyond their origin among Jews what, if anything, made the Jewish responses Jewish? Did Jews, as a group, show a particular tendency to certain points of view? Were "non-Jewish Jews"

the only ones "hung up on the war," or were there Jews who, as Jews, felt they had to take a position on the Vietnam War? The thesis concludes with an appraisal of the complexity of the American Jewish response to this issue and the implications this has for the myth propagated by the Jewish Left that American Jewry was guilty of silence during the war, as well as for the myth of the Jewish Right that the American Jewish community was exceedingly liberal in its posture during the Vietnam era.

The appendix includes a chronology of events, the results of selected opinion polls, and a selection of policy statements on the war and related issues made by Jewish organizations. The reader must realize that the polls are not completely accurate. In the words of one poll taker at that time:

A person might endorse a belligerent position on one aspect of the war, while on the next aspect a very neutral or pacifistic position. In other words, [it is impossible] . . . to clearly separate the public into two camps of hawks and doves.²

In addition, Jews represented a small percentage of the total population and, as a result, only a limited number of Jews were actually polled in each survey. Still, polls are useful as they indicate trends and tendencies.

Since very little work has been done in the field of Jewish attitudes about the Vietnamese conflict, the only secondary sources on which I have relied are, with one exception, general treatments of the Vietnam era and of the antiwar movement. The exception is an article entitled "Vietnam and the Jews" by Diane Winston, appearing in Jack

Nusan Porter's Sociology of American Jews (1978). Written from the perspective of an admitted "dove," its purpose is to prove that history has vindicated the antiwar position. Hence, there are serious problems with this work. Prowar positions are rarely fleshed out and, as a result, take on the immoral quality she so earnestly believes they have. In addition, her treatment of the subject is somewhat uneven. The discussion of the Johnson-Jewish War Veterans Incident of late 1966, for example, is as long as that of the period from 1970 through the Peace Accords of 1973. She takes into account Israeli pressures, but seems to exaggerate their importance. There is, finally, a conspicuous lack of notes which would aid the reader in tracing her sources. Still, for all its faults, Winston's article does provide an entree into the topic.

The sources used in this thesis are, therefore, almost entirely primary ones. The spectrum of Jewish responses to the war is reflected best in newspaper and magazine articles and editorials. I tried to look at a broad range of magazines and newspapers in order to present a fair survey of the diversity of Jewish reactions to the war. The periodicals used may be divided into two classes. First, those Jewish magazines which had a popular appeal and a fairly large circulation during the period under discussion. Included in this category are magazines such as Commentary, Hadassah magazine, and Midstream. Secondly, there are the periodicals of Jewish organizations which had limited circulation, but whose constituencies were influential in American

Jewish life. Included in this group are rabbinic annuals, such as the CCAR Yearbook and Proceedings of the Rabbinical Assembly, and organizational periodicals, like the Reconstructionist and the Jewish Frontier. In addition to the aforementioned sources, I turned to the numerous pamphlets, letters, and documents of Jews and Jewish organizations which are only available from archival sources.

One of my greatest surprises in the writing of this work was the discrepancy between the many Jewish responses to the war while it was waged and the paucity of reevaluations of those responses after the war was over. Why is it that this conflict, which so influenced a generation of Jews in this country, was virtually ignored by those Jews later on? Perhaps the individuals who lived through that tumultuous era were, by its end, in no mood to rehash old arguments. Another possible explanation is that contemporaries simply saw no need for an evaluation of all points of view. By the war's end people knew where they stood on the war. It is not difficult to comprehend that partisans on either side would be unwilling, if not unable, to present a fair and comprehensive picture of an opposing viewpoint. Yet the need for a complete treatment of this topic seems obvious.

I do not mean to suggest that I am unbiased. But time does yield a perspective to which contemporaries of an event are not privy. I was influenced by the Vietnam era, but because I was too young to actually be drafted, it only had an indirect impact on my life. I am, in addition, not

so convinced that the moral "right" rested with any one position. I hope that this study presents a balanced view of this complex issue and will help others understand how and why Jews responded to it as they did.

CHAPTER ONE

The Calm Before the Storm

(Beginnings-March 1965)

1. זכרון אלה - אלה - זכרון אלה - זכרון אלה - זכרון אלה :

They offer healing offhand for the wounds of My people, saying, "All is well, All is well," when nothing is well.

Jeremiah 6:14

I. Why America Went to War

The origins of the war in Vietnam lie in a centuries-old attempt of the Vietnamese to become independent of foreign domination. For hundreds of years "Viet Nam" (which means "distant South") was under Chinese hegemony. Economic and geopolitical considerations led the French to take a growing interest in the area in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The French gradually replaced the Chinese as the dominant power in the region. By the late 1800's all of Vietnam was part of the French Empire. The French, with their own understanding of the "white man's burden," indoctrinated many young Vietnamese in Roman Catholicism. Those Vietnamese who became Roman Catholic and adopted Western ways were favored by the French in administering the country. The majority of the Vietnamese, who were Buddhist, resented this loss of independence and the influx of foreign customs. In the early twentieth century

spontaneous outbursts of Vietnamese nationalism were countered through arrests and political maneuvering. During the 1920's anti-French, nationalist feeling led to the appearance of a number of revolutionary organizations. At times united, more often opposed to one another, these underground groups represented a variety of political points of view.

The Japanese invaded Vietnam during World War II but left the French bureaucracy in control of the everyday affairs of the country. During the war many of the underground groups, united in their desire for independence, formed a common front called the Viet Nam Doc Lap Dong Minh ("League for the Independence of Vietnam"), commonly known as the Viet Minh. Financed by the Nationalist Chinese who were, in turn, supported by the United States, the Viet Minh conducted guerrilla raids against the Japanese and their French puppets. The leader of the Viet Minh, Nguyen Ai Quoc, was a communist who had once worked in New York City. He would soon thereafter change his name to Ho Chi Minh.

At the Potsdam Conference after the end of the Second World War, Vietnam was split at the 16th parallel. Arbitrary as such a division was, it reflected a colonialist European view of the world as subject to the whims and needs of the European powers. The northern half was given to China while the southern half was controlled by Britain, who then placed control back into the hands of France. Shortly after the Japanese surrender on September 2, 1945, Ho Chi Minh established the Viet Minh as the government of

the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in Hanoi. The Chinese, beset by their own difficulties following the end of the war, acquiesced to this move and allowed Ho to consolidate power in the north. Ho initially hoped that the Viet Minh would be recognized as the legitimate government of all of Vietnam. France, however, refused to relinquish her authority in the southern sector of Vietnam, citing the fear of communist expansion into Indochina. This fear was not without basis. The Viet Minh, while ostensibly a representative government, was increasingly dominated by the communists. The real reason for French intransigence, however, seems to have been a combination of national pride and economic desires. Stung by her defeats during World War II France wished to maintain her Empire as a symbol of her continued strength. Economically, Southeast Asia remained a choice area for development. After her own communist revolution in 1948, China recognized the Viet Minh as the legitimate government of Vietnam (January 1950). The Viet Minh and the French had, by that time, already been at war for more than three years. It was a conflict the French would come to call la sale guerre, "the dirty war."

The American government, which had supported the Viet Minh because of their opposition to the Japanese during World War II, would not recognize the Viet Minh as the legitimate government in Vietnam after the end of the war. Several factors were at play in the American renunciation of Ho Chi Minh's attempt to establish an independent Vietnam. The first was the American antipathy towards communism in

general and the communist leanings of the Viet Minh in particular. The Secretary of State under President Truman, George C. Marshall, was quite clear about American desires: "We are not interested in seeing colonial empire administrations supplanted by a philosophy and political organization directed by the Kremlin."¹ International communism--at that time still united--was the bogeyman of post-war America. "Containment" of communist expansionism became a cornerstone of American foreign policy for the next generation. Vietnam, it was feared, would only be one more victim of communist aggression. A second reason for American hesitations about the Viet Minh, related to the first, was concern with European defense. American foreign policy makers in the post-war period strove to limit Soviet expansion in Europe. A strong France was essential, American policy makers reasoned, for she would join with other West European nations as a bulwark against the communist bloc. After the communist takeover in China in 1948 and the outbreak of the Korean War, the specter of a worldwide communist conspiracy was raised. Americans believed that the Chinese support of North Korea was paralleled by similar support of North Vietnam. Forced in Indochina to choose between the colonial French government and the communist Viet Minh led by Ho Chi Minh, it was inevitable that the United States would come to side with the former. Thus, in May 1950 the United States began economic and military aid to the French in Vietnam. Ten months later Ho Chi Minh declared "the Americans to be the real enemies of the Vietnamese and the French their mercenaries."² By 1953

the U.S. was paying 78% of the costs of the "French" war in Vietnam.

The Geneva Accords of 1954 ended hostilities between France and the Viet Minh. Vietnam, the Accords declared, was to remain divided at the 17th parallel--the north controlled by the Viet Minh, the south by a caretaker government led by Ngo Dinh Diem--until elections could be held throughout the country. The latest possible date for such elections was set two years hence (July 1956). Although this division was intended as a temporary measure, the actual result was that it reinforced the split made after World War II and led to the de facto creation of two sovereign states--North and South Vietnam. Neither the United States nor the interim government in the southern sector signed the Geneva Accords. In later years both would use this fact as the basis for their disregard of the stipulation settled upon.³ The Accord did, however, allow France to withdraw from Vietnam.

The political vacuum created by France's withdrawal gave Diem the opportunity to consolidate his power in the south. Much of his power came from the Americans, whose support simply shifted from the French. On October 23, 1954 President Dwight D. Eisenhower assured Premier Diem that if "needed reforms" took place the United States would "help the Government of Vietnam in developing and maintaining a strong, viable state, capable of resisting attempted subversion and aggression through military means."⁴ Eisenhower was not, however, willing to see American soldiers fight in

Vietnam. "I could conceive of no greater tragedy," he warned, "than for the United States to become involved in an all-out war in Indochina."⁵ Within eighteen months Diem proclaimed the area south of the 17th parallel to be the Republic of Vietnam. The elections scheduled by July 1956 were called off and never took place. The 900,000 men, women, and children, mostly Catholic and anti-Communist who left the DRV for South Vietnam during the one year of free movement provided for in the Geneva Accords were strong supporters of Diem's regime (100,000 South Vietnamese transferred to the north during the same period).

Throughout the 1950's Diem seemed to be in control. American advisors arrived to train South Vietnamese forces. Political opposition to Diem's regime was minor. There was an uneasy coexistence with the DRV. The relative calm of this period, however, was deceiving. Diem's refusal to compromise with opponents and his attacks on non-Catholics and Communists antagonized a growing number of South Vietnamese. These disenchanted individuals rejected the United States, which backed Diem, and turned to the Viet Minh as a way of opposing the despotic premier. Ho Chi Minh was more concerned in this period with consolidating communist power than with intervening in the south. There was, as a result, no real challenge to Diem's power.

Late in the 1950's the various threads of opposition to Diem came together to form a noose which would grow ever tighter around the neck of South Vietnam. In the spring of 1959 the Central Committee of the Viet Minh decided that the

time had come to "struggle heroically and perseveringly to smash the government of President Diem."⁶ Communist leaders and organizers were sent over the border to increase covert activities against South Vietnam. In December 1960 the opponents of Diem living within South Vietnam formed the National Liberation Front (NLF), so called because of their belief that the war against Diem was one of "national liberation." Although linked with the North Vietnamese government, the NLF, for many years, acted independently. The Americans derisively referred to the NLF rebels as the VC, short for Viet Cong San ("Vietnamese communists"). The United States refused to back down to this new communist pressure. On July 4, 1959 President Eisenhower "linked America's 'national interest' not only to Diem but to the survival of any non-Communist regime in Saigon. Four days later two American casualties were recorded in Vietnam, the first since the United States took over from the French."⁷

The conflict between the U.S.-backed South Vietnamese forces and the NLF escalated throughout the years of John F. Kennedy's presidency. "In the final analysis [it is] . . . their [the Vietnamese people's] war," Kennedy asserted, "they are the ones who have to win or lose it." In reality, however, Vietnam was increasingly becoming "our war." Kennedy and his top advisors were uneasy about sending combat troops to Vietnam, but they did see a need to increase U.S. assistance. The decision was made to offset the growing communist activity by providing military equipment to South Vietnam. This equipment, the Kennedy Administration decided,

would be "manned to the extent necessary by United States uniformed personnel and under United States operational control." Air bases were set up or expanded at key locations throughout South Vietnam. Pilots, engineers, and support personnel were soon on their way to these bases. When Kennedy was elected, approximately 1000 advisors were stationed in Vietnam. At the time of his death there were more than sixteen times as many American military personnel there; 106 Americans had been killed, 486 wounded.⁸

The Buddhist uprising of 1963 further exacerbated the situation. The Buddhists represented 80% of South Vietnam's population of 14 million. Diem's government, like the French before it, was Roman Catholic. The Buddhist majority resented the long-held Catholic domination of South Vietnam. In May 1963 nine Buddhists celebrating Buddha's birthday were killed by South Vietnamese troops in the coastal city of Hue. The incident sparked widespread riots which were fanned by political and religious discontent with Diem and his rule. In a vivid and horrifying protest against Diem's rule, Buddhist monks committed suicide by setting themselves afire. The flames of the Buddhist riots, which burned throughout the summer and fall, finally engulfed Diem. He was overthrown and killed by a military coup on the night of November 1-2, 1963. The stability the United States hoped for after Diem's fall never materialized. Within the following twelve months South Vietnam saw seven governments come and go.

Lyndon Baines Johnson, presidential designate following

the assassination of John F. Kennedy, was faced from the beginning of his presidency with a highly unstable and weak South Vietnam. Johnson was as unwilling as his predecessor to allow the communist-backed NLF to take over. He recalls in his memoirs that within four days of being sworn in as President he signed National Security Memorandum 273, affirming that "it remains the central objective of the United States in South Vietnam to assist the people and Government of that country to win their contest against the externally directed and supported Communist conspiracy."⁹ Within a few months of Kennedy's death the Johnson Administration appears to have come to the conclusion that a more military posture by the U.S. would help stabilize the situation in Vietnam. "In February 1964, the American military initiated Operation Plan 34A, a program of spying, intelligence gathering, kidnapping, commando raids, psychological warfare, sabotage, and coastal bombardment."¹⁰ Without notifying Congress, the Johnson Administration secretly outlined contingency plans for increased U.S. commitment in South Vietnam. Afraid of going into battle without congressional approval, Johnson ordered the State Department to write the first draft of a resolution declaring war which could be presented to Congress. By the early summer America was ready for war.

Johnson received the congressional support he so anxiously desired on August 7, 1964. The United States Congress resolved to "support the determination of the President as Commander-in-Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel armed attack against the forces of the

United States and to prevent further aggression."¹¹ With the nearly unanimous support for passage of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (the vote was 466 to 0 in the House of Representatives and 88 to 2 in the Senate) the United States government demonstrated its overwhelming support for a military solution to the Vietnam conflict.

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution received the support it did because of the belief that North Vietnam had attacked U.S. boats without provocation. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara claimed that the American destroyers Maddox and C. Turner Joy were on a "routine mission" on the nights of August 2-4 and were attacked on two occasions by the North Vietnamese. A number of years later, documents would be released to Congress and the American public which called into question the Administration's perception of the course of events. Whether the attack was provoked by the United States or not remains a topic of great debate.¹² What is important for the history of the war, however, is that the general perception of Americans was that the United States had been attacked.

The American resolve to punish such an act was clear. At 6:00 p.m. Washington Time on Tuesday, August 4, the Pentagon announced that a second attack on the destroyers had taken place. Forty-five minutes later President Johnson was meeting with congressional leaders to tell them how he planned to respond. By 10:00 p.m. the first planes were leaving the decks of the aircraft carriers Ticonderoga and Constellation on retaliatory raids against four North Viet-

namese naval bases. Johnson, a master politician, persuaded Congress to support the American military response with the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon, one of the two senators who opposed the resolution said that Congress would someday rue its decision.

I say most respectfully and sadly that in my judgement, in this resolution, we are planting the seeds not of peace, but of war. Those who will follow us in the years to come will cry out in anguish and despair in criticism over the mistake that was made in 1964 when the joint resolution was passed.¹³

His words, unheeded when they were spoken, would haunt the consciences of more and more Americans as the war in Vietnam dragged on.

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution gave the President the power to wage war without having to declare war. Yet the time was not conducive for a massive military commitment. Johnson was, first of all, in the midst of an election campaign. His opponent, Barry Goldwater, senator from Arizona, was a right-wing Republican whose tough talk about communism and war scared the majority of people in the United States. Aware of the political advantage of being seen as a moderate, Johnson played down the American role in Vietnam. His reluctance to widen the war seems, however, to have been based in something more than political expediency. Throughout the last half of 1964 he seems to have truly hoped that the American military role would remain limited. Evidence for this is not only seen in his campaign speeches, but in the actions he took. On August 29 he declared:

I have had advice to load our planes with bombs and to drop them on certain areas that

I think would enlarge the war and escalate the war, and result in committing a good many American boys to fighting a war that I think ought to be fought by the boys in Asia. . . . And for that reason I have not chosen to enlarge the war.¹⁴

On October 21 he reiterated this position: "We aren't about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves."¹⁵ These were not empty words. Just before the election the airport in Saigon was attacked. Against the advice of his advisors Johnson refused to retaliate with sustained aerial bombardment of North Vietnam. Even after his November 3 election victory he showed restraint. After an attack on December 24, Johnson's advisors once again asked for increased bombing of North Vietnam. The President refused once more. "Johnson at this stage was still hoping against hope that a collapse of South Vietnam could be averted without deepening the American military involvement."¹⁶

Following the attack at Pleiku on February 7, 1965, which left 8 Americans dead and 60 wounded, Johnson made the decision to begin a sustained aerial bombing campaign against North Vietnam. The campaign, called "Operation Rolling Thunder," began on March 2, 1965. Military strategists in Vietnam soon realized that combat troops would be needed to protect American airfields. General William C. Westmoreland, commander of American forces in Vietnam "sent in a request for two U.S. Marine corps to provide security for the U.S. air base at Danang."¹⁷

Sixteen days later (six days after the commencement of

U.S. bombing) amphibious vehicles landed on the beach near an American airfield in Danang, South Vietnam. The U.S. Marines who walked ashore were the first American combat forces on Vietnamese soil. The President of the United States, Lyndon Baines Johnson, and his Administration, had decided to solve Vietnam's problems primarily through military means. It was a decision which would greatly affect the lives of those who were sent to Vietnam, the American Nation, the President and his advisors.

II. American public opinion

Before the Buddhist riots of 1963 few Americans had ever heard of Vietnam. Only then did pictures of self immolated Buddhist monks shock Americans enough to force them to take a closer look at the situation in that distant land. The instability of South Vietnam in the months following these riots led more and more Americans to question the U.S. role. In fact, several weeks before the Gulf of Tonkin incident 58% of all Americans were critical of Johnson's handling of the growing hostilities in Indochina.

The Administration's assertion that North Vietnam initiated unprovoked attacks on American ships in international waters in the Gulf of Tonkin drastically altered public opinion. The American public, like the Congress, accepted the official version of what had happened and, in overwhelming numbers, chose to "rally 'round the flag." The well-known pollster, Lou Harris, stated, on August 10, 1964, that "in a single stroke Mr. Johnson has, at least

temporarily, turned his greatest political vulnerability in foreign policy into one of his strongest assets." A dramatic turnaround had occurred: 72% approved of the president's handling of the incident, 85% approved of air strikes against North Vietnam, and 66% favored taking the war into the DRV on the ground. General support for Johnson jumped from 42% to 72%.¹⁸ It was a period of political triumph for the President. Goldwater's hard line approach towards Vietnam was undercut by Johnson's strong, but more moderate stance. In the minds of most Americans Vietnam was a situation under control and, therefore, not worth worrying about. "Opinion polls commissioned by local candidates and the national Democratic party showed that as few as four or five percent of the people in many states considered it [i.e. Vietnam] an issue of major concern."¹⁹ In the November 3 presidential election Lyndon Johnson won 61.1% of the popular vote--the largest percentage ever to go to a presidential candidate in the nation's history.

Few Americans questioned U.S. involvement in Vietnam in the early 1960's. The silence of the majority about the war signified, if not tacit support of the Administration, certainly a lack of concern. The antiwar opposition was not, even in 1965, influential to any great degree. The few people who spoke out against the war remained isolated and ineffectual. The significance of these early opponents of official American policy therefore lay not in the impact they had at the time, but in the important role they assumed in later years.

The small antiwar opposition received its impetus from movements of discontent which had been growing in strength since the middle of the previous decade. American fears of communism climaxed in the McCarthy hearings and black lists of the early 1950's. Afraid of reprisals, most protest groups maintained a low profile throughout this period. But by the late 1950's a change of attitude was in the offing. People who had long stayed silent now began to question the values of postwar America. Dissidence centered around three major issues--nuclear disarmament, civil rights, and student revolt on university campuses.

The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union led to an ever-escalating arms race. The fear of "the Bomb" gripped America during the terms of Eisenhower and Kennedy. In response, a number of pro-disarmament groups were formed. The most important of these peace organizations, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) was founded in 1957. The peace demonstrations of this period were relatively small, although 4000 students did converge on Washington, D.C. in February 1962 for a demonstration in favor of disarmament.

The peace organizations were, by the early 1960's, overshadowed by a growing civil rights movement. This campaign, which sought political and social equality for black Americans, derived much of its initial strength from churches in the South. Black youths were attracted to the movement early in 1960 after four black students in Greensboro, North Carolina sat down at a "white only" counter at the local

Woolworth's and asked to be served. As the "sit-in" movement spread, idealistic white youths were attracted to the goal of racial equality. The "sit-in," a non-violent form of civil disobedience, would be used again and again by anti-war protesters who saw Vietnam as symptomatic of the same injustice and immorality in America which led to black repression. By the following spring hundreds of white students from the North joined blacks on integrated buses for "freedom rides" into Alabama and Mississippi. The civil rights movement continued to grow in strength over the next few years. To help register black voters for the upcoming election, many white students volunteered to work over their summer vacation on the Mississippi Summer Project (1964). Many of those who went found themselves "for the first time in their lives . . . on the side of people who felt the government was at best indifferent, and perhaps downright hostile."²⁰ This discontent with the government would act as tinder for the antiwar fire of the 1960's.

University students were the backbone of the antiwar movement throughout the duration of the war. Student activism began slowly in the early years of the decade, but increased in scope and power as time went on. As early as 1959 students at the University of California demanded that mandatory enrollment in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) be dropped.

It was the civil rights movement, however, which served as the catalyst for political awareness among students. The civil rights movement created "a new political

atmosphere, . . . populist in spirit and activist in mood" on Northern campuses.²¹ The optimism and hopefulness of students in 1961 turned, after the Mississippi Summer Project, into disenchantment and disillusionment. Both the political distrust of "the Establishment" and the techniques of active protest which were developed in the civil rights movement were turned, in 1964, against the universities. In the Fall of 1964, at the University of California at Berkeley, students demonstrated against university policy that political activities not be allowed on campus. The demonstrators occupied one of the buildings on campus and formed the Free Speech Movement. In a speech on December 1, at UC Berkeley, Mario Savio, leader of this group, expressed the feelings of a new generation of students, young men and women unwilling to placidly accept the status quo:

After a long period of apathy during the Fifties, students have begun not only to question, but, having arrived at answers, to act on those answers. This is part of a growing understanding among many people in America that history has not yet ended, that a better society is possible, and that it is worth dying for. . .²²

The Berkeley student demonstrations were clear proof to activist students of the power they held. They would not, in following years, be afraid to use that power to protest against the war.

Much of the discontent on university campuses came from small, though vocal, leftist groups. These organizations were heirs to the tradition of the left in America, but also represented a break with leftist doctrines formerly regarded as sacred. The term "left" in a political context, is "used

to designate a political ideology that is in some way or to some significant extent informed by Marxism."²³ In the United States the heyday of the left was the period between the First and Second World Wars. The anti-communist mood of America in the 1940's and 1950's greatly reduced the size and the impact of the left, but the rise of various dissident movements in the late 1950's and early 1960's led to its revival. The most important of these groups in later years, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), was formed in June 1962, primarily by students from the University of Michigan. Meeting at Port Huron, Michigan, the 59 people present issued a statement calling for a "participatory democracy" in America.

Yet the newly formed organizations were somehow different from the leftist groups of earlier years. They represented what Professor C. Wright Mills of Columbia University called the "New Left." Mills, who coined the term in 1960, rejected "Old Left" theories of a revolutionary working class. The vehicle for social change, he argued, is the intelligentsia. Intellectuals and college-age radicals formed the core of the New Left. Although the New Left represented a unified point of view, it was made up of "a conglomeration of random groups in ideological disarray."²⁴ The most common features of the New Left were a distrust of mainstream American liberalism and a rejection of the doctrinaire Marxist, proletarian focus of the Old Left. Mordecai Chertoff writes that the New Left was "disenchanted with

the so-called wishy-washy liberals and the complacent working class."²⁵ Liberalism worked within the established political system. The New Left emphasized radicalism, the need to change the system, by revolutionary means if necessary. This extremist and intellectual emphasis of the New Left tended to lead to a sense of elitism among its adherents. Unlike the Old Left, which believed in the Marxist doctrine of a society transformed by an involved proletariat, the New Left showed "a spirit of indiscriminating rejection of society."²⁶ The feeling of many New Left members was one of being better than or above the rest of society.²⁷

Opposition within America specifically directed at U.S. support of Vietnam was, until the Buddhist uprising of 1963, almost nonexistent. Vietnam attracted the attention of only a few journalists and political analysts from the United States. Most reporters regarded Vietnam as a peripheral concern. In the early years of the decade the hot spot of Indochina seemed to be Laos. Even those journalists who felt Vietnam was important did not question the reasons for having American "advisors" in the country. For the most part "the difference between journalists and the Kennedy administration was not over the wisdom of U.S. policy, but over whether or not it was working."²⁸ The only questioning of the war within the dissident movements at home occurred by individuals active in the peace movement. A. J. Muste, a long time pacifist, publicly denounced U.S. intervention in Vietnam during a 1963 Easter Peace Walk in New York. His voice, however, was faint and his cries went unheeded.

Organized opposition to the war centered, at first, around disenchantment with the rule of Ngo Dinh Diem. Diem's sister-in-law, Mdme. Ngo Dinh Nhu, encountered numerous protests during her tour of the United States in the Fall of 1963. Articles critical of Diem slowly began to appear in the American press. A few individuals and organizations protested American support for Diem's corrupt and "authoritarian" government.²⁹

The response Johnson made to the Gulf of Tonkin incident led to the first real protests against American military involvement in Vietnam. Bob Moses, a black leader of the voter registration movement, noted, in August 1964, a parallel between violence against blacks in America and U.S. retaliatory bombing of North Vietnam and called upon the "killing" to end "everywhere."³⁰ Several university faculty groups took out ads and signed letters calling upon the United States to enter into negotiations as a means of ending the conflict. In November the War Resisters League, a major pacifist organization, "called for 'the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. military forces and military aid' from Vietnam and a month later it joined with other pacifist groups to demonstrate in New York against the war. . . . There were other ads, rallies, petitions, and letters protesting the war in late 1964, but they remained frail and isolated efforts, partly as a result of the illusion that the issue had been settled during the presidential campaign" and partly because those most likely to protest were involved in issues they felt were more pressing.³¹

Disenchantment with the American military role in

Vietnam remained rare until late the following year. The dissident elements in American society which angrily rejected Johnson after 1965 perceived him, in 1964, as the candidate of peace. Following the lead of most Americans, many student activists and civil rights supporters stood behind the Democratic candidate. With few exceptions, the intellectuals of the New Left gave Johnson their endorsement as well. The vehemence of the attacks leveled against the Johnson Administration by these groups in later years was undoubtedly due, in part, to both the guilt they felt in supporting Lyndon Johnson and the anger they felt at having been betrayed by their "peace candidate."

America was drawn inextricably into a military confrontation in Vietnam, but most Americans responded with silence. It was a silence indicative of mixed emotions--support of a war aimed at defending an ally from communist aggression, indifference to what was happening, uncertainty about what individuals or groups should state publicly, and/or ignorance about the land of Vietnam and the reasons for a war there at all. Yet, at the same time, Lyndon Johnson's decision to escalate forced more and more Americans to reject that silence and come out against the war.

III. American Jewry Prior to the Vietnam Era

The Jewish community in the United States, throughout the twentieth century, has tended to take a more liberal to left approach than most Americans. Jews had been active in the Old Left as early as the beginning of the century. After

World War II, as they moved into the middle class and became part of "the Establishment," there began a slow shift in attitudes. In the early 1960's, however, Jews were instrumental in the re-emergence of the New Left. Although the number of Jews actively involved in it always remained small vis-a-vis the total number of American Jews, a disproportionately high percentage of the New Left membership was Jewish. It has been suggested that "Jews constituted at least 30 to 50 percent of the Movement's ranks."³²

Not only did Jews affiliate with the Left to a greater degree than non-Jews, but twice as many Jews as non-Jews saw themselves as liberal.³³ For decades Jews supported the more liberal Democratic Party over the Republican Party. In 1964 an unprecedented 89 to 95 percent of those Jews who voted supported Lyndon Johnson. One political analyst has noted that "American Jewish political behavior is an anomaly and a contradiction. . . . They [the Jews] are overwhelmingly liberal-to-radical and this despite the general rule of political behavior that the higher a group stands in status, income, and education, the more it tends to prefer a conservative to a liberal philosophy." There are numerous theories as to why Jews do not fit the usual pattern--religious, historical, sociological, and psychological.

One theory is that although many modern Jews are not religious, the values of justice and charity which are stressed in Judaism led Jews to take a more charitable perspective. Such an outlook, it is held, is more evident on the left than on the right. As a result, Jews affiliate

with groups which show a tendency to the former point of view. The historical argument is founded on the belief that Jewish support for liberalism can be traced to the fact that it was a liberal Enlightenment which freed the Jews from their ghettos and helped them enter the modern world. Another suggestion is that Jews in postwar America have, rightly or not, associated extreme rightism with the destruction of European Jewry under the Nazi regime. Hence, Jews shy away from any group or party on the right. A final theory for Jewish liberalism explains it as an outcome of Jewish "marginality." According to this viewpoint the psychological sense of being "in," though not completely, leads many Jews to take a somewhat critical view of politics. Such an approach is, philosophically, much closer to liberalism than conservatism, which aims to preserve the status quo.³⁴ Regardless of whether these theories are correct or not, this liberal and leftist bias of American Jewry would have an enormous impact on attitudes toward the war in Vietnam.

The issues of war and peace had been addressed by American Jewish organizations since the First World War. The shocks of that conflict turned many individuals, Jew and non-Jew alike, towards pacifism. "The terrific disillusionment that followed World War I had had a profound effect upon the general population and especially upon the clergy."³⁵ Antiwar sentiment was strong among rabbis throughout the 1920's and early 1930's. In 1925 the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the organization of Reform rabbis,

established a Committee on International Peace which sponsored resolutions in favor of disarmament and world peace. Seven years later the Conservative rabbinate, through the auspices of the Rabbinical Assembly of America (RA), went so far as to reject the legitimacy of any war: "We believe all war to be wrong, whether as an instrument of national policy or as a means of settling disputes."³⁶

In consonance with their pacifistic perspective was the assertion, by both the CCAR and the RA, that it was the right of a Jew to conscientiously object to war. The notion that a Jew could be a Conscientious Objector (CO) was a novel one. Most Americans recognized the right of the members of certain pacifistic Christian groups (e.g. the Quakers) to claim exemption based on conscientious objection, but few people (Jews included) would accept such a claim by a Jew.³⁷ Yet again and again, the rabbis of the Reform and Conservative movements, stated their support for any Jew who could not, in good conscience, fight in a war. In 1931 the CCAR declared:

While adherents of the Jewish faith have at different times so interpreted their religion as to justify their personal participation in warfare, it is in accord with the highest personal interpretation of Judaism conscientiously to object to any such personal participation.³⁸

The RA concurred:

We recognize the right of the conscientious objector to claim exemption from military service in any war in which he cannot give his moral assent, and we pledge ourselves to support him in his determination to refrain from any participation in it.³⁹

Although most Americans favored neutrality after the

outbreak of hostilities in Europe in September 1939, Jews tended to support American intervention more readily because of the Nazis treatment of German Jews during the 1930's. Rabbis who had not long before condemned "all war" now sought to justify American involvement in another world conflict. This war was necessary, it was explained, as a defense against "aggression," against "a real and ever-encroaching jeopardy to the freedom we cherish."⁴⁰

The pacifist hopes unleashed by the First World War were not, however, washed away by this flood of support for armed struggle against Nazi Germany. The CCAR and RA reaffirmed the rights of a Jew to become a CO.⁴¹ The few, staunch pacifists who remained as America geared up for war organized themselves in 1941 to form the Jewish Peace Fellowship. This group disseminated information on Jewish attitudes towards peace and supported those Jews who wished to file for status as conscientious objectors. The Jewish Peace Fellowship (JPF) was non-denominational but defined itself as a religious group. It aimed to be a "specifically Jewish voice [for peace] drawing upon the peculiar insights of Jewish religion."⁴² Although small throughout the 1940's, 1950's, and early 1960's, the JPF was the only Jewish organization which was specifically and consistently concerned with the issue of peace, the draft, and conscientious objection.

Vocal support of pacifism and repudiation of American military policy was rare in the Jewish community in the years following World War II. It was, after all, a period when any criticism of America could potentially be interpreted

as "communist" and "traitorous." Nevertheless, following the outbreak of the Korean War the Conservative and Reform rabbinical organizations once again asserted that a Jew could, on religious grounds, ask to be declared a CO. The Reform Committee on Conscientious Objection, however, was not willing to take such a stand without any qualifications: "The majority of us," the committee report goes on to apologize, "believe that it is in accordance with the highest traditions of Judaism to give military service to our Government in time of need."⁴³ In contrast, the Conservative movement's Committee on Conscientious Objection, chaired by Isidor Hoffman, an important Jewish pacifist for many years, sought, in 1951, "to broaden the basis for conscientious objection so as to include humanitarian beliefs" as well as religious conviction. The Reform rabbinate would wait thirteen years to make the same point.⁴⁴

Due, in large part, to a growing fear of nuclear war there was a resurgence of Jewish interest in pacifism as the fifties came to a close. Indicative of this was the marked jump in the number of Jews making inquiries with the Jewish Peace Fellowship about CO status. A May 1963 letter of the JPF read that "since 1940, over one hundred Jews have been granted official status as conscientious objectors on the basis of their Jewish training and belief." Less than one year later, the JPF was receiving "no less than one inquiry" per week on this subject.⁴⁵ Numerous resolutions, conferences, and lectures were dedicated to exploring peace. Both the Reform and Conservative movements passed

resolutions on peace. The nineteenth-century-like optimism of these resolutions about the ability of human beings to attain peace has a strange ring so late in the twentieth century. The rabbis of the RA identified themselves "as members of a tradition committed to believe . . . in man's ability to transcend himself."⁴⁶ So, too, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), the constituent body of Reform synagogues, asserted "faith in man's capacity to establish God's Kingdom on earth."⁴⁷ ^{46th General Assembly 1961 (10-11)} The belief that peaceful solutions could be found to the world's conflicts was reflected in the early resolutions of these rabbinical organizations about the Vietnam War, where emphasis was placed on the United Nations.

Among Jews active in the peace movement of the Sixties the emphasis was not simply on expressing the hope for peace, but on establishing a link between religion and politics. On October 28-29, 1963 a special conference on war and peace called the "Dimensions of Peace: a Jewish Confrontation" was held in New York City for the leaders of national Jewish organizations. The remarks of one of the participants, Rabbi Jacob Agus of Baltimore, are indicative of how things had changed since the height of the "Red scare" a decade before. In keeping with the mood of political activism which was sweeping across America, Agus emphasized the political and social functions of Judaism. "The first principle that emerges from our tradition," Agus declared, "is the unity of the spiritual and secular realms." A Jew who is not involved in politics, he concluded, commits idolatry.⁴⁸

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Several weeks later Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld of Cleveland, in a forum paper entitled "The Pursuit of World Peace," expanded upon this theme. Not only must the Jew be involved in politics, Lelyveld claimed, but should realize that there are concerns which transcend the needs of the State. "The state is not entitled to a reverence higher than the human values and the human rights . . . that it is designed to serve."⁴⁹ This was not merely philosophical exposition. The willingness to see certain moral values on a higher plane than the political values of the government would lead many Jews during the Vietnam War to oppose American involvement as "immoral" and "wrong" even if such involvement was regarded by the government as politically or strategically expedient.

Further evidence of the changed mood of the early 1960's was the willingness of some rabbis, particularly those in the Reform movement, to reassess the Cold War mentality which dominated postwar America (Orthodoxy, as is discussed further on, was silent on this issue). The resolutions of the Reform and Conservative movements reflect subtle, but significant, differences.

In 1962 the RA called upon the U.S. government "to intensify the investigation of methods other than the military by which we can establish peace, at the same time protecting the religious values in our civilization."⁵⁰ What these "religious values" were and how they would be "protected" the Conservative rabbis failed to say. The Conservative rabbis seem to have been willing to accept peace only

on American terms and as a result, made sure to leave themselves the loophole of the last phrase. There is little doubt that the reference to "our civilization" was to the United States and her allies, not to humanity as a whole.

In a 1960 report on "World Law and Order" the Commission on Justice and Peace of the CCAR hinted at a more open approach towards communist governments. "It is become clear in this nuclear and space age," the report asserted, "that the concept of absolute national sovereignty is obsolete."⁵¹ Reform leaders were also becoming bolder in their criticism of the anti-communist Cold War mentality of the government. Maurice Eisendrath, outspoken, progressive president of the UAHC, was characteristically forthright in his criticism of U.S. support of anti-communist regimes. "Do we advance the cause of peace," he asked rhetorically of the delegates to the 47th General Assembly of the UAHC (1963), "when we reward the anti-communist sloganeering of dictators . . . ?"⁵²★ The Union he addressed was no less adamant in its stance. In November 1963 the UAHC approved a resolution entitled "The Pursuit of Peace."★ It urged "the administration to continue to seek peace through negotiations, maintaining flexibility. . . . We must reject the voices of hysteria which unthinkingly confuse honest negotiations with appeasement, social revolution with communism and co-existence with treason."⁵³ This liberal approach towards social revolution in the Third World would be reiterated by Reform (and some Conservative) rabbis and lay leaders throughout the Vietnam era. It would, in addition, be a foundation

on which would be built the calls for recognition of and negotiation with the North Vietnamese and the NLF.

IV. Jewish Responses to American Escalation

The majority of American Jews were, like their fellow citizens, silent about U.S. involvement in Vietnam in the early 1960's, and probably for the same major reasons--lack of interest, uncertainty, and/or support of American policy.

Yet there were some Jews, albeit few in number, who were disenchanted with the course of events in Indochina at the earliest stages of U.S. intervention. Those who said or wrote anything were, for the most part, affiliated with the New Left, some liberal Jewish periodicals, or the Reform movement.

Jewish New Leftists themselves invariably minimized the role their Jewishness played in their leftist orientation. The opposition to the war they expressed at this early date, therefore, was based in Judaism or Jewish identity only secondarily, if at all. Until the middle of 1967 most Jews on the Left questioned the merits of the Vietnam War solely from their perspective as leftist American citizens. Only later in the decade would Jewish New Leftists reappraise the reasons for their opposition to the war in Southeast Asia.

Within the organized American Jewish community repudiation of U.S. military support of South Vietnam was at first nearly nonexistent. Only five articles about Vietnam appeared in popular Jewish periodicals before August 1964.

Of these, four were in Commentary, then a liberal, secular Jewish monthly sponsored by the American Jewish Committee.⁵⁴ The authors of these early articles all counselled military restraint and the need to solve Vietnam's problems through social, political, and economic changes. They were, as a whole, not radical in their tone, but liberal. Typical were the comments of Hans Morgenthau, professor at the University of Chicago, who argued that the "primary threat Communism presents outside Europe is not military but consists in political penetration and subversion." In fact, he continued, a military build-up would be "counter-productive in Vietnam."⁵⁵ With chilling accuracy Saul Padover, a journalist writing in Hadassah magazine, predicted the devastating effect a war in Vietnam would have for America. A year and a half before the first Marines landed at Danang he observed:

South Vietnam's people, with the exception of a small minority, have no stake in the war. . . . Almost unavoidably, the Americans will be left "holding the bag"--and suffering the casualties. Worst of all, the United States will reap--is, in fact, already reaping--a crop of hatred on the part of the majority of the population.⁵⁶

Jewish organizations were generally reticent about criticizing American policy in Vietnam before 1965. The only major Jewish organization which spoke out against the war during this period was the Central Conference of American Rabbis. ^{57*} *Jewish currents* The CCAR had long distinguished itself in taking progressive stances on various social and political issues. In the 1950's and early 1960's Reform rabbis were

active in the fight for civil rights and in the tiny peace movement. Many of the members of the JPF were Reform rabbis. The CCAR's opposition to the war, therefore, was in keeping with the liberal attitudes of its members. A "Resolution on South Vietnam," adopted in mid-June 1964 by this organization, was couched in political terms:

We view with distress the growing deterioration of the political and military situation in South Vietnam. Neither the two changes in government in the past year, nor the presence of 15,000 United States troops, nor the one and one-half million dollars in daily aid we have provided, have brought the people of South Vietnam closer to peace or to a better way of life. . . .

We urge that our government . . . work with . . . the United Nations--to seek a peaceful solution to the problem of South Vietnam.⁵⁸

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The only public statement made by a national Jewish organization after the middle of the Summer was an endorsement by the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) of the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam. At their national convention in August 1964, just after the Tonkin incident, the JWV delegates supported the "U.S. commitment to Vietnamese independence [and] . . . the action of President Johnson in ordering the attack on the North Vietnamese 'hive' as the source of the Communist assault boats, and as a necessary and proper response to irresponsible provocation."⁵⁹ [A politically conservative organization, the JWV would remain the staunchest supporter of American policy in Indochina throughout the Vietnam era.]

The overwhelming support of Johnson following the Gulf of Tonkin incident stifled opposition within the organized Jewish community for the last half of 1964. Opposition to

the armed combat on a religious or moral level was, as of yet, unexpressed. In his November report to the UAHC Board of Trustees, Maurice Eisendrath, a staunch advocate of peace in earlier reports, did not mention the war in Vietnam at all.⁶⁰ The American Jewish community, during these few months between the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in August 1964 and the mid-February 1965 decision by Lyndon Johnson to escalate, was united in its lack of vocal opposition to the war in Indochina. Jews who would, in later years, take vehement moral stands in opposition to or in favor of the war, now said nothing. The silence was like the calm before a storm.

CHAPTER TWO

The American Jewish Community Takes Sides

(March 1965-June 1967)

You don't have to be Jewish to be against the war in Vietnam.

-placard carried by university student at April 15, 1967 "Spring Mobilization for Peace"

American-Jews want victory in Vietnam.

-placard carried by a member of the Anti-Communist International (Jewish Section) at the U.N. Plaza, April 1967

I. Trends in American Society

The March 1965 American offensive was not an all-out escalation of the war. President Johnson and his advisors hoped that the strategic bombing of "Operation Rolling Thunder" would obviate the necessity of having ground troops fight in the war. The orders of the Marines who landed at Danang were, at first, only to defend the air base where many of the air strikes originated. It was soon apparent, however, that neither the bombing nor the influx of the Marines was effectively altering the communists' conduct of the war. Strategic bombing was ineffective against North Vietnam, a largely agricultural country with few areas where industry was centralized. In the south the American ground forces were frustrated by increasing activity on the part of the NLF and North Vietnamese

personnel. As a result, Johnson authorized, in early April, limited offensive action (within 50 miles of Danang) for U.S. troops. General Westmoreland asked for additional troops to quell the growing guerrilla activity against the United States.

The number of Americans in Vietnam increased gradually. There are two probably^e explanations for Johnson's hesitation in escalating to full strength. The first was his desire not to provoke Moscow or Beijing into a serious confrontation. A further motivation for this "low key" approach was, as he recalled later, his apprehension that "all those conservatives in the Congress would use it as a weapon against the [social legislation of the] Great Society [program]."¹ Although American soldiers were brought in gradually, by the end of the year over 180,000 men were committed to the war effort.

In late 1965 Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense, hinted that the fighting might not be over as quickly as was first hoped. The guerrillas "expressed the determination to carry on the conflict," he stated, "which can only lead to one conclusion--that it will be a long war."² Vietnam was increasingly referred to as a defense against foreign, communist aggression by the Johnson Administration and its supporters. As the conflict in Indochina intensified so too did the official rhetoric at home. In an October 26, 1966 speech the President explained why American troops were in Vietnam. "They are there to keep aggression from succeeding. . . . They are there because somewhere,

and at some place, the free nations of the world must say again to the military disciples of Asian Communism: this far and no further."³ By May 1967 over 436,000 Americans were fighting in Vietnam.

Throughout this period, the Johnson Administration enjoyed the support of both Congress and of most Americans for its conduct of the war. Johnson's political acumen quelled political dissent in Washington. The Vice President, Hubert H. Humphrey warned the new members of the 89th Congress (1965):

If you feel an urge to stand up and make a speech attacking Vietnam policy, don't make it. After you have been here a few years you can afford to be independent. But if you want to come back in 1967, don't do it now.⁴

The Administration repudiated any form of public protest as helping to "advance the cause of Red imperialism."⁵ The result was a high degree of political support for Johnson's policy in Southeast Asia. A March 1966 amendment sponsored by Senator Wayne Morse to repeal the Tonkin Gulf Resolution was defeated 92 to 5. In March 1967 only three Senators voted against the proposed \$12.2 billion appropriation for the Vietnam War.⁶ This was not only a reflection of the pro-war mood of Congress, but of the American public. "Support for the war in Vietnam rose very considerably as American troops joined the fighting during the last half of 1965." After the Fulbright hearings held in Congress to investigate American conduct of the war (February/March 1966) the percentage of Americans dissatisfied with the war jumped con-

siderably, but even in mid-1967 most Americans continued to support the President.⁷

As the war intensified, however, so did the influence of the antiwar opposition in the U.S. In Congress and the news media opposition was "based mainly on tactical considerations rather than on any fundamental disagreement over objectives." For these groups the question was whether "the war could be won, not whether it was worth winning."⁸ In the universities, among intellectuals on the Left, and in liberal religious organizations, however, serious disagreement over American involvement in Vietnam was raised in an ever louder chorus of opposition.

One of the first forums for people to express their disagreement with the March 1965 escalation of the war were the "teach-ins." Three days after the Marines landed at Danang a group of faculty members from the University of Michigan met to set up some kind of a strike against the war. They issued "a formal appeal for a one-day 'moratorium' so that students could study the war."⁹ The date for this moratorium (or, as it was called, "teach-in") was set for the night of March 24-25. The hope was that it would give students access to the various points of view on the war, though, in actuality, most of the speakers emphasized the need to solve Vietnam's problems politically, not through a military show of force. The "teach-in" idea was popular, for it spread to scores of other campuses that Spring.

A growing rift separated the President from the intellectual community. The Johnson Administration traced the

dissent expressed at the "teach-ins" to "academic gullability." Academicians and intellectuals were frustrated by their ineffectiveness in altering U.S. policy and by their rebuff from Johnson. The "teach-ins," however, were influential. In bringing students and intellectuals together, they served as a focus for the growing discontent with the war.

By no means was the intellectual community united in its approach to the conflict. A small number felt that the war, as inhuman as it was, could and should be ended by working within the political system. "There have been war crimes," Norman Podhoretz, editor of Commentary, declared, "but the war itself is not a criminal war."¹⁰ Liberals like Podhoretz were outnumbered by those intellectuals who became more and more radicalized. The radical saw Vietnam as a moral issue. An individual or government which favored (or even tolerated) such a war was not just mistaken, but wrong. In addition, a nation which conducted such a war was viewed as a "criminal, sinister country."¹¹

Intellectuals also differed as to how their opposition to the war should be expressed. Moderates, such as Irving Howe and others stressed the "legitimacy of [written or verbal] protest against a policy that has never been seriously debated in Congress or candidly presented to the country" in a "Joint Statement on the Vietnam Protest Movement" published in November.¹²

Radical intellectuals, on the other hand, felt that the time for words had passed and called for a more activist

protest to the Vietnam War. At a June 8, 1965 antiwar rally held in Madison Square Garden in New York, Bayard Rustin, a key antiwar critic, challenged the antiwar opposition to engage in civil disobedience:

We know that the Wagner Act which gave labor the right to organize and bargain collectively was empty until workers went into the streets. The civil rights movement has learned this lesson. It is a lesson that must be applied now to the peace movement as well. We must stop meeting indoors and go into the streets.¹³

These and similar statements served as the intellectual foundation for the growing protest movement. The first to actually demonstrate against the war were students, particularly those in the New Left. On April 17, 1965 more than 20,000 people gathered at the Washington Monument for the first mass demonstration against the war. It was sponsored by the SDS. Within a few months the antiwar movement began to split, like its intellectual backers, into liberals and radicals. Unlike the intellectuals, who were primarily radical by mid-1965, the peace movement remained, for the next 24 months, in the hands of those who were generally liberal in their politics. Throughout this period, nevertheless, there was discord between these factions. A few demonstrations of the period were militant (symbolic attempts to block troop trains), but most were peaceful marches or gatherings.

In November 1966 planning began for nationwide demonstrations to be held on Saturday, April 15, 1967. The months before the April date were filled with rancor within the antiwar movement as liberals and radicals argued over who

should be included in the demonstration. As the day approached, however, it became clear to those in charge that more people would be demonstrating than they had originally estimated. The March in New York on April 15 was the largest demonstration in American history to that date. Estimates of the number of participants ranged from 100,000 to half a million.¹⁴ Thousands of other Americans joined in peace demonstrations throughout the country.

The success of the April 1967 demonstrations had important effects on the peace movement. It showed that antiwar sentiment was no longer limited to some fringe groups, but was supported by vast numbers of Americans. Yet, for all of their seeming success, the antiwar protests did not really alter the war. The U.S. continued to intensify its efforts against North Vietnam and the NLF. In its frustration at not effecting serious change the radical element in the antiwar movement began to press for a more active, even violent, protest against the war and the government. After the middle of 1967 the issue was no longer dissent, but resistance.

II. Early Jewish Reactions (March 1965-January 1966)

In 1965 few Jewish organizations took a clear stand on the war. Only the most liberal or the most conservative of Jewish groups made any public statements about the war before the end of the year. The Reform movement, led by its rabbis, had already expressed some reservations about American policy in South East Asia and only intensified its opposition to the war as time went on. Those Orthodox, Conser-

vative, and Reform rabbis who felt the war was inimical to their beliefs joined with the clergy of other faiths to present a united, interfaith opposition. On the right the Jewish War Veterans placed themselves squarely behind the President.

The debate in 1965 centered around the political issues of the war and the right of Americans to protest government policy. The three key topics discussed were the bombing of North Vietnam, the need for negotiation, and the withdrawal of American troops from offensive combat. At first, only a few individuals and organizations saw the Vietnam War as a moral or religious issue. Taking their cue from left-wing intellectuals, however, Jews began to approach the war from a different perspective. By early 1966 a number of them were relying on the "moral imperatives" of Judaism as the basis for their opposition.

The first public statement against the escalation of the war in March 1965 was a resolution adopted by the Executive Board of the CCAR the day after "Operation Rolling Thunder" began. "We deplore escalation of the conflict by any country," the rabbis affirmed. They expressed two fears about the intensification of this war--the first being the "misery" it would cause "the Vietnamese people," the second that such an action "runs the risk of a global nuclear war." The solution seemed clear: "to enter into immediate negotiations" with "other Governments" to end the conflict. This clarion call for "negotiation" would resound again and again

within the antiwar movement until the signing of the Paris Agreements in 1973.¹⁵

This resolution was, in light of the times, a harsh criticism of American policy in Vietnam. Yet these rabbis were not willing to break completely with the government's argument that the U.S. could not simply surrender. "We do not advocate unilateral withdrawal," the resolution went on to say, "but the substitution of the United Nations peace keeping agencies." (Of course, much later in the war, unilateral withdrawal was exactly what the liberal rabbis would advocate.) The final sentence of the resolution reads, "Communism is not stopped by bullets but by bread, education and hope." The implication that communism should be stopped is presumed. What is up for debate is how communism is to be fought--politically or militarily. It seems that this sentence was added after the rest of the resolution was proposed. Not only does it come at the end of the document, but it does not follow logically from the rest of the text. In addition, it represents a complete change of position from the refutation of anti-communism expressed in statements of the CCAR from previous years.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the CCAR Executive Board was on the record as strongly opposed to the war.

In June the CCAR reiterated the position of its Executive Board. "We are firmly convinced that there can be no 'military solution' to the fundamental social and economic problems of the Vietnamese," the rabbis declared. They called upon the President to "enter into immediate negotia-

tions" to resolve the conflict. The rabbis, like the intellectual community, began to question the President's credibility. The disenchantment with the Administration which followed the rebuff of the "teach-ins" was reflected, in the CCAR resolution, in a cynical note "that [while] our President has repeated his offer to negotiate at any time with all parties concerned . . . we believe that this offer is nullified by his refusal to cease bombing North Vietnam."

The resolution concluded:

We call upon our Government to begin now a gradual withdrawal of its vast military machine in Vietnam; to restore the status quo of the Geneva Agreement of 1954, with special emphasis upon all-Vietnamese democratic elections; to co-operate with the Soviet Union and China in support of the government which will emerge from free elections; and, finally, to transfer the keeping of the peace to the United Nations. *not against communism but wanted "democratic elections"*

This emphasis on "all-Vietnamese" elections and co-operation with China and the USSR hints at the openness of the Reform rabbis towards the idea of a communist Vietnam.¹⁷ The first rebuke of the war on religious grounds came from the Western Association of Reform Rabbis, which said the war was "inimical to Jewish traditions and teachings."¹⁸ *Jewish Currents Magazine June 1965, 25*

The 48th Biennial General Assembly of the UAHC in November followed the lead taken by Reform rabbis. Much of the drive behind the Union's liberal stance was derived from its president, Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath. As early as May he proposed that a resolution about the war be submitted before the general assembly. His concerns, like those of his rabbinical colleagues, were political. He suggested a resolution draft which called for "a peaceful settlement in

Vietnam," expressed "concern" about the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam, and proposed "unconditional discussions involving all concerned parties."¹⁹ In a passionate speech before the 3000 delegates meeting that November in San Francisco, Eisendrath pleaded that the UAHC align itself with the CCAR in opposing the war. What is significant about his speech is not what he proposed, but the arguments he used in favor of its passage. His recommendations were the same in November as they had been in May, yet he no longer condemned the war from a political perspective. His objections were religious. "This is not 'politics' I am mixing in," he thundered, "[it is] a religious, a Jewish precept. . . . We transgress every tenet of our faith when we fight on another's soil, scorch the earth of another's beloved homeland, slay multitudes of innocent villagers."²⁰ *Presidential message 487 B. 11.1 Nov 14 1965*

There are several possible explanations for this shift. First, and probably most important, was the willingness of other liberal religious leaders in the U.S. to address the issue from a moral perspective.²¹ In addition, Eisendrath may have been frustrated with the lack of success obtained by reference merely to political arguments. The reliance on religious authority was, perhaps, perceived as a surer means of affecting change. Furthermore, by late 1965 the Administration was making it clear that the conflict might be protracted, only adding to the disenchantment Eisendrath felt. Finally, as the war lengthened and more Americans visited Vietnam, reports of the actual toll in life began to filter back to the U.S., angering those like the UAHC presi-

dent for whom human life was more important than political ideology.

Eisendrath's proposal was, for many delegates, too extreme. There was heated debate on the convention floor over the proposition that the U.S. immediately cease its bombing of North Vietnam "even were this to entail a short-range military disadvantage in order to contribute to an atmosphere conducive to negotiations and an ultimate cessation of carnage." Opponents argued that an immediate halt of the bombing would weaken the chances for peace. A standing vote indicated an almost even division among the delegates on this resolution. The compromise resolution, which was overwhelmingly approved, first requested the President to ensure the "safety of our armed forces" and only then declare "as of a given date, our armed forces will cease firing, our planes will cease bombing and that our representatives are proceeding forthwith to a designated neutral place" to meet with "representatives of the opposing forces in Vietnam and of the United Nations" to find a "peaceful solution" to this conflict. The resolution's language was largely political, but the basis for the opposition to the war was religious principle. The UAHC delegates were "troubled," "perplexed," and "distressed" with the war because they saw themselves "as representatives of a religious people within whom there dwells the deep hunger for peace among men." These delegates were not addressing the war simply as Americans, but as Jewish Americans. (22) World As Peace Unit

The Union's resolution placed the Reform movement at

the forefront of Jewish opposition to the war. The movement's oppositional stance vis-a-vis Vietnam was the result of a number of factors. Reform Judaism was, in the first place, theologically and philosophically liberal. In the political arena Reform Jews were equally as progressive. Opposition to Vietnam was but one more example of this liberal outlook. Second, Reform Jews were open to the movement's direct involvement in politics because of their tradition of social concern. This sprang out of the nineteenth century doctrine of "the mission of Israel" as well as the post-World War II emphasis on the prophetic model, which united the political and moral realms. A third factor was the power of the movement's leaders to sustain interest in progressive issues. The UAHC, CCAR, and individual Reform rabbis would remain leaders in the antiwar movement for the duration of the war.

The only other Jewish organization to publicly condemn the fighting in 1965 was the women's division of the American Jewish Congress, the first of many women's groups in the Jewish community to come out against the war.²³ The Conservative rabbinate endorsed the June 8 antiwar rally at Madison Square Gardens (as did the CCAR), but issued no formal statements about the war.²⁴

A number of prominent rabbis opposed the war through interfaith organizations. It is easy to understand why these rabbis were so willing to join interfaith groups to oppose the war. In the fight for civil rights many of them worked alongside their non-Jewish colleagues. The friendships that formed during the civil rights struggle were

merely renewed once the war in Vietnam became a serious issue. Liberal clergy of all faiths played an early and active role in opposition to the war.²⁵ Early religious criticism of U.S. intervention in Indochina grew, in part, out of the emphasis placed on peace among liberal religious groups, a lingering sense of guilt for not having spoken up against the Nazi menace prior to the Second World War, and the perception that the U.S. President never legitimated the war in moral terms.

Shortly after the escalation in March an ad hoc committee, called the Clergyman's Emergency Committee for Vietnam, was formed. In late April this organization assumed a new name, the Inter-Religious Committee on Vietnam, and planned a "silent vigil" at the Pentagon for May 11-12. Among the 22 signers of a "Call to Vigil" were three rabbis--Isidor B. Hoffman (a Conservative rabbi active in the JPF since its inception), Albert M. Lewis (Reform) and Uri Miller (Orthodox).²⁶

A second interfaith group opposed to the war was the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), an international pacifist organization established in the 1920's to which the Jewish Peace Fellowship was affiliated. One of its efforts was to send prominent members of the clergy to Vietnam to see, first hand, the effects of the war. Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein, president of the CCAR, was among those who went. Weinstein stated that the reason why he and other clergy had such reservations about this war was that "twice in this century, organized religion had bent the knee to the

Moloch of War. . . . There was a general feeling among all of us [who travelled to Vietnam] that if religion accepted this role a third time, it would lose the loyalty and the respect of the majority of its thoughtful devotees."²⁷

The most important ecumenical body opposed to Vietnam was Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam (CALCAV). Created in October 1965, it was chaired by Daniel Berrigan (Catholic), Richard Neuhaus (Protestant), and Abraham Joshua Heschel, professor of theology at the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) in New York. In January 1966 several prominent Reform rabbis--Balfour Brickner, Maurice Eisendrath, and Jacob Weinstein--joined the national committee of CALCAV.²⁸

Although the Jewish community was generally silent about the war, a number of groups did speak out against those who would stifle dissent, whether from the pulpit or in the streets. The "teach-ins" and demonstrations of the antiwar opposition had led many people to attack critics of the war as "gullible" if not "disloyal." A number of rabbis who opposed the war were "pressured by congregational presidents and boards to refrain from making any comments or to speak out at all on the war in Vietnam."²⁹ Antiwar critics were, by the end of the year, under constant attack from supporters of America's involvement in Vietnam. The tendency of some elements in America to stifle dissent was viewed, by many Jews, as a dangerous shackling of freedom. Several Jewish groups, angered and afraid of what was happening, refused to remain silent any longer. During the

last two months of 1965 and first month of 1966 both organizations of the Reform movement, the American Jewish Congress (AJCongress), the editorial voice of the Reconstructionist movement, Reconstructionist magazine, and the Jewish Spectator, an independent Jewish monthly, publicly endorsed the freedom of Americans to object to governmental policy.

In line with their liberal attitude towards the war the CCAR and UAHC issued resolutions favoring free dissent. Afraid of repression of "the whole truth about our Government's political and military involvement" in Southeast Asia, the CCAR passed a resolution on "The Right to Free Debate." It asserted the "rights of our citizens" to challenge the government and excoriated Administration officials who questioned the loyalty of antiwar critics. It noted, in addition, that:

There are disquieting reports that journalists in Vietnam . . . have been put under pressure to report official news based on press releases from the military. This is "managed news" and has no place in a democracy.³⁰ CCAR Yr. 1965 25: 68

In response to congregational restraints upon rabbis the Executive Board of the CCAR endorsed the "freedom of the pulpit" in its October meeting.³¹ Jewish Current 11: 1965 December

Eisendrath and the UAHC were no less forthright in their statements. In his address before the UAHC General Assembly Eisendrath expressed his fears of a "consensus philosophy" which "at least by our silence, at worst by our support," leaves all decisions to the "military and industrial complex." "We have a duty," the leader of the Union continued, "to challenge the jibe of 'Communist' flung at

almost everyone who presumes to differ from this day's Administration policy. . . . I thought that the right of dissent . . . was the salient distinction between dictatorship and democracy." Judaism would not be relevant to modern individuals unless it countered this "jingoism" and "worship [of] the idol of the state."³² *State of our Union 1965* The Union delegates from the United States and Canada agreed with their president's remarks and adopted a resolution titled the "Right to Dissent:"

We find it necessary at this time to reaffirm the right of American citizens peacefully to assemble and demonstrate whether in support [of] or in protest against Government policies. . . . It is not the right of government . . . to silence dissent, however unpopular or controversial. Those who are critical of the United States' policies, whether from the pulpit or in the street, must be neither stifled nor intimidated by the threat of investigation. Neither shall their motives nor their loyalties be impugned. We most vigorously urge our congregations to . . . fully explore every area of social and religious concern, even those deemed most controversial.³³ *Right to Dissent 1965*

Other liberal elements in the Jewish community took a similar position. The Governing Council of the American Jewish Congress, meeting in early November, argued that "the desire of Administration spokesmen to mobilize public endorsement for United States military intervention in Vietnam unhappily has been accompanied by a corollary desire to discourage criticism and by an apparent willingness to countenance limitations upon free speech and free assembly inconsistent with the tenets of an open society. . . . The right of vigorous protest--including demonstrations, parades, rallies, peaceful picketing, and the distribution of literature--is protected" in this country.³⁴ An editorial

in the Reconstructionist noted that "as the war in Vietnam escalates, the spirit of freedom in the United States declines." While the author of this piece did not explicitly come out against the war, congratulations were offered to Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn, who endorsed an antiwar march in Washington in late November.³⁵ Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, editor of the Jewish Spectator, argued that "civil disobedience, especially with respect to war, has a long tradition among Jews" and praised those rabbis who were willing to challenge this war.³⁶ Unlike the UAHC and CCAR, these traditionally liberal organizations and periodicals addressed the issue not as Jews, but as American citizens.

Support for the freedom of dissent was important for liberal elements in American society, for during the McCarthy Era only a decade earlier, many liberals and leftists were castigated as traitorous communists. Jews were particularly wary because of their relatively active political involvement in such groups. Furthermore, the government's challenge to dissent smacked of censorship and the limitation of civil rights. It is only natural that Jews, a minority whose success in America rested on equal rights for all citizens, would be especially sensitive about this topic.

Those Jews who spoke out in this period were generally critics of the Administration, but two national Jewish organizations--the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) and the small Religious Zionists of America--did defend the American actions in Indochina. The JWV was merely reaffirming the prowar approach it took following the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

JWV

Even this right-wing organization affirmed the "right of Americans to dissent from our government's policies in Vietnam." Yet its members also added their disagreement with "the action of this dissenting minority" out of fear of giving the enemy the wrong impression, thereby "detering peace negotiations and possibly prolonging the war." To counter the heightened opposition to the war, leaders of the JWV, during the first week of December 1965, flew to Vietnam to "convey to our servicemen the knowledge that Jews, along with Americans of other faiths, support the United States' action and involvement in the Vietnamese conflict." That these same individuals felt it necessary to point out that "the protests of noisy dissenters do not reflect the overwhelming sentiment of the American people" indicates how influential the antiwar opposition was perceived, even as early as 1965.³⁷ At their convention in Long Beach, N.Y. the Religious Zionists of America urged "full support" for Vietnam policy.³⁸ There was a handful of individual rabbis who spoke in favor of the war, but they remained isolated and unable to present a united front.³⁹

Jews were little different from the vast number of Americans who gave the war their tacit support. The concern that opposing points of view not be stifled, however, was unusually strong in the Jewish community. Hence, most Jews in late 1965 remained torn--supportive of those willing to fight in the war, yet equally supportive of those who fought against it. Nelson Glueck, president of the Reform rabbinical seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, Hebrew Union

College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), gave word to this ambiguity in a memo sent to the faculty, staff, and students of the school in December 1965:

Our thoughts turn to the thousands of young men--many no less sensitive and no less aware of moral issues than we--who . . . risk their lives and die for us. . . . We think, too, of the many who strive for peace--who daily expose themselves to hostility and abuse so that right and decency shall govern the affairs of men and nations. We would stand at their side and strengthen their hand.⁴⁰ HUC Security danger

III. Consensus and Opposition (January 1966-August 1966)

In early 1966 there were still signs that the Jewish community, as a whole, supported the Administration. This support was undoubtedly enhanced after President Johnson initiated a "peace offensive" in late 1965, stressing America's willingness to negotiate and de-escalate to end the conflict in Southeast Asia. After meeting with Arthur Goldberg, U.S. delegate to the United Nations, Jacob Weinstein wrote the members of the CCAR to assure them: "We [who visited Goldberg] were all convinced that the recent Peace Offensive was a genuine and sincere attempt to find a peaceful solution to the war." Included with his letter was the position paper of the government so that "we might better understand our Government's position."⁴¹ Polls at this time showed that a majority of Jews supported the war (56%), although a relatively large percentage (34%), in comparison with other groups, did feel the war was wrong. Also, Jews showed a much greater tendency than individuals claiming other religious affiliations to urge a cessation of hostilities.⁴²

Most Jews were not, as yet, opposed to the reasons the U.S. was in Vietnam, but they did feel American goals would be best served by peace not war. This demonstrated, once again, the moderate or liberal approach of the Jewish community as a whole.

In the same month that the Reform rabbis met with Goldberg representatives of the largest constituent bodies of Orthodox Judaism in America joined with the Conservative and Reform movements, under the auspices of the Synagogue Council of America (SCA), to issue a "Policy Statement on Vietnam."⁴³ It seemed, on the surface, that there was a consensus among the major Jewish organizations on this issue. It was the most broad-based Jewish statement on the Vietnam War to date. Its signers were the presidents of each of the SCA's constituent organizations--Rabbi Israel Miller (Rabbinical Council of America, the largest Orthodox rabbinic body), Moses I. Feuerstein (Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, the most representative organization of American Orthodoxy), Rabbi Max Routtenberg (RA), Henry N. Rapaport (United Synagogue of America, Conservative Judaism's synagogue organization), Rabbi Jacob J. Weinstein (CCAR), and Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath (UAHC).

The signers agreed that "peace and the cessation of hostilities must remain our major objective," but noted that "no one course of action in this complicated situation can clearly solve the moral dilemma in which we find ourselves." These men were, nevertheless, quite willing to propose a number of suggestions: "to begin negotiations . . .

among the governments of the United States, North and South Vietnam, including representation for the National Liberation Front;" to make provisions for "the independence of South Viet Nam . . . to determine the character of its future government;" "[to begin] the phased withdrawal of all [American troops] . . . if and when they can be replaced by adequate international peace-keeping forces;" and to make economic aid available to help the "development" of Southeast Asia. To placate pro-Administration elements, President Johnson's stated willingness to negotiate and de-escalate was commended.

The diversity of support for the SCA "Policy Statement on Vietnam" seemed to be the document's potential strength, but, in actuality, was a weakness. In many ways the SCA statement, which was issued to demonstrate the unity of the largest religious movement on this issue, merely served as a catalyst for those on both sides to take a stronger and more vocal stance than had been taken previously. Many of the proposals were controversial. Antiwar critics could hail the need to recognize the NLF in negotiations, but would argue that an immediate, not "phased," withdrawal was imperative. Avid supporters of the war could rejoice over acceptance of South Vietnam's "independence," but regarded negotiations with the NLF as anathema. The final paragraph of the statement reflects the variety of opinions within the SCA:

We do not lay claim to moral certitude and refrain from moral dogmatism in this complex and agonizing situation. Within the range of re-

ligious commitment and concern, differences as to specific policies can and do exist. We recognize that those who see the need for checking Communist subversion by military means are no less dedicated to the cause of a just world peace than those who believe the United States must cease hostilities in Vietnam.

Since mid-1965 Jewish antiwar critics had questioned the U.S. involvement in Vietnam on moral grounds. It was clear that war, not communism, was the greatest of evils. Morality demanded that America end its military role in Vietnam. There could be no compromise. Supporters of the war were forced to explain their support in terms of their fears about "Communist aggression" and Jewish survival in a communist world. The only real way to peace, advocates of American policy argued, was to show military firmness. There could be no compromise. And so, just when the Jewish community seemed to be reaching a consensus, it was really moving apart.

Rabbi Henry Siegman argued, in his opening remarks at an SCA-sponsored symposium on "Judaism and the World Peace" several weeks later, that the religious individual is not granted "special insights" into the issue of war, but does have "special responsibilities." The Jew "must apply the morality to which he is committed in a meaningful way, and he must turn to that religious heritage which is uniquely his for guidance and insight in the application of that morality."⁴⁴ For Jews to whom this "religious heritage" was important, therefore, the question was no longer "can we respond to the war as Jews?," but "how, as Jews, do we respond to the conflict?"

Prominent Jewish leaders who opposed the war began, in late 1965, to see opposition to the war as a moral imperative. The resolutions of the CCAR and UAHC were based on the belief that Judaism necessarily led to an antiwar position. Throughout the first half of 1966 a growing number of antiwar critics took this same view. On January 30 the Governing Council of the American Jewish Congress (AJCongress) called on the United States "to offer an immediate cease fire," to "negotiate . . . with all states, governments, and groups that . . . have a direct interest" in Vietnam, and to "support" free elections. The reason for these proposals was explicit:

Through the ages, the Jewish people has longed and worked for the fulfillment of the dream of peace. . . . The crisis in Vietnam presents a grave danger not only to peace but to civilization itself.

Without disregarding the responsibilities our presence in Southeast Asia has created; without denying the validity of American concern for freedom in all parts of the world, we nonetheless believe that the overriding moral imperative of this moment [is peace in Vietnam].⁴⁵

In May the RA stated that "the moral imperatives of Judaism impel us to seek peace and pursue it. . . . The supreme religious mandate requires a ceaseless search for a peaceful alternative [to the war]." The RA statement, reflecting a group more politically conservative than the Reform rabbis, did not simply address the American government, but was also condemnatory of North Vietnam's "immoral conduct of the war."⁴⁶ The Committee on Justice, Peace and Church-State Relations of the CCAR expressed pride over "the vigor with which the Reform movement has expressed its moral distress concerning

the war in Vietnam."⁴⁷ "Rabbis who speak and work for peace," the CCAR Executive Board declared, "are not only faithful to the dictates of conscience but to the major emphasis of the Jewish tradition, which has ever celebrated peace as the proper condition of men."⁴⁸

In May 1966 the AJCongress, following the lead of its women's division and Governing Council, adopted a resolution on Vietnam which stressed opposition to the war based in the "dream of peace" and the "sanctity of life" cherished by the "Jewish people." The AJCongress' chief objection to the war, therefore, was that it violated religious or moral values of Judaism. The fact that it justified its position by religious values was not unusual, but was in line with the general tendency of the antiwar movement to gain legitimacy by emphasis on a higher moral authority than the government. Political solutions to the war were also proposed. The resolution called for "suspending U.S. bombing of North Viet Nam, an immediate ceasefire, . . . phased withdrawal of troops," negotiations with all parties (including the NLF), and free elections (including the Viet Cong).⁴⁹ Although a broad based organization which included religious Jews, Zionists, and individuals whose Jewish affiliation was primarily ethnic, the AJCongress had long been involved in liberal causes. Since the Second World War this group had promoted social legislation and fought for the advancement of civil liberties. This resolution on Vietnam, then, while the first by a Jewish communal organization, was not that unusual bearing in mind the general political leanings of

the AJCongress.

Many individuals also saw their opposition to the war in moral terms. Albert Vorspan, director of the UAHC Commission on Social Action, argued that "our deepest rationale [for opposition to the war] is the imperative of Judaism itself. . . . As a Jewish community we should speak and act in behalf of peaceful settlement. . . . Isn't that a tender-hearted position? Yes. That's what the Jewish position has always been." Unlike other antiwar critics he did not doubt that terror tactics were used in the war by the communists, but, he reasoned, "if the moral distinction between them and us is obliterated, does it matter who wins Vietnam?"⁵⁰ A number of rabbis addressed the Vietnam War as an issue of Jewish moral concern in sermons and lectures.⁵¹ Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld wrote that the "imperatives of the Jewish heritage" demanded fairness towards the Vietnamese people, truth from the U.S. government, and freedom for Americans to express their dissent. Peace is not Judaism's highest goal, he continued, kiddush ha-chaim ("dignity of life") is. Hence, "when we read what is happening to the peasants of South Vietnam . . . we confront that deprecation of life which in light of our conviction [as Jews] as to its supreme value is intolerable."⁵²

A number of supporters of the war criticized those Jews who felt the "moral imperative" of Judaism necessarily led to an antiwar stance. Most Orthodox Jews, right-wing Conservative Jews, the Jewish War Veterans, and some Zionist groups spoke out in favor of a war which was undesirable,

but necessary. Michael Wyschogrod, a professor at Yeshiva University, agreed with the antiwar critics that "as Jews, we can't be hawks. But," he added, "neither can we be doves." The conclusions drawn from Judaism are not as clear as the antiwar camp would have people believe. "Judaism abhors war, but it also considers it necessary to wage war against evil when there is no other way to contain it." The "evil," as he saw it, was an expansionist "Asian Communism."⁵³ Another Yeshiva University professor, Irving Greenberg, concurred with Wyschogrod that "Judaism seeks peace but does not exclude the possibility of war." Upset about the debate over the morality of the war he cautioned, "clergymen should eschew sweeping moralisms [against the supporters of the war]. . . . The other side may not be guilty of callousness, or misguided prestige considerations or moral blindness." In fact, Greenberg added, the equation of pacifism with morality has enabled political leaders to disregard the religious perspective as unrealistic.⁵⁴

A large percentage of Jewish supporters of the war continued to deal with the issue solely on the political level. They responded not from their understanding of Jewish tradition, but as concerned American citizens. The reason was that, for them, using the tradition for guidelines on this issue "creates as many problems as it solves."⁵⁵ The Jews who approved of Johnson's handling of the war were not in favor of escalating the conflict, but they regarded the antiwar calls for an immediate ceasefire, negotiations with all parties, and American withdrawal as unreasonable.

In addition, they were more willing to accept the Administration's view that North Vietnam and the NLF were the aggressors in this war. Politically conservative Seymour Siegel, professor at JTS, agreed that "moralistic exhortations, which overlook the ambiguities of real situations, can cause more harm than good." The "aggressor" in Vietnam, he proposed, was not the U.S., but communism. Withdrawal would be a "disastrous course of action. . . . for it would reward the aggressor, thus tempting him to undertake further advances." The only logical course of action would be to "hold the conflict within controllable bounds and actively" seek to end it, with the ultimate goals being "the halting of the aggressor . . . and the reconstruction" of Vietnam.⁵⁶

The Orthodox Rabbinical Council of America (RCA) "united behind the President's leadership" and supported his attempts to bring about peace.⁵⁷ In July 1966 Rabbi Pesach Z. Levovitz, president of the RCA, criticized the peace efforts of some religious leaders which were directed solely at Washington. "This is not the road to peace," he maintained, "if we are to be successful in securing peace in Southeast Asia, we must apply equal pressure and persuasion on Hanoi, Peking, and Moscow."⁵⁸ Rabbi Richard E. Dryer, senior Jewish chaplain in Vietnam, also regarded "the other side" as a "brutal, tyrannical aggressor."⁵⁹ In January 1966 Malcolm Tarlov, national commander of the JWV challenged the Reform leaders, Weinstein and Eisendrath, who advocated policies politically detrimental to "our allies and our vital interests in Vietnam."⁶⁰ By September, however, he said the JWV

supported the war "on religious as well as patriotic grounds because wherever Communism has spread, Judaism has decayed."⁶¹

Zionist groups in America were split in their attitudes towards the war. The Religious Zionists of America had already come out in favor of the war. In an article in the American Zionist, the official publication of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), Jacob Rudin argued that the antiwar mood created in America by the war might leave Israel in the lurch. He also pointed to connections between the NLF and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), an anti-Israel terrorist front.⁶² In a January editorial in Jewish Frontier, the Labor Zionist magazine, the Johnson Administration was praised for its efforts to begin negotiations. Now, the editorial said, "North Vietnam must show an equivalent disposition to negotiate."⁶³ Yet by mid-summer this same magazine was expressing concern over the continued escalation of the war. The most liberal Zionist organization, the tiny Americans for a Progressive Israel (Hashomer Hatzair), was the harshest critic of America's involvement in Vietnam.⁶⁴ As the situation in the Middle East worsened in 1966 and early 1967 most Zionist groups kept silent about Vietnam, undoubtedly afraid of compromising American support for Israel. After the Six Day War (June 1967) the Israeli government would place increasing pressure on American Jewry, particularly Zionist groups, to maintain this silence. Before the war, however, it appears that there was little, if any, interference from Israelis.

The growth of a vocal prowar camp within the Jewish

community must have been frustrating to those Jews who took an antiwar position. This, the feeling that resolutions alone were having no effect on the progress of the war, and the arguments made by notable intellectuals and leaders of the general antiwar movement, led some Jews to call for a more activist protest. An editorial in the Reconstructionist criticized the SCA conference as simply being a reiteration of the religious "preference for peace" without any concrete suggestions for changing the situation.⁶⁵ "We have not yet gotten beyond the 'statement' phase of our work for peace," Jacob Weinstein lamented, "our task . . . is not only to speak to official leadership but to mobilize the convinced but fearful to put their beliefs on the line."⁶⁶ Albert Vorspan believed that the Jews have a unique responsibility to speak out about the war. "As a Jewish community we have largely been tepid and silent. . . . We pay a price for being so accepted and secure in American life. We are so in that we are losing that special angle of vision which comes from being out, from being alienated. I get worried," he concluded, "when the Jewish position is a popular position."⁶⁷

IV. Jews and Dissent: The Johnson/JWV Incident (Autumn 1966)

In September 1966 the question of whether "the Jewish position" was indeed "the popular position" was highlighted by an incident which demonstrated the unique position of Jews in America.

On September 6, 1966, national commander of the JWV, Malcolm Tarlov, paid a half-hour ceremonial call on President Johnson. His organization had continually shown

staunch support for the President's handling of the war and had, since 1964, passed a number of prowar statements. "A month earlier, at a National Community Relations Advisory Council (NCRAC) Plenary [the NCRAC is a central co-ordinating body of Jewish organizations and community councils], the JWV blocked a resolution which expressed the fear that the right to dissent in America was being curtailed because of our participation in the Viet Nam War. The JWV insisted that the resolution gave a distorted expression of American policies." During this visit Johnson commended the JWV for its position and spoke at length about Vietnam.⁶⁸

Three days later the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, a bureau for gathering and disseminating Jewish news, reported the JWV national commander's remarks following this meeting in its Weekly News Digest. Tarlov was reported to have said that the President was aware of the "critical stand [on Vietnam] taken by a number of rabbis" and the "American Jewish community" and "revealed the strong conviction that the Jews who sought American aid for their co-religionists in the Soviet Union and for Israel should vigorously identify with the Administration policy in Vietnam."⁶⁹ The New York Times accepted the Jewish Telegraphic Agency account and, in an article headlined "Jewish War Plea Vexes President" (September 11), noted that this was not the first time that the President had raised complaints about Jewish opposition to the war.⁷⁰ On September 19, Tarlov claimed that he was misquoted: "The President did not--and I did not report that he did--link aid to Israel with Jewish support on

Vietnam," although the correspondent who originally quoted him disagreed.⁷¹ The White House remained aloof from the controversy and made no public comment until early October. At that time special counsel to the President, Harry C. McPherson, Jr., said, "Any inference in news stories that the President linked American Jewish support for this country's struggle in Vietnam with continued United States support for Israel is wholly fanciful."⁷²

It is impossible to know what actually was said at that meeting between Johnson and Tarlov. It may very well be that the President did not, at this time, specifically link support for Vietnam with support for Israel, but merely made an analogy between the two as small countries which needed American aid. This was not, however, the first time Johnson expressed concern about the patriotism of the Jewish community.

The New York Times was correct in its assertion that the President had raised the issue of Jewish dissent before. An article written by Marianne Means for the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner (and printed in 75 other newspapers) on June 24, 1966 stated that President Johnson, addressing legislative leaders from fifty states on June 16,

spoke bluntly and singled out for rebuke the many Jewish intellectual leaders who have been pressuring him to get out of Vietnam. These same men who object strenuously to Vietnam have an emotional commitment and a nostalgic interest in Israel. . . . The President has long been perplexed as to why these leaders don't realize U.S. protection of Vietnamese independence is a part of the same principle under which the U.S. protects Israel. . . . In his speech the President warned that "Israel isn't going to be able to stand up to would be conquerors if we throw in the towel."⁷³

Within the Jewish community after the JWV incident three questions were uppermost. First, was Johnson correct in singling out Jews because of their opposition to the war? Second, was he threatening to withdraw support of Israel if dissent continued, thereby hoping to silence Jewish opposition? Third, did the Jewish community, as the President implied, show a propensity for dissent or did it reflect, in Vorspan's words, "the popular position" (which was still generally supportive of the war)?

Within the Jewish community the earliest reaction to the President's alleged remarks was to find out if, indeed, the reported comments were true. Contacts were made with the White House by leaders from B'nai Brith and the Presidents' Conference, an association of 19 major Jewish organizations. In both cases President Johnson's position was defended once the incident was "clarified."

The first Jewish leaders to meet with President Johnson were two executive officers of B'nai Brith--Dr. William A. Wexler (president) and Rabbi Jay Kaufman (executive vice president). Afterwards these two men made a lengthy statement.⁷⁴ The President, they said, had not singled out the Jews. "It is our belief that the President's views were either misunderstood or poorly interpreted to the news media. It is evident that the views attributed to the President conveyed neither his attitude nor his convictions." Neither was there any threat to gain Jewish support. "The inference of an interrelationship between future American-Israel affairs and support among Jewish organizations for

Administration policies in Vietnam appears to us to have been as inaccurate as it was unfortunate." The final point made by Wexler and Kaufman was their assurance that most Jews did not oppose the war. "Implicit in the publicized statements [of the meeting with Tarlov] was a contention that most Jewish organizations do not support United States policy in Vietnam. There is," they stated apologetically, "no real basis for such an inference." Dr. Joachim Prinz, director of the Presidents' Conference, set up a meeting between a number of Jewish leaders and Arthur Goldberg in New York to clear the air on this issue. Goldberg assured the Jewish leaders that while "there was a connection, in the President's mind, between Vietnam and guaranteeing the security of other small nations from aggression," in no way did he intend to muzzle Jewish dissent. A New York Times editorial called this meeting "ill conceived" and regarded Goldberg's role as an "intermediary" to be "distasteful and unwarranted."⁷⁵

Although Tarlov later denied that Johnson had linked Jewish opposition to the Vietnam War with American support for Israel, both he and the JWV were anxious to show the President that he was mistaken in assuming that most Jews in the U.S. opposed the war. In late September the JWV, supposedly on the instigation of the President, initiated a "grass roots" campaign to garner support for the war, especially among those groups "where organizational positions do not necessarily reflect rank and file attitudes."⁷⁶ Over the next several months members of the JWV gave pro-war sermons throughout the U.S. The result, Tarlov

telegraphed President Johnson in November, was that the "vast majority of our listeners indicated their agreement with this support and their appreciation of an opportunity to express their support for the first time."⁷⁷

On the opposite side of the fence were the Jewish opponents of the war who, while they disagreed with the attempt to establish consensus in favor of the war by linking Israel to Vietnam, agreed, with pride, that Jews were generally opposed to the war. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, editor of the Jewish Spectator, exclaimed, "American Jews should be proud rather than embarrassed that they provide a disproportionately large number of critics of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War."⁷⁸ For Maurice Eisendrath the failure to speak out against the war was a reflection of Jewish insecurity in America, of the view of mah yomeru ha-goyim ("what will the non-Jews say"). He noted, in a satirical "Letter to the President" in the Reform movement's periodical, American Judaism, "though some of our number may be cowed into submission by presidential displeasure, great numbers of my fellow Jews in America--the greater number I do believe--will not sacrifice their moral convictions concerning the evils of this particular war in Vietnam to be at ease either in Zion or in America."⁷⁹ He was, however, less optimistic in his more private reports. "I must be realist enough," he admitted to the UAHC Board of Trustees in December 1966, "to recognize that the [1965 UAHC] resolution [opposing the war] may not, at the present time, represent the majority will of our constituency."⁸⁰

Most Jewish organizations and periodicals criticized the attempt to identify a monolithic Jewish opinion on Vietnam.⁸¹ Jews, this third body of opinion stressed, like all ethnic groups in America, held a variety of positions. In fact, a Gallup poll done in September 1966 asking "do you approve or disapprove of the way President Johnson is handling the situation in Vietnam?" demonstrated that Jewish responses were very close to those of Americans generally.⁸² The results were:

	<u>Overall Population</u>	<u>Jews</u>
Approval	43%	41%
Disapproval	40%	41%
No opinion	17%	18%

It was noted that few Jewish organizations had, by Autumn 1966, taken any political stands on the war. The United Synagogue of America, Hadassah, many Zionist groups, the American Jewish Committee, and numerous smaller organizations had, for a variety of reasons, said nothing up to this point. Some may have felt the war was not a Jewish concern. Others seem to have preferred a "wait and see" approach. A middle-of-the-road group with a diverse membership, like the United Synagogue of America, the organization of Conservative synagogues, undoubtedly backed away from any strong statement either because of the inability to garner the votes to take such a stand or out of fear of alienating a large percentage of members if one point of view was actually advocated. Still other groups might have approved of U.S. policy and regarded silence as proof of that

stance. B'nai Brith, for example, supported President Johnson's implied endorsement of the link of Vietnam and Israel in September 1966.

The B'nai Brith supports the principle of the right of small nations to the integrity of their independence and to pursue their own destiny. We believe that the major powers have a moral responsibility to preserve that integrity and freedom, and we are concerned--as we understand the President to be--that a neoisolationist mood can threaten to negate that principle.⁸³

This was not an outright prowar statement, but it does show that B'nai Brith tended in that direction. Finally, some organizations with strong ties with Israel were wary of challenging U.S. policy so as not to damage American support for the Jewish State. Certain groups, such as Hadassah, a loosely Zionist women's service organization, tended to avoid commentary on controversial issues in American politics and, therefore, were circumspect about discussing Vietnam.

Furthermore, this third view stressed, those organizations which did speak out on Vietnam differed widely. The rabbinical groups of the Reform and Conservative movements, the UAHC and the AJCongress were opposed to the war. The JWV and (in late November) the largest organization of synagogues in the Orthodox movement gave their support to the war.

Why is it, then, that Jews were perceived as representing a disproportionately large number of antiwar opponents? A September 18 article in the New York Times made three suggestions which still seem valid. First, the war had long

been unpopular with intellectuals and "an unusually high percentage of articulate intellectuals are identified with the 'Jewish community.'" The second reason was the long-time association of Jews with liberal causes. And lastly, (based on the assumption that an empathetic perspective led one to oppose the war) the Jewish community "tends to be politically concerned, well informed, and compassionate."⁸⁴ It is worth mentioning one other point. Younger, college-aged Jews represented an unusually large percentage of the antiwar movement, though they were generally not affiliated with the organized Jewish community. In the 1966-1967 academic year the American Council of Education found "Jewish background was the single most important predictor of participation in anti-war . . . protests." It was estimated that at this time "from one-third to one-half of the most committed activists at the most volatile schools were Jews."⁸⁵ "Ironically, it is those Jews who are furthest from ritualistic Judaism who are mainly in the vanguard of demonstrations and other social causes," Henry Dicker astutely observed in a January 1967 letter in the Jewish Spectator.⁸⁶ Although unaffiliated with the Jewish community, these individuals would, in the popular mind, be seen as being Jewish. In reality, however, the organized Jewish community and the young unaffiliated Jews in the activist Left were far apart in their views. Although there were many viewpoints in the Jewish community, few were ready, as of yet, to take to the streets. Furthermore, the radical students, Jews and non-Jews alike, were beginning to speak of a need to change "the System,"

something which would have appalled even the most vociferous critics of the war within the organized Jewish community.

The Johnson/JWV incident demonstrated the wide gap which existed between actual Jewish attitudes towards the war and the perception of what those attitudes were. It also pointed to a Jewish community which felt vulnerable to governmental disapproval and manipulation. It led, finally, to an increased polarization of opinion within the Jewish community.

V. Split of the Jewish Community (late 1966-June 1967)

Within the Jewish community the debate on the war grew more heated as the conflict expanded. Many organizations, individuals, and periodicals which had hitherto said little or nothing about the war now felt compelled to take an unequivocal stand. Among Orthodox Jews there was a vigorous attempt to defend the war. Orthodoxy based its views on a Jewish perspective, but regarded "the interest of the Jewish people" as the compelling argument in the debate, not high minded talk about the "moral imperatives" of Judaism. Jewish organizations and leaders which opposed the war were exasperated by widespread Jewish support of American policy. They regarded vindication of the war as morally inconsistent with Jewish teachings. Some began to advocate a position of civil disobedience in order to focus attention on the war. On both sides the polemic against Jews with a different perspective turned rancorous. By May 1967, on the eve of the Israeli Six Day War, the American Jewish community was pola-

rized on the issue of the Vietnam War.

The JWV, in December 1966, pledged its "continued full support of American policy in Vietnam." The basis for American policy, the JWV declared, must not be the "unrealistic yearnings of some organizational leaders," but "American military security considerations." Hence, it was American concerns, not Jewish ones, which motivated the JWV. Malcolm Tarlov, in a telegram to the President, denied the claims of religious figures who argued that "the ethics of their faith" authorizes them to question "precise and detailed military methods."⁸⁷ Tarlov, like a number of Jewish backers of the war, questioned the right of religious leaders and organizations to state a religious or moral objection to the war based in anything other than personal conviction. Individuals could and should take a stand on the war, but it is wrong for religious or secular leaders to say that Judaism demands an antiwar position. Jews who supported American involvement in Vietnam, therefore, tended to avoid the question as to whether it was moral or not.

In late 1966 and early 1967 a number of Orthodox leaders also came out in favor of the war. The arguments they used were, by and large, reformulations of those made in early 1966.

It is difficult to ascertain why Orthodox Jews were so adamant in their support of the war. Irving Greenberg suggested that the Orthodox Jewish community's attitude "may well reflect its relative lack of cultural and political sophistication or its tendency to render unto Caesar that

which is Caesar's . . ."⁸⁸ Orthodox Jewry, even in the 1960's, was influenced by a relatively large number of post-WWII European refugees. These Jews probably tended to see their role in the political processes of the secular state as a limited one. After all, only the most "Americanized" of Orthodox groups said anything about the war. The numerous elements on the right wing of Orthodoxy did not consider Vietnam to be a relevant issue in their lives and therefore said nothing. Perhaps, too, there was the anxiety that Jewish opposition to the war might result in an antisemitic backlash. Orthodox Jews, still more European than their liberal coreligionists, were undoubted more conscious of and sensitive to this possibility. Hence, it was expedient for the Jews to stay silent or, if they chose to speak, to support the war. Those who did speak out generally relied on political arguments. It may be that they were uncomfortable about utilizing broad, ambiguous moral values which had no sure basis in halacha (Jewish law).

This does not mean that Orthodox Jews were unconcerned with the war's implications for the Jewish community. In fact, their prowar attitude was based in an overriding fear of communism, an ideology which they believed to be inherently anti-Jewish. The war in Vietnam, most Orthodox Jews believed, was being fought as a defense against "Communist aggression." While peace was an ultimate desire, the reality of the situation demanded that America remain in Vietnam. Orthodox thinkers argued that there are two good reasons why Jews, in particular, should support the American involvement in

Southeast Asia. The first was based in the assumption that "all forms of Communism are detrimental to Jewish existence."⁸⁹ A communist victory in any corner of the world, the argument continued, would threaten the Jews' ethnic identity and religious beliefs. Hence, the communists must not be allowed to win in Vietnam, because it would strengthen communism and ultimately hurt the Jews.

A second reason Jews should defend American policy in Vietnam, it was suggested, was because the survival of Israel depended upon this support. Israel and Vietnam were related in two ways. First, the communist NLF guerrillas and North Vietnam had linked themselves ideologically and tactically (by providing weapons) to the PLO. "Should the day come when the Viet Cong, North Vietnamese, and Chinese Communists would be free to divert time, energy and sizeable assistance to the Palestine Arabs," it was pointed out, "they would do so."⁹⁰ Any lover of Israel must, therefore, be opposed to the communists in Indochina. Second, an American loss in Vietnam would bode ill for Israel. "If the United States with the magnitude of its military effort on behalf of South Vietnam is defeated, no small nation surrounded by hostile neighbors such as Israel can put any trust in American guarantees."⁹¹ Prowar supporters did not deny the hope for peace, but they refused to accept a peace which would lead to a communist South Vietnam. As bad as the government was in the south, they concluded, it was still better than if it was communist.

The 2000 delegates at the 68th National Biennial Con-

vention of the UOJCA (November 1966) agreed with the reasoning of the Orthodox leaders. The UOJCA resolved, in the first official statement of Orthodox Judaism on Vietnam, to continue the "quest for peace" which "is deeply ingrained in the Jewish soul," but vowed that peace would not come by surrendering to communist aggression.

Our country is deeply engaged in the war in Viet Nam as part of its determination to resist Communist aggression anywhere in the world. . . . The constant efforts of the President of the United States to promote peace and end the conflict have our fervent support. . . . Any hope for peace by negotiation in Viet Nam rests on the manifestation of the ability of the Free World to contain aggression.⁹²

Agudat Israel, a smaller Orthodox organization than the UOJCA also gave the war its approval.⁹³

The formulation of a clearly defined prowar position based on the political and social realities of Jewish life forced the antiwar advocates to rethink earlier statements about the "moral imperatives" of Judaism. These "imperatives" included loosely stated hopes for global peace, the freedom of people to choose their own way of life, and the elimination of the misery caused by poverty. Now antiwar critics were forced to answer how Vietnam challenged these Jewish "moral imperatives." Opponents of the war felt compelled to challenge the conflict in Indochina because of the demands of two traditions. "Both my American patriotism and my Jewish faith impel me to cry out in anguish against the current policies of my government in Vietnam," explained Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn of Boston.⁹⁴

Most of the political arguments Jewish antiwar groups

and individuals used against the war were the same as those used by other Americans who opposed the war--the bombing of the DRV is strategically ineffective, continuation of the war would leave the U.S. "isolated internationally," the American actions are illegal since authorization was not obtained from either the United Nations nor the Congress. Americans should not defend a corrupt dictatorship such as the government of South Vietnam. The war was also criticized for the problems it raised at home. Not only was there a growing perception that the Administration was not being completely honest about the war (hence the then popular term "credibility gap)," but there was also the fear that allocations to the war would effectively undermine the "Great Society" program. The assumption that the war in Vietnam was part of a worldwide communist plot was ridiculed as politically unperceptive. In fact, it was (correctly) pointed out, North Vietnam and China had been enemies for centuries. The contention that China was behind North Vietnam was, therefore, untenable (although history has shown that North Vietnam did receive a great deal of Soviet aid).⁹⁵

Many Jews who disapproved of the war continued to rely on political, rather than moral arguments. An editorial attacking the war in the Reconstructionist (January 1967) criticized the war, but did not resort to calling the war immoral. The Labor Zionist magazine, Jewish Frontier, which took an increasingly antiwar stance as the year went on, only dealt with the political ramifications of the war. Articles in Commentary were, for many years, critical of American policy

in Vietnam, but few saw the war in terms of morality. A resolution approved by the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) in April stressed the need to solve the war through "political rather than military means," but did not see this as a moral issue.⁹⁶

Still, a great number of Jews did feel that the war in Vietnam was not merely a political, economic, or tactical error, but was morally wrong. Many American policies were excoriated for their immorality--the defoliation of Vietnamese forests as a method of warfare, the forced deportation of civilians to create "free fire" zones, the torture of enemy soldiers, and the large numbers of civilian casualties. In short, "it is an immoral war," Richard Falk explained to readers of Hadassah magazine, "because great human suffering is being caused for no discernible benefits."⁹⁷ Rabbinic students at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the Reform seminary in Cincinnati, called Vietnam a "crisis of conscience" and explained that "we who claim allegiance to the tradition of prophetic faith can no longer assent through our silence to the inhumane policies perpetrated in our behalf by our government."⁹⁸ At a speech delivered on April 4, 1967 before 3000 people Professor A. J. Heschel noted, with sadness, pain, and anger:

The longer we stay in Vietnam, the more we lose morally. The higher the escalation, the more difficult to disengage. Its sheer folly and futility are only surpassed by its immorality.⁹⁹

Among Jewish opponents of the war there was a widely held belief that statements and protests against the war "are in the line of our tradition and do express the ethical, moral, and

halachic [i.e., legal] commitments of Judaism."¹⁰⁰ The committed Jew must, therefore, find the Vietnam war repugnant. Charles Liebman, an Orthodox Jew who opposed the official stand of the UOJCA, declared (somewhat optimistically), "most morally sensitive people have resolved the question against the official American position. . . . the burden of proof today rests on anyone who claims that the war in Vietnam is not inherently immoral."¹⁰¹

Jewish opponents of the war had to answer five charges of their prowar critics: that they were unpatriotic, that Jews should stop Communism just as they wished to stop Hitler, that the antiwar approach was bad for the Jews; that Jewish opposition to Vietnam could compromise American support for Israel, and finally, that the war was "too complicated" for "non-specialists" to understand, much less criticize.

Critics of the antiwar movement often accused the dissenters of a lack of patriotism. The response was that there is a "higher patriotism," a morality which stands above the State.¹⁰² This was a significant statement, for it represented a growing feeling that the individual conscience, based in some higher morality, made demands which could not be superseded by the will of a government. This philosophical position served as the basis for the defense of the conscientious objector, the individual whose conscience dictated opposition to war. The analogy between Communism and Nazism, made by some Jewish supporters of the war, was refuted as unsound historically and as "moral imbecility."¹⁰³ A third criticism of the antiwar view was related to the concern

about "our image" in the general community and the fear of antisemitism. This was attacked on two accounts. First, there is no guarantee that the image of the Jews would be better if Jews supported the war. Secondly, antiwar critics felt it was more important that the Jew be internally honest, than play a role for others.¹⁰⁴ To see American support for Israel as dependent upon the political perspective of American Jews was ridiculed as unperceptive and naive. America backed Israel solely because of "American national interests." Opponents of the war were, finally, often criticized as being incompetent to deal with the real issues of the war. This view was regarded as political elitism. No one really understood the full implications of the war and, even if they did, moral concerns negated any others people might have. Furthermore, the so-called "experts" had a "vested interest" in the status quo.¹⁰⁵

Although some leaders of secular Jewish organizations took a clear stand on the war, the most outspoken individuals in the Jewish community were rabbis (the leaders of the JWV being the notable exception). The most forceful statements about the war within the Jewish community, both pro and con, were made by Orthodox and Reform rabbis respectively. Henry Siegman (Orthodox) theorized as to why rabbis chose to speak about the relationship of the Jew to Vietnam:

A religious person is granted no special Divine insights, nor can he claim any special competence or expertise in the field of morality. . . . A person's religiosity and his religious commitments do not make for special rights, even in the field of morality. They do, however, make for special responsibilities. . . . to involve

himself personally in the fashioning of a just and moral society.

Rabbis as individual citizens had a right, and as religious leaders an obligation, to come to grips with the moral dilemma of Vietnam. "Jewish tradition," Siegman concluded, "does contain valuable lessons which, while sectarian in their context, are suggestive of insights that have universal validity and application."¹⁰⁶ Rabbi Uri Miller, past president of the RCA and the SCA, had long opposed the war. He posited that concern with the problems raised by the war enabled "rabbis to get away from a concentration on ritual and to make Judaism a living experience."¹⁰⁷ The motivation for some rabbis was the overwhelming "sense of personal guilt" of living in a country which undertook such a war. It was a feeling which led many to action.¹⁰⁸

A growing number of antiwar rabbis were convinced that a more activist approach had to be adopted.¹⁰⁹ The Religious Action Center (UAHC) in Washington and the American Jewish Congress' Committee on International Affairs sent information on the war to their respective local organizations for the purpose of study and taking a more active role in the debate. In addition, acts of nonviolent civil disobedience which were previously shunned were now embraced as necessary tools of opposition. Rabbinic thinking lagged far behind that of the more militant theories of the New Left, to be sure, but new directions for protest were appearing within the Jewish community. In three areas--draft counselling, providing humanitarian aid to the enemy, and violating U.S. passport

regulations--rabbis stepped beyond what the State defined as proper and legal action.

One of the earliest forms of civil disobedience in the U.S. was the burning of the card (called a "draft card") which demonstrated registration in the Selective Service System. In May 1964, at a rally against U.S. military commitments overseas, twelve students in New York City burned their draft cards and coined the phrase "We won't go," a slogan often heard chanted at the numerous antiwar demonstrations of the following decade. The concept of burning one's draft card stirred the public imagination, for it signified a refusal to cooperate with those in authority. To forestall widespread violation of the law the U.S. House of Representatives, in August 1965, "passed, 391 to 1, a harsh bill providing for a five-year jail sentence and a \$10,000 fine for burning a draft card." After this, opposition to the draft faded into the background. Most Americans were not yet prepared to confront the U.S. government so directly. During the Winter of 1966-1967 the idea of draft resistance was revived. Students decided to burn their cards en masse, hoping to avoid federal prosecution. Adult critics of the war defended this protest as a legitimate means of opposing the war.¹¹⁰

Interest in draft resistance grew slowly among Jews. In 1965 even the most radical critics of the war within the Jewish community could not condone the burning of draft cards.¹¹¹ In late 1966, as it became apparent to young Jewish men that they could be drafted, there was a groundswell

of interest in the draft and CO. A number of synagogues sponsored programs specifically related to this subject.¹¹² The Jewish Peace Fellowship grew rapidly between 1965 and 1967. Although the number of inquiries about CO status remained at about 100 per year, in early 1967 Rabbi Isidor Hoffman estimated that "during the present year at least two hundred more young Jews . . . will be seriously taking up this matter."¹¹³ On April 16, 1967 the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism (UAHC) sponsored a conference in New York on "Military Conscription in the United States" to "clarify issues and to advance the dialogue in Reform congregations."¹¹⁴ The primary focus of the conference was informative. Several speakers at this conference asserted that Jews should support both selective conscientious objection (SCO), the right of an individual to refuse to fight in a particular war, and the expansion of CO status to include "atheistic objectors." Morris Laub, director of the Joint Commission on Social Action of the Conservative movement argued that the Jewish legal tradition supports CO status.¹¹⁵ In an article in the Jewish Advocate (Boston) Everett Gendler, a Conservative rabbi in Princeton, N.J., pointed out:

Granted that many Jews find the waging of some wars consistent with Judaism. This is not to say that all Jews regard all wars as consistent with Judaism, nor is it to say that all Jews find ~~this~~ war in Vietnam consistent with Judaism.¹¹⁶

Not all Jewish leaders were so supportive of the use of Jewish tradition as a basis for exemption from the draft. One commentator in the Conservative movement's newsletter,

the United Synagogue Review, indicated that "no Jews can claim exemption from military service on the ground of pacifism as a tenet in Judaism."¹¹⁷ Orthodox Jews were understandably cautious because CO implied that the individual's moral decisions superseded those of the community. For the halachic Jew, who accepted a system which was founded on obedience to the will of God as transmitted through the leaders of the community, CO not only threatened the secular state, but the authority of halacha as well.

The different perspectives in the Jewish community on the right of a Jew to claim CO status were focused, in February 1967, on Robert Levy, a 22 year old private in the U.S. Army and an Orthodox Jew who decided, after much soul searching, to ask for consideration as a selective conscientious objector. He joined the Army voluntarily 18 months before this, but now believed that Judaism demanded his opposition to the war in Vietnam. "As an expression of my religious conviction as an Orthodox Jew," he declared, "I break the law of the United States and refuse to remain a soldier." After his commanding officer refused to grant his request Levy went on a hunger strike in protest. Better to starve, he exclaimed, than "to serve the god of war." Two Orthodox chaplains castigated Levy for using Judaism as an excuse. Rabbi Martin Feinsod claimed he was "unfair to bring religion into it." Rabbi Arthur Fine agreed, and added his fear that Levy's actions could "cast aspersions on other Orthodox Jewish soldiers." The president of the CCAR, Jacob Weinstein challenged the "self assumed right" of these rabbis to "arbitrarily

rule out conscientious objection by a soldier of the Jewish faith." Everett Gendler, questioned the Army's determination to deny Levy CO status. The Army eventually relented and Levy was granted honorable discharge as "unsuitable for military service" in late March.¹¹⁸

Interfaith organizations, which usually included Jews, often took a more activist stance than Jewish organizations. One of the more controversial acts of this period was providing medical and humanitarian aid to Vietnamese on both sides of the 17th parallel. The Fellowship of Reconciliation (to which the JPF was affiliated after December 1965) placed a political ad in the New York Times in January 1966 entitled "They are our brothers whom we kill" which appealed to all combatants to lay down their arms. The signers (including 36 rabbis) declared, "we must find new, non-military ways of dealing with the conflicts and misunderstandings that inevitably arise among us."¹¹⁹ Twelve months later the Fellowship began a project of humanitarian aid as a "work of penitence" by Americans who felt "shamed by the role of our own country . . . in perpetuating and intensifying this war." The sponsors, including Rabbis Jacob Weinstein, A. J. Heschel, Everett Gendler and Balfour Brickner, realized that such a program might be interpreted as "aiding the enemy," but they believed it was our "responsibility [as Americans] . . . to heal" the wounds of war.¹²⁰ In 1967 the U.S. State Department said such aid was the equivalent of "trading with the enemy," forcing the Fellowship to send money through other than legal channels. Rabbis who supported the program urged the Administra-

tion to permit the Fellowship to extend aid legally.¹²¹

The largest interfaith conference on the war in this period occurred on January 31-February 1, 1967 in Washington, D.C. Over 2500 clergy met under the rubric of "Vietnam: The Clergyman's Dilemma" to discuss the war and plan ways to actively oppose it. In an anguish filled interpretation of Ezekial 34:25-31 Professor A. J. Heschel told the gathering:

At this hour Vietnam is our most urgent, our most disturbing religious problem. . . . Vietnam is a personal problem. To speak about God and remain silent on Vietnam is blasphemous. . . . We call for a covenant of peace, for reconciliation of America and all of Vietnam.¹²²

Heschel's challenge that Americans of all faiths could no longer remain silent reflected a common sentiment in the clerical group. A position paper drawn up by the Executive Committee of CALCAV and approved at the conference reiterated the need to speak out against the war. "A time comes when silence is betrayal," the members of the clergy decided, "that time has come for us in relation to Vietnam. . . . we know that millions of Americans share the anguish we express. . . . If they have been silent heretofore we plead with them to speak up now, and pledge them our support."¹²³ This document is rather lengthy. It specifies many objections to the war and suggests a number of specific solutions to the conflict. Its primary purpose, however, was to mobilize public opinion (via religious institutions) against the war. In this respect it appears to have been successful. In Fall 1966 there were twenty local clergy-lay groups in the U.S. By mid-1967 the number of such groups had more than quadrupled.¹²⁴

The most dramatic act of civil disobedience by a rabbi was the five week visit (December 26, 1966-January 28, 1967) to North Vietnam by Abraham Feinberg, rabbi emeritus of Holy Blossom Temple (Reform) of Toronto. At that time it was illegal for an American citizen (Feinberg was born in the U.S. and never relinquished his citizenship) to travel to North Vietnam. Yet he decided to go despite the risk (or, perhaps, because of it). Accompanying him were three other pacifist clergymen, all in their 60's or older. One of the results of this trip was the publication of the journal he kept while travelling. Entitled Hanoi Diary it gives one a unique insight into the reasoning of this flamboyant individual. Feinberg went to North Vietnam because he was convinced that Judaism was opposed to the "moral nihilism" represented by the war in Indochina. When asked before he left why he was going, he replied:

The Talmud says the universe rests on truth, justice, and peace. To find the facts of the credibility gap, to protest against the injustice of American military intervention and to . . . show the Vietnamese that some people in the West have sympathy and compassion--these are my reasons for going to Hanoi.¹²⁵

Feinberg was no ivory-tower idealist. He realized that what he was doing could have little if any effect on the outcome of the war. "I carry on," he admitted, "for self-respect, for the sovereignty of the individual conscience." "Dissent is my tribute to intellectual honesty; this disobedience is recognition of God."¹²⁶ Although he repeatedly castigated U.S. actions in Vietnam, he was not pro-Viet Cong. "Isn't it inconsistent," he asked while in the North Vietnamese

capital, "to berate the Pentagon for demanding victory and then encourage and condone that mirage here [in Hanoi]?"

. . . I cannot take a bullheaded anti-American position," though, he quickly admitted, "I can literally feel myself slipping into it."¹²⁷ Feinberg and his colleagues met with Ho Chi Minh, who requested that they ask President Johnson to come to North Vietnam to discuss peace. A cane Ho gave to Feinberg remains a treasured possession until today. A picture of the rabbi shaking hands with Ho and news of this meeting was published on the front page of the next day's New York Times (January 24, 1967). Within one month of his return Feinberg's passport was confiscated by U.S. authorities.

Although many, if not most, American Jews countenanced (or at least tolerated) dissent against the war in Vietnam, the photograph of an eminent rabbi shaking hands with the leader of a nation the U.S. was fighting was too much for many Jews to accept. Feinberg's actions led to vehement ex-coriations and equally strong statements in his defense.

Feinberg was angered by the rancor expressed within the Jewish community to his trip. In his book this anger continually bubbles through the narration of events. He bitterly opposed the rightist elements in American Jewry. The JWV members are derided as "super-patriots." The Orthodox rabbinate "kow-tows to authority and [thereby] hopes to exercise some itself." In fact, most of the Jews in the U.S. are guilty of supporting the war through silence. Feinberg believed that the reason for this silence was that American Jews are part of a complacent and self-satisfied "middle

class so anxious to retain the status that they don't use it" to challenge the status quo. As a result, Jews in America, despite their apparent success, remain "second-class citizens out of timidity."¹²⁸ This argument was a challenge to American Jews to escape their "mah yomeru ha-goyim mentality" and to raise a united voice against the war. The argument was not a new one, but its tone was indicative of a growing tension within the Jewish community.

The President of the CCAR also challenged:

our Orthodox brethren who seem intent . . . to classify this war as a Milchemet mitzvah--a war of duty. . . . Those who speak for Orthodoxy act as though they were still second-class citizens, as though they had to earn their right to citizenship by offering religious sanction for our Administration's policy in Vietnam.

The Orthodox approach was criticized as one of "pilpulistic sophistry," which perverted the moral and ethical "imperatives" of Judaism. In coming months and years Reform Jews would continue to attack Orthodox supporters of the war for their "second-class" or "Galut" perspective.¹²⁹

Rabbi Leonard Beerman delineated, in his synagogue bulletin remarks, the rift in the Jewish community:

There is a clear unbroken line of division among us, separating those who feel the War is an unpleasant and unfortunate necessity from those who believe that the War is an outrage to all that is decent and just. [Those who have "made peace with the war or who rationalize it] are embraced by some kind of oblivion, [while those opposed] find that it relentlessly invades our lives.¹³⁰

This statement also explains the perceived power of the anti-war opposition. People opposed to the war usually cared about it deeply. They were willing to work vigorously to see an end

to the war. Many, if not most, of the "supporters" of the war were not active advocates of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, but simply did not care enough to counter official policy.

The strongest supporter of the Johnson Administration, the JWV, and its president, Malcolm Tarlov, sparked the most debate in remarks made about Jewish groups which opposed the war. Tarvlov referred to opponents of the war as "misguided, sometimes misled, Americans" and "appeasers." He expressed "revulsion" at those who would seek to cut off appropriations for the war effort with the logic that "every vote against a Vietnam appropriation is a vote for Ho Chi Minh." Tarlov's full bile was expressed in a letter to Maurice Eisendrath about the latter's "Letter to the President" in American Judaism (Winter 1966-1967). In this satirical article Eisendrath implied that Johnson was, in many respects, similar to the ancient Syrian enemy of the Jews, Atiochus. He went on to talk about the "Veterans of Syrian Wars" who "were but a tiny splinter of the Jewish community" and who did not reflect the deep resentment of the masses against this demand for unvarying uniformity of thought and action." The thinly disguised analogy was not lost on the JWV.¹³¹ Tarlov called this letter "intemperate," "impudent in tone and content," "ill-considered," and an "example of irresponsible dissent." "Your extremist dissent," he told Eisendrath, "can but serve to delight and encourage Ho Chi Minh." The same arguments Eisendrath used to dismiss the JWV were used by Tarlov to disparage the UAHC president. "You speak for little more than yourself," Tarlov declared. In fact, "you do not speak for all or most

of American Jewry, or even most of Reform Jewry." In response to the charge that the JWV expected "unvarying uniformity of thought and action" Tarlov predicted that "American Jews of today will . . . revolt and defeat the 'conformity--craving tyrant.'"¹³²

Tarlov's remarks were countered with equal rancor and vehemence by leftist Jews. An article in Jewish Currents attacks the JWV for being the only large Jewish organization "carrying aloft the skull-and-bones banner of jingoism in support of [the] . . . war." Rabbi Paul Levenson expressed "chagrin at such truculent, bellicose, super-nationalist more-patriotic-than-thou statements" as were made by the JWV.¹³³

On the eve of the Six-Day War American Jewry was deeply divided about Vietnam. At a Warsaw Ghetto Memorial meeting in Chicago (May 1967) Rabbi David Polish began to speak about Vietnam. The commander of the Illinois Department of the JWV promptly led a contingent out of the room. It was a sharp illustration of the fact that while Jewish organizations mouthed their acceptance of the right of dissent, the members of these groups were unwilling to even listen to opposing points of view. In fact, in June 1967 Jacob Weinstein criticized this discrepancy of "spokesmen for the Jewish War Veterans, [who] . . . have always managed to state that while they believe in dissent as a general principle, any Jew who exercises it is, if not disloyal to the Government, certainly inimical to the best interests of the Jewish people."¹³⁴

The internal conflicts over organizational stances on the war were, at times, equally as rancorous as inter-

organizational debates. No organization, prowar or antiwar, was spared the feuding and tension between various, inner elements, although those groups which took an antiwar position (still a minority opinion in American society) were under the most attack from members.

In August 1966, at the Annual Convention of the JWV in Atlantic City, N.J., a proposed resolution led to a challenge of the organization's prowar attitude. The proposal stated that the JWV support the President "in increasing our military commitment in Vietnam" while simultaneously seeking peace. Past National Commander, Morton London, rejected the proposal as useless "sophistry" and called for a resolution which would ask for a limitation of the escalation. Although the original proposal carried, a note was added in the record that the adoption was "not unanimous."¹³⁵

In the Orthodox movement two rabbis, in particular, Rabbis Charles Liebman and Uri Miller, diverged from the views of their colleagues and congregants. Rabbi Liebman expressed astonishment at the incongruency of Orthodox Judaism:

Agudath Israel and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations wrap themselves in the American flag and wallow in self-righteousness, and this precisely at the time when a sense of genuine moral revulsion has gripped the most sensitive personalities throughout the world in protest against American intervention in Vietnam.¹³⁶

For the most part, however, there were few voices of internal dissent to the official position.

Much more serious were the challenges within the Reform movement to its liberal position. Rabbi William Silverman represented a small group of Reform rabbis who disagreed with

those who used Judaism as the basis of an antiwar stance. If a rabbi opposes the war, Silverman declared, "[let him] oppose it in the name of his conscience and not in the name of Judaism." He ridiculed the "pacifists who scorn their government. . . . I look with contempt upon the defiant sabotaging of the military [through resistance to the war]."¹³⁷ Lay members of the Reform movement were also exasperated with the antiwar posture of the UAHC and CCAR. In a speech before the sixth regional biennial convention of the UAHC's Pacific Southwest Council (February 1967) Maurice Eisendrath attacked the war and compared President Johnson with Attila the Hun. The president of a Bakersfield, California congregation, Stan Simrin, was so upset that he rose to challenge the comments of the Union president. Simrin "evoked applause from the audience when he told [Eisendrath] . . . that there may be many Reform Jews who disagree with him but have never had a chance to discuss or vote on the issue."¹³⁸

The most significant breach within the Reform movement came when Temple Emanu-El of New York, one of the largest Reform synagogues in the world, decided to withdraw from the UAHC, ostensibly because of Eisendrath's anti-Vietnam policy. On April 25, 1967 the Temple Emanu-El Board voted, six to four (eleven members of the 21-person Board were present) to withdraw. Alfred R. Bachrach, president of the synagogue, said, "There is no such thing as a spokesman for Reform Judaism on social and political issues" and chided Eisendrath for joining with Marthin Luther King, Jr. and others to create an organization to end the bombing of Vietnam "now and without

conditions." Eisendrath should not deal with such issues, Bachrach continued, because "whatever he says is interpreted as the position of Reform Judaism."¹³⁹

The reaction of the UAHC was strong and sure, for the Temple Emanu-El action threatened the Reform movement ideologically and politically. If Emanu-El could withdraw, what prevented other congregations from doing the same? In fact, Bachrach reported several weeks later, more than 25 congregations wrote to him to convey their support of Emanu-El's position.¹⁴⁰ The UAHC countered that Emanu-El's actions were "bound to stifle dissent" by individual Jews:

Rabbi Eisendrath has never presumed to speak for 1,000,000 Jews. He makes clear that he speaks for himself and his own conscience. But does a large and important Reform synagogue withdraw into isolation every time a Jewish leader says something with which they disagree?

Eisendrath said that he was aware that Vietnam "divides the Jewish community--and its Reform segment--as sharply as it divides other Americans," but felt that, in this case, "the issue of the war is being used to limit dissent and to curtail free expression of opinion." The president of the UAHC Board, in a letter to American Jewish leaders, chastised the Emanu-El decision as an attempt "to deny the relevance of religion to life." The CCAR also lent its formal support to Eisendrath and castigated the Temple Emanu-El action as an attempt to "limit dissent."¹⁴¹ Only on November 26, 1968 did Temple Emanu-El decide to rejoin the Union.

For the moment, however, Temple Emanu-El's action touched a chord of discontent among a minority within the UAHC.

It was a reflection, too, of the schisms which existed in the American Jewish community over the issue of Vietnam. Local Jewish newspapers took various perspectives. The B'nai Brith Messenger (Los Angeles), in consonance with B'nai Brith's tacit support of the war, applauded Bachrach and concluded, "these Rabbinical dissenters simply do not have the congregational support they think they have." Two Philadelphia weeklies, the Jewish Exponent and the Philadelphia Jewish Times supported both the right of both Eisendrath to express his views and Temple Emanu-El to act the way it did. The editor of the Detroit Jewish News, Philip Slomovitz, denied the contention that Vietnam was a Jewish issue, but worried that Emanu-El's withdrawal could threaten Jewish organizational life in America.¹⁴²

In early 1965 most of the American population responded to the escalation with silence. Within two years it was quite evident that this consensus of silence was shattered. Not only were there differences about whether to support the war, but the antiwar camp was divided over ideology and tactics. American Jewry responded in an equally varied manner. A small, though significant, minority of Jews rejected the liberalism of the Jewish community and chose the path of radical opposition to the war. All segments of the organized Jewish community agreed that peace achieved through negotiations was the highest goal of Judaism, but there was no consensus as to how to achieve this ideal in Vietnam.

[The JWV and Orthodox groups] believe that the Administration is in fact committed to a negotiated settlement and that it has effectively demonstrated its intention to withstand pressures for a military solution or for dangerous escalation. The Reform position is that while President Johnson earnestly seeks to end the conflict, many of the Administration's measures, such as the bombing of North Vietnam are designed to frustrate this objective. The Conservative position [shared by most secular Jewish organizations] seems to be one of qualified support.¹⁴³

The organized Jewish community, reflecting its generally liberal posture towards politics, did not represent the more extreme positions which unaffiliated Jews took on the war. The leadership of the JWV did advocate a strong hawkish stance, regarding loyalty to the state as a citizen's greatest obligation. Most Jews, however, did want to see an end to the war, but were not ready, as a few notable antiwar leaders advocated, to see the U.S. simply leave Southeast Asia. Too much money, too many lives, and too great a psychological investment had been made by most Americans (Jews included) to reject the war out of hand. Typical was the response of 74 students and faculty members of HUC-JIR, who called for a bombing halt, yet were "unwilling to state categorically that the U.S. has no legitimate interests to defend in Vietnam." "We would not wish to accuse our Government of wrongdoing," their statement asserted.¹⁴⁴ Yet for those unaffiliated Jews in the Left and the outspoken minority within the Jewish community who opposed the war it was exactly because of American "wrongdoing" that the war was seen as immoral. For these staunch opponents of the war Vietnam was becoming a "symbol" of "national and spiritual malaise," of an "inner emptiness."¹⁴⁵

This feeling of desperation would lead many, particularly unaffiliated Jews, to advocate active resistance against an intractable American policy.

This "symbol" might have divided the Jewish community even more had it not been for events on the other end of the Asian continent which diverted attention away from Vietnam. In the Middle East tensions between Israel and her Arab neighbors grew throughout the Spring. On the morning of June 5, 1967, jets of the Israeli airforce swooped down on Arab airfields in a pre-emptive strike. The Six Day War, which would have profound effects on American Jewry, had begun.

CHAPTER THREE

A Shift in the Attitude of American Jewry

(June 1967-Summer 1969)

War requires for its successful pursuit the mobilization of a moral consensus on the legitimacy of both the objectives of violence and the means by which these objectives are pursued.

. . . The maintenance of that consensus is one of the key objectives of national strategy, in both a political and a military sense, for when it fails, the war is lost.

-Col. Charles F. Kreite, 1977

In the Spring of 1967 approximately 60% of the American public supported Johnson's handling of the war. A little over two years later the same percentage of people regarded Vietnam as a horrible, if not criminal, mistake. Jewish dissatisfaction with the conflict in Southeast Asia far surpassed even that expressed by the general population. Yet, at the same time, Jewish organizations showed stagnation in their response to the war and the tensions it was creating at home. Many groups avoided the issue, either remaining silent or concentrating on the ancillary problem of the draft. Those organizations which did speak out rarely offered new approaches and merely reaffirmed statements made prior to this period. This discrepancy between the attitudes Jews held privately and expressed publicly was undoubtedly related to the Six Day War in June 1967. The potential destruction and eventual

victory of the State of Israel had a profound and lasting impact on American Jewry. For some segments of the Jewish community it did not simply affect how Jews felt about Israel, but how they would respond to the war in Southeast Asia. Many Jewish groups were uncertain about the impact official Jewish antiwar statements might have on U.S.-Israeli relations and, as a result, avoided any problems by stepping gingerly when it came to criticizing the American role in Indochina. The importance of the Six Day War for Jewish attitudes toward the Vietnamese conflict and the various problems concerning issues related to the draft are, therefore, the central topics of this chapter.

I. The Change in American Public Opinion

The success of the antiwar protests of "Vietnam Week" (April 8-15, 1967) demonstrated that opposition to the war was widespread. The antiwar movement was no longer on the extremist fringe of American society, without any real political clout, but was a powerful coalition. Just when the antiwar movement was coalescing, however, radical forces within it were beginning to take ideological positions and suggest methods of protest which would splinter the movement into its disparate parts.

The first to reject the peaceful, non-violent protests of the past were students. Antiwar activists were jubilant at the public response to the "Vietnam Week" marches, but soon realized that the Administration's policies would not be swayed simply because American citizens walked the

streets in protest. The teach-ins, antiwar rallies, draft card burnings, and demonstrations were perceived to be ineffectual in altering the course of the war. Disheartened and disgusted, a small, but influential, minority of student activists began to advocate violent opposition to the war. A Cornell University group, even before the April 1967 demonstrations, gave voice to their frustration:

The armies of the United States have, through conscription, already oppressed or destroyed the lives and consciences of millions of Americans and Vietnamese. We have argued and demonstrated to stop this destruction. We have not succeeded. Murderers do not respond to reason. Powerful resistance is now demanded: radical, illegal, unpleasant and sustained.¹

In earlier periods violence had occasionally flared up, but it was unplanned and limited in scope. Now, for the first time, violence was contemplated as a tool of protest.

During the 1967-68 school year students increasingly put their rhetoric into action. In the student-backed demonstrations of Autumn 1967 protesters were no longer asking the government for a change of policy, they were demanding that such a change take place. A leaflet distributed by the Columbia University SDS at a November 14 demonstration in New York against a speech by Dean Rusk urged the participants to use "good guerilla tactics" in protesting the war.² Inspired by the "inner city" riots which engulfed American cities during the summer of 1967, revolutionary students pushed for more violent antiwar demonstrations. There was a marked increase in the number of bombings of ROTC offices and draft boards. A growing number of demonstrations and marches

ended up violently--police clubs flying, protesters kicking and screaming.

The student protests of this period gained much attention from the various news media. It seemed as if the young in America were almost universally opposed to Vietnam. In reality only 10 to 15 percent of all college students were active in the peace movement.³ Those that were involved, however, were very influential in setting the tone of violence and radicalism on many university campuses.

Within the intellectual Left there was a parallel radicalization of theory. The radical element of intellectuals, which had long since split with the more moderate thinkers, now moved even further to the left. Arthur Waskow captured the feelings of a generation of intellectuals when he wrote about his personal journey from being "a stubborn but narrow liberal who praised non-violent protest [to] . . . an angry, more subtle, and more flexible radical who wants the people to take control of their own schools and factories, and to learn to run them democratically--against the government."⁴ Radical intellectuals, following the lead of student activists, began to advocate active resistance not simply to Vietnam, but to an American system which allowed such a war to take place. The creation of a "counterculture," a society antithetical to conventional American values was praised by these intellectuals as an important first step in changing America.

There were several reasons for the revolutionary posture of so many intellectuals of that time. Perhaps the most important was the sense of frustration with the lack of

official responsiveness to their demands. After the March on the Pentagon (October 21, 1967) many intellectuals, be they moderates or radicals, despaired of having any influence in changing either American public opinion or the war itself. "Paul Goodman [known as 'the father-figure of the New Left'] premised his support for We Won't Go, a mass movement for draft resistance to stop the Vietnam War, on the futility of protest in Johnson's America. Hans Morgenthau concluded that 'the democratic state is in a blind alley, and so is American democracy.'"⁵ Only revolutionary changes, the radical intellectuals felt, would force America to end the war. A second factor in the intellectual justification of violence was a growing sense of moral indignation about the war. Daniel Ellsberg, a Defense Department bureaucrat who would later leak secret documents to the New York Times, described the shifting perception he had of the war: "I have seen it first as a problem; then as a stalemate; then as a crime." The implication was that criminal, immoral, and illegal actions must be countered with violent civil disobedience if necessary.⁶ A third reason was the Administration's attempt to silence civil disobedience through the courts. The most famous example of this was the trial of the "Boston Five." The five indicted--Dr. Benjamin Spock, Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Jr., Mitchell Goodman, Michael Ferber, and Marcus Raskin--were actively involved in a national draft card turn-in in mid-October 1967. These men were prosecuted because they were well-known, not simply because of their actions. Hundreds of others who were also guilty of counselling, aiding, and abet-

ting evasion of the draft were never tried, but the government's message, conveyed in its attempt to prosecute the "Boston Five," was unmistakable. Sandy Vogelgesang, a student of the intellectual Left, postulated a fourth motivation for their new emphasis on resistance. She believed that older intellectuals, ineffective in government, could at least feel "reborn" through their newly formed association with a younger generation of student activists.⁷

Despite the growing power of radical elements in the antiwar movement and in the intellectual community, there remained a large number (probably a majority) of individuals who took a more moderate approach to the war. These people were opposed to the war in Vietnam, but refused to see it as symptomatic of a malaise of American society. The violence of the demonstrations of the fall alienated a number of liberals and moderates in the peace movement, who felt violence would not only damage the reputation of the antiwar approach, but was an unrealistic and morally reprehensible response.⁸

Non-violent actions, such as sit-ins and peaceful marches, continued to take place after mid-1967 but they did not spark the public's imagination nor did they represent the "cutting edge" of the protest movement.

In late 1967 the antiwar movement was deeply divided--it had lost its drive and direction. All indications were that President Johnson would win the Democratic primary the coming Summer, perhaps the election in November, and the war would continue to intensify. American public opinion, which

had grown steadily against the war, reached a plateau. In fact, the radical antiwar protests worried many people and caused a slight increase in the number of those who supported the war.⁹

Within three months, however, the Vietnam War was discredited and Johnson was compelled to turn his back on any hopes he had for re-election. This sudden reversal was the result of events in Southeast Asia and at home. In late January 1968 North Vietnamese troops, in conjunction with NLF rebels, engaged in a co-ordinated surprise attack against every major city and military base in South Vietnam. The operation was called the "Tet Offensive," after the Vietnamese name of the month in which it began. Although analysis of the Tet Offensive after the assault indicated it was technically a military success for the United States and South Vietnam, American public opinion regarded it as a disaster. The extent of opposition to "Johnson's War" following the Tet Offensive was translated into a startling victory in the March 1968 New Hampshire primary for Eugene McCarthy, Democratic senator from Minnesota who challenged Johnson almost solely on the issue of Vietnam.¹⁰ On March 16 Senator Robert Kennedy announced that he, too, would run against Johnson. The President's popularity, which was as high as 79% following his election in 1964, now slipped to 29%. Rather than split the Democratic Party and perhaps even lose the nomination, President Johnson decided not to seek re-election. On March 31, in a televised speech before the nation, he announced a partial halt to the bombing of North Vietnam and disclosed that

he would "not accept the nomination of my party as your President."

Johnson's speech breathed new hope into the opponents of the war. Many activists felt that Johnson's decision was largely due to actions taken by the antiwar movement. Irving Howe, like many critics of the war, felt that their opposition was vindicated:

Surely a major reason for Johnson's decision was a belated but strong response to growing public pressure and disenchantment. The complaints one heard about American campuses that dissidents are not listened to, and have no choice but 'alienation' or exile or urban guerilla tactics, seem now to be utterly wrong or, at the very least, wildly premature.¹¹

With the exception of the violent demonstrations in Chicago during the National Democratic Convention (mid-summer 1968) there were few large scale protests between late 1967 and the Autumn of 1969. There are a number of reasons: 1) Much of the energy which was previously directed at opposing the war was channeled, in 1968, into campaigning for Presidential candidates who were against American involvement in Vietnam. 2) Johnson's March 31, 1968 speech, in addition to the initiation of peace talks in Paris on May 13, also helped to defuse the antiwar opposition for several months. 3) Furthermore, many on the Left were shocked and disheartened by the assassinations of two champions of their cause--Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4 and Senator Robert Kennedy on June 6. King's death did provoke violent riots in black communities across the land, but they were not anti-Vietnam War protests. The "inner city" riots were expressions of

black anger, not organized antiwar demonstrations. With the loss of these men much of the peace movement's power dissipated; it was unable to generate any real momentum from within. 4) The violence of the demonstrations in Chicago during the summer of 1968, graphically shown on television and described in newspapers and periodicals, frightened many Americans who sympathized with the antiwar movement's goals, but could not condone the increasingly violent posture which the movement assumed. After the Chicago Democratic convention antiwar demonstrations would be linked in the popular mind, rightly or wrongly, with violence and illegal action. The radical leadership of the antiwar movement had, in effect, alienated much of the support they otherwise might have received. A further reason for the lull in antiwar protests was President Johnson's October 31 decision to halt the bombing in Vietnam. 6) A final impetus against massive demonstrations was the public perception, following the election of Republican candidate Richard Nixon as President on November 5, 1968, that there would be a de-escalation of the war, due largely to Nixon's campaign promise to end the war "with honor."

The relative quiescence of the period does not mean that Americans were still in favor of the war. In 1965 silence indicated acceptance of U.S. intervention in Vietnam; by 1968 silence no longer implied assent. Polls taken just prior to Johnson's March 31 speech showed that 50 percent of all Americans felt U.S. involvement in Vietnam was a mistake.

In fact, Vietnam was regarded as the most important problem facing the country.¹² Political advertisements, representing "middle class" Americans--business people, artists, lawyers, and architects--became common in the newspapers of larger cities. Among young Americans opposition to the war was even more pronounced. A June 30, 1969 survey of graduating university seniors showed that the protest movement received the tacit support of the vast majority of college-aged youth. The Class of '69 was a fairly radical group. 40% said they participated in demonstrations and 72% were willing to do so; 11% said that they had engaged in civil disobedience and 36% were open to this option. Another poll, of Harvard seniors, showed that 94% disapproved of the war, 59% intended to avoid military service, and 27% would rather go to prison or Canada than fight in Vietnam.¹³ The question for most Americans by 1969, therefore, was no longer the extent of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, but the speed and manner of withdrawal of American forces from that distant land.

II. The Israeli-Arab War and Vietnam

The Six Day War between Israel and her Arab neighbors was not only a turning point for Israelis, but for American Jews, as well. In the weeks before the June war there were real fears that Israel might be destroyed by the massing Arab armies on her borders. The organized Jewish community was, as would be expected, greatly affected by the course of events in the Middle East. Yet, surprisingly, many unaffiliated Jews were also troubled by the threat of Israel's de-

struction. In fact, one observer of the period noted, "the immediate reaction of American Jewry to the crisis was far more intense and widespread than anyone could have foreseen. Many Jews would never have believed that grave danger to Israel could dominate their thoughts and emotion to the exclusion of all else." Jewish organizations, almost universally, gave unqualified support to the Israeli pre-emptive strikes and rejoiced over Israel's success in defeating her enemies. American Jewry may have been deeply divided over Vietnam, but with regard to Israel they spoke with a united voice.¹⁴

A substantial number of Jews in the New Left were also greatly influenced by the Arab-Israeli war. For the first time these Jews felt that being Jewish was important. Many of them had hitherto been unconcerned with their Jewishness. For these individuals Jewish identity was not regarded as something to be embraced, but was, at best, a feature which gave one a sympathetic understanding of oppression and, at worst, served as a focus for what was wrong in American society and what the New Left was trying to change. Jerry Rubin, one of the best known Leftists of the time, remarked:

I personally feel very torn about being Jewish. I know it made me feel like a minority or outsider in Amerika (sic!) from my birth and helped me become a revolutionary. . . . But despite this . . . Judaism no longer means much to us because the Judeo-Christian tradition has died of hypocrisy. Jews have become landlords, businessmen, and prosecutors in Amerika.

One SDS organizer, also a Jew, expressed a similar feeling:

We've all been messed over, but I feel its been more sharp for American Jews. What we detest

about the lives of our parents, what we would talk about as emptiness, hypocrisy, and . . . materialism is the behavior that comes out of these insecurities, plus our own experience of those insecurities. We see a way of getting beyond that . . . a possibility of the liberation from that.¹⁵

Arthur Waskow elaborated on why Jews on the Left were particularly affected by the war in Indochina:

To young Jews the war was an earthquake. Brought up on memories of the Holocaust and genocide, they were horrified to discover that the United States government . . . was behaving in Vietnam like Hitler.¹⁶

Jews in the New Left did not, therefore, necessarily deny their Jewish roots, but felt that their primary identity was radical and leftist.

The possible annihilation of the Jewish State forced many Jews in the New Left to reevaluate their ambiguous to hostile attitude towards Israel, and their own Jewish identity. M. Jay Rosenberg, at that time a student activist at the State University of New York at Albany, in looking back on his response to the growing tension in the Middle East, remarked: "At that time I would have denied that I was reacting as a Jew. I was a radical, a democrat, of course an American and 'everyone' supported Israel, didn't they. . . . I was certain that all the good people were on her [Israel's] side. All the anti-war kids, all my radical friends, everyone supported Israel. Or so I thought."¹⁷ But Rosenberg, and thousands like him, thought wrong. Many Leftist Jews who supported Israel quickly realized that their pro-Israeli stance placed them in a very precarious position. Allies in the fight against the Vietnam War were often cool, if not

outright hostile, to Israel's victory.

The radical New Left was particularly vehement in its anti-Israel and anti-Zionist rhetoric. This was, to a large extent, a reflection of the growing antipathy between blacks and Jews. Beginning in late 1966 black groups began to assert the need to achieve their goals without the help of whites. A growing number of militant blacks felt that the presence of white leaders in a civil rights movement was only one more example of white domination of blacks. Jews, who were often in leadership positions in the civil rights movement, felt that their work in behalf of blacks was not properly appreciated. By the middle of 1967 the black-Jewish alliance of the early 1960's was showing serious strain. The Israeli-Arab war only exacerbated earlier tensions. The June 1967 issue of Black Power, a forerunner to the publication, Black Panther, crudely suggested:

We're gonna burn their towns and that ain't all
We're gonna piss upon the Wailing Wall
And then we'll get Kosygin and deGaulle
That will be ecstasy, killing every Jew in Jewland.¹⁸

The black nationalist radical element gained control of the New Left at the National Conference of New Politics (NCNP) meeting in Chicago over Labor Day Weekend, 1967. The NCNP was formed by a coalition of antiwar and civil rights activists in January 1966. The meeting in September 1967 was called to forge a unified political front of all groups on the Left. The course of events at the meeting starkly demonstrated, however, the divisiveness within the New Left and its anti-Israel ideology. At the opening ceremonies

black comedian Dick Gregory underscored the split between blacks and Jews. "Every Jew in America over thirty years old knows another Jew that hates niggers," he said jokingly, "well, it's even, baby." The "Black Caucus," a coalition of 300 black delegates, threatened to withdraw from the meeting if the 1800 other delegates did not yield 50 percent of the conference votes to them and approve in toto a 13 point resolution which they submitted. Point 5 of the proposed resolution called on the conference to "condemn the imperialistic Zionist war" of June. On Saturday, September 2, the NCNP agreed, by a 3 to 1 vote, to accept the two demands of the "Black Caucus." Several influential Jewish leftists were so disgusted by what took place that they walked out of the conference and severed their ties with the New Left.¹⁹

Moderate leftists were divided in their response to Israel's victory and the anti-Israel viciousness of the radical Left. Comentators of this point-of-view argued that Israel and Vietnam were separate and different situations. The greatest fear of this camp was that Jewish support for Israel might "diminish opposition to the Vietnam War" or even lead some people "into acceptance of our present Vietnam policy."²⁰

Jews who were affiliated with the New Left were faced with difficult choices after the Six Day War. Some severed ties with former colleagues and drew closer to the pro-Israel American Jewish community. Others were unable to reject the party line and felt compelled to defend the anti-Zionist position of the New Left.

Those Jews who were committed to the ideals of the Left, yet rejected the pro-Arab stance most Leftists took after 1967, felt confused and isolated. M. Jay Rosenberg lamented:

The choice seemed to be one between the anti-Zionist left and the reactionary Zionists. I had a problem. How could I reconcile my leftist proclivities with my, now, admittedly Zionist ones? Did I have to choose between the Fatah-supporting SDS and the ultra-middle class, lox and bagel breakfast club, "Hillel Society?". . . . The choice was an impossible one. I felt there had to be a third route.

It would be many months before Rosenberg and Jews like him finally decided where that "third route" would take them. In the latter half of 1968 a few groups began to appear which were both Jewish and radical. This movement of Jewish radicalism blossomed in 1969 and in the early 1970's (and, therefore, will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters).²¹

Antiwar opponents within the Jewish community were also faced with the charge of displaying inconsistency between their criticism of the Vietnam War and their militant stance with regard to Israel. Several years later one Conservative rabbi recalled the tenor of the times:

The Six Day War caused many of us to reconsider the extreme positions we had so easily adopted before. The months following the War caused an outpouring of pilpul to show that our dovishness on Vietnam did not preclude our favoring American intervention on behalf of Israel.

After all, it was argued, the situation in the Middle East and the Far East were vastly different. In the first place, "Israel's government is a democracy. . . . South Vietnam has been governed by a series of corrupt dictatorships." Secondly, "Israel is not threatened by internal revolution (as is

South Vietnam from the NLF). . . . It is threatened by foreign countries." The war in Vietnam, in other words, unlike the Middle East conflict, "although not completely divorced from the international power struggle of competing ideologies," is primarily a civil war. Third, Israel won without the intervention of American troops, South Vietnam is maintained because of such intervention. Fourth, "Israel has sought to negotiate. . . . South Vietnam has evaded negotiation." And finally, "the United States commitment to Israel is a commitment reached in concert with the United Nations. The United States commitment in Vietnam is . . . in disregard of both the United Nations and the will of mankind."²²

More conservative, prowar elements within the Jewish community, on the other hand, saw the chain of events following the Six Day War as a vindication of their argument that communism was opposed to Judaism and that Jews should support the anti-communist war in Indochina. Michael Wyschogrod posited that "the one fact that has emerged from the events since June is the unanimous and unequivocal hatred for Israel that has been demonstrated by the Communist world." The war in Vietnam was not, as antiwar critics claimed, a civil war, but a case of "communist aggression." The Viet Cong, he continued, are the enemies of the Jews because they back the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), a terrorist front dedicated to the eradication of the Jewish State. Furthermore, the American presence in Vietnam gave significant strength to the U.S. assurances of Israel's safety. If not for America's refusal to back down in the Far East, Wyschogrod

concluded, the USSR might very well have entered the Six Day War.²³

In the organized Jewish community, therefore, the Six Day War did not substantially alter attitudes towards the Vietnam War. Jews who supported the war before June 1967 simply saw the Mid East conflict as proof of their point of view. Jews against the Vietnam War were forced to justify their support of the Israelis, but refused to repudiate their antiwar beliefs. Neither the pro- nor the antiwar forces saw the Six Day War as a real challenge to pre-conceived notions about Vietnam. The intransigence of both sides is evidence of the solidification of opinions on the war among most Americans. John E. Mueller, in a 1973 study of American public opinion of the Vietnam War, demonstrated that by the end of 1967 "public support for and opposition to the war in Vietnam hardened . . . to the point where events were less likely to make an impression."²⁴ Although Mueller was referring to events in Vietnam and America, it is evident that his hypothesis is valid with respect to the effect the Arab-Israeli War had on American Jewish attitudes towards Vietnam.

The war in the Middle East did, nevertheless, have two lasting effects on Jewish attitudes toward Vietnam. In the short run it almost completely muffled organizational opposition to the Indochinese conflict in the Jewish community. Before the Six Day War a growing number of Jewish groups came out against the war in Vietnam. After June 1967, despite the fact that the majority of Jews were against the war, the pace of such organizational opposition slowed considerably, no

doubt due to fears about causing friction in U.S.-Israeli relations. It would not be until after the Cambodian invasion in the middle of 1970 that many Jewish groups, previously silent, finally spoke out against the war. A second consequence of the Six Day War was the eventual formation of a Jewish radical movement. The course of events in Israel leading up to and including the Six Day War awakened, in many Jews of the New Left, a latent sense of Jewish identity. If interest in Israel was not enough to force such Jews to re-examine what it meant to be Jewish, the antisemitism prevalent in the Left after June 1967 was further impetus to do so. Although these individuals did not disavow their opposition to the Vietnam War, the context out of which that opposition arose changed significantly. They no longer questioned U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia as radicals and as Americans, but as Jews.

III. The Antiwar Tendency of American Jewry

In the two year period between mid-1967 and mid-1969 American public opinion shifted decidedly against the Vietnam War. Jews in the United States followed the prevailing trend, but turned even more dramatically than most against the continuation of the war in Southeast Asia. In September 1966 Jewish attitudes about Vietnam were consistent with the opinions of Americans generally. A survey taken in July 1967, however, showed that Jews were much more likely to oppose the war than individuals of other faiths.

	Percentage opposed to Vietnam War
Jewish	48
West European Catholic	29
South European Catholic	26
West European Protestant	17
Long-time American	
Protestant-Catholic	15
East European Catholic	7

Polls made in 1968 and 1969 revealed an even higher percentage of Jews opposed to the war--in one instance, 80% of the Jews polled expressed opposition to the Vietnamese conflict.²⁵

These results are, however, somewhat misleading. First of all, they do not reveal the association those who declared themselves "Jewish" had with the Jewish community. As was indicated earlier, a disproportionately high percentage of Jews were active in the antiwar Left. These individuals may have seen themselves as Jewish in an ethnic sense, but their Jewish identity was expressed in the most minimal of ways. Their position on the war was not, in other words, based in Judaism or Jewish values, but in liberal, secular, American values. A second problem with this survey is that it gives the mistaken impression that Jews opposed the war to a degree unsurpassed by anyone else. While it is true that Jews did show a markedly liberal tendency, there were other groups (e.g. individuals not identifying with any religious groups, blacks, and others) which tended to take even stronger antiwar positions. Still, Jews were definitely in the "dove" (i.e. antiwar) camp. A Louis Harris poll printed in the July 10, 1967 issue of Newsweek characterized Jews as "moderate doves." This viewpoint generally accepted the

Administration policy in Vietnam, but sought a "reduction in escalation to encourage negotiations."²⁶ Hence, most Jews did not accept the radical view which called for an unconditional halt to bombing and the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam, but took a more liberal or moderate stance.

In 1968 two studies, one of a Reform congregation, the other of Orthodox rabbis, confirmed the more general findings of the previous year. These studies showed that despite the official stance of the leaders of Jewish organizations, be it strongly supportive of or in disagreement with American involvement in Vietnam, the membership generally took a moderate or liberal approach. This would be expected among Reform Jews, whose leadership was in the vanguard of the moderate antiwar movement, but it comes as something of a surprise from the Orthodox rabbis, whose congregations publicly declared (in November 1966) their support for American policy in Indochina.

In the early months of 1968 an extensive survey of attitudes towards the Vietnam War was made at Temple Oheb Shalom in Baltimore, Maryland. The results reflected a broad range of opinions, but the overall findings supported the official, liberal position of the Reform movement. Congregants were asked to respond to the following statements:

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| I favor much stronger measures in the Vietnam War if our military leaders feel it is the best way to achieve victory. | 17% |
| I agree with the current policy of our government in Vietnam. | Less than 5% |
| I favor de-escalation . . . and a much greater effort to reach a politically negotiated settlement . . . | 44% |

I favor immediate withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam.	21%
I do not have sufficient information about the military situation in Vietnam.	7%
Disapproval of survey	1%
Unclassifiable returns	Less than 5%

Hence, nearly 22% of the respondents "expressed views which would favor the administration's present policy or call for greater military actions," while 65% took a liberal, "dovish" position. The answer which received the strongest endorsement was the moderately liberal approach which emphasized de-escalation and negotiation. This study, though limited in scope, does demonstrate a strong corroboration of the findings of the Louis Harris poll mentioned above. In addition, "the results of this survey indicate that the [resolutions of the] UAHC [and the CCAR] . . . do more closely represent the views of American Reform Jews than many vocal critics," both within and outside of the movement, were willing to admit.²⁷

The survey of Orthodox rabbis, taken at approximately the same time as the Oheb Shalom study, revealed remarkably similar responses.

The U.S. should increase its military efforts in Vietnam.	1.7%
The U.S. should take whatever military steps are necessary to win the war.	16.4%
The U.S. is now pursuing an appropriate policy.	14.4%
The U.S. should withdraw from the war.	12.1%
The U.S. should . . . de-escalate . . . and/or make greater efforts to negotiate than it has been making.	53.2%

About 65% of these Orthodox rabbis were opposed to the war, with a clear majority taking a moderately "dovish" approach. 18% favored escalation of the war if necessary. In these two respects, then, there was a nearly exact correspondence with the results of the Oheb Shalom poll. The only difference between the Orthodox and Reform respondents was that the former were more accepting (by a 3 to 1 margin) of the present U.S. policy in Vietnam. The results also demonstrated that the Orthodox rabbinic leaders who answered this survey were even more opposed to the war than other Orthodox rabbis.

Charles Liebman, who conducted this survey, was "puzzled by the contrast between the dovish response of the Orthodox rabbis and the statements of Orthodox organizations and leaders" and suggested two possible explanations. Either the attitudes of the respondents changed after official statements were made or the "Orthodox organizations simply do not reflect the attitudes of RCA rabbis." He does not, however, offer any solution.²⁸ The results of this poll are even more surprising when later Orthodox positions on the war are considered, for the official bodies of Orthodoxy maintained their support of American intervention in Southeast Asia. This would seem to indicate that Liebman's second explanation is most likely the one closer to the truth. Based on the evidence of this (admittedly unscientific) study it appears that there was a bifurcation between the official position of Orthodoxy towards the war and what Orthodox rabbis privately thought. Why did Orthodoxy feel the need to support the war publicly? Perhaps out of concern for continued

U.S. backing of Israel. Perhaps, too, because of feelings of insecurity in American society. It would be best, in other words, for Jews not to "rock the boat" and thereby endanger their own status.

American Jewry's proclivity to oppose the war in Vietnam grew out of its liberal stance vis-a-vis politics in general.²⁹ The Arab-Israeli conflict, while important in altering or, at least, influencing the organizational level of Jewish life, seems to have had an insignificant impact on the opinions Jews held as individuals about Vietnam. It is important to keep in mind, however, that this liberal inclination of American Jewry was simply an indication of how most Jews responded. A substantial minority rejected both liberalism in general and the anti-Vietnam response in particular. Still, most Jews were, by the late 1960's, prepared to see an end to or a reduction of the American presence in Vietnam.

IV. Organizational Responses

Although the majority of Americans (and Jews even more so) favored de-escalation after early 1968, a detailed look at what Jewish groups said about Vietnam between mid-1967 and mid-1969 reveals a wide spectrum of responses to the war.

There are several possible explanations for this seeming failure of Jewish organizations to mirror the attitudes of individual Jews. First and most important was Jewish uneasiness about the deleterious effects their "official" anti-Vietnam statements could have on U.S. support for Israel.

The Johnson/JWV Incident was still fresh in the minds of many Jewish leaders. Although the Administration denied that Jewish responses to Vietnam would affect American backing of Israel, many Jews were unwilling to test the government's resolve to stand by its promises. Other factors, however, also played a role in keeping Jewish groups from adopting new positions on the war. The make up of a group often determined whether or not a clear cut response could be made. Smaller groups, like the National Council of Jewish Women and Americans for a Progressive Israel were able to issue statements because their membership was limited and had a similar view of politics. Larger organizations, with a diverse membership, such as B'nai Brith or Hadassah, remained quite to avoid antagonizing certain elements of their constituencies. A third reason for organizational intransigence at this time was the inertia present in every organization. It is, quite simply, easier for an individual to change opinions than it is to have a group of people agree on a new course of action. Hence, with few exceptions, only those groups which at an earlier date had commented on the war in Vietnam made any public comments on this issue before late 1969. A final explanation for the apparently large gap between individual and organizational responses may be that this was more apparent than real. The polls which indicated the strong antiwar stance of American Jewry were somewhat misleading. Individuals surveyed about the Vietnamese conflict were often forced to choose between approval or disapproval of the war without being asked to make any qualifying remarks about their

choices. As a result, Jews who were against the war could, hypothetically, include one person who was prepared to blow up government buildings in order to change American society, another who advocated a negotiated settlement and phased withdrawal of U.S. troops, and a third who simply had a "gut" feeling that Americans should not be fighting for other nations. In fact, when Jews were asked what course of action the United States should take in Vietnam, a variety of approaches were suggested (although Jews still tended to favor total withdrawal more than other religious groups).³⁰ The diversity of responses by Jewish organizations, therefore, may have been a more accurate and realistic reflection of Jewish attitudes than the polls which showed Jews to be strongly antiwar.

In June 1968 Roland Gittelsohn, vice-president of the CCAR observed, "with the exception of a few Jewish organizations that have taken a definite position, the thinking of the American Jewish community on Vietnam is diffuse."³¹ Although the Tet Offensive had come and gone, American public opinion had changed, and President Johnson was discredited, the attitudes of Jewish organizations regarding the confrontation in Indochina were little different in June 1968 than they were twelve months earlier. Even a year after Gittelsohn uttered his comments the situation had not altered appreciably. Groups on the right (e.g. the JWV) continued to support the war; those in the middle (e.g. B'nai Brith) remained cautious about challenging American policy; those on the left (e.g. agencies of the Reform movement) maintained their opposition

to Vietnam.

The staunchest supporter of the war in the organized Jewish community continued to be the JWV. At its 72nd national convention in August 1967 (Washington, D.C.) the JWV, for the third year in a row, endorsed President Johnson's Vietnam policy. The new National Commander, Samuel Samuels, gave his full support for a resolution which called for "National Unification behind a mighty offensive to end the war by eliminating any Hanoi illusions that the communists can win by default." The resolution was not, however, given unanimous support by the JWV membership. Morton London, a past president of the JWV who had previously criticized the pro-Administration stance of the JWV, once more expressed dissatisfaction with his organization's position. "There is a deep sense of futility and frustration among many Americans on the military aspects of the war," he cautioned the JWV delegates in remarks made on the convention floor, as well as "the debacle of the pacification program and the myth of national interest and commitment to South Vietnam."³²

Throughout 1968 the JWV continued its unquestioning support for American policies in Southeast Asia. In January Samuel Samuels was so inspired by a trip to Vietnam that he decided to launch a new push by the JWV to explain to Americans "the urgency of the war effort." Even after Johnson's decision not to run for President the JWV pledged its "continued full support for our country's welfare and security abroad as well as at home." In August 1968 a new national commander, Charles Feuereisen, was elected. He, like his

predecessors, backed the government's goals to "resist Communist aggression in South Vietnam, and, at the same time, to do everything possible to bring about a just and lasting peace." The JWV defended President Johnson right up to the election in November. Although many Americans criticized Johnson's October 31 bombing halt as a political ploy to aid the Democratic candidate, Hubert H. Humphrey, the JWV, in an apologetic tone, pointed out the various military and strategic reasons Johnson had to wait until that moment to approve a cessation of the bombing.³³

Two smaller groups also came out, in 1968, in favor of the Administration's handling of the war. On January 31 the New York Board of Rabbis and on May 9 the Workmen's Circle, a fraternal benefit society, commended President Johnson's efforts to seek peace in Vietnam.³⁴ It is puzzling that the Workmen's Circle, which was socialistically oriented since its inception in the early twentieth century, would, at such a late date, back the President. It may well be that the members, most of whom were born in Eastern Europe, were still unsure of their place, as Jews, in American society. Support of the war, they might have reasoned, would avoid any negative association of the Jews with an "anti-American" stance.

The Governors of B'nai Brith, representing one half a million members, remained mildly supportive of the Johnson Administration. The leadership of this organization was anxious to maintain a middle-of-the-road policy, undoubtedly to placate the diverse constituency which formed B'nai Brith. A 1968 resolution displayed the various viewpoints within

this group. The Governors noted that many Americans feel "keen anxiety over the morality and wisdom of our nation's . . . large-scale involvement," yet in the very same document they recognized that "many powerful forces still persist in seeking a decisive military victory without due regard for cost or risk." The fact that the final clause was hotly debated and was retained by a small margin (the vote was 16 to 13 in favor of keeping it) plus the general ambiguity of the resolution indicate that B'nai Brith was internally divided on the issue and was, as a result, unable to take any clear stance. The only concrete suggestion made at their December 4 meeting was a request that the Johnson Administration convene "a high-level council . . . to make a fresh and thoroughgoing evaluation" of U.S. objectives in Vietnam. This unimaginative proposal is but one more example of the lack of direction displayed by this important Jewish organization towards the war in Vietnam.³⁵ B'nai Brith women were somewhat more open to attacking the war, reflecting the tendency of American women in general to oppose the war more than men. In late March these women called for vigorous efforts to commence negotiations.³⁶

The Conservative rabbinate, reflecting its centrist tendencies, took a position on the war which was only slightly more critical than that of the B'nai Brith. A "three-fold program" was proposed in a June 1968 resolution: a "re-evaluation of the military course of the war, designed to de-escalate it," a halt to American bombing in order to "move towards negotiations," and an "immediate mutual ceasefire."

The RA was reluctant to explain its position in terms of Judaism. The reasons which the delegates at this convention used to justify these proposals were similar to those made by a growing number of other Americans--the high casualties on both sides, the threat to social programs at home, military leaders who were questioning the possibility of success, and the disapproval of American policy by so many foreign allies. The Conservative rabbis, like their Reform colleagues, supported a de-escalation of the war, but like the Orthodox rabbis, they justified their approach in non-religious terms.³⁷ Hence, the RA members demonstrated in this resolution their general propensity for steering a middle course between Orthodoxy and Reform.

A number of groups kept silent. The reluctance of Zionist organizations to comment on the war is understandable, for the Israeli government publicly supported American policy in Vietnam. In January 1968, then Prime Minister of Israel, Levi Eshkol, met with President Johnson. "Before returning to Israel Eshkol stopped in New York City and defended U.S. policy [in Vietnam] to several hundred Jewish leaders."³⁸ Under such pressure from Israel it is not surprising that nearly all American Zionist groups maintained silence on the Vietnam issue. Communal organizations, including Hadassah and two groups devoted to interfaith activities and the fight for civil liberties, the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith, skirted the debate on the war as well. Vietnam was probably perceived as an issue which was too complex and potentially troublesome for the

Jewish community and, therefore, was simply ignored. The United Synagogue of America, reflecting its middle-of-the-road constituency, was also reluctant to forsake its previous policy of silence.

There were, nevertheless, many Jewish organizations which, in line with the liberal propensity of American Jewry, opposed to the war. Women's groups, the National Jewish Welfare Board, the various agencies of the Reform movement, the AJCongress, and Americans for a Progressive Israel all issued antiwar statements during this period.

Women's groups were generally more dovish than other organizations. This was true both in American society as a whole and in the Jewish community. The women's division of the AJCongress came out against the war in the Autumn of 1965, a year before the general assembly of the Congress passed its statement on Vietnam. In the Fall of 1967, when few other Jewish groups said anything about the war in Indochina, the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), a communal aid organization, called on the U.S. government to settle the war at the negotiation table, not with bombs and bullets.³⁹ In March 1968 B'nai Brith women broke ranks with B'nai Brith when they took a decidedly antiwar stance. The tendency for women's groups to oppose the Vietnam War was probably due to the antiwar inclination of most women, perhaps explained by a greater emotional awareness of the devastating effects of war on everyday life. The resolutions of these women's groups were, more often than not, emotional expressions of disgust with the war, not detailed proposals

for a specific course of action.

In a striking move the National Jewish Welfare Board, a service organization for Jewish military personnel, Young Mens' Hebrew Associations, and community centers, called on the U.S. government to "intensify efforts for negotiated settlement of [the] war" and to encourage freedom of dissent.⁴⁰ This was quite a liberal position for an organization so integrally involved with the armed forces. It is, therefore, difficult to say why they took this position.

The Reform movement and its leaders remained outspoken in their criticism of the Vietnam War throughout the era. Less than three weeks after the Arab-Israeli War, Jacob Weinstein opened the CCAR convention with an impassioned call to double the efforts against the Vietnam War. In November 1967 the UAHC, at its 49th General Assembly held in Montreal, Canada, reaffirmed its opposition to the Vietnam conflict. In a spirit reminiscent of the 1965 resolution on a "World at Peace," the representatives of the Union declared:

We are deeply troubled in conscience by the involvement of our nation in Vietnam. The war's continued escalation not only increasingly disturbs a growing number of our citizens, drains urgently needed economic resources, and threatens a world war, it also brutalizes and degrades all nations.

The proposals set forth were, by and large, the same as those which were made two years before in San Francisco.⁴¹ In January 1968 the UAHC and CCAR joined together in an appeal to President Johnson to immediately halt all bombing in order to "test" the peaceful intentions of Hanoi. It would, these

organizations firmly believed, be a "small risk for the possibility of a negotiated settlement." The CCAR also went on record against the Administration's proposed tax increase, which would be used to pay for the growing costs of the war. After Johnson's speech of March 31, 1968 Reform leaders who were opposed to the war reacted, like most of those involved in the antiwar movement, with jubilation. It seemed that the war would soon be ended. Eisendrath recalled, in words quite similar to those voiced by secular intellectuals, that the President's announcement "revived our waning faith in the efficacy of our democracy." Within a short period of time many in the peace movement realized that their hopes for a settlement were premature. "Our euphoria," Eisendrath expressed sadly, "was all too short lived." The vice-president of the CCAR, Roland Gittelsohn, explained why. "Large segments of the American public," he said, "have been misled by President Johnson" into thinking the bombing of the DRV was ended when, in fact, it was merely restricted to certain areas.⁴² In June 1968 the CCAR reasserted its support for an end to the bombing, recognition of the NLF, and negotiations which would lead to a withdrawal "of all military forces from Vietnam."⁴³

Leaders of the Reform movement remained, by and large, deeply involved in the struggle against the war. The UAHC president, Maurice Eisendrath, and the CCAR presidents, Jacob J. Weinstein (1967), Levi A. Olan (1968), and Roland Gittelsohn (1969), continued to attack U.S. policy in Vietnam and to defend the right of Americans to disagree with that policy.

The president of the movement's seminary, Nelson Glueck, while supportive of the rights of any individual to protest the war, was much more restrained in his feelings about Vietnam.⁴⁴

Although there were some resignations from Reform synagogues because of the positions taken by the movement, no rabbis lost their jobs because of a particular stand on Vietnam.⁴⁵

Prior to 1967 the only other groups to adopt an anti-war position as critical as that taken by the Reform movement were the American Jewish Congress and Americans for a Progressive Israel. They, too, maintained their liberal perspective in the succeeding years.

The antiwar attitudes mirrored in the 1966 resolution on Vietnam of the AJCongress were not abandoned after the Six Day War. On March 3, 1968 the New York Metropolitan Council of the American Jewish Congress sponsored a conference on Vietnam held at the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue (Reform). "Nearly every one of the 800 members of the American Jewish Congress in New York (the largest turnout at a Congress meeting in this area in the past several years)" showed up for the seven hour conference to hear four speakers offer various proposals on the future course of the war. Although a hawkish perspective was given by two of the speakers, the majority of those present were opposed to the war. David Haber, head of the New York Metropolitan Council of the AJCongress, believed that "at least two-thirds of the participants supported the Negotiation Now position [i.e. a halt to bombing, immediate ceasefire, and negotiations for all parties]. . . . almost one-third . . . were prepared,

in fact, to support unilateral withdrawal." Haber felt that the AJCongress' opposition to the war was not based merely in secular values, but Jewish ones, as well. The success of the March 3 conference was therefore regarded as an endorsement of "the involvement of the American Jewish Congress in the Peace Movement as a Jewish organization."⁴⁶

The much smaller Americans for a Progressive Israel, a leftist Zionist organization, also maintained its pre-1967 antiwar stance following the Six Day War. In December 1967 it adopted a resolution which echoed the now familiar call of the American peace movement for an immediate end to American bombing, a ceasefire, and the withdrawal of all foreign troops. In addition, the resolution expressed revulsion at "the attempts to muzzle criticism by Jews of America's Vietnam policy by hinting that this might harm the United States' post-conflict help to Israel in the international political arena." It is obvious that the members of this Zionist group did not perceive any conflict between support of Israel and opposition to the Vietnam War, as did almost all other Zionist organizations. This was undoubtedly due to the highly leftist orientation which they represented.⁴⁷

Many leaders of the Jewish community were also involved in non-Jewish national organizations, both religious and secular, which were against the war. At first it seemed as if the Six Day War would cause a rift in the interfaith organizations against the war in Vietnam. The Christian community was lukewarm, at best, in its support for Israel during and

after the Arab-Israel conflict. Although the ensuing chill in Jewish-Christian relations threatened to splinter the ecumenical peace groups, relations never grew so bad as to result in an actual break. Within half a year Jews were once again actively involved in these interfaith organizations.⁴⁸

After the Tet Offensive the religious community was perceived, in the popular mind, as largely opposed to the war. One commentator argued, in April 1968, that "forthright comments by religious leaders and publications [against the Vietnam War] are the rule rather than the exception."⁴⁹ Richard J. Neuhaus, who, in 1970, conducted an in-depth study of the policy statements of various religious groups, as well as the editorials of a number of religious (particularly Christian) periodicals of the late 1960's, indicated that this "image of relentless religious opposition to the war is misleading." Before the Tet Offensive of early 1968 many churches were mildly critical of the war, but most said nothing. After this point, Neuhaus found, many churches shared the disillusionment of Americans generally about the continuation of the war, but few actively opposed American policy. Neuhaus also discovered that a very small percentage of the clergy in America (no more than 10% as members and less than 5% as active participants) were involved with the major peace groups of the late 1960's--FOR, SANE, Negotiation Now!, or CALCAV. The activist minority within the American religious community was, however, influential in religious publications and at seminaries. As a result,

Neuhaus continued, "no publication in the mainstream of the American religious [community] . . . has supported the war," with the exception of "purely denominational papers."

It is difficult to ascertain whether these findings also held true for the religious movements of American Jewry. Organizationally, there was an almost even division of opinion--Orthodoxy in favor of the war, Reform and Reconstructionist against it, and the Conservatives split (the RA was mildly antiwar, but the United Synagogue was uncommitted to any clear position). Jewish religious leaders also took a number of perspectives. Neuhaus' findings, however, do seem to be in line with the responses of the rabbis of these religious movements, for a 1969 study by Rabbi Arnold Pessin demonstrated that only a small minority of rabbis were actively involved in the debate over Vietnam. Furthermore, activist opposition to the war was more prevalent in the Jewish seminaries.⁵⁰

The strong opposition to the war among seminarians and within seminary faculties was probably the result of two factors--the prevailing antiwar mood of American college-age youth and academia and, secondly, the tendency of religious individuals to emphasize peace over a resort to a military show of arms. A New York Times survey made in mid-March 1968 indicated that while the number of students active in the peace movement represented roughly 10 to 15% of the student body "a majority of the approximately 75,000 seminarians of the three faiths [i.e. Catholic, Protestant, Jewish] appeared to oppose the war." This study noticed several key

differences in the attitudes of seminarians vis-a-vis most university students. First, there seemed to be a greater support for civil disobedience among seminary students, no doubt due to the fact that going to jail as an act of conscience was regarded as less detrimental to a clerical career than to other professions. Second, although civil disobedience was encouraged by seminary students, most seminarians avoided confrontative tactics for more peaceful demonstrations or political actions, such as distributing petitions and writing letters. Finally, the antiwar movement in seminaries was "marked by a lack of cynicism and by an absence of the political radicalism present on most secular campuses" at this time. The antiwar feeling was greatest at Protestant seminaries with a strong tradition of social activism (e.g. Union Theological Seminary in New York City), less strong at Jewish and denominational Protestant seminaries, and weakest at Catholic and fundamentalist Protestant institutions."⁵¹

A number of prominent Conservative and Reform rabbis remained active in CALCAV, "the largest of the religious peace groups, and possibly the largest peace group of any sort in America." Abraham Heschel co-chaired the national committee of this group. In April 1968 he and four other rabbis issued, along with twenty-four Christian colleagues, a pamphlet entitled "In the Name of America." Its purpose was to educate Americans about the "crimes of humanity" in Vietnam and to move them to speak out against the war. CALCAV and other antiwar groups had, in earlier years, come to the conclusion that silence implied acceptance of an

immoral conflict. To plead ignorance was no longer an acceptable excuse by 1968. "The citizen who knows of the wrongs committed in the name of his country, and remains silent, is thereby implicated in the perpetuation of those wrongs," the pamphlet indicted, "in a free society, if some men are guilty all are responsible."⁵² On February 6-8, 1968 approximately 2,000 supporters of CALCAV met in Washington, in the words of the organizers, "to talk tactically about increased opposition to the Vietnamese War, and to make clear our concern for our brothers who in conscience cannot fight in Vietnam." A large number of seminary students, including a contingent of more than 40 students and faculty from HUC-JIR, participated in the February conference.⁵³

There were few large demonstrations against the war planned by the antiwar movement in 1968. Energy was directed, instead, towards electing a presidential candidate who would possess more dovish views. Jewish leaders opposed to the war were therefore involved in organizations which hoped to influence the political opinions of the various candidates. "The AJCongress . . . cooperated in helping establish a comprehensive coalition of mainstream religious, civic, and educational organizations for a negotiated settlement in Vietnam [a bombing halt, and a ceasefire] under the heading of 'Negotiation Now!'" The National Committee for a Political Settlement in Vietnam, backed by the leaders of the Reform movement and the AJCongress, among others, offered a comprehensive "ceasefire strategy" for both candidates for president (Hubert H. Humphrey and Richard M. Nixon) to con-

sider.⁵⁴ The fact that even the most critical members of the Jewish "Establishment" were still willing to work within the political system shows how great a gulf lay between them and those individuals in the Left who rejected "the system" and rioted at the Democratic convention. The leaders of the organized Jewish community, like other religious leaders, may have lent their support to people who engaged in civil disobedience, but chose for themselves the path of peaceful political protest.

The arguments used by individual Jews on all sides of the Vietnam issue were not substantially different after June 1967 from those used earlier.

Many opponents of the war continued to base their stand on the moral values of Judaism. Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld, president of the AJCongress, argued that Jews should be concerned with "what is happening in Vietnam because it has been a major principle of Jewish thought and of Jewish life that whatever depreciates man depreciates the Divine Image; the chief value which we are called upon to defend is kavod habriyot--respect for human beings, for human dignity, for human life. Rabbi Abraham Feinberg agreed, "As a Jew and Rabbi, I find Communist totalitarianism intolerable," he admitted in a speech delivered in March 1968, but "Judaism's priority is human life rather than a political, economic, or social system." The time for silence was long past. "We may not regard Vietnam with equanimity or indifference," Feinberg claimed. To accept the view that Vietnam was not a

Jewish concern was derided as an attempt to cut oneself off from the Jewish "mission" to perfect the world. It was, in other words, a "self-imposed Galut [i.e. exile]." These arguments, and many like them, had been heard before. The essence of the disagreement remained the same--the war in Vietnam was immoral. Rabbi Lelyveld clearly expressed this view:

We could attack this unwanted war for what it is doing to the fabric of American democracy. . . . We could condemn the war for the waste of American lives and of American resources when they are so desperately needed for the healing of the sickness of American cities and for the redemption of the American poor. . . . We have, be it said, chosen to take our stand squarely on the ethical judgement that what we are doing in Vietnam and to the Vietnamese people is wrong.⁵⁵

Supporters of the war, for the first time in the minority, began to show some signs of uncertainty, although they continued to espouse views in line with those made earlier in the decade. Some responded, like Rabbi Harry J. Kaufman (Orthodox) of the Washington, D.C. area, that they did not "feel competent to speak on this" issue. Seymour Siegel worried that a communist victory in Vietnam would lead to instability in the region, but added an ambiguous remark that "we must always be open to new alternatives." In a June 1968 prowar article in the Reconstructionist the author (for "legitimate" reasons, according to the editor) chose not to use his own name, but a pseudonym, Abraham Zeligovitz. He made many familiar points. Opponents of the war speak of the immorality of the U.S., Zeligovitz said, but forget the immorality of the other side. It is one thing to object to the

war on its strategic faults, but to attack it with a one-sided morality is unjust. In addition, the communist world is united against Israel and, therefore, should be the object of the Jewish community's wrath. Finally, Zeligovitz declared, dissent is increasingly perceived as a "Jewish" domain and may endanger "the safety and future of Jews in this country and the world."⁵⁶ Although Zeligovitz and those like him were correct in pointing out the antiwar tendency to avoid evils of the North Vietnamese and NLF, they really missed the point. Supporters of American policy in Indochina continued to conceive of the war in terms of how it would affect the Jews, whereas the majority of the opponents of the war thought in terms of how it related to Jewish values.

Although there was wide spectrum of responses to Vietnam, nearly all segments of the Jewish community reacted with horror to the radicalization of the antiwar movement after mid-1967 and its refusal to protest peacefully against wrongs in the draft system. The violent methods espoused by the radicals threatened anarchy and revolution. It seems clear why Jews reacted so negatively to this threat. All too frequently in history societies fraught with violence turned against the Jews. American Jewry, as secure as it was in American society, did not feel so comfortable as to forget what the past had taught. In rejecting this "new style in protest" the Jewish "Establishment" demonstrated, once more, that while it might question the war, it did not doubt the value of the American system as a whole. Jews who opposed

the war were liberals, not radicals. "We have a sense of horror of war," explained Abraham Heschel, "but a respect for the law is central to the Jewish community, and most do not want to criticize a country that offered Jews a haven from persecution." In November 1967, the month after the Pentagon March, two Jewish periodicals, the Reconstructionist and Jewish Frontier, expressed concern with the "flagrant and irresponsible violence" of the Vietnam dissenters. Neither editorial criticized the goal of these protesters. In fact, the fear was that such violent protest would harm the antiwar movement as a whole.

The extremist fringe around the peace movement is . . . harmful to its purpose. . . . Those concerned with the achievement of an objective rather than self-expression cannot afford to disregard the safeguards and controls of the democratic process.

Jewish liberals in the antiwar movement agreed. "All of us in the peace movement are confronted by a terrible dilemma," wrote the editor of the JPF Newsletter, Murray Polner, in early 1969, "what to do in revolutionary and violent situations."⁵⁷

Jews were not opposed to civil disobedience per se, only the violent forms it was increasingly assuming after mid-1967. In early 1967 a few Jewish leaders, almost exclusively rabbis, began to advocate nonviolent civil disobedience. Just a handful, however, were willing to actually engage in illegal acts. Perhaps encouraged by the growing strength of the draft resistance movement a number of young, committed Jews felt, by late 1967, that the time had come to act.

On the evening of December 6, 1967 approximately 80 young men and women from the Cincinnati, Ohio area began a vigil at the local induction center, located in the Federal Building in downtown Cincinnati. The following morning they moved inside the building to stage a "sit-in." Two of those arrested, Lewis E. Goldenberg and Leigh Lerner, were students at HUC-JIR. Other rabbinic students also took part in the early morning "sit-in." The local authorities in this conservative midwestern city reacted harshly to this act of civil disobedience. Shortly thereafter, Dr. Sheldon Blank, an HUC-JIR faculty member who regarded the prophetic message as the driving force behind contemporary social activism, agreed to a student request to "join with others in a protest against the treatment of these demonstrators." A group was created which came to be known as Sixteen Concerned Citizens and included Blank and other prominent Jews. These sixteen individuals sent a letter to the City Council to express "shock and chagrin at the intemperate treatment given the draft protesters" and sparked a fierce debate locally on the propriety of civil disobedience. Three HUC-JIR students, in a February 1968 letter to one of Cincinnati's newspapers, alleged that the harsh sentence against those participating in the "sit-in" two months earlier was tantamount to breaking the Nuremberg Charter established to try Nazi war criminals. They conducted a three-day fast as "an appeal to our fellow Cincinnatians to voice their dissent."⁵⁸ With the act of December 1967 and the reaction to it the die was set. Not only had young Jews actually engaged in civil disobedience,

but a committed cadre of their elders were supportive.

V. The Issue of the Draft and Conscience

The burning issue of the period between June 1967 and the summer of 1969 was that of draft resistance. Although it was illegal either to resist the draft or "to aid, abet, or counsel men to refuse the draft," the hope was that the refusal of so many young men to fight would convince the government that American intervention in Indochina must cease. In mid-1967 two Fellows at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C. drafted "A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority," which received wide circulation and support. The signers explained the reasons they chose to act illegally:

We hope that by using traditional American tactics of nonviolent civil disobedience against conscription and militarism we will further spur further antidraft activity and help to build the tidal wave of revulsion that will lead to the withdrawal of our Army from Vietnam . . .⁵⁹

In San Francisco an organization calling itself "The Resistance" called for a nationwide draft card turn-in to be held on October 16, 1967. More than one thousand cards were turned in on the designated day "during ceremonies held in eighteen cities. On October 20, Dr. [Benjamin] Spock, Mitchell Goodman, Marcus Raskin, and Arthur Waskow formally accepted the cards at a rally held in front of the Department of Justice in Washington."⁶⁰ The number of draft resisters subsequent to this incident grew tremendously. An estimated 570,000 men over the course of the war committed "draft violations that could have sent them to prison for five years." Of these, only 3,250 went to prison ("most of them were

paroled within a year.") The numbers of draft resisters so overwhelmed the government that only 89% of all cases of resistance were even prosecuted."⁶¹ It is difficult to ascertain whether or not the draft resistance had any impact on the outcome of the war, but it certainly kept hundreds of thousands of young men from entering the military during the period of the Vietnamese conflict.

In the Jewish community, of course, the topic was not a new one. Many of the problems related to the draft--civil disobedience, conscientious objection, selective conscientious objection, and rabbinic counselling of draft resisters--had been discussed at the very beginning of the escalation in 1964, if not before. However, one problem now received attention for the first time. This was the mandatory chaplaincy required of all rabbinic ordinees of the three largest seminaries--Yeshiva University (Orthodox), JTS (Conservative), and HUC-JIR (Reform). All these issues now began to play a dominant role in the debate on Vietnam.

At the center of the debate was the growing emphasis given to individual conscience. Conscientious objection had been an option in America since the beginning of the century. In the period between the First World War and Vietnam CO status was expanded from an option open only to the adherents of a few strictly pacifist Christian organizations to a status available to anyone who objected to war because of "religious training and belief." From the 1930's, CO status was accepted by Reform and Conservative Judaism as legitimately Jewish. The Jewish Peace Fellowship had, since its inception, also

asserted that a Jew could be a conscientious objector. Yet throughout the Vietnam era Jews were denied CO status by local draft boards. To correct this, U.S. Senator Charles E. Goodell and Representative Allard K. Lowenstein of New York called on the Selective Service System on May 21, 1969 "to issue new guidelines to correct the widespread practice of denying Jews CO status."⁶² For many people this was not enough. As the war in Vietnam progressed, there were growing demands by Jews and non-Jews to expand the meaning of conscientious objection beyond its legal definition as a religious disavowal of military confrontation. Legally, "persons who might object to a particular war on philosophical or political grounds" were not eligible for consideration as conscientious objectors.⁶³ In addition, any non-religious objection, be it based on politics, sociology, or a personal moral code, could not be considered. Change was sought, therefore, in two areas--first, to include non-religious, ethical pacifism in addition to religious pacifism as a basis for a claim of conscientious objection and second, to allow for selective conscientious objection, the disagreement with a particular conflict and not necessarily war in general.

In 1951 the RA sought to include "humanitarian beliefs" as a basis for conscientious objection. The CCAR, in 1964, urged Congress "to protect the individual whose conscientious objection to military service has been established as genuine without consideration as to his belief in a Supreme Being." On March 8, 1965 the Supreme Court upheld the position advocated by the two rabbinic organizations and accepted the

validity of non-religious conscientious objection. If one's beliefs occupied "a place in the life of its possessor parallel to that filled by the orthodox belief in God."⁶⁴

Selective conscientious objection, a new idea in Jewish circles in early 1967, was, a year and a half later, a hallmark of Jewish antiwar proponents. Individuals and organizations which took a liberal approach towards the war usually embraced the idea of SCO at an early date. The first organization to call for the establishment of a category of SCO for the purpose of exemption from military duty was the CCAR (June 1967). By a 66 to 49 vote the Reform rabbis approved a resolution which supported SCO, called for an expansion of non-combat and non-military service for all conscientious objectors, and warned against the use of the selective service system to control dissidence. That November, Maurice Eisendrath called on the delegates at the 49th UAHC General Assembly to endorse a proposed resolution on SCO. The Reform lay leaders were unwilling, however, to accede to his request and the resolution was not ratified.⁶⁵ It may be that these lay individuals were uncomfortable with the broad definition of conscience implied by an acceptance of SCO. The Union, as progressive as was its approach to the draft, maintained a more moderate point-of-view than its affiliated organization, the CCAR. The other liberal groups, the Americans for a Progressive Israel and the American Jewish Congress, were also in favor of SCO. Some, like Rabbi Everett Gendler, went so far as to say that SCO was "a fundamental teaching of Judaism and a fundamental demand of its

adherents."⁶⁶ Whatever the basis for their position, liberals in the Jewish community continued to support SCO until the end of the war.

Moderates, and even a few political conservatives, in the Jewish community also began, in 1968, to support the creation of a separate SCO status. Addressing the Conservative rabbis present at a June convention of the RA, Rabbi Eli A. Bohnen, that organization's president, argued that SCO "must be recognized," for it allowed one to object to a war seen as wrong (e.g. Vietnam), yet did not restrict that person from supporting another conflict (e.g. the Israelies during the Six Day War). The RA concurred and urged the government to recognize selective conscientious objection. The Conservative rabbis did not accept the view of the radical draft resistance movement, which refused to cooperate with the Selective Service system, but saw the person who claimed SCO status as an individual who would "serve his country in a manner other than engaging in direct military duty." Even some Orthodox Jews backed SCO. In September 1968 Yavneh, the National Religious Jewish Students Association, held a five-day seminar on the Jewish position on the Vietnam War. At that time one of the leaders of the organization asked that the current draft be amended to allow for SCO. Three months after this, Rabbi Aaron Soloveichik, the dean of the Hebrew Theological College of Skokie, Illinois, a modern Orthodox seminary, spoke with 300 college students affiliated with Yavneh. He told them of his support for SCO. "It is immoral for the United States to recognize objections of conscience

only as unqualified opposition to all wars," he declared.⁶⁷ By no means was acceptance of SCO widespread among Orthodox Jews, but, in a remarkable switch from official Orthodox policy, some objections were raised. This can be accounted for only if one looks to the general situation in America at this time. In America, intellectuals and students were at the center of the Vietnam protest. Obviously, the ferment of 1967-68 even affected those in a seemingly insular Orthodox Jewish community.

In 1968 more and more Jews were willing, based upon conscience, to either become a draft resister, if young enough to be drafted, or, if over the age for induction, to actively aid those who sought to evade the draft in some way.

Legally, the aiding or abetting of a draft resister was a criminal act. In fact, the "Boston Five" were indicted on this very charge. Yet a growing number of young Jews and rabbis in 1967 and 1968 felt that draft counselling was a crucial need. Older Jews were undoubtedly inspired by the courageous stands taken by prominent individuals across America. On April 4, 1967 Martin Luther King, Jr., speaking at the Riverside Church in New York advocated the counselling of draftees who were conscientious objectors and encouraged "all ministers of draft age to give up their ministerial exemptions and seek status as conscientious objectors." A number of rabbis were also heartened by the October 1967 actions of Dr. Spock, Rev. Coffin, and others at the national draft card turn-in and, soon thereafter, pledged their support for persons who broke the law in order to end the war.⁶⁸

In December 1967 Rabbis Brickner, Gittelsohn, and Heschel joined with non-Jewish clergy in stating that they were "prepared to pay whatever price . . . to defend the right of conscience." The following June the CCAR resolved to set up "draft counselling services in our synagogues" and to work more closely with the JPF. The rabbis at the convention also declared:

Acting out of commitment to the prophetic ideals of justice and peace, and acknowledging the duty of the individual to act in accordance with the highest ideals of morality, we hereby express our support of those who conscientiously dissent from the policy of our government in Vietnam and who refuse to cooperate with that policy.⁶⁹

In late December 1968 young Jews affiliated with United Synagogue Youth, the youth group of the Conservative movement, expressed their concern "over the failure of rabbis and Jewish groups to counsel them on such issues as pacifism, the draft, and conscientious objection."⁷⁰

The most well-documented case of rabbinic willingness to engage in illegal draft counselling involved two rabbis at Sinai Congregation (Reform) of Washington, D.C.--Eugene Lipman and Merle Singer. In the February 1968 congregational bulletin Lipman declared:

I have deliberately placed myself in the position of civil disobedient. . . . I shall continue to meet with individuals who face the Selective Service System and I shall continue to make clear to them (a) that in my view their individual consciences transcend the requirements of the State; (b) in my view they have a right . . . to pursue the demands of conscience either within the law or beyond the boundaries of the law; (c) if they decide to act beyond the boundary of the law, I am prepared to aid them.

Lipman clarified his understanding of the purpose of "rabbinic

counselling" as not "advocating a position. . . . [but] to help the young person to understand the issues. Then he must make up his own mind." He supported civil disobedience, but drew the line at any act of violence. "I do not support or aid personal harassment of draft board members, . . . interference of troop movement to any place, [or] burning of draft board offices and records." Lipman went on to say that he was, at the current time, counselling three or four times per week. His statement, which was supported by his colleague, Merle Singer, aroused tremendous consternation in the synagogue.

To answer the concerns of their congregants the two rabbis agreed to explain their position after Friday evening services on March 15. Over 1200 people showed up to hear what their rabbis would say. Lipman and Singer both reiterated that they were not advocating a particular point of view, but merely hoped to serve as a sounding board and a source of information for those persons who were confused about the various alternatives to the draft and the consequences of making certain choices. The rabbis' goal was to help the individual choose a "responsive reflective of his own values." Lipman explained that the Selective Service Law of 1967 was a "bad law" because it did not recognize the right of an individual to object to the war on strictly humanitarian grounds or to seek status as a selective conscientious objector. He based his actions in "Judaism [which] requires the primacy of the individual's religious convictions over society's demands." Many challenged the rabbis in their

support for illegal activities, but only one member resigned (although one non-member was so impressed by their stance that she joined the synagogue).⁷¹

The Jewish Peace Fellowship had, of course, counselled individuals about the draft for decades. It was the only Jewish organization, both before and during the war, which had as its primary purpose the counselling of individuals uncertain about the draft. Due to the fact that it was the only Jewish resource on issues of the draft it grew rapidly as more and more young Jewish men were threatened with induction and sought ways of avoiding it. The increase of the JPF annual budget indicates the spurt of interest in the aims of this organization during this period. In 1965 the group had a \$1500 budget. In 1966 it remained a modest \$2000. The following year it tripled, reaching \$6500. In 1968 membership exploded; the budget stood at \$25,000. "The single most important source of income . . . [was] the contributions of individual rabbis," although some funds were received from the CCAR. The JPF's budgetary and membership growth mirrored an enlarged importance in the Jewish community. Whereas one hundred requests regarding CO status were received per year in the years prior to 1967, over 200 prospective conscientious objectors were counselled by phone or mail during the one month of April 1968 alone. Field representatives were added in Chicago, New York, Boston, and New Haven, Connecticut. A West Coast chapter was established at the Leo Baeck Temple (Reform) in Los Angeles.⁷²

The JPF originally dealt only with those Jews who con-

sidered themselves to be COs and were willing to serve their country, though not in a military capacity. Individuals who chose CO status were still classified under the Selective Service System. During the Vietnam War, however, young men refused, for the first time since the Selective Service System was established, to cooperate with the government's draft system in any way. The JPF was now faced with the need for counselling these draft resisters.

The JPF published several pamphlets at the time to deal with these dilemmas. One, entitled "Counselling Young Jews About Conscientious Objection to Military Service," was written for rabbis and Jewish lay leaders who were increasingly faced with young Jews seeking "Jewish" answers to the issues of war and the draft. Two other pamphlets--"The Draft and the Jew: Must I Destroy Life?" and "Can a Jew be a Conscientious Objector?"--were addressed to the college-age youth who were confronted with this difficult decision. The JPF's pacifist bent was explicit in both pamphlets. The latter declared: "While Judaism is not in any absolute sense a 'pacifist' tradition, some of its basic teachings, when applied to what we know of modern war, raise grave doubts about the permissibility of participation in war today." Although there is "no uniform doctrine" in Judaism, the other publication elaborated, "the major values and experiences of the Jewish people have tended to enshrine peace and nonviolent solutions." The JPF realized that many Jews, when standing before their draft boards, could be asked, "Would you have fought against Hitler?" "This kind of question is

really irrelevant," the pamphlets argued in defense of SCO, "the Selective Service law judges COs on the basis of their attitudes towards participation in U.S. wars of the present and potential future, not on what they might have done in past times and under other circumstances."⁷³

The choice of Jews to resist the draft explicitly on the basis of Jewish values, rather than on account of political objections to the Vietnam War, was rare, but noteworthy. In 1968 and 1969 a handful of young Jewish men, the majority of whom were affiliated in some way with one of the rabbinical seminaries, joined the hundreds of other Americans who turned in their draft cards at that time.

Michael Zigmond, the son of Rabbi Maurice Zigmond, New England Hillel Foundations director, turned in his draft card at a "religious service" in November 1967. His father explained the reason why: "[he] contends that nice, clean-cut, non-hippy boys like himself from middle class, respectable families must speak out against the war." As a result, Zigmond's draft board declared him "delinquent" for failing to carry a draft card and soon thereafter he received a notice to appear for induction (he was previously on an educational deferment). The Massachusetts Board of Rabbis condemned the decision of Zigmond's draft board to re-classify him for induction as a flagrant misuse of the draft system as a "means of silencing opposition to the war." Zigmond refused induction and was brought to trial at the U.S. Federal District Court in Boston in early April 1969. In early September 1969 the charges against Michael Zigmond were finally dropped due

to a "procedural error."⁷⁴ In the meanwhile he had made his point--a Jew could and should obey the dictates of conscience, even if it meant opposing the law of the land.

On December 4, 1968, Jeffrey Halper, a rabbinic student at HUC-JIR in Cincinnati, announced during chapel services that he was returning his draft card to the Selective Service in protest over Vietnam. His decision to take the path of "social protest and civil disobedience," the culmination of one and a half years of uncertainty, was based in "those ideals of love and justice which mankind in general and Judaism in particular hold sacred." Wearing a kipah (head covering) and two peace symbols, the 22 year old told those present that while he was "frightened" and "ashamed" that he was the first rabbinical student to reject his seminarian exemption from the draft, he had no choice but to protest the "entire draft system which gave me my deferment because of my color and my wealth. To be part of the Selective Service System at this time," he concluded, was an "intolerable violation of conscience and morality." The president of the college, Nelson Glueck, rose to speak immediately following Halper. Glueck praised Halper's "deep religious spirit" which led him to make this gesture, but felt it was probably not "going to be very effective." The president of the College-Institute defended Halper's right to voice his opinions, although he did not agree with all of what he said. Glueck ended by assuring the young seminarian that "if he fills our requirements, by the grace of God and our faculty" he would be ordained.⁷⁵

Even more dramatic was an incident which took place at the Conservative Seminary in New York. On March 6, 1969 Burton Weiss, the New York field director of the JPF and a former student at the Jewish Theological Seminary's Summer Institute, was to appear in a U.S. District Court for arraignment as a draft resister. He chose instead, on the invitation of 18 friends at JTS, to spend the day in the synagogue of the Conservative seminary. He explained, in a letter delivered to the federal judge for his trial, that "in it [the synagogue] the Jew marks and celebrates together with his people the most significant events in his life." The day was referred to as a "learn-in" by the JTS student body and was spent studying traditional texts related to pacifism. One of those who was present recalled the intense feelings felt by students and faculty on that day. "For once we had realized a Jewish ideal, a seminary dream--namely, the total integration of our religious, moral, and personal concerns within the context of our Tradition." Standing arm in arm with students, faculty (including Abraham Heschel) and seminary president Bernard Mandelbaum, Weiss surrendered peacefully to four U.S. marshalls. He carried with him a Hebrew Bible and a statement of support from 115 of the 140 JTS students. As he was led away, the assembled community burst into song. The words were Lo yisa goy el goy herev ("Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore").⁷⁶

Other rabbinic students besides Halper decided, during the 1968-69 academic year, that they, too, had no choice but to resist the draft. On May 1 Daniel Siegel, a student at

the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia, turned in his draft card and disavowed his exemption as a divinity student. Ten days later John Ruskay, at JTS, did the same thing. The Dean of JTS, Rabbi Arthur Gilbert and eleven JTS students, issued a statement of support for Ruskay.

We believe that the Jewish community must stand behind its young men who exercise the traditional Jewish right to refuse to participate in an immoral war. . . . In the choice between immoral disobedience to the law of the state, we must give our allegiance to the higher law of moral conduct.⁷⁷

Halper, Siegel, and Ruskay, by returning their draft cards, were breaking U.S. law. Their fellow rabbinic students, while not willing to take such drastic measures, did begin to question the mandatory chaplaincy program of the major seminaries. In the early 1950's a coordinated program was established in the Jewish community which required all eligible rabbinic ordinees (i.e. those not receiving exemptions or deferments) of Yeshiva University (YU), JTS, and HUC-JIR to enlist in the American armed forces and serve as military chaplains. In the early months of 1967 rabbinic students at HUC-JIR and JTS began to call upon the chaplaincy committees of their respective rabbinic organizations to review present policy regarding chaplaincy. Senior HUC-JIR students told Maurice Eisendrath of their "moral reservations" about Vietnam and asked him to convey their desire for the legitimization of SCO as an appropriate reason for not becoming a military chaplain. At JTS two students, who were conscientious objectors, after facing some "unpleasant negotiation,"

were exempted from service.⁷⁸

The chaplaincy program came under increasing attacks from individuals other than students after the middle of 1967. Not only did the program's existence imply acceptance of an unwanted war, but its system of deferments (e.g. for married individuals, physical problems, or graduate study) led to inequities, causing bitterness and cynicism. In addition, the current system, on account of deferments, was not providing enough chaplains to meet the needs of the armed forces. At first recommendations were made simply to exempt rabbinic students who attested to their conscientious objection from serving in the chaplaincy.⁷⁹ In 1968 the Orthodox and Conservative movements went even further and ended their demands that rabbinic graduates be required to become military chaplains. Oddly enough, on this issue the Reform movement lagged behind, ending its mandatory chaplaincy program only the following year.

On March 6, 1968 Yeshiva University "agreed to a request from rabbinical students to suspend for one year its participation in [the] Jewish community's self-imposed draft of rabbis for military chaplaincy duty, making such service voluntary." The RCA, whose membership was primarily alumni of Yeshiva University, acquiesced to the Yeshiva University decision on a trial basis. Within a year, however, the RCA reinstituted the stipulation that "the requirement for admission to the Rabbinical Council must be satisfied as to the chaplaincy."⁸⁰

In early 1968 the Conservative movement was rapidly

moving to the same conclusion that Yeshiva University came to endorse. At JTS an "overwhelming majority" of students approved a resolution "rejecting the compulsory system for procurement of chaplains." The incident in early March with Burton Weiss only served to intensify feelings about the issue. Rabbi Eli A. Bohnen, RA president, felt the time was ripe for a change. At the RA convention in late March he declared:

The chaplain is part of the military, and is unable to question the premises on which the war is fought. . . . some may claim that in war one cannot afford the luxury of conscience. Can we . . . agree that conscience is a luxury? The time will soon come, if it has not already arrived, when we shall have to ask that the chaplain cease to be part of the military establishment, . . . without being subjected to military discipline beyond that imposed on other civilians serving the Armed Forces.

Bohnen's colleagues were cognizant of the difficulties of maintaining a mandatory military chaplaincy for JTS graduates. As a result, three weeks after the Yeshiva University decision, the RA suspended the mandatory program of chaplaincy procurement for a voluntary one. They also emphasized the need to find new sources for chaplains, perhaps through the employment of civilians. A "Committee on Chaplaincy" recommended that JTS graduates still be required to give two years of mandatory "special service" to the community, but that the military would only be one of the options. To assure the success of this proposal it was further suggested that no JTS graduate be admitted to the RA until completion of this assignment. A "Commission on Community Service" was formed to oversee the application of these recommendations.⁸¹

The CCAR was greatly divided over the elimination of mandatory chaplaincy at its June 1968 convention. The Chaplaincy Committee of the CCAR was aware of the pressure on the Conference from HUC-JIR students and the other movements to eliminate this system, but felt that such a move would only "penalize" Jewish soldiers. Bertram Korn, who chaired this committee, warned that "too few of our men would serve in uniform if chaplaincy service were voluntary." He urged the CCAR members to divorce this issue from their concerns about Vietnam. As a compromise measure the Chaplaincy Committee simply proposed, in accord with the Reform rabbinate's resolution on the Selective Service System the previous year, that newly ordained rabbis be allowed to seek exemption from military chaplaincy on the grounds of conscientious objection to a particular war, but that no other changes be made.⁸² A lengthy discussion ensued. Some supported the recommendation of the Chaplaincy Committee. Others suggested different proposals. One group supported a two year service program for newly-ordained rabbis modelled after the RA system. Another group said "we should abandon the drafting of rabbis" for any obligatory service. A further suggestion was to require service placements not just for graduating students, but for rabbis in the field, as well.

A number of reasons were suggested for elimination of the current program. First, military chaplains are not free to speak out. Second, it is wrong to expect HUC-JIR "to deny ordination to men who do not comply" to CCAR rules. Third, the system is unfair. Fourth, there are many places, besides

the military (e.g. foreign congregations, Hillels, etc.) where Jews need to be served. A final objection was that such a system is philosophically inconsistent with the stance of the CCAR. In a perceptive remark, Rabbi Hillel Gamoran noted the divergency between CCAR rhetoric and action. "Certainly the need to serve young people . . . is a telling argument," he said, "but this is in direct conflict with the need to oppose with all our strength our government's policy in Vietnam."⁸³

For the moment, nevertheless, the Chaplaincy Committee proposal was the operative model. At the same time a special committee was created to investigate the other courses of action suggested during the convention.

For the Reform movement, change was a year away. In June 1969 the CCAR once more discussed possible alterations to the current mandatory chaplaincy program. The many arguments, pro and con, were simply reiterations of those made the year before. A proposal of the special Committee on Chaplaincy, which was appointed in 1968, for a mandatory "two years of service" for all HUC-JIR graduates, was defeated. The final result was that the present system would be scrapped and a voluntary program would be instituted on a two year trial basis. It was also resolved to investigate the "possibility" of a civilian chaplaincy system.⁸⁴

In the Jewish community reaction to the moves by the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform movements to limit, if not eliminate, the chaplaincy system, was mixed and, at times, surprising. As would be expected, rabbis who volunteered to work in the military disapproved of the changes. "Whether

we as religious leaders have any philosophical reservations about the role the United States plays in [Southeast Asia], . . . the fact still remains that Jewish boys are fighting and dying in Vietnam--and they and their needs must be our priority consideration," wrote Rabbi Mark Golub (Reform), at that time stationed in Vietnam. Rabbi Gerry Rosenberg (Conservative), also in Vietnam, explained that he might "wrestle" with the problems raised by the war, but, he added, "that is not why I am here. I am here to serve." The president of the Association of Jewish Chaplains of the Armed Forces, in a letter to the heads of the main seminaries, rabbinical groups, and association members, strongly opposed refusal by any rabbi to serve as a chaplain on the basis of SCO.⁸⁵

The response from secular Jewish organizations, by and large, followed ideological lines. The JWV argued that the moves "are not striking a blow for peace nor making a legitimate protest against the war. They are striking a blow against fellow Americans whose services make a free society possible for all, including the dissenters."⁸⁶ The American Jewish Congress, at its May 1968 convention, not only supported the elimination of the mandatory chaplaincy within the Jewish community, but proposed that all religious groups in America move to replace military chaplains with civilian chaplains, who will consider nothing but the religious needs of the soldier [they are] . . . counselling."⁸⁷ Unexpected opposition to the decision of Yeshiva University and the RA to change the decade and a half old system was expressed in the editorial pages of the Reconstructionist, an otherwise

liberal, antiwar forum. The disagreement was two-fold: "We not only believe that it [i.e. a voluntary chaplaincy program] will not work, we believe that it is a disservice to the Jewish men in the armed services." The only other acceptable solution would be "that a form of alternative service be required of young rabbis who do not enter the military service."⁸⁸

Concern about the elimination of the mandatory chaplaincy program, therefore, was not necessarily a reflection of one's attitudes to the war. The Orthodox supported the war, yet were the first to suspend the program; the Reconstructionist and the CCAR strongly opposed Vietnam, but wished the chaplaincy to continue.

It is difficult to understand why Yeshiva University officials took a step so out of line with general Orthodox ideology. The decision by Yeshiva University and the RCA seems, on the basis of the previous opposition to the war expressed by Orthodox groups, to be grounded more in the pragmatic problems involved with the program than ideological issues. There was, in other words, simply too much opposition from the ranks of those whose lives would be most affected by a continuation of the current system--specifically, young men studying for the rabbinate. Perhaps, too, Orthodox leaders may have been assured that a voluntary program would, in fact, fill that year's quota of Orthodox military chaplains. After all, the decision was, technically, a suspension, not a revocation. In fact, within a year, as we have seen, the RCA reversed its decision and reinstituted the requirement

of military chaplaincy.

The RA's elimination of the program is easier to comprehend. The Conservative decision appears to have been motivated by several factors--the earlier decision of the Orthodox, strong opposition from JTS students, and a philosophical concern that individual conscience not be compromised. That young Conservative rabbis had more qualms about the chaplaincy than their Orthodox colleagues is indicated in the numbers of chaplains each movement provided the armed forces. Whereas in 1967 there were 22 Conservative and 21 Orthodox rabbis in the military, by 1970 there were only 5 Conservative rabbis versus 16 Orthodox rabbis working as chaplains.⁸⁹

The refusal of the CCAR members to concur with their Orthodox and Conservative colleagues is more difficult to explain. It was, perhaps, due less to ideological considerations than simple inertia. Secondly, the appointment of a committee to study the problem and report the next year may have placated many of those rabbis who sought changes. A final reason may be related to the persuasiveness and/or political clout of Rabbi Korn and the Chaplaincy Committee at the 1968 convention.

By mid-1969 the mandatory chaplaincy program, despite protests to the contrary, was dismantled in all three major branches of Judaism in America. None of the rabbinical seminaries demanded that their students join the military, and of the rabbinical organizations, only the RCA required chaplaincy for inclusion as a member (unless, of course, one was exempted

from military duty).

Jews, like most Americans, had high hopes that the war would soon be over after Richard Nixon became President on January 20, 1969. The conflict which devastated Vietnam, split America asunder, defeated the Democratic Party, killed 31,000 American soldiers and wounded 196,000 more, seemed, in the early months of 1969, to be passing. The bombing halt had held since November. In addition, it appeared that Nixon would fulfil his campaign promise to gain "peace with honor," for in early June he announced that 25,000 of the 543,000 American troops would be pulled out of Vietnam as part of his proposed "Vietnamization" of the war (i.e. using South Vietnamese troops to carry the burden of combat). The feeling of impending revolution which gripped America during the summer of 1968 began to recede. American campuses, rocked by violence during the 1967-1968 academic year were, the following term, relatively quiet. Massive antiwar protests seemed to be things of the past. No new demonstrations were even being planned. The antiwar movement was divided ideologically and uncertain of its goals.

Jewish organizations, reflecting the mood of the times, said little about the war. Commentators on both sides of the issue waited to see what the new President intended to do. Between the Fall of 1968 and mid-Summer 1969 not a single article on the Vietnam War or the draft was published in American Jewish periodicals. There were a few cases of draft resistance within the Jewish community, but they received

only limited press coverage and had little impact in changing attitudes beyond the rabbinic seminaries. American Jewry seemed to hold its collective breath, anticipating an end to one of the stormiest periods in American history. American Jews joined with their fellow citizens in adopting a "wait and see" approach.

Yet there were ominous signs in mid-1969 that the calm would be short-lived. There were still over half a million Americans fighting in Vietnam. Richard Nixon interpreted the campaign promise of "peace with honor" in his own way, with the emphasis on "honor." "I am not," he swore in September 1969, "going to be the first American president who loses a war." He was ready to get out of Vietnam, but not at the cost of an American defeat or humiliation. By the summer of 1969 the patience of many Americans was wearing thin. An opportunity to act decisively to end the war was slipping away. Frustrated by the lack of progress, millions of Americans turned against the man whom they hoped would do so much.

The American Jewish community, to an extent surpassing that of most other groups, backed the resurgent antiwar movement. By the end of 1969 it was evident that the fervor of antiwar feeling was as strong (if not stronger) than it was a year and a half before. Within one year of Nixon's election it was clear that the relative quiescence of late 1968 to mid-1969 was not the calm after a storm, only the tranquil eye in the midst of a hurricane.

CHAPTER FOUR

Jewish Responses to the American Withdrawal

(Fall 1969-January 1973)

At the gate he stopped me and asked: "Where is the master going?" "I don't know," I said, "just out of here, just out of here. Out of here, nothing else, it's the only way I can reach my goal." "So you know your goal?" he asked. "Yes," I replied, "I've just told you. Out of here-- that's my goal."

-Franz Kafka, The Departure

President Richard M. Nixon began to withdraw American forces from Vietnam in the middle of 1969. It would, however, be almost four years more before the last troops departed from that war-ravaged nation. The long delay in getting out of Indochina combined with sporadic escalation of the war in this era only served to turn more Americans against U.S. involvement in an overseas war. Active Jewish support of the war was, by this period, almost nonexistent. The early 1970's marked the apex of antiwar feeling in the United States and in the Jewish community. It was a time when anti-Vietnam rhetoric was melded with Jewish values in Jewish radical groups, student organizations, and some politically progressive Jewish groups. Yet many Jewish organizations still refrained from making any public comments against the Administration's policy. This chapter traces the developments in Jewish opinion as America slowly got out

of the war and tries to explain why Jews reacted as they did.

I. The Debate is Renewed (Fall 1969-April 1970)

By the early summer of 1969 liberals who were disenchanted with the new President were referring to Vietnam as "Nixon's War." Jewish liberals were no exception. At the CCAR convention in mid-June the Committee on Justice and Peace gave voice to a growing concern that American involvement in Vietnam end more rapidly. The optimistic naivete of the early 1960's gave way to a grim realism in their statement entitled "Vietnam--The Bloody War Moves On."

Few of us can fail to recall the past repeated assurances of our military leaders.
 . . . We have been led up this garden path all too many times [in the] past. It is just this kind of illusory assurance which will transform President Johnson's War into President Nixon's War.

The committee called for a "reduction of . . . offensive military action," "continuing significant and substantial phased withdrawal," an insistence that South Vietnam end its "repression against . . . political opposition," and an "immediate ceasefire."¹ It was evident, in the eyes of these rabbis, that Americans simply wanted out of Vietnam. Unless the President acted quickly, they hinted prophetically, he would lose the tacit support he had enjoyed since the Inauguration.

A July 4, 1969 letter of an Ad Hoc Committee for a Coalition in Cincinnati gave voice to the changing mood of many Americans, both Jews and non-Jews, in its call for a coalition "to direct popular impatience with a meaningless

and increasingly drawn out war in as effective a way as possible." The present Administration's actions were regarded as "contradictory." "While a small withdrawl [sic] of troops has been made with great fanfare, the total war effort has been stepped up. . . . The new administration's period of grace," the letter warned, "is drawing to a close. . . . Nixon's war replaces Johnson's."²

As a result of this growing dissatisfaction with Nixon more and more Americans were willing, once again, to take the antiwar effort into the streets.

In the summer of 1969 moderates within the general antiwar movement regained the key role of power which they had lost two years earlier. The radicals not only alienated the movement from the mass of Americans, but were divided among themselves as to goals and tactics. The SDS, for example, split into the Revolutionary Youth Movement (later, the Weathermen), a radical, revolutionary fringe group which had few followers, but a strong ideological commitment, and the Progressive Labor Party, a larger organization with far less ideological drive. More moderate elements in the peace movement used the weakness of the radicals to their own advantage and, in mid-1969, sought to "take the antiwar movement off the campus and build it back into the community." That meant, one organizer of the time later remembered, "that you had to have language that was moderate and not strident . . . that you have to have . . . events . . . that were locally-organized. . . . Heartland folks had to feel it belonged to them."³

In the Spring of 1969 Boston entrepreneur Jerome Grossman, president of Political Action for Peace in Massachusetts, proposed a "general strike" against the war. Sam Brown, a Fellow at Harvard's Institute of Politics, was attracted to Grossman's proposal for political action, but reluctant about a strike. Garnering support from other moderates, they planned, instead, a nationwide "moratorium" for October 15. The idea of massive, local demonstrations struck a chord in hundreds of thousands of Americans. 50,000 marched in Washington; 100,000 gathered on the Boston Commons; an estimated one million people participated in the October 15 Moratorium across the nation. The demonstrations were peaceful. Many ended with candle light ceremonies, with marchers silently standing in protest.⁴

In the American Jewish community the only groups to advocate participation in the Moratorium prior to the planned date were the traditionally liberal organizations. The UAHC and CCAR presidents "joined hands with these young people who refuse to yield to despair and who, equally, refuse to acquiesce" to the military policy of the current Administration. (Eisendrath, in fact, was one of the early backers of the Vietnam Moratorium Committee). They suggested a number of actions Reform Jews, in particular, might take: a "special [antiwar] religious service," "joint interreligious statement[s]," signing petitions against the war, sending letters and/or telegrams to congressional representatives, and to have rabbis spend time on the day of the Moratorium on university campuses.⁵ The actions which these Reform

leaders suggested were typical of liberal protest--low key and non-violent. A year before such proposals were dismissed as unproductive by antiwar leaders. Now, however, the desire was to maintain a non-confrontive posture.

In a moving recollection of a faculty meeting of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (the rabbinical school of Yeshiva University) J. David Bleich later told of the "misgivings" many professors had about Yeshiva University students participating in the Moratorium.

At that time I had the temerity to suggest that the concern of our students be channelled in a uniquely Jewish direction. I proposed that we encourage communal recitation of tehillim (psalms) on Moratorium Day and that we consider proclaiming it a day of fasting and prayer. A senior faculty member facetiously asked whether I wished prayers to be recited for the victory of South Vietnam or on behalf of the Communists. Before I could respond a younger colleague answered, "He wishes us to pray for peace."⁶

Yeshiva University never formally supported the event. Any prayers students or faculty might have said during the Moratorium were without official sanction.

A number of Jewish organizations did, however, participate in the October Moratorium. Although many different forms of protest were utilized, few groups went beyond a mere expression of support. Most of those groups which did anything simply endorsed the Moratorium, but took no specific actions.⁷ One exception took place when a contingent of the JPF in Cincinnati (largely made up of HUC-JIR students) spent the evening of October 14 and the whole next day in various protests against the war. On October 14 approximately 300 people, led by members of the JPF, recalled the Biblical account

of Joshua's overthrow of Jericho when they marched around the Federal Building in downtown Cincinnati and blew nine shofarot (rams' horns) as "a Jewish call for peace." The organizers of this event "were intent on maintaining the essentially religious nature of the demonstration. Thus during the memorial service [held during the demonstration for the Americans and Vietnamese killed in the war] the Kaddish . . . was recited along with several relevant passages from Leviticus." On October 15 students at HUC-JIR spent the morning discussing the war (classes were cancelled) and, after lunch, distributed information about the war at local shopping centers.⁸

At the Moratorium and in succeeding weeks a new source of Jewish opposition to the war--the Jewish radical movement--began to flex its muscles. The movement was less than two years old. A handful of tiny, isolated groups of leftist Jews which stressed both radical and Jewish values, slowly coalesced in late 1968 and early 1969. M. Jay Rosenberg, whose post-Six Day War fears were discussed earlier, formed the Hebrew Students Alliance (later called Am Yisrael, "the People of Israel") in 1968. It "called for support for Israel and endorsed the Student Mobilization against the war in Vietnam."⁹ In late November 1968 over 1800 socialist and progressive groups met in Montreal at the Hemispheric Conference to End the War in Vietnam. During the meeting the representatives of several Jewish leftist groups held a caucus and issued a statement "urging all Jewish organizations and individuals to speak out for an end to the immoral war in Vietnam. . . . There can be no security for Jews

anywhere until peace is established everywhere and the first step toward world peace is to stop the war in Vietnam."¹⁰

Although the organizations within this "Jewish caucus" were still primarily leftist in tone and remained nominally affiliated with the more radical, anti-Israel groups, they were showing signs of a significant change. The war in Vietnam was still vigorously opposed, but that opposition was now connected with "security for Jews."

Jewish leftists were not, as yet, opposing the war out of the values of Judaism, but they were looking at the Vietnam War through new lenses--namely, the desire for Jewish survival. In time, as the Jewish radical movement became more "Jewish" in content, the religious or moral values of Judaism would be used to attack the war. In the February 13, 1969 issue of the Village Voice, at that time a liberal to radical weekly paper, Rosenberg emphasized the central difference between the radical who was a Jew and the Jewish radical. "All those Jewish students . . . who are prepared to die for the Vietnamese, . . . yet who reject Israel--these are our . . . shame. The Jew must accept his identity. . . . If I must choose between the Jewish cause and a 'progressive' anti-Israel SDS," he declared defiantly, "I shall choose the Jewish cause."¹¹

Several factors, unique to the late 1960's, contributed to the rise of a Jewish radical movement at this specific time. Perhaps the most important reason was the growing awareness of Jewish identity among a sizeable proportion of Jews in the Left following the Six Day War. For many months, even years,

it was difficult to give expression to this inner concern with Israel and Jewishness. In time, however, the solution for many of these individuals, a fusion of radical and Jewish needs, began to achieve some form. A second factor, already discussed, was the alienation many Jews felt from the increasingly anti-Zionist and antisemitic Left. A third reason for the growth of Jewish radicalism at this particular time was the break-up of the general peace movement "into its separate components, . . . each concerned with its own primary affairs--black studies, women's liberation, homosexual emancipation, increased welfare."¹² Finally, the "Black Power" movement of 1966 and 1967, which argued that black emancipation must come without white leadership, and that "black is beautiful," led to an ethnic revival in the United States and to a re-evaluation of the "melting pot" theory of American society. Whereas in the early 1960's the emphasis was on universalism, the late 1960's witnessed the growing identification of many individuals--black, hispanic, Jewish, and others--with an ethnic group. Sociologists began to speak of a "cultural mosaic." Jewish Leftists who felt more Jewish, yet rejected the "Establishment," had only one choice--the formation of new groups to meet their needs.

The number of participants in the November 15, 1969 "Mobilization against the War in Vietnam" surpassed even the huge turnouts seen the month before during the Moratorium. A quarter of a million people came to Washington to participate in vigils, workshops, and demonstrations. 100,000 gathered on the Boston Commons.

Two factors contributed to the success of the Mobili-

zation. The most important was President Nixon's November 1 decision to resume the bombing of North Vietnam. For months Nixon secretly warned Hanoi that U.S. bombing would resume on November 1 (the first anniversary of Johnson's bombing halt) unless the DRV was willing to negotiate seriously in Paris. The North Vietnamese, aware of the Moratorium's success, undoubtedly believed Nixon would be unable, because of public opinion at home, to carry out his threats and, as a result, continued to stall in Paris. Nixon decided to stand by his earlier warnings and resumed the bombing. In a televised speech delivered on November 3 the President called on the "Silent Majority" in the U.S. to support his policy. He explained that only this course of action would result in the honorable peace promised in the 1968 campaign:

The more divided we are at home the less likely the enemy is to negotiate at Paris. Let us be united for peace. Let us also be united against defeat; because let us understand, North Vietnam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States. Only Americans can do that.

Not only were millions of Americans infuriated with what they perceived to be an escalation of the war, but they were angered at the President's attempt to stifle dissent by implying that it threatened peace and lengthened the war. Polls showed that 58% of all Americans now felt "the U.S. made a mistake in committing troops to Vietnam; only 25% thought the action was justified."¹³

Another reason for the Mobilization's success on the heels of the Moratorium was the increased condemnation of the peace movement by the President. Nixon's disparaging

view of the antiwar protests rankled many in the United States. Henry Kissinger, the President's National Security Advisor, and later Secretary of State, indicated the seriousness of the problem:

Nixon's handling of the antiwar movement was not generous, and contributed to the polarization of our society. Nixon, when challenged politically, tended to react with certain gut feelings. . . . He never found the language of respect and compassion which might have . . . created a bridge, at least to the more reasonable elements of the antiwar movement. . . . [As a result,] civil war conditions developed.

Before the Moratorium the President took an almost flippant view of anti-Vietnam demonstrations. "Under no circumstances," he promised, "will I be affected whatever" by the upcoming protest. Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn spoke for millions when he warned that "the administration seems determined to repeat the tragedies of the last Administration."¹⁴ After the Moratorium took place Administration officials simply ignored the fact that one million citizens had actively protested against the war. The Mobilization organizers hoped that perhaps another, equally massive demonstration, would convince the government that the events of October 15 did not merely represent a fad, but the true feelings of most Americans.

The four week period between the Moratorium and the Mobilization witnessed a flurry of antiwar activity by American Jews. The heretofore liberal groups--the UAHC, AJCongress and JPF--all backed the Mobilization.¹⁵ In Philadelphia the group Na'aseh ("We will act") spent the month attempting to "mobilize Jewish support for [a] nation-

wide offensive against the war." Although one of the new Jewish radical groups, a careful look at Na'aseh's four point program suggests a much more moderate or liberal outlook than might be expected from such an organization. Its proposals were to: 1) "write letters . . . in support of the resolutions in Congress calling for the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam," 2) "insure synagogue observance of November 14-15 as a Sabbath of Peace in Vietnam," 3) push Jewish organizations to support an "immediate withdrawal . . . and ceasefire," and 4) mobilize "a massive Jewish presence" at the Washington Mobilization. It was a clear sign that the Jewish radical movement was, as early as 1969, drifting away from the radicalism of the New Left and towards the moderate stance of liberal Jewish groups.¹⁶

Before the Mobilization several of the Jewish radical organizations, including Jews for Urban Justice, Na'aseh, the Radical Jewish Union, and the Radical Zionist Alliance, formed the National Jewish Organizing Project. This coalition set up a Jewish Movement Center in Washington which served as the focal point for the planning of a special demonstration and religious ceremony on Sunday, November 16. Their unique form of protest, held outside the gates of the White House, "was a call to the destruction of such idols as war, militarism, greed, and technology for its own sake. Symbolic idols like a paper-mache golden calf, a toy robot and dollar bills were burnt while . . . blowing the shofar and reciting the kaddish for the war dead on both sides. UAHC representatives Brickner and Al Vorspan came in solidarity with the youth movement, but

hung back during the unconventional liturgy." The rest of the weekend was spent in workshops on "Jewish Tradition--the War and the Draft" and the "Role of the Radical Jew." Over 1000 people, mostly youth, participated in Project-sponsored programs. The only statement coming from the Jewish radicals was a call for a national day of fasting and discussion of the war on Friday, December 12. Arthur Waskow, one of the leaders of Jews for Urban Justice, hoped that such an act would "enhance their [i.e. Jews'] appreciation of the following day, the Jewish Sabbath."¹⁷ Here, again, was a sign that among the Jewish radicals concern about Vietnam was increasingly subsumed under the nascent attempt to "enhance" one's Jewish life and identity.

A few elements in the organized Jewish community remained supportive of or quiet about the war, but many organizations and individuals which had heretofore remained silent now expressed the desire that the Vietnam War be ended. Even a few who, at an earlier date, backed the war, now began to wonder whether the cost of the war was justifiable.

The UAHC and its fiery president continued to endorse an immediate end to the conflict. At the 50th General Assembly of the UAHC in Miami Beach (October 25-29, 1969), Eisen-drath decried Nixon's "sleight-of-hand" policy of attempting to cool public displeasure about the war by withdrawing American troops from Vietnam in "agonizingly small installments." He linked the war to social problems at home and called for a "major reordering" of economic priorities to

help alleviate this problem.¹⁸ The UAHC delegates, upon the urging of Eisendrath, passed a resolution on "Vietnam" which went further than the statements of either 1965 or 1967. Since the bombing of the DRV had not resumed at that point, there was no call for a halt in the bombing. There was, however, a demand for an "immediate stand-still ceasefire." The call for a withdrawal was now accompanied by a termination date for all U.S. troops to be out of Vietnam--December 31, 1970. Several additional points were also made. First, that the U.S. "seek the development of a coalition government in South Vietnam." Second, that America recognize its "moral obligation to bring aid and relief to the very people who have been injured in this war." This point demonstrates how much public opinion had shifted since the early stages of the war. Several years earlier, when interfaith organizations emphasized non-partisan humanitarian aid, there was a fair amount of anxiety that such a move would be viewed as traitorous. By late 1969, however, the UAHC delegates made the same point without feeling the need to justify their stance. A final point in the resolution was addressed to the North Vietnamese government and the NLF, who were urged "in the name of human decency to make known the list of American servicemen that are held prisoners, and to allow communication between them and their families."¹⁹

This was not the first time a Jewish organization took note of American prisoners of war (POWs). The Jewish War Veterans, since early 1968, had emphasized the plight of American servicemen held captive in North Vietnam.²⁰ It

makes sense that the JWV would be the first Jewish organization to speak publicly about this issue, for a veteran group's primary concern is the welfare of both retired and active duty soldiers. This does not imply that the UAHC's position was contradictory. Reform Jews may have opposed the war, but they were still concerned about the welfare of American soldiers. What is less easy to comprehend is why other Jewish organizations said nothing on this serious topic. It is possible that many Jews felt that because other groups, as well as the U.S. government, were involved in keeping the public's attention on the POWs, any statement they might make would be redundant.

The week before the Mobilization the Labor Zionists (Poale Zion) issued a policy statement on Vietnam. Their antiwar position, the first of any major American Zionist organization, (the much smaller Americans for a Progressive Israel adopted an antiwar resolution in December 1967) was based on secular concerns. The arguments used in defense of their stance--that the war was a "drain on our society," that further deaths would be senseless, and that the U.S. was aiding "an unpopular, undemocratic and corrupt regime" in South Vietnam--were not innovative. Yet there is something in the tone of this statement which differentiates it from statements made by liberal Jewish groups prior to 1969. It does not spell out a comprehensive plan for ending the war, but merely gives vent to the feeling prevalent among Jews that America should get out of Indochina and end the war now. Yet the suggestion that the U.S. withdraw its troops,

"whether by negotiations or unilaterally," represented a new approach, for few Jewish groups before this time advocated unilateral withdrawal. The Labor Zionists, like every other Jewish organization against the war, was liberal, not radical. "We shall continue to support such activities as peaceful petitions, public education, vigils, and community meetings and rallies," they said, but not the tactics of the "extremist groups."²¹

Some individual Jews who were formerly supportive of the war now questioned the wisdom of continued U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia. Seymour Siegel travelled to South Vietnam on an eight-day tour organized by the "Ad Hoc Committee to Investigate Political and Religious Freedom in South Vietnam." While there he came to the conclusion that the current government in South Vietnam, the Thieu-Ky regime, "is an object of fear and hatred among the people. . . . Most of the people with whom we spoke want to be neither Communists nor tools of the West." He still advocated, as in earlier years, the view that "from a geopolitical consideration it was necessary for the United States to prevent the success of aggression." Continued U.S. aid for such an oppressive government, however, was doing more harm than good. Hence, "the time has come to withdraw; we have made our point. Our continued support of unrepresentative and oppressive force is dissipating whatever good we have have done."²² In 1967 Siegel backed the war (with the stipulation that we "be open to new alternatives"). Two years later he was suggesting that the "new" alternative of U.S.

withdrawal now be put into action. What was different was not Vietnam, for there were "oppressive" regimes in South Vietnam since the earliest days of U.S. involvement. What was different was the perception of those regimes in relation to the war. Siegel's uncertainty about the war was a reflection of a growing doubt within America generally as to the right of the U.S. to act as the world's policeman. A new consensus was in the process of being born.

By no means did all Jews and Jewish organizations suddenly turn against the war in Vietnam. The Synagogue Council of America, silent since its early 1966 statement which emphasized the need for a peaceful solution in Indochina, supported the right of Americans to protest against the government, but said nothing about the war itself. Several weeks later the American Jewish Committee took exactly the same position.²³

Jews who were indifferent to or supportive of U.S. policy said little about the war per se, but reacted harshly against those Jews who adopted an antiwar posture. Such liberal Jews, the familiar argument went, threatened the status of the Jewish community, neglected the communist role in Vietnam, and were blind to the fact that the peace demonstrators were as pro-Arab as they were pro-VC.²⁴

A few members of the Jewish community even continued to actively back President Nixon's policies. Orthodox Jewry was particularly staunch in its support, undoubtedly because of Nixon's strong assistance for Israel, as well as the tendency of Orthodox Jews to be politically conservative and their hatred for communism in general. Nash Kestenbaum,

president of the National Council of Young Israel, representing 120 synagogues, told the President: "We fully support your position in Vietnam. Your stand is in the interest of all free people walking the face of the earth." The Rabbinical Alliance of America (RAA), an association of Orthodox rabbis, was, with the exception of the JWV, Nixon's strongest supporter in the Jewish community. Speaking on behalf of the RAA, Rabbi Abraham Gross wrote Nixon that its members "pray that you may succeed in this determination to bring about a just peace ending aggression against nations and peoples." In an "Honor America Rally," held under the "sponsorship" of the RAA on November 16, 1969 Rabbi David Hollander reiterated the familiar litany of prowar arguments. The JWV also supported Nixon's efforts to de-Americanize the war and proudly announced that it "has been a consistent supporter of the United States military commitment in Southeast Asia."²⁵ Following the demonstrations of October 15 and November 15 it was, nevertheless, more and more unusual for any Jewish group to actively and publicly support the war.

Zionist groups in the United States were placed in a precarious and somewhat unique position because of their close ideological commitment to the State of Israel. Official policy of the Israeli government towards American intervention in Southeast Asia was often the significant factor in determining their point of view. The silence of Zionist organizations following the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1967 was obviously related to fears that America might reconsider its support for Israel if Jews attacked the war in Vietnam. By

late 1969, however, there was a tension in the Zionist movement between those who felt a growing sense of doubt on Vietnam and those who were more anxious about Israel's security. Adding fuel to this debate was a comment made by Israel's Prime Minister, Golda Meir, several days after Nixon's November 3 speech.

During his remarks Nixon warned that to "precipitate withdrawal" of U.S. troops in Vietnam would set off violence "wherever our commitments help maintain peace," be it "in the Middle East" or elsewhere. Four days later Meir made the following comments in a telegram to President Nixon:

The Prime Minister . . . expresses her hope that he [President Nixon] will speedily succeed in bringing about peace in Vietnam. The President's speech contains much that encourages and strengthens freedom-loving small nations the world over, which are striving to maintain their independent existence looking to that great democracy, the United States of America.²⁶

Many Zionist groups said nothing about this incident, but the two largest American Zionist groups were divided in their response to Meir's statement and, consequently, to the war in Vietnam.

The President of the Zionist Organization of America (also known as the General Zionist Organization), Jacques Torczyner, defended Nixon's war policy in a statement issued on November 9. In the American Zionist an editorial entitled "Jews and the Moratorium" criticized Jewish participation in the demonstrations of the previous two months. This article emphasized two points of disagreement with Jewish opposition to Vietnam. The first was the worry that "the prominent

appearance in the peace movement of Jewish spokesmen" could hurt the entire Jewish community, for a withdrawal might lead to "scape-goat seeking." Jews, closely associated with the antiwar opposition, might be a prime target for the charge of being a "fifth column." A second reason Jews should back the war was the danger that America would enter a new period of isolationism, thereby helping Communism, "the sworn enemy of the Jewish people." Although neither Torczyner nor the ZOA specifically mentioned Meir's telegram to the U.S. President, their endorsement of Nixon's program in Vietnam so shortly after the Israeli Prime Minister's remarks seems ample proof that their central concern was that their policy be in line with that of the Israel government.²⁷

Taking the opposite view were the Labor Zionists, who issued their antiwar "Position Statement on Vietnam" the same day that Meir made her comments. They refused to retract their antiwar policy statement, but they did not criticize Meir. "To read into this conventional greeting an endorsement or rejection of President Nixon's Vietnam policy is absurd," said the Jewish Frontier, "it is neither." Nixon's speech was simply a refutation of isolationism, a stance Israel's Prime Minister would be expected to endorse.²⁸

Over a year later, while travelling in the U.S., Meir defended her remarks before a gathering of Zionist youth. "The only thing I said about Vietnam is that I hope honestly and sincerely that there may be peace very soon," she hastily replied to a challenge to the propriety of her remarks.²⁹ Literally, of course, both the Jewish Frontier and Meir were

correct--the telegram sent to Nixon in November 1969 made a simple, innocuous statement expressing the hope for peace in Vietnam. The political reality, however, was that Meir and her government had much to lose by an American loss in Southeast Asia. In her telegram and in her defense of that telegram the Israeli Prime Minister expressed subtly, but unequivocally her belief that the success of the U.S. in Vietnam could very possibly affect American commitment to Israel. It was expedient, therefore, to tread carefully in questioning U.S. policy in Vietnam. Meir's reasoning was not out of line with general Israeli policy. It should be remembered that in 1968 Eshkol defended Johnson's handling of the war. The Israeli perception was that a strong American military stance in Southeast Asia would benefit them by deterring Soviet expansionism in the Middle East. Hence, Israel would, for the duration of the war, stand behind Nixon's Vietnam policy. As a result of the delicate nature of the relationship between the U.S. and Israel the American Zionist movement generally avoided statements highly critical of the government. These organizations were, as a result of their unique perspective, compelled to either support the war, remain neutral, or, at the very most, adopt an antiwar position which denied the pro-Vietnam War tendenz of the Israeli government.

Four days after the Mobilization a story appeared in the press which gave even more momentum to the growing antiwar feeling in the United States. The report was about a massacre which occurred in the Vietnamese village of My Lai

on March 16, 1968. The details of the incident were pieced together by a GI who heard about the massacre while in Vietnam. During his tour of duty in 1968 that individual, Ronald Lee Ridenhour, collected evidence about what had happened months earlier. Upon his return home and throughout the spring and summer of 1969 he submitted the evidence he had to Congress, the White House, and the press. No one was interested. It was not until after the Mobilization that a freelance reporter interested in Ridenhour's story, Seymour M. Hersh, finally brought the My Lai massacre to the public's attention.

There was, in response to this story, nearly universal condemnation of the massacre. In the Jewish community the first public statements were made in early December 1969. In a radio broadcast Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum, director of the Interreligious Affairs of the AJCommittee, claimed that My Lai was a "clear violation of the . . . values" of both America and the Jewish tradition. "In the end," he concluded, "the only safeguard against the excesses of the war and its brutalization of the human spirit is the elimination of the war itself." A Jewish Frontier editorial praised the American people's "indignation" regarding this brutal act. "The moral issues raised by this outrage," claimed the Reconstructivist, "has (sic) stripped away the facade of righteousness from the American societal structure." Even the National Commander of the JWV, Bernard Dierenfeld, supported the demands for a probe to "uncover and punish all those involved," although he criticized the comparisons made between the

"isolated actions of a handful of Americans and the genocidal atrocities of the Nazis."³⁰ That he felt the need to make such a disclaimer is evidence that such an argument was, indeed, being used. For the peace movement My Lai was more than just an isolated incident. It was a symbol of America's immorality in remaining in Vietnam and would be used in the future as a sign of the nation's guilt.³¹

After the outbursts of the Autumn came a several month period of quiet on the war. With the exception of a "Hanuka Festival for Peace and Freedom" in New York (December 11), there were no Jewish demonstrations against the war until May 1970.

Jewish attitudes at the time were, nevertheless, different from those of their non-Jewish neighbors. A study published in Theology Today in January 1970 demonstrated, as had earlier studies, that Jews showed only a somewhat greater tendency than Christians and a slightly smaller tendency than those with no religious affiliation to see Vietnam as a mistake. Yet an overwhelming majority of Jews (80%), far more than any other group, were in favor of "legislation to require the withdrawal of all United States troops from Vietnam by the end of next year [1970]." Most Jews seemed to be saying, "even if we were justified in getting involved, now is the time to get out."³²

As 1970 began, Americans looked back on a decade of political upheaval and social change. It was a time, if only for a brief moment, for contemplation on where America had come from and where it was heading. What people could not

know at the time was that American involvement in the war was far from over. Three more New Years Days would pass before that dream would become reality.

During the Winter of 1969-1970 the central concerns of the Jewish community were the draft, conscientious objection, and chaplaincy. None of these issues were new, but there was an increasing number of organizations and individuals which came to support the liberal perspective towards them.

The debate over the halachic attitude to Jewish conscientious objectors continued. Most commentators argued that although Judaism may not demand pacifism, neither does it expect the individual to take part in a military enterprise. Rabbi Leo Landman concluded that the halacha was ambiguous, leaving the choice to the individual Jew.

Jewish law cannot determine whether or not the Vietnam War is or is not immoral. Each individual must come to a conclusion based upon his own powers of reason and conscience. Should one conclude that the Communist nations indirectly threaten the peace of the world and thereby the United States and its allies, then there is no question that the presence of the United States in Vietnam is moral. A draft law based upon such a conclusion is just and must be obeyed. However, should one conclude that the threat of war and annihilation or even conquest is illusory, then the United States has no place in Vietnam. Its presence there would be immoral, and laws concerning the war would not be supported by the doctrine of dina d'malkhuta dina. Each individual must make his decision.³³

Landman, therefore, based Jewish CO on a personal judgment regarding the morality or immorality of the Vietnamese conflict. Hence, protection of the individual conscience overrides acceptance of the laws of the State. Many other Jews

and Jewish organizations reiterated Landman's assertion that Jewish tradition supported the individual who decided to become a CO.³⁴

A few who wrote on this issue, primarily Orthodox Jews, refused to accept this conclusion. Berel Wein, writing in the official magazine of the UOJCA, Jewish Life, asserted, "The general Halachic attitude toward the problem would be to place loyalty to country over one's personal qualms in the matter." Wein engaged in a lengthy argument to "prove" his belief that the Jew cannot be a CO. Axiomatic is the awareness that Judaism is not purely pacifist, but accepts "wars of defense and self-preservation as necessitated by the reality of human affairs." Since "the reasonable and objective view of the Vietnam War is that it is not aggressive in intent" on the part of the U.S., the war must be viewed as an acceptable conflict from a Jewish point-of-view. The Jew, therefore, cannot use recourse to Judaism for an objection to the war. If this was not enough, the principle of dina d'malkhuta dina compels the Jewish American citizen to obey the draft laws of the United States. A final reason for his opposition to Jewish CO status was that it reflected poorly on the loyalty of the Jews to America. Encouragement of such a status is, in other words, "not in the best interests of the Jewish people."³⁵

Wein was correct in asserting that Judaism is not pacifist, as all but the most ardent Jewish pacifists would have agreed. The weakness of his argument is in his "objective" conclusion that the U.S. was fighting a war of "defense

and self-preservation." It is true that the communists were the aggressors. The true "defenders," however, were the South Vietnamese. America, Wein might respond, was defending freedom. Yet from the perspective of Jewish law it is difficult to say when one should or should not fight for such an ephemeral value. A much more balanced picture is presented by Landman, who accepts Wein's point-of-view as a Jewish response, but recognizes that it cannot be the sole answer one can derive from the halacha. A second problem in Wein's argument is his use of dina d'malkhuta dina. This law was, as he admitted, formulated to deal with civil and financial matters. He assumed that "the concept will apply even to other matters of national loyalty and policy when they are not in opposition to precepts and customs of Judaism," but never gives any proof, other than his own perception that such an extension of the concept is legitimate.

Despite the strengths and/or flaws of the various arguments, what is worth noting historically is that Jews continued to seek a Jewish justification for the demand that Jews serve in the armed forces.

Prior to this period the only Jewish organizations to support SCO were the two rabbinical groups, the RA and the CCAR, and the AJCongress. In October 1969 the UAHC joined this roster. The Reform lay leaders accepted SCO, but stipulated that the individual who seeks such status is obligated "to refrain from invoking such a right except on the clearest and most compelling grounds of conscience." On January 14, 1970 the Rabbinical Court of Justice (bayt din) of the Asso-

ciated Synagogues of Massachusetts released a document also approving of SCO. Four days later the AJCongress went so far as to ask the U.S. Supreme Court to extend SCO to young men who oppose a particular war based simply on a personal morality, rather than for religious reasons.³⁶

The Jewish Peace Fellowship remained the most important, though no longer the only, place a Jew could turn for draft counselling. In November 1969 a "draft sanctuary" was established in the Hillel House at the University of Pennsylvania. On December 3 the national office of B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations, a non-sectarian coordinating body for the university-based Hillel Houses, asserted the "right and obligation" of campus rabbis to counsel students on CO and the draft.³⁷ Still, the JPF was the largest Jewish group devoted to the aid of draft resisters. Local JPF chapters were meeting in Los Angeles, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, New York, Boston, and elsewhere. By this time nearly 3000 requests for facts, publications, and counselling were received annually. Rabbis were occasionally sent by the JPF to testify on behalf of Jews who claimed that their conscientious objection was based on their understanding of Judaism. These rabbinic counsellors were not neutral, as Rabbis Lipman and Singer claimed to be two years earlier, but told those being counselled that "Jewish tradition not only does not oppose such a moral position [i.e. conscientious objection], but in fact justifies it." The JPF also began to get involved with "draft evaders"--that is, those individuals who fled the United States (most often to

Canada) to escape the draft. A JPF representative in Toronto, Canada, estimated that in early 1970, approximately 10 percent of all draft evaders were Jewish. Another estimate, made two years later, said 8000 of the 30,000 draft evaders in Canada were Jews. Hence, the JPF felt it was important to work with the Jewish communities in Toronto and, to a lesser extent, in Montreal, "to furnish housing, secure jobs, and to provide other needed services" for those American Jews living in exile.³⁸

Although a growing number of Jewish groups affirmed the right of a Jew to ask for CO status, one JPF field director at the time believed that many young Jews who sought counseling were often unaware that a Jew could be a CO. This may be true, but the statistics kept by the JPF showed that a growing number of Jews were classified with this status. In November 1968 there were 28 Jewish COs in the Selective Service System's alternative service program. The number rose to 51 less than a year later. Between September 1969 and January 1970 an additional 22 were classified in this status (73 total). By September 1970 there were "well over a hundred Jewish COs" doing "national service under civilian direction."³⁹ There are several possible explanations which, either singly or in combination, might account for the dramatic upswing in Jewish COs after mid-1969. The first is that the favorable press given CO status by many Jewish groups may have resulted in a greater awareness among Jews of draft age that such an option was not only open to them, but was acceptable in the eyes of the Jewish community. The

general climate of antiwar feeling in America after the middle of 1969 was, undoubtedly, another significant stimulus for Jews to seek ways of avoiding military service. A final reason was the success of the JPF in disseminating information on this subject through its local chapters and field representatives. Many young Jewish men, perhaps the majority of those eligible for the draft, may have been unaware that they could be considered conscientious objectors, but a growing number were aware that CO was a possible option.

The Conservative and Reform rabbinical associations' attempt to procure military chaplains by establishing a volunteer program was a Gordian knot. Seminarians were pleased, but lay leaders were not. Very few rabbis chose to work in the armed forces. In the Fall of 1969 there was only one chaplain for the ten to fifteen thousand Jews in Vietnam.⁴⁰ The RA scrapped the two year compulsory service program and opted, as had the CCAR a year earlier, for a purely voluntary program. The RA committee which reported on the failure of the service program suggested that a "permanent career civilian chaplaincy" might help fill the gap between the actual and needed number of Jewish chaplains. The CCAR's Committee on Chaplaincy recognized that a problem existed, but could offer no solution beyond strengthening the chaplaincy recruitment program. The UAHC delegates were unhappy with the voluntary program and expressed their "urgent conviction" that the CCAR meet its quota of Reform chaplains. Yet they, too, gave no concrete suggestions as to how to do this.⁴¹ There was, in reality, no easy solution. Despite

arguments to the contrary, few rabbis would serve in the military.

II. The Cambodian Invasion (April 1970-July 1970)

On April 30, 1970 President Nixon shocked the nation with the announcement that, as he was speaking, 20,000 American and 40,000 South Vietnamese troops were invading Cambodia in order to destroy enemy camps and supply routes located across the border. Although the President assured the nation that the military campaign was a short term venture necessary for the gradual and peaceful withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam, most Americans saw the invasion as an expansion of the war and a breach of previous pledges by Nixon to de-escalate the conflict. Within days, demonstrations and student strikes erupted on scores of university campuses. At Kent State University, a small college in northeastern Ohio, an ROTC hall was put to the torch on the night of May 2. Two days later the National Guard was sent in to quell the antiwar demonstrations. Some of these Guardsmen, when confronted by hundreds of protesters, panicked and fired their weapons into the crowd. Four students were killed, one was crippled for life, and several more were wounded (three of the four who were killed were Jewish). Young Americans were infuriated. Student demonstrations spread to hundreds of universities. Many colleges were forced to shut down. Eventually 536 of the 1350 university-level institutions in America then in existence were closed temporarily. An estimated 60% of all students enrolled in colleges that Spring

participated in the antiwar activities of May and June.

(Arthur Liebman contends that "90% of [the] Jewish students attending schools at which there were demonstrations claim to have participated.") President Nixon exacerbated the situation by attacking the violent actions of the protesters while ignoring the violence of those who were supposed to keep the peace. The lesson of Kent State, he said, was that it "should remind us all again that when dissent turns to violence it invites tragedy."⁴²

Older Americans were also displeased with the expansion of the war into Cambodia. Senators McGovern, Hatfield, and Church sponsored a bill in Congress which would limit funds for prosecution of the war beyond June 30, 1971. Many individuals and organizations reacted with horror to the Kent State killings.

Jewish organizations vehemently denounced the Kent State killings. Communal and religious Jewish groups, representing a broad spectrum of political viewpoints, joined with seminarians and Jewish radicals in condemning what appeared to be a complete disregard by those in authority for the opinions of the American public and their right to express those opinions openly. The UOJCA, Workmen's Circle, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods (NFTS; a Reform women's group), and Synagogue Council of America, as well as countless individual members of these organizations, deplored the events at Kent State.⁴³

While the response to the Kent State incident was uni-

versally condemned, there were different explanations as to the cause of the tragic affair. Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, vice president of the UAHC, placed the onus on American "leadership," which must "respond and act more rationally to the voice of justified outrage." He was "utterly appalled" by Nixon's "cavalier" statement about the fatal incident and the implication that those who protest deserve to be shot. Others, such as the leaders of NFTS, the president of the UOJCA (Rabbi Joseph Karasick), and the UOJCA as a whole, were equally disturbed by the violence of the protesters. Typical were the remarks of two resolutions issued at the 72nd National Biennial Convention of the UOJCA (November 1970) entitled "Campus Unrest" and "Dissent and It's Limits." Both expressed the opinion that "violent dissent must be curbed resolutely and not condoned by reason of the sincerity or goals of the dissenters." Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, national director of the Interreligious Affairs Department of the AJCommittee, questioned the violence perpetrated by both the antiwar protesters and their opponents. Such violence, Tanenbaum explained, was not only wrong in and of itself, but also threatened to turn against the Jews, "for every society in upheaval seeks scapegoats and . . . for much of the past 2000 years Jews have had that role imposed on them."⁴⁴ Tanenbaum hinted at the real reason Jews reacted so negatively to the events at Kent State. Jews were not only infuriated by the violence of the incident, they were frightened by it. Jews tended to be liberal, to emphasize peaceful social change because they perceived such a system to be in

their own best interest. Violence threatened the cohesion of American society and, in turn, the safety of the Jewish community.

Jewish interests with regard to the war in general were not quite as easy to define. As a result, Jewish organizational responses to the Cambodian invasion were much more in line with previous statements about the war than were their comments on Kent State.

Groups previously opposed to the war simply saw this as another occasion to attack the government's policies. The AJCongress, AJCommittee, CCAR, NCJW, and Workmens Circle, all of whom had at an earlier date made antiwar statements, condemned the invasion into Cambodia and called for a withdrawal of U.S. forces from that country. Interfaith actions against the war were backed by the JPF and Reform rabbinic leaders, but they were not as well supported by the religious community (Jews included) as were many of the activities in the 1960's. The Jews represented in these liberal organizations were, for the most part, not in favor of an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Southeast Asia as suggested by radical elements in the antiwar movement (e.g. Out Now!), but favored a gradual, paced withdrawal to conclude at the end of 1971, as proposed by Senators McGovern, Church, and Hatfield.⁴⁵

No group which was previously indifferent to or supportive of the war was swayed by these events to alter its position on the war. Yet a change had occurred in a few organizations. Groups which, before April 30, actively

supported the Administration were, after this date, reticent about publicly backing U.S. policy. At its convention in November 1970 the UOJCA mentioned the War in Indochina only in passing, recognizing only that "we [must] demonstrate sincerity in dealing with" this problem. A number of organizations continued their policy of not saying anything, pro or con, about the war.

Broadly based communal organizations, such as Hadassah and B'nai Brith, maintained their previous silence, because of the diverse perspectives of their membership. Most Zionist groups, probably because of the continued support the Israeli government gave to and received from the Nixon Administration, also shied away from taking a clear position.⁴⁶

The JWV alone maintained a staunchly prowar stance subsequent to the events of the late Spring of 1970. Yet even within the JWV a shift in policy was in the air. A New York regional convention of the JWV meeting on June 3-7 disapproved of a bid to pass the following resolution:

[We call upon President Nixon] to move more determinedly towards negotiations to guarantee that American losses will be brought to a halt; failing this to expedite the withdrawal of our troops by the end of 1971; and for the immediate withdrawal of all troops from Cambodia and Laos; and to stay out of all future internal conflicts that do not concern us.

It is not in the least surprising that this proposed resolution was defeated. What is amazing, however, is the very fact that such a document could come from within the ranks of the JWV.

In October 1970 JWV National Commander Arthur Schlossberg cabled Nixon that the JWV supported his peace proposal.

Schlossberg mentioned, specifically, "the offer of withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam," "request for the release of all Prisoners of War," and the "offer for an immediate standstill cease-fire."⁴⁷ These proposals were almost exactly the same as those proposed within the peace movement (and summarily rejected by the JWV) only a few years before. The fact that the JWV endorsed them in late 1970 can be explained in two ways. Either the JWV's position on the war had changed or, as is more likely the case, the JWV was always less committed to the war itself than it was to falling in line behind presidential authority. Hence, any change of policy by the Administration would simply be "rubber stamped" by the JWV.

Jewish students nationwide, like other American college aged youth, were particularly incensed by what they saw as an expansion of the war. The Kent State killings greatly affected university communities. It was not so much that students were worried that their protests might lead to personal harm as they were upset that dissent was muzzled by the threat of injury. Undergraduates and graduates at Yeshiva University (YU) and seminarians at JTS, HUC-JIR (Cincinnati and New York), and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College requested that classes be cancelled so that energy might be devoted to antiwar activities. Although only YU and JTS actually joined the national student strike, the other seminaries sponsored various programs on the Indochinese War and the violence in America. At HUC-JIR in New York students observed shiva, the traditional seven days of mourning, for

the students killed at Kent State and for those dying in Southeast Asia. In Washington the JPF and Jews for Urban Justice conducted Erev Shabbat services on May 15 in protest against the invasion. On July 15 HUC-JIR students, along with the Park Avenue Synagogue Youth Group and Jews for Peace, published an advertisement in the New York Times against the Kent State killings and the war in Southeast Asia. Quoting the Talmud, they went on to support congressional efforts to end the war immediately.

Some students went beyond simply stating opposition to U.S. policy. Students in the rabbinic, education, and cantorial programs at the Reform and Conservative seminaries organized special groups to "mobilize public opinion against the war" and to lobby in Washington for the passage of anti-war legislation."⁴⁸ One of the few Zionist groups to take a stand at this time was Habonim, the youth movement of the Labor Zionists. In sympathy for those killed at Kent State they decided to wear black armbands during an Israeli Independence Day Parade. "Word immediately came back that the gesture was not appropriate. The group badgered the schliach [local Israeli liason] until he admitted that the Israeli consulate had vetoed the plan."⁴⁹ This represents further evidence of the ongoing Israeli attempt to soften anti-Vietnam actions by Jewish (particularly Zionist) groups in the United States. Most Zionist groups succumbed to Israeli pressures, but Habonim was too caught up in the general student ferment of contemporary America to ignore what had happened.

The protests of Jewish young people, be it from the seminaries, Jewish radical groups, or Habonim, were usually non-violent. During several successive erev shabbat services in May and June at Temple Emanu-El (New York), however, violence did flare. On May 15 members of the 20-member Radical Jewish Union (RJU) of Columbia University, led by Rabbi A. Bruce Goldman, entered the synagogue for the evening services. Goldman informed Temple Emanu-El's senior rabbi Nathan Perilman several days earlier that he wished to use the Temple's pulpit as a platform for expressing discontent with the war. Perilman refused and warned Goldman that police would be present to prevent a seizure of the pulpit. Undeterred, the members of the RJU went to services that Friday evening. Two members who arrived late were detained by ushers from entering the synagogue. When one of the two young people attempted to gain entry, insisting on his right as a Jew to participate in the religious service, one of the ushers "hit him in the face with a prayer book." Rabbi Goldman, upon hearing of this attack, stood up in the middle of the sermon and denounced Perilman and those in attendance. He refused to sit down and screamed, "I will not be one of the Jews of silence." Apparently uncertain as to what to do, Perilman invited Goldman to the pulpit to address the congregation. A "lengthy discussion" on the Cambodian situation took place after services. The relationship between Emanu-El and the RJU did not, however, end amicably. Goldman and another RJU member were arrested that week for the disturbance they caused.

Undaunted, the RJU returned to protest for the next three weeks. On May 22 they "took part in responsive readings and departed without incident." During their third visit, however, (May 30), the RJU suddenly interrupted services and presented a list of demands (including \$100,000 for the Black Panther Defense Fund) to the synagogue. Goldman later claimed that their disruption was justified and based in the Jewish principle of ikuv t'filah, "an interruption of the prayer service to make known a moral injustice in the community." Anne Rosen, a Barnard University graduate, ran to the front of the synagogue, clambered over a railing separating the first row of pews from the pulpit, and attempted to get to the microphone to announce the RJU's demands. Plain-clothes police, warned in advance that such a disturbance might occur, grabbed her as she reached the pulpit. As they dragged her away she shouted, "I am a Jew in a synagogue. How can you arrest me?" Goldman was so incensed that he called Perilman a "fascist." Police also led him away. As they escorted him out he cried out in anger, "Is this a House of God?"

Perilman had had enough and sought an injunction to bar the RJU from further appearances at services. The RJU members said this would not stop them and that they would, the coming week, show up again during services. On June 12, after weeks of growing tension, representatives of the RJU and Temple Emanu-El reached an "understanding." They "agreed that further constructive conversations will take place between the two groups on matters of mutual concern, focusing

on the Jewish response to pressing social and political issues of our time, such as war, poverty, racism, and political oppression."⁵⁰

Violent confrontations by Jewish groups, even within the Jewish radical movement, were rare. The RJU-Temple Emanu-El controversy is not noteworthy because it represented a trend, but because it was so unusual. Jews maintained their moderate stance, condemning violence wherever it reared its head. Even the most activist of Jewish groups resorted to non-violent forms of protests. Students and Jewish leaders lobbied congressional representatives, religious services were led by Jews for Urban Justice, colloquia and lectures were held in seminaries, and speakers were sent out to influence public opinion. Elements in the antiwar movement might be turning again to violence, but Jews would have no part of it. That Jewish radicals took the same position was one more sign that they were becoming more Jewish and less radical as time went on.

The uproar in America caused by the Cambodian invasion ended almost as quickly as it began. By the beginning of July the spasm of discontent was over. The reasons were obvious. On June 30, U.S. ground troops were withdrawn from Cambodia, as Nixon promised in remarks made on May 8. Although air missions continued over the border, American soldiers were no longer dying on Cambodian soil. The central concern of American protesters, was, despite rhetoric to the contrary, not the welfare of the Cambodians, whose country was not brought into the war, but that U.S. involvement in Southeast

Asia end. A second reason for the abrupt end to the protests was that the key element of the Spring 1970 protest, the university student population, was now home for the summer. The student actions of the previous two months would be the last significant student antiwar expression of the Vietnam era.

III. American Disengagement and Jewish Reactions (July 1970-March 1970)

Although the demonstrations of the Spring were over by late June, the overwhelming feeling among Americans aroused by the Cambodian invasion that the war must end did not fade. The desire for the U.S. to get out of Vietnam was almost universal after this point. The only question was how quickly troops should be withdrawn. An incredible 73% of the American people in January 1971 wanted the United States out of Vietnam by the end of the year.⁵¹ Although withdrawals were proceeding apace, American disengagement took longer than most Americans hoped. In July 1970 approximately 375,000 U.S. troops were still in Vietnam, although this was 160,000 less than the all-time high of 1968. By May 1972 only 69,000 Americans remained in Vietnam. Antiwar activists maintained their critical approach for the war continued. True, less Americans were fighting, but thousands of U.S. forces were still engaged in combat alongside a growing number of South Vietnam soldiers armed by U.S. aid.

Reflecting the general tenor of the times, there was almost a complete lull in Jewish discussion of the war from mid-1970 until well after the American incursion into Laos in

February 1971. It was an election year and, as in earlier election years, antiwar activists turned from trying to organize protests to attempting to elect acceptable congressional representatives. Few articles on Vietnam appeared in Jewish periodicals. The only group to issue any statement on the war was the JWV which, on October 8, repeated former assurances that it would stand behind the President. The invasion of Laos in early February received scant attention from American Jews, with the American Jewish Congress being the only group to condemn the action.⁵²

Although there were no antiwar protests during the Fall of 1970 and Winter of 1971, plans were made for a national protest against the war in late April. Concurrently, student body presidents affiliated with the U.S. National Student Association and similar organizations in North and South Vietnam forged a "Joint Treaty of Peace" in December 1970 which affirmed the peace between the peoples of North Vietnam and the United States. The "Treaty" called for an "immediate and total withdrawal" of U.S. forces, political freedom throughout Vietnam, the return of American prisoners from North Vietnam, and a pledge of non-interference by all sides with the neighboring countries of Laos and Cambodia.⁵³ Support for the April 24 demonstration and the "Joint Treaty of Peace" (later called the "People's Peace Treaty") gathered momentum after the Laotian invasion.

Within the Jewish community antiwar criticism, practically dormant in the previous six months, was revived in March and April 1971. Antiwar activism was particularly

strong among Jewish radicals and youth. In early March a number of Jewish radicals met to discuss the "People's Peace Treaty" and searched for a way to oppose the war as Jews. The result was "The Jewish Campaign for the People's Peace Treaty," a revision of the general Treaty which emphasized two additional points. A preamble stressed that "our beliefs and traditions as Jews impel us to separate ourselves from [the Indochina] . . . war." An addendum established a Trees for Vietnam program based in the Biblical admonition (Deut. 20:19) not to destroy the trees surrounding a besieged city. This could, the document's framers decided, be a legitimately Jewish response to one of the war's most devastating consequences--the defoliation of Vietnamese forests. The National Committee for the Jewish Campaign said there were five reasons why they felt they had to respond to the war as Jews and not as individual American citizens: 1) it is a quintessentially Jewish act to unite "religious and ethical commitments [with] . . . politics," 2) to blindly follow any government, especially one which is morally suspect, is idolatrous, 3) Jews are committed to social justice and the war threatens this, 4) Jews know how it feels "to be the victim of oppression by Western society," and 5) Judaism stresses the community; hence, Jews acting together shows that we truly are a community.⁵⁴ These explanations are indicative of the shift in the Jewish radical movement towards an emphasis on Jewish values (and, concomitantly, a de-emphasis on the ideals of the Left).

Increasingly, in these groups, Jewish rituals, values, and symbols would be used to express social and political

concerns. The "Religious Community of Micah," an alternative, leftist Jewish group in Washington, for example, celebrated "the liberation . . . of the Vietnamese People . . . along-side the liberation of the Jewish People" during its Passover Seder (ritual meal). It asked participants to sign the "People's Peace Treaty" and suggested ways in which it could be implemented: "refuse to pay a war tax," "create areas of sanctuary for war resisters," "contribute to a program of reforestation of North and South Vietnam," "insist that Jewish institutions provide draft counselling," "begin courses on just and unjust wars, as part of religious education," or "find out if your local Jewish institutions are employing Jewish conscientious objectors."

A pamphlet on the "Jewish Campaign," co-sponsored by Jewish radical groups (The Brooklyn Bridge Collective and the Community of Micah), youth groups of the Conservative and Reform movements, and the JPF, called for more than simple endorsement of the People's Peace Treaty. Jews, the pamphlet declared, should support the Trees for Vietnam project, back "legislation to end American involvement in the war," provide "medical assistance to injure Vietnamese," and give aid and counsel to young men of draft age.⁵⁵

The Trees for Vietnam culminated on March 13, 1972 when the leaders of the project--Michael Tabor (Community of Micah), Rabbi Michael Robinson (JPF), Mitchell Smith (rabbinic student at RRC), Ruth Robinson (NFTS), and Mitchell Krucoff (president of the Reform youth's Mid-Atlantic region)--met in Paris with representatives of the DRV, the Provisional

Revolutionary Government of Vietnam (the political arm of the NLF), and several Buddhist groups. They explained the importance of reforestation in Israel and distributed money collected for the program.⁵⁶

In the Spring of 1971 a number of mainstream Jewish groups also joined in the resurgent antiwar mood. Those organizations which spoke out had, by and large, long been associated with the antiwar movement. In March the Reconstructionist criticized a seemingly indifferent society and called for a renewed struggle against the war. During the four week period prior to the April 24 demonstration the CCAR, the Women's Division of the AJCongress, and the NCJW all called for an immediate ceasefire.⁵⁷

The demonstration against the War in Southeast Asia on April 24, 1971 was the largest of the Vietnam era, with an estimated two to five hundred thousand gathering in Washington, 300,000 in San Francisco, and hundreds of thousands at smaller rallies held throughout the United States. Never again would so many Americans come together in protest.⁵⁸

After the April 24 protest American disengagement from Vietnam accelerated. As American troops were pulled out, more South Vietnamese forces were sent into battle under a program the Nixon Administration termed "Vietnamization." Although there were fewer ground troops in Vietnam, American air support for the South Vietnamese remained high. In late December 1971 American planes, in the most extensive aerial operations since the November 1968 bombing halt, attacked military targets in the southern part of North Vietnam in reaction to

a North Vietnamese buildup. Through this two pronged approach of Vietnamization and continued U.S. aerial support Nixon hoped to minimize American losses, but still keep the North Vietnamese in check. At the same time secret talks in Paris with representatives of the DRV and NLF, which began in August 1969, continued on a regular basis.

Antiwar critics in the Jewish community were displeased with this approach. Throughout 1971 and early 1972 they pressed for a complete withdrawal of U.S. forces and repudiated Nixon's reliance on American air power to resolve Vietnam's problems. In June 1971 the National Conference of Jewish Communal Service and the Executive Committee of the CCAR called for an end to the "senseless" war. The UAHC, AJCongress and NCJW participated in an interfaith Convocation to End the War in Southeast Asia held on June 7-8. In July several Jewish leftist groups, meeting at a National Peace Action conference, demanded "the setting of a date for the immediate end of the war." Joining a November 6 antiwar march in New York were several Jewish radical groups. Later that month the UAHC reiterated earlier calls for a ceasefire, urged total U.S. withdrawal by March 1972, and supported the Trees for Vietnam project. Several weeks after this the UAHC joined with the CCAR, AJCongress and Americans for a Progressive Israel in sponsoring a "Sabbath of Peace" dedicated to "immediate withdrawal from Southeast Asia and equitable peace in the Middle East." The December bombing was attacked by the presidents of the UAHC and CCAR--Rabbis Maurice Eisendrath and David Polish--and the AJCongress, who

referred to it as a "shameful episode." The NCJW, JPF, and the Joint Commission on Social Action of the UAHC and the CCAR repeated the familiar antiwar rhetoric in March 1972.⁵⁹

In addition to these groups which had previously expressed opposition to the war there were indications after the beginning of 1971 that Jewish organizations which at an earlier date tended to either back the war or say nothing about it were now beginning, tentatively at first, then more boldly, to question the war publicly. None of these groups actually opposed the war, but they did show that they were not immune to the growing feeling in America that the U.S. should withdraw its troops from Vietnam with all due speed. In May 1971 Hadassah magazine reprinted an article critical of the war, which first appeared on its pages in 1963. The author, Saul Padover, commended Hadassah, in a postscript written to accompany this reprint, for its courage in printing the critical review of the war at such an early date. As yet, Hadassah had not made a statement on the war, although it did express support for responsible dissent in October 1969. The decision to reprint Padover's article in its magazine surely was the result of a growing feeling within this organization to more forthrightly oppose the war.

In B'nai Brith there were also signs that the earlier policy of neutralism was under attack. A letter in the September issue of the B'nai Brith periodical, the National Jewish Monthly, informed the members of this organization that at a district convention a resolution "condemning the war in Indo-China and calling for immediate withdrawal of

American troops was adopted." In the same magazine, three months later, a report by a Jewish serviceman in Vietnam during Yom Kippur expressed anguish over the irony of asking for forgiveness while fighting in Vietnam:

Our . . . well-constructed rationalizations . . . separated us from the true accounting needed on that Atonement Day. It was lost on us. But the need for that accounting still remains.⁶⁰

Perhaps the most surprising change of heart was within the Jewish War Veterans. In March 1971 the JWV National Commander referred to his disillusionment with the war in a commentary on Vietnam veterans.

We have sent these boys to a war without end, a war without glory, a war without national heroes, a war that has become a cancer in our hearts. It has not only come to be hated by most Americans, but especially by the vets themselves.

Less than a year later (January 1972) the JWV, in line with its long-standing "no questions asked" policy of supporting the U.S. President, endorsed Nixon's plan to end the war. But, they warned Nixon, "continuation of private negotiations is counter productive when the credibility of our own government is at stake." The JWV then proposed that the President specify a date for total withdrawal, contingent upon the return of all American POWs.⁶¹

After mid-1971 the American military presence in Vietnam was greatly reduced--more troops were coming home and draft calls were down markedly. As a result, fewer Americans felt Vietnam was the pressing concern it once was. Students, no longer affected by the draft, largely ignored the war and returned to their studies. A large majority of the public

did feel it was morally wrong for the U.S. to be in Southeast Asia and were anxious that the war end swiftly, but very few were now concerned enough to express their opinions in any active way.⁶²

One issue which continued to generate interest was the punishment of those responsible for the My Lai massacre. A year and a half after the first articles written about My Lai Lt. William L. Calley, Jr. was charged with perpetrating the murder of 22 Vietnamese citizens. Many Americans were incensed that the charges against others in the military chain of command at the time of the assault were dropped. Calley, though wrong, was a scapegoat, people cried. Some argued that My Lai was only one example of the atrocities which were committed during the war and was, therefore, a symbol of America's guilt. Lt. Calley was guilty, but so were others and they should be charged. Another view at the time was that because Calley was a scapegoat for others more responsible than he, the President should grant him clemency. Jews were as divided as the rest of society. Most commentators accepted the former point of view. A. J. Heschel even went so far as to suggest the establishment of a "guardian or commissioner of moral discipline" to limit such excesses in the future. One group in the Jewish community, the JWV, sided with those who felt that "to protect a fragile national unity from suffering further damage, Calley should be granted clemency."⁶³

Jewish antiwar activists were increasingly aware that, as the war was winding down, Jews, like most Americans, no longer considered Vietnam a major issue. Jews, in particular,

were more concerned with the ongoing tension between Israel and her Soviet-supported Arab neighbors. The Jewish radicals at the July 1971 National Peace Action Coalition blamed this apathy on the "Jewish Establishment" which, in an attempt "to gain American support for the policies of the Israeli government, has discouraged the Jewish community from active participation against the war in Indochina."

Rather than castigate American Jewry, some moderate antiwar groups attempted to co-opt Jews by linking Vietnam to Israel. In Philadelphia several individuals "disturbed over the relative quiet in the [Jewish] community" about vietnam, formed an ad hoc coalition in January 1972 to "raise the level of Jewish concern about the war and generate some concerted action to help bring the conflict to an end." The organizers drafted a statement on Vietnam and, after much debate, included a phrase supporting "Israel's right to defend her sovereignty within secure and defensible borders." One of those who was present said the reason this phrase was included was, quite simply and realistically, "to encourage Jewish sponsorship of the coalition." An advertisement in the New York Times by the Reform movement, AJCongress, and Americans for a Progressive Israel made the same connection.

As we affirm the right of the Vietnamese people to live in independence, freedom, and dignity in their land, we shall also affirm the right of our kinsmen in Israel to live in independence, freedom and dignity in their land.⁶⁴

Thus activists were able to express their concern for Israel and, at the same time, demonstrate the legitimacy of their antiwar feelings to the general Jewish public.

The question of a Jewish basis for SCO was rendered academic because of the vast decrease in draft calls and, therefore, few discussed it. In conjunction with the revitalized antiwar feeling which swept America during the Spring of 1971 the MBR and the SCA came out in favor of selective conscientious objection.⁶⁵ The final words in the debate were spoken by two Orthodox rabbis--Emanuel Rackman, who accepted SCO, and Maurice Lamm, who said that while a nation can reject a particular war, an individual can not.⁶⁶

IV. On the Threshold of Peace (April 1972-January 1973)

The North Vietnamese decided sometime in early 1972 that because of public pressure in America to get out of the war the United States would not intervene in the case of an all-out communist offensive. On March 30 North Vietnamese troops invaded South Vietnam. Nixon realized that neither the American public nor Congress would accept an increase in U.S. ground forces. The President chose to rely once more on American air power. On April 6 aerial bombardment against the DRV was resumed. The North Vietnamese were undaunted. Throughout April the offensive continued; a major South Vietnamese city, Quang Tri City, fell to the North on May 1. The South Vietnamese army, to whom the bulk of the fighting fell, was in disarray. To blunt the North Vietnamese attack Nixon decided on May 8 to mine key North Vietnamese harbors, including Haiphong, Hanoi's port city.

As the war intensified in April some people in the United States worried that the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam might be held in check. A few demonstrations

took place, although none were near the scale of the huge gatherings of the previous two years. After Nixon announced that the U.S. would mine North Vietnamese ports, however, demonstrations erupted coast-to-coast. They were, according to the New York Times, the "most turbulent since May 1970."⁶⁷

Within the Jewish community the familiar cadre of antiwar organizations and Jewish periodicals joined in condemning the escalation of April and May 1972. The UAHC, CCAR, Workmen's Circle, United Synagogue of America, AJCongress, Americans for a Progressive Israel, Labor Zionist Alliance, AJCommittee, Massachusetts Board of Rabbis and the Reconstructionist all issued statements, either jointly with or independently of other groups, against the war's intensification. A number of Jewish women's groups, some never before on record against the war, expressed shock and horror at the events in Indochina. The NCJW, NFTS, Women's Division of the AJCongress, B'nai Brith Women, and National Women's League of the United Synagogue (Conservative) appealed for an end to the war. In the first joint statement of Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox Jews since the SCA "Policy Statement on Vietnam" in early 1966 fourteen religious leaders of all three movements assailed the American escalation of the war and called on Congress to withdraw "financial and legal" resources for continuation of the conflict.⁶⁸

Most Jews and Jewish organizations merely issued antiwar statements, but a few took action. The CCAR, at its annual convention in June became the first Jewish organization to support a collective act of civil disobedience when

it called upon all Reform rabbis, the UAHC, and HUC-JIR to withhold payment on a special telephone excise tax which was used to generate revenue for the Vietnamese War.⁶⁹ A demonstration in Boston on May 17, planned by the Massachusetts Board of Rabbis and involving area rabbis and Jewish students, received a great deal of publicity because of the arrest of six rabbis who participated in the protest. This was not the first time that Jews or rabbis had resorted to civil disobedience to express their opposition to the war. It was, however, the only time during the Vietnam era when Jewish leaders were arrested for their activities.

The MBR was moved to make some form of protest because of an appeal in late April from Jewish college students in the Boston area.

[We are] looking for a voice with which to cry out. . . . And we knew that this voice . . . had to come from our Jewish tradition and from our Jewish selves. . . . We ask you, we plead with you, we demand that you lead our community into a position which makes us confront the world as a whole . . . We must make Judaism shape America.

The MBR decided to sponsor "an act of non-violent civil disobedience on Wednesday, May 17th at 11 A.M. at the Federal Building in Boston to dramatize its moral concern" with the war. The Social Action Chairman of the MBR, Rabbi Judea B. Miller, recalled that the demonstration was to begin with a worship service. After that those present would block the main entrance to the Federal Building. "If in the course of this civil disobedience we were arrested, this was a risk that many rabbis were prepared to take. But arrest per se

was not the stated goal and object of the demonstration." Prior to the demonstration, Miller declared, it was decided to end at noon so as not to interfere with the workers' lunch hour.⁷⁰

The demonstration did not proceed as planned. When Rabbi Miller and Rabbi Oscar Bookspan, designated earlier as the sole spokesmen for the protest, decided to adjourn after the police said no one would be arrested, a group of rabbis refused to accede to their wishes. "We fell into fighting among ourselves in public," Miller wrote the arrested rabbis later, "with rebuttals, catcalls and demagoguery. . . . An orderly and dignified demonstration was turned into a mindless mob." Most of the demonstrators supported the dissenting rabbis and the blockade of the entrance continued until approximately 1:30 P.M., when one hundred people went inside the building, sat down, and sang Hebrew songs. Those who went into the Federal Building did so, in the words of one rabbi present, "with every intention of being arrested . . . to show publicly our dissatisfaction with the mining of North Vietnamese ports and the stepped-up bombing." They were, it came out later, also frustrated that the police did not arrest them while they were outside and, therefore, went indoors purposely to provoke arrest. "I entered the building in part," said Rabbi Herman Blumberg, "to protest duplicity in law enforcement which protects 'respected clergy,' but permits acts of violence on nameless youths." The violence he was referring to occurred when twenty-nine demonstrators, including the six rabbis, were forcibly removed

from the building and arrested "on grounds . . . involving trespass and obstruction on federal property."⁷¹

While they were in jail waiting for their arraignment the rabbis who were arrested--Herman Blumberg, Lawrence Kushner, Daniel Polish, Herman Pollack, Benjamin Rudavsky, and Cary Yales--drafted an acrimonious letter, "on a left-over sandwich wrapper from some previous prisoner," to the MBR in defense of their actions. They expressed chagrin at the MBR's forfeiture of moral leadership demonstrated by the spokesmen for the MBR" at the morning's demonstration. The remarks of these men, the six rabbis declared, "had the effect of undermining the will of many Rabbis to participate in just such actions, . . . [for it represented the Rabbis] as pusillanimous temporizers, infected by a failure of nerve and purpose. . . . The fact is that had we not persisted in our goal, the MBR would have been completely disgraced in the eyes of the community."⁷²

Although the MBR issued a public statement supporting its members who took part in the demonstration and "requested that the lawyers from the Jewish Community Council continue to serve those arrested," Judea Miller responded to the letter by chiding the six who were arrested with a lack of "self-discipline" which "endangered the effectiveness of the whole undertaking." He praised them for their "courage and moral commitment," but was upset that they acted "on the spur of the moment," without registering their disapproval of the scheduled program of the demonstration before it began.⁷³

At their trial on May 31 each of the six who were arrested accepted their guilt at breaking the law, but defended this as a minor infraction incurred to stir others to oppose the more serious crime of the Vietnam War. This act was not, declared Cary Yales, "a repudiation of this country and its larger purpose, . . . [but was] a decision of conscience against an unconscionable war." Several of the statements expressed frustration at the failure of other acts of opposition to the war to affect change and said that only an act of non-violent, civil disobedience such as this could express the depth of moral outrage they felt. Each rabbi based this sense of moral outrage on a personal understanding of Jewish tradition. In words reminiscent of Arthur Waskow several years earlier, Lawrence Kushner implied that the memory of the Holocaust stirred him to action: "I have chosen an act of civil disobedience for I refuse to be a good citizen who sees the smoke curling from distant chimneys and soothes his conscience with feigned powerlessness." Yales concurred: "Ours was a decision to speak out because no one knows better than we [Jews] the price that men and nations will pay for their silence."⁷⁴

It should be noted that all six were Reform rabbis and that three were ordained in the late 1960's. It is evident, then, that the position of the CCAR was a reflection of the activist mood displayed by these rabbis. The younger rabbis who were arrested were all seminarians during the period of HUC-JIR draft resistance. It is not surprising, therefore, that the anger they felt at this time compelled them to

similar acts of civil disobedience.

During the interval between the arraignment and the May 31 trial the six asked the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Boston to "assume responsibility for court costs and fines" and, by so doing, to "express its support of our concern and find means for voicing further opposition to the war." Although their request was refused, the executive director of the Jewish Community Council expressed his personal feeling that the "demonstration did achieve your objective of placing the issue of the Vietnam War before the organized Jewish community."

Within the Jewish community, however, the central issue brought out in letters, editorials, and articles on this incident was not the war, but the propriety of rabbis engaging in an act of civil disobedience. Reaction to their protest was divided. Some saw it as a moral imperative, necessitated by the outrageous escalation of the war. Their supporters asked rhetorically, "would we really have been better Jews by doing nothing?" Those who questioned the demonstration did so from different perspectives. Some felt that it was inappropriate for Jews to be so intently involved in non-Jewish issues such as Vietnam. Furthermore, to do this, but not to take similar action for Jewish concerns showed "moral bankruptcy." Moderates, who opposed the war yet were equally opposed to Jews breaking the law, said that at this time (i.e. in the months prior to the November presidential election) Jewish efforts against the war should be directed at supporting an "alternative" to Nixon.⁷⁵

The antiwar protests were short-lived. The reasons were many. In the first place, Nixon not only visited the Soviet Union and signed the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty with Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev, but only a few months before he had visited China, breaking a generation-long official silence between the two powers. These foreign policy coups effectively pulled the rug out from under the growing antiwar activism at home. The easing of relations with the two major communist nations allayed the fears of many Americans that the escalation of the war might bring the USSR or Communist China into battle. Antiwar activists, particularly on the Left, were disheartened when neither Moscow nor Beijing expressed any public displeasure with American actions in Vietnam while Nixon was visiting. Another factor limiting the antiwar protests in the United States was the continuing pull out of American forces. In fact, on August 12 the last U.S. ground troops left Vietnam (43,500 pilots and support personnel remained to continue the air attacks in Southeast Asia). A final reason for the decline in antiwar activity was the fact that 1972 was an election year and, as always during such a time, energy was directed toward the campaign.

Many Jews felt additional pressure from the Israeli government to keep silent about the war. The new Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, maintained the approach of his predecessors, Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir, in trying to muffle Jewish criticism of American policy in Vietnam. He made calls on several antiwar leaders to ask them to tone down

their attacks on Nixon and the war and repeatedly stressed in public appearances "that Israel was thankful to the Nixon Administration and that American Jews should show their appreciation."⁷⁶

As a result of the above mentioned factors many within the Jewish community backed off from making any strong statements about the war. Most Zionist groups, the large secular organizations (B'nai Brith and Hadassah), Orthodox groups, and the JWV maintained a stony silence.

There continued to be some protests made against the war by Jewish organizations, but they were limited in scope. Most of those who spoke out were affiliated with religious organizations and co-ordinated their protests with Jewish days of prayer and commemoration. (One significant exception was the Ladies Auxiliary of the JWV which, in November 1972, supported "an end to the American military role in Indochina." On Tisha B'av (July 20, 1972) the anniversary of the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem in 586 BCE and 70 CE, several rabbis joined with about 100 others on the steps of the Capitol Building to protest the war. During the Ten Days of Repentance (Aseret Y'may T'shuvah) between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur an estimated 500 Jews, one-fifth of whom were rabbis, fasted in protest against the war. The fast was sponsored by Rabbi Eugene Lipman, who headed the CCAR Commission on Justice and Peace, in a CCAR Newsletter. The idea quickly spread, gaining momentum after it was linked with a remembrance of the eleven Israeli athletes slain at the Olympics in Munich that August. Supported

by Eisendrath, A. J. Heschel, and others, between thirty and forty rabbis, "a few Orthodox, some Conservative, and a majority of Reform," joined in the five day "Fast for Life." In addition to the fast, daily services and discussions on the war in Vietnam took place at various synagogues. Rabbi Lipman explained why such a fast was necessary at this time:

The continuation of the war in Vietnam is a painful burden for each of us. As responsible citizens we cannot evade our own share of guilt because our nation is carrying on a war which we find unconscionable. As serious Jews we must try to expiate our guilt.⁷⁷

The theme of guilt had long been sounded by antiwar activists. Some felt, as early as 1967, a "sense of personal guilt" for living in a nation engaged in an immoral war. In the later stages of the war the argument was slightly modified. Antiwar activists (and Jews with unusual fervor) argued that all Americans were guilty for what took place in Vietnam. In May 1971 Saul Padover declared, "for the sake of the country's moral health and future peace, it would be better to realize that we are all guilty (if not in equal measure), for millions of us gave active and passive support to the Vietnam policy [and showed] . . . indifference to public affairs." In 1972 Jewish war critics repeated the same argument.⁷⁸

Jewish activists were not, of course, the only ones upset about the growing apathy about the war as U.S. involvement decreased in 1971 and 1972. Jews, however, seem to have used the argument of collective guilt to a greater degree than others. A reason for this emphasis was undoubtedly

the growing worry that Jewish antiwar activity might have postwar repercussions for the whole community. After the Tet Offensive (early 1968) there were some fears among intellectuals and other antiwar activists that they might become scapegoats in the American public's attempt to explain how the U.S. could have lost the war in Vietnam. Jews were particularly sensitive to charges that they were instrumental in undermining American policy. It should be remembered that the Johnson-JWV incident of the Autumn of 1966 pivoted on the Jewish community's anxiety about being seen as a "fifth column." There is a "possibility," wrote the sociologist Nathan Glazer in 1971, of the growth of a "stab-in-the-back myth, in which it will not only be students and professors and intellectuals who are attacked, and not only Jews in their role as members of this general community, but conceivably Jews as Jews." At about the same time several Jewish radical groups said they, too, were "deeply concerned" that the debate on the war was resulting in "racism . . . liable to lead to an increase in anti-Semitism."⁷⁹ It is very possible, therefore, that Jews indicted all Americans, at least in part, as a means of countering any attack on themselves as being more guilty than others.

In October and November 1972 the activist derision of Jewish silence, in particular the silence of the Orthodox movement, was debated in Sh'ma, a publication with a limited, but diverse and influential readership in the Jewish community. Over the span of five issues no less than twelve authors, the majority of whom were Orthodox rabbis, took

sides on this controversial issue. The debate was sparked by an article of Rabbi Henry Siegman, who condemned the morality of Orthodox leaders who so narrowly defined "Jewish interests" as to ignore Vietnamese suffering. In a series of rebuttals Orthodox respondents defended that silence. A number of explanations were put forth: 1) since the gedolim (great halachic authorities of the generation) are silent, we must be, too; 2) there is not enough "factual data for the formation of moral perceptions"; 3) non-Jewish concerns are simply not as important to Orthodox leaders as "Jewish interests" because the Jews are that people through whom God will redeem humanity; 4) the survival of Jewry depends on the defeat of Communism wherever it appears; 5) there are no easy solutions to the complex issues of Vietnam; 6) the gedolim, like Orthodox Jewry in general, are acutely sensitive, because of their closer ties to Europe than other Jews, to the "basic insecurity" of life in Galut (Exile) and prefer not to "rock the boat;" and, in an unusual response for an Orthodox Jew, 7) to ask Orthodox leaders to make proclamations is "to crave for the security of authoritarianism." The Orthodox rebuttals were by no means cut from the same cloth. One individual defended the war, saying "it is only unfortunate that America was not successful in Vietnam." Another was "convinced that the United States made a mistake," but saw great wrongs on the other side, as well. Some stressed the theological nature of Orthodox silence, others the political reasons, a third group explained it sociologically. A few felt the Orthodox community should be more open

to its "responsibilities to the outside world." On the opposite side were those who said Orthodox Jewry should not be expected, after the Holocaust, to be anything but distrustful of the non-Jewish world and its concerns.⁸⁰

If nothing else, the debate in Sh'ma demonstrated that while there might be a wide range of explanations and reasons for Orthodox silence on the Vietnam War, there was a common assumption among most Orthodox Jews that silence was the best policy. (Over the years a few Orthodox Jews, such as Uri Miller and Charles Liebman, had come out against the war, but they were the exception.) Silence, however, can be indicative of many things. The informal survey of Charles Liebman made in 1968 tends to support the point of view that Orthodox silence was not really a sign of a pro-war or anti-communist stance as much as it was the result of disinterest and trepidation about running counter to official government policy. As a result, on the few occasions when Orthodox leaders and organizations issued statements on the war they were generally supportive of U.S. policy. It must be noted, however, that Orthodox support of the war was rarely as vociferous as were Reform protests against it. Orthodoxy did officially back the war, right up to its end, but its support seems to have been less out of conviction than it was to show that Orthodox Jews were law-abiding Americans.

By the Autumn of 1972 Vietnam was, in the eyes of most Americans, Jews and non-Jews alike, barely worth considering.

In October it looked as though negotiations in Paris were on the verge of a successful conclusion. North Vietnamese and American representatives were in agreement on all points. The President ordered a halt to all bombing of the DRV north of the 20th parallel. The South Vietnamese balked at the tentative proposal, however, and demanded a number of changes. Although the peace negotiations were stalled, President Richard M. Nixon was re-elected on November 7, 1972, winning the electoral vote in all states but Massachusetts. 35% of the Jewish vote went to the Republican candidate, double the percentage he received four years earlier.⁸¹ For these Jews, Nixon's staunch support for Israel was obviously more important than the small presence of American troops in Vietnam. Nixon was anxious to have a peace agreement signed, but on December 13 the North Vietnamese broke off the negotiations. Five days later Nixon resumed unrestricted bombing of North Vietnam (including Hanoi). The American bombs continued to fall until December 30 (except on the 25th), when the North Vietnamese declared their willingness to negotiate a truce.

Many Americans, unaware of or indifferent to the breakdown in negotiations, could not understand why Nixon ordered such a large scale bombing offensive. Jewish antiwar critics were incensed. On December 26, 1972 the NCJW expressed its opposition to the "senseless wholesale killing." Rabbis Judea Miller and Leonard Beerman called on an "apathetic and docile" public to demand an end to the war. The AJCongress, Americans for a Progressive Israel, B'nai Brith Women, CCAR,

NCJW, National Women's League of the United Synagogue, NFTS, RA, UAHC, and numerous local groups planned a four day protest around Tu B'Shevat (Arbor Day) to coincide with a national antiwar rally to be held on January 20, 1973, the date of Nixon's inauguration. In Washington the protest began on Saturday evening, January 13, with havdalah, followed by a "Vietnamese dinner" of rice and tea. Tree plantings took place on January 17 in Washington and, in New York, on the 21st. A political advertisement in the New York Times explained why such a protest was chosen.

Now, as an end nears to the devastation of the land and the people of Vietnam, it is a time for prayer and for planting. Our role in the destruction of life and land in Indo-China has compromised us . . . in the depts of our conscience.⁸²

It was, in other words, an expiation for guilt, another attempt to overcome the shame that so many Jews against the war just could not shake. The goal of this protest was, therefore, a highly personal one.

Many Jews against the war who lived through the Vietnam era were forever changed by the experience. By the war's end they believed that, regardless of what they did, those in authority would act as they pleased. Protests, therefore, were no longer made to alter national policy, only to serve personal conscience. Rabbi Lawrence Kushner declared that ultimately, "should all my intentions [at affecting change] be obscured or proven futile, . . . should all the people remain unchanged, perhaps at least I shall be able to keep

them from changing me." Less optimistic, but echoing the same belief that his antiwar opposition was primarily an expression of personal integrity, was M. Jay Rosenberg, who wrote after the Tu B'Shevat "Festival of Life" in January 1973:

I realized that nothing we did would change anything. We were all impotent. . . . Except to ourselves. And that is just the point. We have to march, protest, pray, and even plant trees for ourselves, for our own self respect. . . . to assert our own personal humanity in the face of the colossal inhumanity and indifference that we all see around us.⁸³

A generation that thought it could save the world, now was desperately hoping to save itself. As the war ended, thousands of American Jews were looking for ways to assert their "own personal humanity." In its final phase, then, the antiwar protest was less about Vietnam than about Jews trying to understand their place in the world. Perhaps this was always the reason for what they did, but they once believed the world could be changed to accommodate them. Now they felt that it was enough to simply keep the world from changing them.

CHAPTER FIVE

Peace?

(January 1973-Present)

Vietnam will haunt us in a hundred ways for decades to come.

-Jewish Peace Fellowship
pamphlet "This is About
Amnesty and the Jewish
Tradition"

The peace negotiations in Paris moved quickly after the "Christmas bombings" of late 1972. On January 11, 1973, Henry Kissinger cabled Nixon that an agreement was ready. Twenty-six days later, on Tet, the Vietnamese New Year (January 27, 1973) Kissinger and the chief North Vietnamese negotiator, Le Duc Tho, formally signed a peace agreement which provided for an immediate ceasefire, the release of all prisoners of war, and the withdrawal of U.S. forces within 60 days. In a strange coincidence former President Lyndon B. Johnson died in Texas only five days before the Paris Peace Accord was signed. On March 29 the last American troops left South Vietnam; only a Defense Attache Office remained.

Bombings continued in Cambodia for several months more but Congress cut off appropriations for this program in late June. On August 15, 1973 U.S. bombers completed their last mission in Indochina. The War in Southeast Asia was over and America was at peace. At least, so it seemed.

I. Postwar Vietnam and the Jews

In reality the war in Vietnam continued for another two years. Violations of the ceasefire between North and South Vietnam began shortly after U.S. troops withdrew from the country. North Vietnamese troop strength in the south increased steadily in 1973 and 1974.

Nixon reassured Premier Thieu prior to the signing of the Peace Accord that the U.S. would "respond with full force should the settlement be violated by North Vietnam," but was unable to fulfill his promises because of domestic problems.¹ The U.S. President was stymied, first of all, by a Congress which was unwilling to accede to presidential requests for more military ventures. Congress, long dominated by the Executive branch of the government, tightened the reins on the President's power to commit America to war when it passed the War Powers Act, which demanded Congressional approval for any deployment of U.S. forces lasting longer than 90 days. In addition, a limit was placed on aid which could be sent to South Vietnam. A second reason for Nixon's inability to aid South Vietnam at this time was his growing preoccupation with the Watergate scandal. On June 17, 1972 a break-in was discovered in a room in Watergate Hotel serving as the Democratic headquarters in Washington, D.C. As it became apparent that top presidential aides and probably even the President himself were involved, cries began to be heard for Nixon's impeachment. On August 9, 1974 Nixon resigned as President. The man who took his place, Gerald Ford, pleaded with Congress to honor America's commit-

ments to South Vietnam, but to no avail.

Cambodia, brought into the war after the 1970 American and South Vietnamese invasion, was equally dependent on U.S. aid. General Lon Nol, who seized power from Prince Norodom Sihanouk in March 1970, was increasingly besieged by the communist forces (called "Khmer Rouge") after the end of American bombing in August 1973. In early 1975 the Khmer Rouge began their final assault on the capital city of Phnom Penh. The five year old war in Cambodia ended on April 17, 1975; the communists were victorious.

In Vietnam the fighting ended that same month. North Vietnam launched a new offensive against the south on March 5, 1975. The generals who led the campaign hoped to win the war within two years. Fifty-five days later they were in Saigon. On April 30, 1975 the newly proclaimed South Vietnamese President, Duong Van Minh, announced an unconditional surrender. Only hours earlier the last Americans in Vietnam were evacuated from Saigon via helicopter to U.S. aircraft carriers off the coast in the South China Sea.

Following the American disengagement from Vietnam a coalition of primarily Jewish radical and Jewish youth organizations established the "Trees and Life for Vietnam" campaign to promote humanitarian aid to agencies in North and South Vietnam. The sponsoring organizations were Am Chai, Atid (the college-age organization of the Conservative movement), the Community of Micah, Hillel (Boston), JPF, National Federation of Temple Youth, United Synagogue Youth, and the CCAR. The campaign focused on three projects: reforestation

throughout Vietnam, the construction of a "resettlement village" for orphans in South Vietnam, and the restoration of a hospital in the north. Jews had been involved with similar programs in the past, but those programs were not exclusively Jewish.

A pamphlet and letter of explanation, written in June 1973, indicated how dramatically some segments of American Jewry had changed since the Six Day War. Hebrew (in transliteration) was frequent, as was the reference to traditional Jewish symbols. These documents also showed how the attempt of the Jewish radical movement to unite progressive concerns with Jewish ideals was spreading to other liberal Jewish groups. The letter, addressed to "Chaverim v'Chaverot" (friends) and dated on the Hebrew date of Sivan 4, 5733, attempted to tie s'firat ha'omer (the counting of days between Passover and Shavuot) with "the ravaged lands of Vietnam." In the pamphlet the familiar two-fold liberal emphasis on guilt and the Holocaust were used to explain why Vietnam was a Jewish concern. In the first place, "having experienced the Holocaust and knowing the possibility of the extermination of an entire people, the tragedy of the war in Vietnam demands a compassionate response from Jews." A second reason was that:

As American Jews we share the burden of guilt for the devastation our country has wrought and must remember that the Jewish tradition requires an overt act as a step toward the expiation of guilt.

It does not appear that this program was highly successful, as there was only one reference to it in the available

literature of the sponsoring organizations after this initial contact.²

Following the gradual communist takeover of South Vietnam and Cambodia in 1975 American Jewry spent less attention on direct humanitarian aid to Vietnam and more on the thousands of refugees fleeing from Southeast Asia, most often by boat. A wide range of Jewish groups, representing diverse religious and political interests, was strongly supportive of aid for the "Boat People," as these refugees were called at the time. It is easy to understand why Jews felt so committed to resettling the "Boat People" in the United States. Not only did Jews remember their own immigrant background and a country which allowed their ancestors to make a new life in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but they also remembered an America which closed its doors to Jews desperately seeking to escape from Germany in the 1930's. Jews were not willing to stand by and let a similar rebuff of anxious refugees occur again. "We Jews," an editorial in the June 1975 issue of Jewish Currents declared, "have not forgotten the cold shoulder . . . that faced Jewish refugees from Hitler." One Jewish woman who helped a family of Laotian refugees, when asked why she did it, responded with other reasons: "Humanitarian concerns, I suppose, mixed with some curiosity and a real dedication to the Jewish values of social justice." In April, May, and June, as the refugees began to stream out of Indochina, the UAHC, CCAR, AJCommittee, AJCongress, JWV, B'nai Brith Women, New York Board of Rabbis, and Chicago Board of Rabbis urged America to take in the

"Boat People." Many of these groups commended President Ford for deciding to admit 130,000 refugees. Several years later, in November 1978, the UOJCA joined the roster of Jewish organizations petitioning the government to aid in the continuing plight of refugees from Southeast Asia.³

Certain groups did more than simply urge the government to act. At the request of the U.S. State Department, HIAS, the worldwide Jewish migration agency, agreed to enlist the aid of local Jewish communities to resettle 10,000 refugees. In the four years between 1975 and 1979 "some 5,000" Indochinese refugees were actually helped by Jewish communities across the United States. "The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago alone . . . provided services for upward of one-third of all the Indochinese refugees received by all Jewish Federations." Synagogues affiliated with the Reform movement "adopted" hundreds of refugees and helped them begin their lives in America. Thousands more were sponsored by individual Jews and Jewish families. This time the doors would not be closed.⁴

Throughout the war supporters of American involvement in Southeast Asia argued that should the communists be victorious there would be bloody purges of all critics of the regime. In Vietnam the predicted bloodbath never happened, although 1.5 million Vietnamese were forced to resettle and 200,000 were sent to "re-education camps." In Cambodia, (renamed Kampuchea), however, peace meant death. After 1975 millions of perceived enemies of the state were killed in the most systematic death program since the European Holocaust

of the Second World War. It ended only when Vietnamese troops invaded Kampuchea in 1978. An estimated 1.5 to 2.5 million people (out of a total population of 7 million) died during the three and a half year rule of the Khmer Rouge.

The American Jewish community was not silent after the full extent of the horror was made public. Many Jews drew a parallel between the Nazi Holocaust and the genocide in Cambodia. "As Jews, as Americans, and as human beings," the UOJCA resolved in 1978, "we must not allow history to repeat itself." It called on the U.S. to "lead the effort to challenge the credentials of this regime to sit in the United Nations General Assembly." On October 27, 1979 the AJCommittee made a similar point: "As Jews who still live under the shadow of the Nazi holocaust we cannot stand idly by while so many fellow human beings face death by starvation." Marc Tanenbaum, director of interreligious affairs of the AJCommittee and the first Jewish representative to visit the Cambodian refugee camps, promised the survivors, "that we [Jews] would not let them suffer the indifference we had experienced." Tanenbaum also asked that American Jews take action and sponsor Indochinese refugees.⁵

In retaliation for the 1978 incursion into Kampuchea, Communist China invaded Vietnam in February 1979. Although Chinese troops left within a month, tensions have occasionally flared along the Chinese-Vietnamese border in recent years. Indochina has become more and more impoverished. Between 1979 and 1983 approximately two million Southeast Asians fled to China. Nearly 700,000 Indochinese (most of them

Vietnamese) have, as of the end of 1983, reached the United States.

Following the influx of refugees in the late 1970's, the Jewish community, more involved with Middle East tensions and communal concerns, dropped the problems of Indochina from its agenda. The effects of the Vietnam War on American society are still significant, but concern with Indochina itself is, for the moment, a thing of the past.

II. Postwar America and the Jews

In the United States the wounds created by the war and the opposition it generated at home remained long after the ceasefire and withdrawal of American troops. For the men and women who fought in Vietnam there was the readjustment to life in a country which just wanted to forget the painful episode. Thousands of young Americans who took flight to Canada, Sweden, and other countries between 1967 and 1973 in order to escape the draft remained in exile. Millions of Americans were disillusioned with the nation's political leadership. Nearly everyone who lived through the "Vietnam years" tried to comprehend what the war meant for their country and themselves. Shortly after the Paris Accords were signed the Reconstructionist asked aloud what many must have been thinking:

Will they [Americans] swing from foolhardy adventures abroad to a new isolationism? Will they move from virtual surrender to the demands of the military, to cynical rejection of all use of power? Will Americans learn that there is an alternative to abject reliance upon the leader, on the one hand, and a cop out on the other?; that the people, through the legislative process,

must share in the determination of national policies? Will the "majority" ever learn to distinguish between rhetoric and reality?⁶

Following the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in 1973 the focus of the controversy on the war shifted to a debate on amnesty for those Americans who resisted or evaded the draft. At the war's end draft evaders were subject to a maximum penalty of five years in jail and a \$10,000 fine. A New York Times article on the issue indicated the complexity of the amnesty question:

While the problem is political, it is also profoundly moral and religious. It involves questions of attitudes toward law and governmental policies, of convictions about killing and the justness of the Vietnam War, of the concepts of punishment and forgiveness. It is complicated by the fact that the motives--or moral or religious convictions--of the men involved vary greatly.⁷

Amnesty was not, of course, a new issue. It was first suggested by Eugene McCarthy during the 1968 presidential campaign, but was quickly dropped after those in exile stated their opposition to it because of its implication that they committed a criminal act which had to be forgiven.

In time, as the exile from home stretched into years and as the war began to wind down, exiles increasingly supported unconditional amnesty as an admission that the war was immoral and those who fled were right in opposing it. Ironically, the more amnesty was used as a moral judgment on the war, the more Americans questioned the propriety of such an amnesty. If draft resisters and evaders were granted amnesty, critics countered, we would, in effect, be saying that the Americans who fought in Vietnam were

morally tainted. As a result, Nixon felt unconditional amnesty to be "the most immoral thing I can think of." At a press conference on January 31, 1973 he declared:

Amnesty means forgiveness. We cannot provide forgiveness for them. Those who served, paid their price. . . . If they want to return to the United States they must pay the penalty.

Most Americans agreed. In June 1972 a Harris poll showed public opinion opposed to amnesty by a 3 to 2 margin. By the next March 67% of the people were against an unconditional amnesty. A "clemency" program proposed by Senator Robert Taft, Jr. of Ohio in 1971, stipulating that exiled Americans could return if they served their country in some non-military capacity for three years, was rejected by both sides of the debate as merely sidestepping the essential guilt and/or innocence of those involved.⁸

The real question after 1973, therefore, was not whether to grant an amnesty, but what the nature of that amnesty would be. Would it, in other words, be an unconditional pardon or a program requiring some form of compensatory service? Would it include draft evaders and military deserters, or simply draft resisters?

In the Jewish community the subject of amnesty was first raised not for those in exile, but for jailed draft resisters. In May 1970 the Massachusetts Board of Rabbis supported "amnesty to those who have been imprisoned for refusing to serve in the military on grounds of conscience." It was not until 1971, however, that amnesty for draft evaders became an issue of concern among Jews.

Jews were, like other Americans in 1971, divided on this issue. Antiwar critics, who viewed the nation as wrong and draft resisters as right, saw amnesty not as a forgiveness, but as a way of admitting a national error. The JPF, in a pamphlet entitled, "This is About Amnesty and the Jewish Tradition," declared, "in many ways the deserters and exiles took prematurely the stance that the war was a mistake. They should not be punished for having been ahead of public opinion and government policy." A. J. Heschel saw unconditional amnesty as one more means of "purging ourselves of what we have done" in Vietnam. In addition, he believed amnesty was a way to end the "disunion" which fractured America.

Rabbi Emanuel Rackman (Orthodox) agreed with the JPF argument that the liberalization of American draft laws was due, in part, to the draft evaders, but backed the proposal of Senator Taft for a clemency program.

The clemency need not be automatic and gratuitous. The State could easily provide substitute forms of service. . . . which would have great appeal to those exiles who would want to return home. Most of them would delight in peaceful service.

Rackman misread the response of those in exile, who refused, in 1971 and again after the war, to accept an amnesty which demanded alternative service. He was, however, the only commentator to relate his opinions to an understanding of Jewish tradition, arguing that "one may commit . . . an act of disobedience to the law" if it leads to the "aggrandizement of Torah and the establishment of new Mitzvot." In

this case, amnesty "may aid and abet disobedience to the law, [but it] will nonetheless inspire many to give expression to their consciences and sensitize those less concerned with [the] . . . moral dilemma" involved.

A third perspective, taken by Jews and non-Jews alike, was that amnesty was wrong for two reasons. First, it is "demoralizing" to the soldiers still fighting in Vietnam and, second, it threatens to undermine the American system of "democracy of majority rule," proving that one could break the law with impunity.⁹

In 1972 two groups addressed the issue. The AJCongress urged that amnesty be "extended at the end of hostilities to all those who were compelled by their conscience to refuse to participate in the Vietnam War." B'nai Brith conducted an internal survey to sound out its membership's feeling on the topic, but no statements were issued.¹⁰

After 1973 no one in the Jewish community was strongly opposed to amnesty. In fact, most Jewish groups supported unconditional amnesty, even though the majority of Americans were against such an approach. At first, primarily antiwar elements backed amnesty (although the JWV gave tentative support at an early date). Within several years, however, a broad spectrum of Jewish organizations came out in favor of unconditional amnesty. This mirrored, in part, a growing feeling in the U.S. in the mid-1970's that the war had to be left behind. Yet this alone does not explain the overwhelming support the Jewish community gave to amnesty for draft resisters and evaders almost from the beginning. A

key factor was, most probably, American Jewry's desire to see peace and harmony within society. This was not only a moral demand of Judaism, but was perceived to be in the best interests of the Jewish community. Amnesty, therefore, was less a symbol of forgiveness or admission of guilt, than it was an attempt at bonding the nation together. Jews in the U.S. were, as a result, much more interested in reconciliation than recrimination. A second explanation for the pro-amnesty stance of American Jewry may be related to the disproportionate number of Jews who were in exile abroad. A 1972 study estimated that perhaps as many as "8,000 out of 30,000" draft evaders in Canada were Jewish.¹¹ Hence, many Jewish families had relatives and/or friends in exile. It would make sense that they would want to see them return home without any hassles.

The first Jewish leader to address the issue after the peace treaty was the JWV National Commander, Norman D. Tilles. In a February 18, 1973 interview he admitted that while "at the moment I am not for amnesty. . . . it should not arbitrarily be ruled out." He proposed that a "commission for reconciliation" consider the issue. "It is essential," Tilles concluded, "that we bring back into the mainstream those thousands of young people in this country who are disenchanted and disillusioned." In March the MBR asked that the President "grant amnesty" to the 75,000 "Americans who are now in jail or living in exile abroad because of their loyalty to their ideals and convictions." The president of the Women's Division of the AJCongress, Jacqueline Levine,

agreed that amnesty was not primarily "an act of forgiveness," but a "recognition of the acts of conscience of war resisters." The NCJW endorsed full amnesty in early April and the AJCongress issued a statement supporting it in June. The Reform movement's two representative bodies--the CCAR and the UAHC--both backed unconditional amnesty in similar, though slightly different statements, made in June and November, respectively. The lay leaders of the UAHC were apparently more sensitive to the charges that a pro-amnesty approach implied a questioning of the morality of those who actually fought in the war than were the rabbis of the CCAR, for they included the phrase, "with full respect for those who serve and those who sacrificed so much for their country" before asking Congress to grant amnesty. In an attempt to elicit public support for unconditional amnesty the Reform movement's Commission on Social Action distributed a "study kit" entitled Keeping Mercy for Thousands. In April 1974 the SCA urged amnesty "for those who on moral grounds refused to participate in the Vietnamese War." The NCJW reiterated its pro-amnesty position in early June.¹²

Only a few days after he became President in August 1974 Gerald Ford endorsed an amnesty program, but "only for those who agreed to do some public service to earn their way back into the country's good graces." The AJCongress and UAHC initially praised the plan, but soon thereafter were joined by the CCAR in urging President Ford to grant an unconditional amnesty. Ford's clemency program was largely a failure. "When the amnesty offer expired July 31, [1976]

only 15 percent of the estimated 12,500 eligible deserters applied, of 6,800 draft evaders, only 97 had surrendered."¹³

There was, by 1976, a growing acceptance in the U.S. of an unconditional amnesty. During his campaign for president, Jimmy Carter stressed that America had to "get the war over with" and promised a pardon for all Vietnam War draft resisters and evaders (though not deserters). In a semantically incorrect, but politically astute campaign speech, Carter differentiated between amnesty and pardon: "Amnesty says what you did was right. Pardon says whether what you did was right or wrong, you are forgiven." Following Carter's election victory in early November 1975 the UOJCA, UAHC, and AJCongress urged the president-elect to fulfil his promise to pardon draft resisters and evaders. The UOJCA statement, based on "the Jewish religious tradition and American history," also asked that he "cleanse the record of thousands of civilians who were arrested for non-violent anti-war demonstrations during the Vietnam era." Nearly four years after the Peace Accords were signed, on his first full day in office (January 21, 1977), President Jimmy Carter issued a "blanket pardon" for all draft resisters and draft evaders. Carter's pardon was accepted by most Jews, for little more was said about the issue after this time. Only one Jewish leader, Naomi Goodman, the president of the JPF, continued to press for an even wider amnesty. In November 1977 she wrote the President on behalf of two groups not fully pardoned by his program. "We oppose," she wrote for the JPF membership, "any denial of benefits to vets discharged under

the Special Discharge Review Program. We ask [also] that the civilian resisters who are in exile or have criminal records by virtue of their acts against the war be given amnesty and their records expunged."¹⁴ This was the last word on amnesty in the Jewish community, for the overwhelming majority considered the issue closed.

The War in Southeast Asia was particularly difficult for the men and women who fought in it. When they returned to the United States they were not welcomed for having served their country, but were, at best, ignored, and at worst, castigated for their part in the war. Seeing the war's futility firsthand many soldiers came back disillusioned with it. Many more became embittered about an America which seemed unconcerned about their special needs as veterans. Only in the early 1980's, for example, were the sacrifices of the Vietnam veterans recognized and honored with a Vietnam memorial in the nation's capital.

The Jewish community was only peripherally concerned with the problems of soldiers and POWs during the war and veterans after the war was over. The chaplaincy issue did generate a fair amount of debate among American Jews who felt that the religious needs of Jewish soldiers had to be met, but there was little attention paid to Jewish soldiers otherwise. The plight of the POWs (an estimated thirty of whom were Jews) was brought up only twice--in late 1968 by the JWV and again in March 1972 by a Bronx, New York rabbi, Schulem Rabin of Young Israel (Orthodox), who wanted to

conduct a Passover seder for the Jewish POWs, but was refused. The JWV was the only Jewish group to emphasize the plight of veterans returning from Vietnam.¹⁵ Sadly, no other Jewish group seemed to feel that the Vietnam vets were a Jewish concern.

III. "No More Vietnams": Jewish Evaluations of the War

Several months after the Tet Offensive in 1968 Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath hinted at the shift in American political beliefs caused by the prolonged Vietnam War. "We must resolve," he vowed, "that there be no more Vietnams, . . . we must abandon our role of universal gendarme."¹⁶ Post-World War II American foreign policy was based in the self-confident belief that the United States could and should contain communism wherever it threatened to expand. That optimistic bubble of American power was burst by Vietnam. As the war lengthened, Vietnam became a symbol--a symbol of brash expectations, futile hopes, and political miscalculations. "No more Vietnams" was a rallying cry for the millions who looked forward to a new period of isolationism, when America would concern itself with its own problems and not worry so much about the rest of the world. Throughout the 1970's and early 1980's "no more Vietnams" became the watchword of American foreign policy. Even today, more than a decade after the last American troops left Vietnam, it is still common to hear the challenge that any foreign involvement could become "another Vietnam." The implication, of course, is that U.S. interest in limited ventures abroad is not

only dangerous, but foolish.

Under the leadership of Ronald Reagan as President there are signs that the isolationist policy of post-Vietnam America is undergoing revision. U.S. involvement in Central America, Lebanon, and Grenada, the deployment of Pershing nuclear missiles in Europe, as well as stepped up anti-Soviet rhetoric may indicate that America in the 1980's will head in a new direction. It is still too early to tell, however, whether the Reagan policy is simply the final curtain call of a past generation or the herald of an encore performance for American interventionism.

Post-Vietnam war commentary has largely focused on the same issues that were debated during the war--was U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia a blunder, a response to a naive ideal, or a crime? Are those who lived at that time guilty for not speaking out against the war? Was America's failure to achieve victory due to military miscalculation, political maneuvering, antiwar criticism at home, or a combination of all these factors? Was the war primarily a "civil war" or an example of "communist aggression?" Did religious leaders have any right to comment on the war? And finally, why was the United States even involved in a war in Southeast Asia?¹⁷

Since the end of American involvement in Vietnam at least three individuals have attempted to evaluate the role the Jewish community played in the controversy on the war. Each one has made the same questionable major point--specifically, that the American Jewish community was, for the most part, silent during the Vietnam war and shares, as a result,

in the guilt for its taking place. All three Jewish evaluations are from people who were against the war. It should not come as a surprise that only antiwar writers spoke on this subject after 1973. The climate of the 1970's was so overwhelmingly anti-Vietnam that any defense of either the war or an earlier prowar stance was nearly impossible. Even within the general literature on the war only a very few articles and books actually defend American policy in Vietnam.

The earliest Jewish evaluation of the Vietnam era came from M. Jay Rosenberg immediately after the signing of the Accords.

There had been few Jewish protests against the war--or perhaps it is more accurate to say that there had been few protests that were called Jewish. Of course the membership of virtually every peace organization has been heavily Jewish. Nevertheless, Jews as Jews were not actively involved in the antiwar movement.

Four years later Samuel Rabinove, the head of the legal division of the AJCommittee also differentiated between the tendency of Jews as individuals to oppose the war and the generally non-committal policy of Jewish organizations. "A key factor in the Jewish communal posture towards Vietnam," Rabinove elaborated, "was a fear of disturbing the U.S. commitment to the survival of Israel. If the U.S. were to default in Vietnam, . . . so the thinking went, it would set a dangerous precedent for possible future abandonment of Israel." These authors merely expressed their opinion, but did not back up those feelings with documentation. A more thorough investigation and summary of Jewish attitudes regarding the Vietnam War was presented by Diane Winston in

her 1978 article entitled "Vietnam and the Jews." Her conclusions were, nevertheless, exactly the same as those offered by Rosenberg and Rabinove. "Most Jews from the organized community," Winston declared, "simply chose not to get involved." She agreed with Rabinove that Israeli pressure was a key factor in limiting Jewish dissent, but she also posited several other explanations. These included "a dislike for Communism, a recognition of financial self-interest [?] and, most significantly, a desire not to take a position, a self imposed galut."¹⁸

The remarkable similarity of these postwar evaluations may be partly explained as a reflection of the shared anti-war perspective of each of these writers. Their apparent need to find the Jewish community guilty of wrongdoing is more difficult to explain. In fact, it seems that the very purpose of these Jewish evaluations of the Vietnam era (unlike the more general works on this topic), was not to offer an opinion on the nature of the war and the debate it generated, but to point a finger at American Jewry and exclaim, "J'accuse!" Perhaps this filled a psychological need. It may have been, in other words, a way of saying, "I opposed the war and was vindicated, but you were unjustly silent--therefore, I am a better person." Perhaps, if we assume a more noble motivation, these authors hoped to move Jews to act more justly, with more compassion, and with less particularistic motivations with regard to current social issues. Whatever explanation we accept, these evaluations must be seen for what they are--not balanced portrayals of American

Jewry's response to the Vietnamese conflict, but biased polemics against an American Jewish community which would not limit itself to a single point of view.

The time has come for a new perspective.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

Jewish statements about the war in Vietnam and the actions Jews took in response to the war were not substantially different from the feelings expressed and the actions taken by non-Jewish Americans. Why, then, it might be asked in all fairness, is it necessary to even discuss Jewish attitudes toward the Vietnam war? The problem with this question is that it looks at the topic only from the angle of how Jews responded.

My concern, on the other hand, has been not simply to see how Jews and Jewish organizations viewed the conflict in Southeast Asia, but why they took the positions they did. It is not merely the responses themselves, but the motivations for those responses which are of crucial interest. From this point of view it seems obvious that there were, indeed, uniquely Jewish perspectives on the war in Vietnam.

I do not mean to imply that Jews were unconcerned with the general issues of the war, whether legal, strategic, moral, or political, for they were. Jews justified their positions, however, not just in terms of the secular values and concerns shared by all Americans, but by grounding their arguments in the three major elements of their Jewish identity--the values of Judaism, the Shoah (the destruction of European Jewry), and the State of Israel. Although each

segment of the Jewish community was influenced by and/or interpreted these "identity symbols" differently, the fact that so many Jews evoked them when discussing Vietnam is strong evidence that a large number of committed Jews viewed the war, at least in part, as a Jewish issue.

A. Jewish Tradition

Jews affiliated with the major religious movements would be expected to turn to the moral and religious values of Jewish tradition to explain their attitudes regarding the war. What was unusual during the Vietnam era was the appeal to a higher morality by Jews whose religious background and belief was minimal.

Traditional or Orthodox Jews, who usually were silent about or in favor of the war, justified their stance by referring to the Talmudic dictum dina d'malkhuta dina ("the law of the land is the law"). This had important implications. Since the United States government decided the war was in America's national interest, Jews, like all other Americans, were obligated to support that decision. Secondly, the Jew was required to serve in the armed forces of the United States if drafted. Although some elements of Orthodoxy gave implied support (via the Synagogue Council of America) to conscientious objection, it was not something most Orthodox Jews were comfortable with. SCO, which assumed the power of the individual to judge the moral right of a particular war, was, quite understandably, anathema to most traditional, halachic Jews, because it placed individual

conscience above the law of the community. The potential of such a doctrine to undermine halacha no less than political authority surely was obvious to many in Orthodoxy. Ironically, most Orthodox Jews preferred not to use Jewish values to defend or attack the war in Indochina. The Jewish interest in Vietnam was not seen as a moral one, but had to do with the survival of the Jewish people in Israel and the safety of that people in the United States. The few Orthodox Jews who did use moral arguments felt that the key issue was one of freedom, a Jewish ideal since the exodus from Egypt. Communism threatened the political freedom of the peoples of Southeast Asia and, therefore, should be vigorously opposed by Jews.

The tendency within the general antiwar movement to view the Vietnamese conflict as immoral undoubtedly contributed to a similar emphasis in Jewish antiwar circles. Critics of the war did not focus on the welfare of the Jewish people, but on vague notions of what Jewish morality demanded in the current situation. The argument that the war might be "bad for the Jews" was viewed as reprehensibly self-centered. Jewish opponents of the war were convinced that the preservation of human life, best achieved through peace, was the central value of the Jewish religious experience. Consequently, any act which might lead to the war's cessation, be it non-violent civil disobedience or SCO, was acceptable.

B. The Shoah

It seemed, prior to the Six Day War, as though most

Jews in the United States regarded the Shoah as a quirk of history. In the weeks before the Arab-Israeli clash, however, Jews were faced with the possibility of the wholesale destruction of the Jewish State. Suddenly, the Shoah was not history, but an all too present and threatening reality. As a result, in the period subsequent to the Six Day War, Jews increasingly used the Shoah as a justification for their approach toward Vietnam. For many American Jews the Shoah was a powerful and horrifying example of the precarious nature of the Galut (Exile). It could happen here, some said fearfully, and, therefore, it is best for Jews not to create too much trouble. Jewish antiwar activity could only harm the community as a whole. Even as the war was winding down some worried that Jewish antiwar activism might lead to an increase in antisemitism as Americans sought a scapegoat for the loss in Southeast Asia. A secondary influence of the Shoah was its impact on the make up of American Jewry. Many of the refugees from postwar Europe were still alive during the Vietnam era. Understandably wary of modern, secular governments, these Jews undoubtedly felt that it was best not to get involved in an issue which could easily damage their own position in society. It may well be the case that as more Americans began to oppose the war, Jews who either favored or tacitly approved of U.S. policy at first, later began to question the war effort in order that they not be "out of step" with general public opinion.

The Shoah was an equally important symbol for Jews who opposed the war. For these individuals and organizations

the great sin of the Shoah was the indifference of the world to the increasingly dire predicament of the Jews. Never again, many Jews vowed, would they let themselves or the world stand idly by while others were killed so brutally. "If the cry that burst from Jewish throats as Auschwitz accursed the entire world for having allowed the Jews to be persecuted," challenged one critic of the war in Vietnam, "can we [Jews] keep silent while other peoples experience discrimination, homelessness, and extermination?" The danger, as was occasionally pointed out by Jews critical of this approach, was that this comparison was susceptible to exaggeration. It was historically inaccurate as well as morally reprehensible to see the American actions in Vietnam as a parallel to the Nazis' systematic annihilation of the Jewish people, gypsies, and others.¹ Underlying the sense of moral certitude which permeated the antiwar camp was the same fear of prowar Jews that the Jewish people might once more be persecuted and destroyed. The Shoah could happen again. Rather than avoid confrontation, however, antiwar activists challenged the anti-communist hatred which was so prevalent among supporters of the war. The reason, they claimed, was that such hatred could easily turn against the Jews. One radical activist of the period was unabashed in his expression of the problem. "As long as there are 'gooks' [communist Vietnamese]," he declared in reference to derogatory terms, "there will be 'kikes' [Jews]."²

C. The State of Israel

Israel was most clearly a factor among those in the Jewish community who were supportive of or silent about the war. This was due, in large part, to the continuous pressure of the Israeli government on American Jews to refrain from anti-Vietnam rhetoric which might conceivably cause damage to U.S.-Israeli relations. Zionist organizations were, of course, most likely to follow Israeli opinion, though there were Zionist groups which opposed the war and non-Zionist groups which gave the war their full support. Jewish advocates of U.S. policy in Vietnam also perceived a coordinated communist threat on both ends of the Asian continent. Israel's security, they argued, was directly linked to the ability of the United States to counter communist expansionism in Southeast Asia. Not only would a communist victory sap America's determination to protect other foreign allies, but it would embolden the Soviets to step up their influence in the Middle East. Proof of the link between the situations in Vietnam and Israel was the Viet Cong support of the PLO.

Antiwar critics tended to shy away from using Israel as an explanation for their position on Vietnam. Indeed, after the Six Day War, many Jews who opposed the Vietnamese conflict felt that they had to differentiate between their antiwar response to Vietnam and their pro-Israel attitudes. There was, furthermore, no need to worry about official U.S. reaction to the Jewish antiwar effort, these people argued, because American support for Israel was based solely on the

fact that it served America's own best interests to do so. Both of these arguments indicate, however, that with respect to Israel, Jewish anti-Vietnam critics did not assume the initiative, but merely reacted to criticisms levelled at them by prowar elements.

It is clear, then, that many Jews took stands on the war not simply as Americans, but because of the impact of Jewish tradition, history, and contemporary reality on their lives. Yet this alone does not explain why certain elements of the Jewish community took one point of view while others took a totally different one. The differing attitudes regarding the Vietnamese conflict can be explained through an understanding of the demography, leadership, and general political tendenz or ideology of the various elements of the Jewish community.

The demographics of the membership of a particular organization must not be overlooked when trying to understand the source of certain attitudes. The average age and sex of a group's members, as well as its size, were significant factors in shaping opinion.

Younger Americans displayed much greater opposition to the war than their elders. This was partially due to a real fear of being drafted. It was also a symptom of the anger which idealistic and optimistic young men and women felt when they saw the horrors of Vietnam every night on television. Organizations with a younger membership were, therefore, more likely to oppose the war than groups whose members

were older. The general mood of student ferment and academic rejection of the war, for example, had an obvious effect on the Jewish radical movement, which was almost exclusively composed of young, university educated Jews. Those who lived through the appeasement era of pre-World War II Europe and the Cold War of the 1950's, however, tended to support the official explanation of the war as a defense against communist expansionism.

Jewish women, like women generally, were much more predisposed to oppose the war than men. Hence, Jewish women's groups and women's divisions of larger organizations were almost universally against the war by its end, even when the groups of which they were a part remained silent. Thus, the B'nai Brith Women and National Women's League of the United Synagogue participated in the 1973 Tu B'Shevat Convocation for Peace although neither the B'nai Brith nor United Synagogue of America had previously come out against the war.

The actual size of groups must also be taken into account. Small, special interest organizations, such as Americans for a Progressive Israel, could take decisive stances much more easily than a large, communal organization like B'nai Brith, which was composed of a diverse constituency with many different points of view.

Certain Jewish leaders played a crucial role in molding attitudes towards the war, though it is difficult to know to what degree they effected real change. It seems certain that the impetus behind the UAHC's early and continued opposition to the war was its strong-willed president, Maurice

Eisendrath. A. J. Heschel certainly had some impact in the Conservative movement, but his conscious effort to be involved in interfaith groups, despite his continual references to Jewish "identity symbols," separated his antiwar opposition from Judaism and may have muffled the influence he might otherwise have exerted in the Jewish community. In many communities rabbis and/or lay leaders whose views were well-defined might also have had a great deal of influence. On the national level the leaders who had the most impact were probably the Israeli Prime Ministers, Levi Eshkol, Golda Meir, and Yitzhak Rabin. Because of the close ties between American Jewry and Israel, they were key figures whose views on the situation in Vietnam surely colored the opinions of many Jews in the U.S.

The general political orientation of a group was, without question, a central factor in determining Jewish responses to American involvement in Southeast Asia. It is not surprising that the CCAR, for example, took such strong political stands on the war, for these Reform rabbis had a long tradition of supporting politically liberal issues. In the 1950's and 1960's the role model for the Reform rabbi was the prophet, whose vehement denunciation of society might be rebuffed, but was a moral imperative. This emphasis on social action led many in the Reform movement to see the political and moral realms as indivisible. The war in Vietnam, therefore, was as much a Jewish issue as the ritual of circumcision. Many religious Jews, probably the majority, however, were more circumspect about seeing the war as a

religious issue. The RA's 1966 resolution on Vietnam, for instance, opposed U.S. intervention for political reasons, not moral ones. Many Orthodox Jews felt the conflict was simply not a Jewish concern and, consequently refrained from making any statements. Some Orthodox groups, like the UOJCA, were traditionally conservative with regard to political issues and, with respect to Vietnam, merely followed general tendencies. The same held true for the JWV. Close ideological commitment to Israel tended to lead a group towards a prowar or neutral policy because of fears about American support of the Jewish State. As I mentioned above, large communal or ethnic organizations avoided controversial political questions so as to not create internal rifts.

Although the Jewish community was not united in its attitude toward the war, certain generalizations can be made about the nature of Jewish responses. Aside from a few notable exceptions, Jews expressed their feelings through non-violent means. Even those antiwar opponents who were willing to accept civil disobedience as a legitimate means of challenging policy were not open to the suggestion that disruptive and potentially harmful methods might be employed. Most Jews in the 1960's and early 1970's advocated a liberal or moderate stance in the political arena. Vietnam was no exception. While a wide range of options was presented, the Jewish community shied away from the extreme positions advocated by the radical Left, which regarded the antiwar effort as a means of revolutionizing America, violently if necessary, and the reactionary forces which wanted "to nuke Vietnam back

into the stone age." As a result, most Jews who commented on the war did little more than issue statements. Only a tiny minority resorted to action. Beyond these broad, general observations, however, little more can be said about American Jewish responses as a whole.

It should, then, be clear that there were many different Jewish responses to the conflict in Indochina. There were times when American Jewry spoke with one voice, but they were rare. Groups which made statements about the My Lai massacre, for example, expressed a shared horror that it took place, but even with respect to this incident there were disagreements as to the pervasiveness of such violence in the U.S. military, the extent of punishment for the perpetrators, and the implications My Lai had for the war in toto. As the wounds of the war healed in the latter part of the 1970's, it was easier for Jews to present a united front on postwar issues such as unconditional amnesty and aid for Indochinese refugees, for by that time these were viewed more as humanitarian issues than concerns related to the conduct of the war.

I thus remain unconvinced both by those who accuse American Jewry of the guilt of silence and by those who argue that the Jewish community and its leaders were excessively critical in their response to the war. These arguments do not reflect the diversity of Jewish opinion toward Vietnam, but are one-sided exaggerations which serve other purposes. They represent distortions of the historically complex nature of the American Jew and the American Jewish

community.

Surveys have indeed demonstrated that Jews, in general, showed a definite tendency to oppose the war, but individual Jews responded, like other Americans, in a myriad of ways. Some were convinced that Judaism and Jewishness offered them no choice but to take a particular stance, be it pro, con, or neutral. They acted out of conviction as Jews and Americans. Others reacted to the war simply as Americans, unaware or unconcerned with its relation to their Jewish heritage. Some individuals in the Jewish community avoided a response, afraid of damaging their status in American society. Others reacted with indifference and apathy, not feeling the need to deal with the war either as Americans or as Jews.

In the organized Jewish community there was such a broad range of opinions that it is impossible to say there was a unified Jewish response to American involvement in Vietnam. In the beginning of the war most Jewish groups were silent--a sign of indifference, uncertainty, and/or tacit support. Yet there were also some organizations which openly expressed support for American policy in Indochina. And from the earliest stages of the military build-up there were Jewish voices--some of them quite influential and persuasive--which protested the U.S. reliance on an armed solution to the problems of Southeast Asia. These antiwar critics were in the minority at first, but within a little more than a year the CCAR, UAHC, AJCongress, and RA issued statements in opposition to the escalation. As the conflict dragged on Jews, like most Americans, grew impatient with the seem-

ingly futile enterprise. Nevertheless, even at the end of the war American Jewry remained divided. No Jewish group actively supported a continuation of the war effort after late 1970, but many organizations refused to attack the government for not withdrawing more quickly. Although a substantial majority of Americans were disgusted with the war as it drew to a close, B'nai Brith, Hadassah, most Zionist groups, nearly all of Orthodoxy, and the Jewish War Veterans remained silent, with many individual members of these groups still justifying the U.S. involvement.

It has, until the present time, been all too common to stereotype American Jewry's response to Vietnam and then, just as swiftly, to castigate this caricatured community for taking an unbalanced view. Such an approach is not only historically inaccurate; it assumes that diversity is a fault. Yet the diversity of Jewish attitudes toward the Vietnamese War may also be seen, not as a sign of weakness, but of power and self-assurance. It revealed a Jewish community which had come of age in America--mature enough to see that dual identity meant responsibilities to two traditions. Comfortable in a pluralistic society, it could respond to those traditions with individual voices, not a united chorus.

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CHRONOLOGY

Principal Events in the Vietnam War and the Jewish Community's response to the conflict

- X 1964 mid-June CCAR views growing tensions in Vietnam
"with distress"
- August 2-4 Gulf of Tonkin incident
- August 7 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed in Congress
- late August JWV supports U.S. retaliation against DRV after Tonkin Gulf incident
- November Lyndon B. Johnson elected President of the United States
- 1965 March 2 "Operation Rolling Thunder," the strategic bombing of North Vietnam begins
- X March 3 CCAR Executive Board calls for negotiation, not escalation of war
- March 8 First U.S. Marines arrive at Danang
- March 24 First "teach-in" (University of Michigan), followed by many others the rest of the Spring
- X May 11 Vigil on Vietnam (Washington)
- X June 8 Madison Square Gardens (NY) rally to end the war endorsed by CCAR and RA
- X June CCAR issues antiwar statement calling for withdrawal of U.S. troops and elections in Vietnam. It also supports right of dissent.
- X October 15 CCAR Executive Board endorses "freedom of the pulpit" because of increased pressure on rabbis to remain silent
- October 15- Numerous demonstrations against the war
16 throughout the U.S.
- November 11 AJCongress stresses freedom of dissent
- X November 14-17 48th General Assembly of UAHC (San Francisco) calls for cease fire and political settlement of war in resolution on "World Peace"

- November 21 Religious Zionists of America urge "full support" for America's policy in Vietnam (Long Beach, CA)
- Autumn Women's division of AJCongress opposes war
- 1966 January SCA "Policy Statement on Vietnam"
- January 30 Governing Council of AJCongress opposes war
- February/ March Fulbright hearings in Congress on the Vietnam War
- March 15-17 Interreligious Conference on Peace
- May 1 AJCongress calls for end to war in Indochina
- May 15-19 RA issues resolution calling for peace in Vietnam
- August JWV supports military build-up in Vietnam
- September 6 Malcolm Tarlov, National Commander of JWV, visits President Johnson in Washington, which leads to debate in Jewish community on dissent
- November UOJCA supports American war effort in resolution on "Vietnam"
- November 27 40,000 people march in Washington against war. Among sponsors of march are Rabbis Jacob Weinstein, Roland Gittelsohn, and Uri Miller
- December 26-January 28 Rabbi Abraham Feinberg visits North Vietnam
- December-January Number of synagogues sponsor programs on war and the draft
 Harrison Salisbury reports on devastation of war in New York Times articles
- 1967 January 31-February 1 Interfaith conference on "Vietnam: the Clergyman's Dilemma" (Washington)
- March 5 JWV holds "patriotic rally" (Miami Beach)
- April 4 Meeting of CALCAV (Riverside Church, NY), including speeches by Martin Luther King, Jr. and A. J. Heschel
- April 8-15 "Vietnam Week," period of national anti-war protest
- April 13 NCJW emphasizes "political rather than military" solution to war
- April 16 UAHC sponsors symposium on military conscription (NY)

- * April 26 Temple Emanu-El (NY) withdraws from UAHC, ostensibly over the Reform position on the war
- * June 5-11 Six Day War between Israel and various Arab nations
- August JWV endorses Johnson's policies in Indo-china
- September 1-3 (Labor Day Weekend) National Conference for New Politics (Chicago)
- October 16-21 National Draft Resistance Week
- October 21 100,000 people involved in March on Pentagon (Washington)
- October "A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority: published in New York Review
- December Americans for a Progressive Israel supports dissent and comes out against war
- December 4 B'nai Brith Board of Governors calls on U.S. government to convene a "high-level conference" to evaluate the war
- 1968 January-February Tet Offensive in Vietnam
- January Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol meets with President Johnson and U.S. Jewish leaders
- * January 11 CCAR, UAHC call for bombing halt, CCAR opposes tax increases to pay for war
- January 31 NY Board of Rabbis supports Johnson's efforts to seek peace in Vietnam
- February 5-6 CALCAV meets in Washington, D.C.
- March 3 Conference of Vietnam sponsored by the NY Metropolitan Council of the AJCongress (Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, NY)
- March 6 Yeshiva University agrees to suspend, for one year, participation in the Jewish military chaplain program
- March 16 My Lai massacre occurs
- March 26 RA ends mandatory chaplaincy rule for newly-ordained rabbis
- March 27 B'nai Brith Women call for "vigorous effort" at negotiation to end war
- March 31 Lyndon Johnson announces that he will not seek a reelection

- April 29 National Jewish Welfare Board stresses negotiations and encourages dissent
- May 9 Workmen's Circle commends Johnson's efforts to seek peace
- May 21 AJCongress suggests a termination of mandatory chaplaincy and the creation of a civilian chaplaincy
- ★ June 20 CCAR says newly ordained rabbis can seek deferment as chaplains on the basis of SCO
- June RA calls for de-escalation of war
- July 12 Indictment of the "Boston Five"
- September 2 RCA president condemns draft card burning
- October 14 AJCongress asks that Selective Service Act be amended to include SCO
- October 31 Johnson announces a U.S. halt to bombing of North Vietnam effective the next day
- November 5 Richard M. Nixon elected President of the United States
- ★ November UAHC issues antiwar resolution
- November 28-Decem-ber 1 Hemispheric Conference to End the War in Vietnam (Montreal)
- ★ December 4 Jeffrey Halper (HUC-JIR rabbinic student) turns in draft card
- December 31 USY voices opposition to draft; asks Jewish agencies and rabbis to offer draft counseling
- 1969 January 20 Inauguration of Richard M. Nixon
- March 6 Burton Weiss arrested for draft evasion at JTS
- May 1 Dan Siegel (RRC rabbinic student) turns in draft card
- May 11 John Ruskay (JTS rabbinic student) turns in draft card
- ★ May 21 Two U.S. Congressmen call on Selective Service System to correct widespread practice of denying Jews CO status
- July 11 U.S. Court of Appeals reverses decision against "Boston Five"
- ★ October 15 Vietnam Moratorium Day--supported by Anti-Defamation League, CCAR, UAHC, and groups in Jewish radical movement. Hadassah calls for speedy end to war in Vietnam.

- ~~X~~ October 25-29 UAHC calls for withdrawal by end of 1970 and supports SCO
- November 3 Nixon speech which is later defended by Golda Meir, angering Jewish opponents of the war
- November 7 Poale Zion (Labor Zionists) issue antiwar statement and back upcoming Mobilization
- November 9 President of ZOA defends Nixon's war policy
- November 13-15 Mobilization against the War in Vietnam
- November 19 My Lai massacre brought to light
- December 3 Hillel Foundations stress "right and obligation" of campus chaplains to counsel students on draft and CO
- December 11 "Hanuka Festival for Peace and Freedom" (New York)
- 1970 April 30 President Nixon announces that U.S. and Vietnamese forces are invading Cambodia
- May-June Violent demonstrations shake American university campuses in reaction to Cambodian invasion
- ~~X~~ May 4 Four Kent State (Ohio) students fatally shot by National Guard (Three of four are Jewish) *HUC Rax*
- May 6 AJCommittee calls for removal of troops from Cambodia
- May 10 AJCongress and Workmen's Circle oppose Cambodian invasion
- May 15 Radical Jewish Union disrupts services at Temple Emanu-El (New York) and continues to do so for next four Friday nights
- May 20 UOJCA deplores Kent State killings
- June 1 SCA denounces violence at Kent State
- 1971 February 4 AJCongress protests Laotian invasion
- March 7 NYT advertisement announcing "Jewish Campaign for a People's Peace Treaty" and "Trees for Vietnam" project
- March 18 MBR supports SCO
- March 28-31 AJCongress Women's Division urges "immediate ceasefire and withdrawal"
- April 3 CCAR call on Nixon to end war by end of year
- April 13 NCJW calls for "immediate cessation" of war

- April 24 Largest antiwar demonstrations of the Vietnam era in San Francisco, Washington, and numerous other cities
- May 3 SCA asks Congress to expand CO status to include SCO
- June 7-8 * Interfaith Convocation to End the War in Southeast Asia (Including UAHC, NCJW, and AJCongress)
- June Pentagon Papers published by NYT
- November 6 Peace March (New York) supported by a number of Jewish radical groups
- November 27 AJCongress and UAHC sponsor "Sabbath of Peace"
- December 23-30 Most extensive aerial attacks against DRV since November 1, 1968 bombing halt
- December 28 * Rabbis Eisendrath (UAHC) and Polish (CCAR) condemn bombing
- 1972 January 4 AJCongress attacks December bombings as a "Shameful episode"
- January 26 JWV endorses Nixon's plan to end U.S. involvement
- March 13 Antiwar Jewish leaders in Paris to distribute funds to Vietnamese representatives for "Trees for Vietnam" project
- March 20 * Commission on Social Action (UAHC; CCAR) oppose war and call for amnesty
- March 30 North Vietnamese troops invade South Vietnam
- April-May U.S. gradually escalates combat to counter invasion
- April 9 * UAHC condemns U.S. escalation of war
- April 21 NCJW calls for U.S. withdrawal
- May 2 * AJCongress, Americans for a Progressive Israel, Labor Zionist Alliance, and UAHC issue joint call for "immediate and total withdrawal"
- May 8 Nixon announces bombing of North Vietnam and mining of key North Vietnamese ports
- May 8 AJCommittee asks for immediate ceasefire and end to war
- May 11 Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform rabbis issue antiwar statement
- May 14 AJCongress protests escalation and supports amnesty
- May 17 MBR demonstration (Boston); 6 rabbis arrested

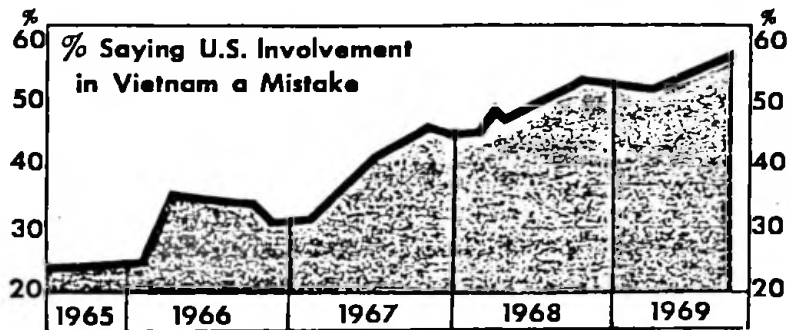
- * June CCAR supports withholding of payment of phone excise tax that is used to pay for war
- August 12 Last American ground troops leave South Vietnam; 43,500 air personnel and support staff remain
- September 9-15 "Fast for Life"--a High Holy Day fast against the war
- November 7 Nixon re-elected
- November 14 Ladies Auxiliary of JYW supports "end to American military role in Indochina"
- December 18-30 Resumption of bombing north of 20th parallel until DRV agrees to negotiate a truce ("Christmas bombings")
- December 26 NCJW urges Nixon to end bombing
- 1973 January 14 AJCongress welcomes peace and call for aid to Vietnam
- January 15 Due to progress of peace talks, U.S. military operations in Vietnam suspended
- January 20 Nixon's inauguration and antiwar demonstrations
- January 13-21 AJCongress, Americans for a Progressive Israel, B'nai Brith Women, CCAR, NFTS, NCJW, National Women's League of the United Synagogue, RA, and UAHC conduct Tu B'shevat Convocation for Peace
- January 27 Peace Accords signed in Paris
- January 27 AJCommittee expresses hope for "binding the wounds of war"
- March 12 MBR calls for full amnesty for draft resisters
- March 29 Last American troops leave South Vietnam, only Defense Attache Office remains
- April 3 NCJW backs full amnesty
- * June 21 CCAR supports unconditional amnesty
- June 24 AJCongress supports unconditional amnesty
- June 29 Congress bans aerial bombing of Cambodia after August 15
- * What a lot of work
* August 15 Last U.S. bombing mission in Southeast Asia
- * November 9-13 UAHC asks Congress to grant unconditional amnesty
- 1974 April 23 SCA supports amnesty
- June 10 NCJW reiterates call for unconditional amnesty

August 9	Richard M. Nixon resigns as President
August 19	President Gerald Ford announces his amnesty program
August 22	AJCongress praises Ford
* September 22	UAHC issues call for unconditional amnesty, but backs partial amnesty program of Ford
* 1975 April 8	UAHC urges Reform synagogues and members to sponsor Indochinese refugees
* April 17	UAHC calls on U.S. to send aid to rebuild Indochina Phnom Penh (Cambodia's capital) falls to communists
April 30	North Vietnamese troops capture Saigon
May 3	AJCommittee calls on American to aid and welcome refugees
May 7	AJCongress asks new government in Vietnam to allow free emigration
May	AJCommittee, B'nai Brith Women, New York Board of Rabbis, Chicago Board of Rabbis support Ford's refugee program
-12 June 15-19	CCAR calls for aid to Vietnam and for acceptance in U.S. of Indochinese refugees
early Summer	JWV asks Americans to help in "welfare and resettlement" of refugees
* 1976 June	CCAR calls for unconditional amnesty
November	Jimmy Carter elected President
November	UOJCA calls on President-elect Carter to grant "full amnesty"
* December 1	UAHC asks Carter to give "widest possible application" to amnesty program
1977 January 20	AJCongress urges Carter to issue "broadly framed amnesty" Carter inauguration
January 21	President Carter issues a "blanket pardon" for draft resisters and evaders (but not military deserters)
June 22	AJCongress asks Carter to grant haven to refugees on tanker off coast of Singapore
June 24	AJCongress, UOJCA praise Israeli government taking in refugees
July 20	ADL praises Carter decision to admit 15,000 refugees

	End of year	Number of refugees leaving Vietnam is approximately 1500 per month
1978	November	UOJCA petitions U.S. government to spear- head worldwide campaign to find homes for Indochinese refugees and condemns Cambod- ian holocaust
1979		Between 1975 and 1979 5,000 Indochinese refugees were sponsored by Jewish Federa- tions, more by other Jewish groups
	October 27	AJCommittee supports Carter's aid for Cam- bodians
	November 12	NCJW asks for an increase in U.S. aid to Cambodia

CHARTS AND SURVEYS

(1)



From: The Gallup Opinion Index, Report No. 52, October, 1969.

Source: Vogelgesang, 78

(2) Do you think the U.S. made a mistake in getting into a war in Vietnam?

	<u>Pro</u>	<u>Con</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
August 1965	61%	24%	24%
December 1967	46%	45%	9%
February 1968	42%	46%	12%
August 1968	35%	53%	12%
May 1971	28%	61%	11%

Source: Mueller, 54-55

- (3) For each group, the numbers represent, in order, the percentages in support of the war, in opposition, and with no opinion.

	Religion								
	Protestant			Catholic			Jewish		
May 1965	49	27	24	59	23	18	59	21	20
August 1965	57	26	17	71	19	11	69	16	15
November 1965	62	23	15	70	16	14			
March 1966	57	26	17	64	22	14	56	34	09
May 1966	46	37	17	57	32	11	33	50	17
September 1966	46	37	17	55	27	19	44	38	17
November 1966	49	31	20	58	27	15	38	43	20
May 1967	47	39	14	59	32	09	54	28	18
July 1967	46	42	12	55	35	09	35	50	15
October 1967	42	47	10	52	41	07	29	60	12
December 1967	43	47	10	54	37	07	36	53	09
Early February 1968	41	50	09	48	45	07	29	67	04
March 1968	41	49	10	47	44	09			
April 1968	40	48	12	43	48	09	20	74	07
August 1968	35	53	12	38	50	12			
Early October 1968	37	54	09	42	49	09	16	80	04
February 1969	39	51	09	45	48	07	30	62	08
September 1969	32	57	10	34	50	16	23	62	15
January 1970	30	54	16	36	55	09	15	76	09
April 1970	35	49	16	40	49	12	03	84	13
March 1970	37	54	09	35	57	08			
January 1971	31	58	11	36	57	07			
May 1971	29	60	11	28	62	10			

Source: Mueller, 143-144

- (4) Have you been paying any attention to what is going on in Vietnam? Those answering yes were then asked: Which of the following do you think we should do now in Vietnam? (Interest question not asked as a filter after 1966.)

	Pull Out of Vietnam Entirely	Keep Our Soldiers in Vietnam but Try to End the Fighting	Take A Stronger Stand Even if It Means Invading North Vietnam	Don't Know	No Interest
	(In Percent)				
1964					
Protest- ants	9	24	30	16	21
Catholics	8	26	34	14	18
Jews	16	34	18	21	11
1966					
Protest- ants	8	35	36	14	8
Catholics	10	39	39	6	6
Jews	19	44	33	5	0
1968					
Protest- ants	18	36	35	11	
Catholics	20	39	32	9	
Jews	36	36	19	9	
1970					
Protest- ants	30	34	25	12	
Catholics	35	30	25	10	
Jews	50	21	14	14	

Source: Mueller, 144

(5) Jewish Chaplains in U.S. Armed Forces (compiled from CCAR Yearbooks)

Page Numbers in respective CCAR Yearbooks	Reform	Conserva- tive	Ortho- dox	Total	Govt. Quota
1960 (p.35)	20	18	24	62	[75]
1961 (p.45)	25	21	28	74	[74]
1962 (pp.50-1)	24	19	27	70	[88]
1963 (pp.42-3)	26	23	25	74	[79]
1964 (p.49)	25	23	27	75	[71]
1965 (p.42)	23	15	22	60	[68]
1966 (p.37)	25	20	16	61	[73]
1967 (p.36)	23	22	21	66	[87]
1968 (p.38)	31	11	22	64	[80]
1969 (p.42)**	24	7	25	56	[80]
1970 (pp.30-1)**	20	5	16	41	[60]
1971*					
1972*					
1973*					
1974 (p.23)	20	10	26	56	[59]
1975*					
1976 (p.23)	20	12	25	57	[65]

* no committee report for these years

** mandatory chaplaincy draft suspended by:

CCAR June 1969

RA March 1968

Yeshiva University March 1968 (for one year)

(1)

RESOLUTION ON VIETNAM ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS,
MARCH 3, 1965

The Central Conference of American Rabbis urges our Government to join with other Governments, including our allies and the Secretary General of the United Nations, to enter into immediate negotiation of the critical situation in South Vietnam. We deplore escalation of the conflict by any country. Such escalation can only add to the misery of the Vietnamese people and runs the risk of a global nuclear war.

We do not advocate unilateral withdrawal but the substitution of the United Nations peace keeping agencies. Our country has the prestige and power to begin now to convert the present undeclared but devastating warfare into an effort of the United Nations, with the cooperation of China, to develop the economic and political stability of the disadvantaged countries of Southeast Asia including Vietnam. Communism is not stopped by bullets but by bread, education and hope.

Source: AJA, VNW File

As heirs to a great Jewish tradition, we reaffirm our faith in man's capacity, as co-partner with God, to fashion a better world. We believe that, in this age of thermonuclear weapons, man must put an end to war. We do believe that the children of God can create a process in which inevitable conflicts in a world of dynamic change can be resolved without resort to armed conflict. To strive toward such a world order, the delegates to the 48th Biennial Assembly of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, meeting in San Francisco, November, 1965:

1 - Reaffirm our belief in the necessity of coexistence of all nations and social systems. Coexistence requires a willingness to negotiate issues and to accomodate differences. We reject the false belief that negotiations need mean appeasement or surrender. . . .

6 - As representatives of a religious people within whom there dwells the deep hunger for peace among men and for whom a supreme value is the preciousness of human life, we are profoundly troubled and perplexed by the dilemma posed by the military, economic and political conditions surrounding the war in Vietnam. Along with the Central Conference of American Rabbis and other religious bodies in many lands, we are greatly distressed over the growing violence and the mounting loss of life of all the peoples involved. Faced with this dilemma, we call for an act of moral courage, and:

a - Ask the President of the United States, subject only to the requirements of the safety of our armed forces, to declare to the world that as of a given date, our armed forces will cease firing, our planes will cease bombing and that our representatives are proceeding forthwith to a designated neutral place prepared to meet with the representatives of the opposing forces in Vietnam and of the United Nations and to implement such declaration with a view toward finding a peaceful solution to the differences which have brought about this horrible conflict and to call upon the representatives of the opposing forces to join us in this unselfish determination to demonstrate our commitment to peace in our time and for all time.

b - Negotiate with any and all parties to secure a ceasefire and an agreement which will vouchsafe through the United Nations independence, freedom and self-determination for the people of Vietnam.

c - Work with the United Nations to reduce the area of conflict by border control and internal policing undertaken by a multi-national force of the United Nations, and

d - Enlarge grants by all nations of substantial economic

and technological assistance to countries of Southeast Asia, including North and South Vietnam. The effective joint cooperation already manifest in the Mekong Delta project suggests the great blessings which peace can bring to this area.

We call upon the agencies of the Union to join with the like-minded religious bodies - Jewish, Protestant and Catholic - east and west, which share and have expressed these same moral concerns.

7 - Commend the increasing cooperation of all religious groups in pursuit of a just and peaceful world. The voice of faith, the message of salvation through righteousness, must again speak to a torn and separated mankind. Reaffirming our belief in the sovereignty of God over all humanity, we renew our pledge to join with all men of good will in achieving man's final opportunity for redemption: A WORLD AT PEACE.

Source: AJA, Peace File

In light of the growing tendency in America to equate dissent with an anti-patriotic or an un-American attitude, we find it necessary at this time to reaffirm the right of American citizens peacefully to assemble and demonstrate whether in support or in protest against Government policies.

We reiterate our long-held commitment to civil liberties and to the freedoms safe-guarded by the Constitution of the United States. In our democratic system, it is not the right of government, whether local or federal, to silence dissent, however unpopular or controversial.

Those who are critical of the United States' policies, whether from the pulpit or in the street, must be neither stifled nor intimidated by the threat of investigation. Neither shall their motives nor their loyalties be impugned.

We most vigorously urge our congregations to sponsor those programs, both internal and public, which would fully explore every area of social and religious concern, even those deemed most controversial.

Source: Resolutions adopted
by the UAHC, 48th
General Assembly
(November 1965):28

POLICY STATEMENT ON VIET NAM ISSUED BY THE SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL OF AMERICA

A decisive contribution of Judaism to the morality of international affairs is the affirmation that nations, like individuals, must be guided in their actions by justice and morality.

Nations, like individuals, cannot escape God's judgment, for "He will judge the Universe with justice, and Nations with righteousness" (*Vehu Yishpot Tevel Betzedek, Yadin Le'umim Bemesharim*). Because nations are comprised of individuals, it is ultimately the individual who must assume moral responsibility and moral judgment in the affairs of his country. This we must do not only because of the imperatives of our religious commitments but also because we cherish the prerogative of citizens in a democratic society to express their views.

No one course of action in this complicated situation can clearly solve the moral dilemma in which we find ourselves. The U.S. commitment to the government of South Viet Nam has created a moral responsibility which we cannot ignore in our quest for peace. Yet, having searched our conscience, we have come to the conclusion that peace and the cessation of hostilities must remain our major objective.

Along with Americans of all faiths, we confront with deep sorrow the loss of American and Vietnamese lives, both North and South, and the suffering of the civilian population in that agonized and war-torn country. Our religious conscience compels us to exert every influence so that the action in Viet Nam can be moved from the battlefield to the negotiating table.

We therefore note with gratification that President Johnson has on numerous occasions committed the Administration to the principle of unconditional discussions leading to the negotiation of the cessation of hostilities and a peace settlement.

We particularly wish to commend President Johnson and the Administration for the recent halt in bombing of North Viet Nam. It serves as a convincing demonstration that despite pressures from some quarters for a military solution to the problem, the purpose of our military effort in Viet Nam remains one that is aimed at speeding an honorable settlement. It is also a convincing demonstration of the integrity of President Johnson's public expressions of our

willingness to negotiate unconditionally.

We are deeply concerned that in the event the present halt in the bombing of North Viet Nam fails to elicit the prayed-for response from Hanoi and the Administration feels constrained to resume these bombings, discouragement and frustration may alter the present character of the conflict as a limited war for limited goals, i.e. the integrity of South Viet Nam. The danger of new pressures for unlimited escalation of the war resulting from impatience and disappointment is grave indeed. Such an escalation would not only fail to achieve our goals, but would ultimately involve the world in a war of mutual destruction.

We therefore urge the Administration:

- to persist in its present efforts to pursue every possible avenue, including channels of the United Nations, that may create more favorable circumstances in which negotiations can begin;
- to steadfastly adhere to the principle that there cannot be a satisfactory military solution to this problem, and until a negotiated settlement is achieved, not to permit a change in the restrained character of this conflict through military escalation.

We further recommend that the United States should consider the following suggestions:

1. Request the United Nations to begin negotiations wherever and whenever possible for a cease-fire agreement (including cessation of terrorist activities) under United Nations supervision, among the governments of the United States, of North and South Viet Nam, including representation for the National Liberation Front, and other interested parties, and to convene a peace conference to explore the basis of a settlement of the long-term issues and the means to give such a settlement effective international guarantees.

2. Make clear that a primary objective of a settlement of the Viet Nam conflict is the independence of South Viet Nam from outside interference, with complete liberty to determine the character of its future government by the result of a

peaceful, free and verified choice of its people.

3. Declare itself in favor of the phased withdrawal of all its troops and bases from the Vietnamese territory, if and when they can be replaced by adequate international peace-keeping forces, composed of military contingents capable of maintaining order while the peace settlement is being carried out.

4. Make available, through Congress, in fulfillment of the President's proposal, immediate reconstruction assistance and long-range economic development funds for Southeast Asia, preferably through an effective international organization in which the beneficiary governments fully participate.

We do not lay claim to moral certitude and refrain from moral dogmatism in this complex and agonizing situation. Within the range of religious commitment and concern, differences as to specific policies can and do exist. We recognize that those who see the need for checking Communist subversion by military means are no less dedicated to the cause of a just world peace than those who believe the United States must cease hostilities in Viet Nam. We do believe, however, that the imperatives of our religious commitments call for the recommendations we prayerfully put forward and commend to the attention of our synagogues throughout the land.

Rabbi Seymour J. Cohen,
President

SYNAGOGUE COUNCIL
OF AMERICA

Rabbi Jacob J. Weinsten,
President

CENTRAL CONFERENCE
OF AMERICAN RABBIS

Rabbi Max Routtenberg,
President

RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY

Rabbi Israel Miller,
President

RABBINICAL COUNCIL
OF AMERICA

Rabbi Maurice N. Eisendrath,
President

UNION OF AMERICAN
HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

Moses I. Feuerstein,
President

UNION OF ORTHODOX
JEWISH CONGREGATIONS
OF AMERICA

Henry N. Rapaport,
President

UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF
AMERICA

Source:
AJA, VNW
File

Excerpts from
The American Jewish Congress Resolution on Vietnam
 Adopted at the National Convention, 1966

The American Jewish Congress views with growing alarm the course our national policy in Vietnam is continuing to take. Through the ages, the Jewish people has longed and worked for the fulfillment of the dream of peace, together with all men and women who cherish the sanctity of human life.

We urge our President to suspend indefinitely our bombing of North Vietnam. As a corollary, we view all initiatives which would escalate the war with alarm and apprehension.

We call upon our government to make clear by every appropriate means and to all interested parties the readiness of our government to take the following specific steps:

1) To offer an immediate cease-fire to be observed as long as the cessation of hostilities continues on both sides.

2) To offer to negotiate without prior conditions all points now outstanding between the adversaries in Vietnam, these negotiations to be carried on with all states, governments and groups including the NLF that are engaged in or have a direct interest in the hostilities.

3) To support the proposal of Secretary General

U Thant acknowledging the right of the people of Vietnam in free elections to choose their own government from among any and all elements within their country without interference in any way with their choice of government or its composition. We urge the United States government to do all within its power to bring about the holding of such elections by the United Nations or, if that is not possible, by an international supervisory commission similar to that constituted under the Geneva accords. If, however, such efforts fail and an election is to be conducted by a Vietnamese government, we urge that the Viet Cong not be denied the right to be included in such a government.

4) To continue actively to seek the assistance of the United Nations to achieve these objectives.

We believe that peace is not beyond attainment and that the differences separating the adversaries are not insuperable. We hold that negotiations and ultimate settlement can be achieved only if both sides exercise the will equal to the enormous stakes involved. . . .

We pledge ourselves to find appropriate means whereby the American Jewish Congress can make an increasing contribution toward the advancement of peace.

Source: Congress bi-weekly,
 35:6 (March 25, 1968):17

Vietnam

The moral imperatives of Judaism impel us to seek peace and pursue it. The Rabbinical Assembly calls upon our government to seek a non-military solution to the Vietnam situation, and to make clear our peaceful intentions by halting all bombings that will result in the killing of civilians, and by avoiding any further military escalation.

We condemn the action of North Vietnam in its indiscriminate bombings and killing of civilians, and immoral conduct of the war, and refusal to accept cease-fire proposals to negotiate peace.

The supreme religious mandate requires a ceaseless search for a peaceful alternative, and therefore we call upon the Government of the United States to take the initiative in such unequivocal manner as to compel all parties involved to recognize the purity of its motives, and its determination to bring about negotiations leading to peace.

We call upon our Government to renew its efforts to secure the participation of the United Nations in the immediate and long-range solution of the complex problems in Vietnam. We reject the view of United Nations officials that this is not the time for United Nations involvement.

We hold that American stature will not be judged by military achievements, but by the furtherance of programs for the social and economic welfare of the Vietnamese people. Meaning for victory is gained not on the battlefield but in rice paddies.

We welcome and encourage widespread discussion regarding America's foreign policies, and a growing understanding of the legitimacy of defense.

We make this statement so that the work of righteousness shall be peace.

Source: PRA, 30 (1966):128

Our country is deeply engaged in the war in Viet Nam as part of its determination to resist Communist aggression anywhere in the world. A true conception of American aspirations, however, must also encompass an ultimate desire and continuing quest for peace. Such a quest is deeply ingrained in the Jewish soul. It is our Prophets who gave to mankind the eschatological vision of a world in which all nations live in harmony with each other and no longer wage war. The constant efforts of the President of the United States to promote peace and to end the conflict have our fervent support.

The leaders of American government have recognized that any hope for peace by negotiation in Viet Nam rests on the manifestation of the ability of the Free World to contain aggression. We express our full confidence that the President of the United States and his Administration will discharge their awesome responsibilities to manifest this determination for the achievement of lasting peace in the best interests of the United States and of all mankind.

Source: Resolutions adopted
by the UOJCA, 68th
Anniversary National
Biennial Convention
(November 1966):20

(8)

As the war in Vietnam rages, we are saddened by the failure to achieve a just solution to the agony of Vietnam.

If we address ourselves to our own government, it is not because we hold the Vietcong or the North Vietnamese blameless, or because we question the good intention of our government in its search for peace. The Vietcong and the North Vietnamese are not amenable to our influence, or, for that matter to that of their own people. Our government *is* attentive to the voice of its people, and therefore we speak to it, with confidence in the power of public discussion to influence policy.

We have faith in the greatness of our nation, and because of this greatness, we believe that the time has come to find new avenues to a solution of the heart-breaking problem of Vietnam.

We hold the following affirmations to be self-evident.

1. There is not and there can not be a military solution in Vietnam.
2. Vietnam and its people are being destroyed by the war, and American casualties are staggering —matters which are unacceptable to men of conscience. Both sides are contributing to this destruction of the innocents, civilian and military.
3. The burden of sustaining a vast military establishment in Vietnam has caused our government to slow down its commitments to the solution of the problems of urban centers, poverty and civil rights.
4. Many American military leaders of high rank, long experience and obvious competence differ with the present military policy of our government.
5. Many of the statesmen of our allies and friends question the diplomatic policy which our government is pursuing in its search for peace.

In view of all these obvious truths, the Rabbinical Assembly, in convention assembled, urges the following three-fold program.

- a. A thorough-going re-evaluation of the military course of the war, designed to de-escalate it. To commit more American men to Vietnam is to repeat the policy of the past which has failed!
- b. We understand the policy of our government which refuses to halt the bombing of North Vietnam without a simultaneous commitment by North Vietnam to impose some restriction upon itself. However, we believe that the greatness of our nation calls us to make a voluntary gesture to demonstrate to the world our sincerity in the pursuit of peace. We petition the President of our nation to announce that, in order to end the impasse and to move towards negotiations, he is terminating the bombardment of North Vietnam.
- c. A call to our allies, to the United Nations and to the Soviet Union by our government, to take all necessary steps to institute an immediate mutual cease-fire all along the line, which our nation pledges itself to observe.

POSITION STATEMENT ON VIETNAM

November 7, 1969

Poale Zion supports all peaceful and responsible methods of bringing about the early withdrawal of all American troops from Vietnam, whether by negotiations or unilaterally. We have supported the aims, principles, and methods of the October moratorium and support the November 13 and 14, 1969 moratorium. We shall continue to support such activities as peaceful petition, public education, vigils, and community meetings and rallies for as long as necessary, and encourage our members to participate individually as their consciences dictate. Poale Zion, however, will not associate itself in any effort with extremist groups or pro-Viet Cong activities, nor will we march behind Viet Cong or North Vietnamese banners.

We call for the speedy end of American troop involvement in this undeclared war in which our own president has said we have no intention of achieving military victory. Surely any further American deaths and injuries would only serve to compound this tragedy.

This war has been a terrible drain on our society, both morally and materially. Large segments of our youth have turned against their own government, convinced that they are being forced by an unresponsive establishment to do the dying in a war in which the existence of the United States is not at stake. Funds needed for urgent domestic priorities in the fields of poverty, housing, education, and health are ignored or cut back to feed the insatiable demands of the military. The increasing polarization of society has many causes directly and indirectly attributable to the involvement in Vietnam. Time and patience are both running out in this country and our people must begin to see an end to this war -- not vague promises, not meaningless statistics, but a tangible commitment to extricate ourselves, with or without a concomitant acceptance of responsibility for the conduct of the war by South Vietnam.

A government must earn the support and loyalty of its own people. No military force, of whatever strength, can long maintain an unpopular, undemocratic and corrupt regime. The primary burden for the defense of Vietnam must inevitably rest with the Vietnamese themselves.

Poale Zion trusts that President Nixon and his advisors will come to understand that the demand for peace is not confined to hippies, extremists, or "effete intellectual snobs," whoever they are, but is widespread in the fellowship of

ordinary citizens who fervently desire an end to this war.

Source: AJA, VNW File

In 1965 the UAHC General Assembly called for a cease-fire and negotiated settlement of the war in Vietnam.

Now, four years and countless lives later, this bloody and brutalizing war drags on, with its incalculable toll. Discussions in Paris are taking place but with little promise of breaking the diplomatic impasse.

Believing that new initiatives are required to bring about an early end of the unconscionable slaughter in Vietnam, we urge our government to:

1. Direct an immediate stand-still cease fire in Vietnam and the withdrawal of all U.S. military presence no later than Dec. 31, 1970, from Vietnam and those combat and supporting troops in other Southeast Asian countries used in support of the war in Vietnam.

2. Use the full weight of our influence to seek the development of a coalition government in South Vietnam which will be broadly reflective of all elements and groups of that country, making it absolutely clear that any obligation is to the people of that tragic land and not to the preservation of an unrepresentative government by a clique of repressive generals in Saigon.

3. Since the war has destroyed families, maimed mothers and children and laid waste the countryside in Vietnam, we must recognize the moral obligation to bring aid and relief to the very people who have been injured in this war. The war in Vietnam has devastated not only that troubled land. The future of the entire world demands an early end to this nightmarish horror.

We urge the North Vietnam government and the National Liberation Front in the name of human decency to make known the list of American servicemen that are held prisoners, and to allow communication between them and their families.

Source: Resolutions adopted by
the UAHC, 50th General
Anniversary (November
1969): 16.

The Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution commences with the guarantee of freedom of religion, speech and the press, and with the right to assemble peacefully and to petition the government for a redress of grievances. Thus, the right to dissent constitutes the very foundation of our government.

The constitutional guarantee covers diverse forms of peaceful dissent, such as worship, speech, publishing, picketing, organizing, assembling, protesting and petitioning. It does not cover violent types of dissent, such as assassination, exploding bombs, hijacking, or even shouting down other speakers, voicing obscene epithets or otherwise disrupting lawful assemblies. A healthy society will not cringe before the dissenter who criminally exceeds the legal boundaries of democratic dissent, for no society can hope to survive unless it defends itself against such abuse of this noble right of free men and women.

We therefore are deeply dismayed by the surrender of some government officials and college administrators to the tyranny of a violent minority. No group has a monopoly on freedom. No group can be permitted to compel by force the acquiescence of those who disagree with it. No cause, no matter how just, can be used as a rationalization for violent means. Prompt governmental action at all levels, using only lawful force, i.e. the minimum necessary under the circumstances and with particular care to avoid harm to the innocent, will insure that our democracy is not destroyed by revolutionary activity masquerading as legitimate dissent.

We appreciate that sincere individuals, especially among our youth, have become impatient with our nation's pace in moving to eradicate war and social injustice. We ask them to understand that in a democracy it is not enough to espouse good causes. Equally important is the need to convince the electorate of the correctness of these causes. We call upon the youth of this country to increase their participation in the political process and we welcome as an important step facilitating such participation the recent passage by Congress of legislation granting the voting right to eighteen year-olds.

Violent dissent must be curbed resolutely and not condoned by reason of the sincerity or goals of the dissenters. Nevertheless, in the long run, healing will come to our nation only when our government acts with similar resolution to solve the underlying problems that cause violent dissent. All who refuse to head peaceful pleas for action to correct our society's failings must share the guilt when these unanswered pleas turn into acts of violence.

Source: Resolutions adopted by
the UOJCA, 72nd Anniversary
National Biennial
Convention (November 1970):25-26

The passivism and lack of concern that held sway on the college campus during the 1950's has turned to the activism of the Sixties and Seventies. Some students, not content to pursue this activism by peaceful methods, have resorted to the rhetoric and use of violence. In the process they have transformed many of our great universities into battlegrounds, resulting in the death and maiming of innocent people, destruction of property and disruption of education.

We view with anguish and deep concern the violence and disruptions that have taken place on college campuses. For the University to play its vital role in our society, the hallowed tradition of academic freedom must be scrupulously guarded or, perhaps, we should say with a note of sadness, restored. Heckling, shouting obscenities or otherwise preventing others from voicing their opinions have no place on campus; nor do students or faculty who seize buildings or otherwise disrupt the educational process.

We call upon college administrators to act resolutely in curbing these disruptions, using as much restraint as possible, but being prepared to call in the legal authorities if necessary. Where disruptions consist of criminal acts, college administrators have the duty to make certain that the offenders are prosecuted. Students or faculty who commit crime have no right of sanctuary on campus.

At the same time, we recognize that the long-range solution to the crisis on campus lies in coming to grips with those problems disturbing our youth that play such a large part in campus ferment. Among them are the war in Indochina that students view as immoral, society's failure to achieve justice for its minorities, the materialism and hypocrisy that they see in the lives of their elders; and the failure of campus authorities to give a share of the decision-making power to students. If we demonstrate sincerity in dealing with these problems, we will be able to isolate the extremists who perpetrate the violence from the much larger group of students and faculty whose sympathy and assistance they require in order to function.

In the forthcoming dialogue that is necessary with our campus youth, it is important that we be as frank in criticizing their youth culture as they are in criticizing the establishment culture. We find abhorrent their hedonistic way of life -- their loose sexual behavior, drugs, obscene language, lack of respect for their elders and low regard for such "middle-class" values as work, thrift and cleanliness.

As bearers of the tradition that introduced the concept of social justice to the world, Torah Jews are the first

to recognize the basic goodness of the bearers of the new youth culture. However, young people must recognize that man's duty to his fellow man, important as that may be, does not constitute the totality of his obligations. In addition he has a duty to G-d to live the kind of life ordained by Him, the kind that may be truly be termed the good life.

We recognize as our challenge and obligation the need to carry this message effectively to our youth.

Source: Resolutions Adopted by
the UOJCA, 72nd Anniversary National Bi-
ennial Convention
(November 1970): 26-27

(13)

THE JEWISH CAMPAIGN
FOR THE PEOPLES' PEACE TREATY

We, the undersigned Jewish organizations and individuals are committed as Jews and Americans to live in peace with the people of Indo-China. We now live subject to the laws of the United States government that compel our support for a war against the peoples of Indo-China, but our beliefs and traditions as Jews impel us to separate ourselves from that war. Moreover, we believe that by creating a vigorous, meaningful, and unalienated Jewish community in America, we will not only be freeing ourselves to live our deepest needs, but making less likely in the future the use of the power of the United States government in unjust and murderous ways. For these reasons we support the adoption by Jews in the United States of this Joint Treaty of Peace, as well as its adoption by all other Americans.

We ourselves shall beat our swords into plowshares, our spears into pruning hooks; and we ourselves shall undo the thongs of the yoke and let the oppressed go free.

Be it known that the American and Vietnamese peoples are not enemies. The war is carried out in the names of the peoples of the United States and South Vietnam but without our consent. It destroys the land and people of Indo-China. It drains America of its resources, its youth and its honor.

We hereby agree to end the war throughout Indo-China on the following terms, so that both peoples can live under the joy of independence and can devote themselves to building a society based on human equality and respect for the earth.

1. The Americans agree to immediate and total withdrawal from Vietnam and publicly to set the date by which all forces will be removed.

The Vietnamese pledge that as soon as the U.S. government publicly sets a date for total withdrawal:

2. They will enter discussions to secure the release of all American prisoners, including pilots captured while bombing North Vietnam.

3. There will be an immediate cease-fire between U.S. forces and those led by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam.

4. They will enter discussions of the procedures to guarantee the safety of all withdrawing troops.

5. The Americans pledge to end the imposition of Thieu, Ky,

and Khiem on the people of South Vietnam in order to insure their right to self-determination and so that all political prisoners can be released.

6. The Vietnamese pledge to form a provisional coalition government to organize democratic elections. All parties agree to respect the results of elections in which all South Vietnamese can participate freely without the presence of any foreign troops.

7. The South Vietnamese pledge to enter discussion of procedures to guarantee the safety and political freedom of those South Vietnamese who have collaborated with the U.S. or with the U.S. supported regime.

8. The Americans and Vietnamese agree to respect the independence, peace and neutrality of Laos and Cambodia in accord with the 1954 and 1962 Geneva conventions and not to interfere in the internal affairs of these two countries.

9. Upon these points of agreement, we pledge to end the war and resolve all other questions in the spirit of self-determination and mutual respect for the independence and political freedom of the people of Vietnam and the United States.

By ratifying the agreement, we pledge to take whatever actions are appropriate to implement the terms of this joint treaty and to insure its acceptance by the government of the United States.

In accord with the pledge to implement this Treaty, we feel specially responsible as Jews to organize a Trees for Vietnam campaign. According to Torah (Deut. 20:19), "When thou besiegest a city many days to bring it into thy power by making war against it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof ... for the tree of the field is man's life."

But now our money, energy, and brains are being used by the U.S. government for a deliberate policy of destroying the forests of Indo-China with chemical poisons, bombs, and napalm fire. The American Association for the Advancement of Science reports that defoliants alone have destroyed 25% of the forests just in South Vietnam.

So we think that we are responsible to help restore these forests, and we are beginning a campaign to raise money to give the North and South Vietnamese student groups - the same ones that agreed to this treaty - for reforesting the thousands of acres of trees that our own taxes have paid to destroy.

Source: AJA, Peace File

Judaism has ever regarded the achievement of peace between men and nations as among the most divine of man's accomplishments. "Seek peace and pursue it," wrote the psalmist. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," proclaimed the prophet. And the rabbis of the Talmud added the priestly blessings which conclude with the words, "and give thee peace," thus teaching that all blessings are of no avail unless accompanied by peace.

Since 1965, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations has pleaded for an end to the Vietnam War.

Despite the fact that this ardent desire for withdrawal from Indochina now animates the overwhelming majority of the American people, the undemocratic regime of South Vietnam continues under American sponsorship, the war continues and the killing continues. The agony of this war has divided and embittered the American people, has dispirited millions of Americans and has distorted our national priorities.

In 1971, as President Nixon has undertaken bold and historic steps toward an era of negotiation rather than confrontation, we share his hope for a generation of peace.

We believe that indispensable to such a vision is the prompt end to the massive killing which continues in Southeast Asia in the guise of Vietnamization and the accelerated air war which devastates Indochina.

1. Therefore, we reiterate our plea, first enunciated by us in 1965, for the President to proclaim a stand-still cease-fire coupled with a plea to all other parties in the conflict to join in a cease-fire as a prelude to a genuine negotiated settlement of the war.
2. We also call upon the U.S. Congress to assert its moral and constitutional responsibilities by legislating an end to American involvement in the disastrous war, no later than March, 1972, (which is the withdrawal date proposed in the Mansfield Amendment passed twice by the Senate).

Source: Resolutions adopted by
the UAHC, 51st General
Assembly (November 1971):
7.

STATEMENT ON THE INDO-CHINA WAR

We have agonized over the great tragedy that is the war in Indo-China. As a human relations agency, we have been distressed at the heavy price our society has had to pay in the polarizations and frustrations this war has caused among the American people.

For many years now, our nation has been committed to a reduction, and finally to an end, of our involvement in that tragic war. While there have been important differences over how best to achieve that end, there has been widespread and genuine satisfaction over the steady, substantial troop withdrawals and the great reduction in American casualties. But this has not been good enough. The recent escalation of fighting, brought about by massive North Vietnamese offensives across the DMZ line and the subsequent retaliatory actions, has now intensified the anguish of Americans and has increased our determination that American involvement should end once and for all.

The American Jewish Committee urges that the United States renew its call for an immediate cease-fire. Let all fighting and killing and destruction of villages -- by all sides -- stop at once. Let us pledge never then to abandon the conference table until a political settlement is finally achieved. And let us obtain the prompt release of American prisoners.

During our attempts to achieve a cease-fire, America should continue its troop withdrawals and take every possible step to wind up its military participation in Indo-China. After these many years of unspeakable tragedy, it should be clear that the only way finally to resolve the complex conflict in Indo-China is through the direct negotiations, the compromises, and the agreements of the parties directly involved. America can contribute to this process, but the people of Indo-China will live again in harmony only after they have themselves determined the conditions of peace.

We again declare that our anguish over Indo-China must not blind us to the other grave and stubborn problems on the international scene. Our country has responsibilities abroad which, in its enlightened self-interest, it cannot ignore, because of the difficulties and frustrations of Vietnam. The United Nations, the underdeveloped countries, Latin America, the Middle East, Western Europe and refugees -- near and far -- are some illustrations. We must not let the nightmare of Vietnam be replaced by the delusion of isolationism, with its reactionary effects at home and its stagnating consequences abroad.

Adopted at the 66th Annual Meeting
Americana Hotel, New York
Plenary Session, May 6, 1972

Source: AJA,VNW File

We are deeply gratified by the cease-fire accord presently in force in Vietnam. It has brought cessation to a war we have long opposed and for which we saw neither moral nor legal sanction.

We express our most reverent hope that this cease-fire will ripen into an abiding and lasting peace, and that it will provide the needed opportunity to reconcile the deep domestic divisions which so embitter our society. It is time now to "bind up the wounds of the nation."

Based on the Jewish religious concern to reconcile generation to generation, person to person, and in consonance with the prophetic cry of Malachi: to turn the hearts of the parents to the children and the hearts of the children to the parents, it is our considered judgment that the first way to affect this healing process is by Congress granting unconditional amnesty to those young men who found, early or late, that they could not participate in that war and so either emigrated, went to prison, resisted, or deserted. As we make peace with our enemies, let us also make peace with these, our youth.

With full respect for those who chose to serve and those who sacrificed so much for their country, we call upon Congress to grant unconditional amnesty as an act of reconciliation and compassion that can help speedily to reunite the American people for the key task of justice and peace which lie ahead.

Source: Resolutions adopted by
the UAHC, 52nd General
Assembly (November 1973):
11.

STATEMENT ON INDOCHINA REFUGEES

The American Jewish Committee views with profound concern the human tragedy that has unfolded in Indochina, where the horrors of war, and social and political upheaval have once again claimed the innocent as victim. As an organization with a long-standing commitment to the principle of fundamental human rights for all people and to humanitarian relief wherever it is needed, we urge the United Nations to call upon the present governmental authorities in Indochina to respect the right of all persons to leave their native lands and to seek asylum and resettlement in the country of their choice. This basic human right is clearly enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in other international agreements.

We further urge the United Nations to call upon these authorities to protect the peoples within their jurisdiction from reprisals and to admit a United Nations committee of impartial observers into the area.

We commend the United States Government for receiving those refugees of the Indochina conflict who have sought admission as immigrants, and we applaud our government's recently announced program to facilitate absorption of the new immigrants in a fair and compassionate manner.

We hope the United States will continue its tradition of granting entry to such refugees under the appropriate provisions of our existing immigration statutes, and we urge the United Nations to call upon other governments to open the doors of their lands to the new refugees.

We also call upon our government to assist the agencies currently engaged in relief and humanitarian efforts in Indochina and we are confident that Americans will respond generously to those agencies' appeals for assistance.

We join with men and women of good will everywhere in the fervent desire to see an end to suffering in Indochina and the achievement of true peace and reconciliation in the area.

Adopted at the
69th Annual Meeting
May 3, 1975

Source: Private Papers of Dr.
Sheldon Blank

American involvement in the tragic conflict in Indo-China has finally ended, but the domestic ones created by the divisive period are still far from healed. One of the most pressing of such problems centers around the thousands of young Americans who violated the Selective Service laws by failing to register for the draft, for refusing to serve once drafted, or who violated the military code by leaving their units.

Both the Jewish religious tradition and American history (L'havdil) teach that those who refuse to serve, be it from conviction or cowardice, are to be granted eventual re-entry into society. Thus the Kohen urges the Rach Levav to leave their units prior to battle in a Milchemet Reshut, and every major American war has been followed by a Congressional or Presidential pardon of those individuals who refused to serve or otherwise violated military rules.

In this spirit, we call upon President-elect Carter to declare, as one of his first acts in office, a full amnesty for any and all American citizens who may have violated the rules of the Selective Service System, or the portion of the military code dealing with desertion. In a similar vein we call upon the amnesty to cleanse the record of the thousands of civilians who were arrested for non-violent anti-war demonstrations during the Vietnam era.

Source: Resolutions adopted by the UOJCA, 78th Anniversary National Biennial Convention (November 1976): 30.

The thirty year upheaval that has desolated much of what was once French Indo China continues unabated. Hundreds of thousands of refugees flee from Vietnam and Laos while Cambodia is not only locked in a bloody war with its neighbors but is destroying its own population in an irrational bloodbath that has been unequalled since the fall of Hitler.

As Jews we are particularly sensitive to two aspects of this unfolding tragedy--the silence with which the world has greeted the genocide being afflicted on the peoples of Cambodia and the reluctance of other nations to provide a haven to the pitiful refugees attempting to flee from discrimination and even death. Both phenomena recall all too vividly the silence and closed doors with which the world greeted the victims of the Nazi Holocaust. As Jews, as Americans and as human beings we must not allow history to repeat itself.

We accordingly resolve that

1) The Orthodox Union petition the United States government to lead an immediate worldwide effort to find homes for the refugees currently fleeing Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. In particular the pathetic plight of the "boat people" must be alleviated at once. If no other country will help then the United States itself should admit these people much as we admitted a much larger number of Cuban refugees in 1960-62.

2) We call upon the United States government to lead the worldwide condemnation of the barbaric Cambodian regime and to lead the effort to challenge the credentials of this regime to sit in the United Nations General Assembly (much as South Africa has been suspended because of its apartheid policies).

Source: Resolutions adopted by
the UOJCA, 80th Anniversary
National Biennial
Convention (November
1978): 20.

NOTES

Preface

¹Letter to the editor by Gilbert Kollin, JPO (May 19, 1972), AJA, VNW File.

²In John P. Robinson and Solomon G. Jacobson, "American Public Opinion About Vietnam," in Walter Isard, ed., Vietnam: Issues and Alternatives (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 64.

Chapter One

¹Quoted in Alexander Kendrick, The Wound Within: America in the Vietnam Years, 1945-1974 (Boston, 1974), 38.

²Kendrick, 57.

³President Eisenhower said the United States was not "a party to nor bound by the decisions taken at the conference." Quoted in David Little, "Is the War in Vietnam Just?," in Paul T. Menzel, ed., The Moral Argument and the War in Vietnam (Nashville, 1971), 25. The delegate of the interim government in the south was so displeased with the course of the conference that at its end he resigned on the spot.

⁴Richard Falk, "An Imprudent, Immoral, Illegal War," Had, 48:5 (January 1967): 7.

⁵Michael Novak, "Stumbling Into War and Stumbling Out," in Robert McAfee Brown, et.al., Vietnam: Crisis of Conscience (New York, 1967), 28.

⁶Joseph Zasloff, "The Problem of South Vietnam," Comm, 2:33 (February 1962): 128.

⁷Kendrick, 122; Oscar Gass, "Vietnam - Resistance or Withdrawal?," Comm, 5:37 (May 1964): 39, asserts that if America had not intervened during Eisenhower's term of office North Vietnam "would certainly have succeeded in imposing unification."

⁸From television interview with Walter Cronkite on September 2, 1963. Quoted in David Halberstam, The Best and the Brightest (New York, 1969), 333. Also see Larry Berman, Planning a Tragedy: the Americanization of the War in Vietnam (New York, 1982), 23.

⁹Quoted in Norman Podhoretz, Why We Were in Vietnam (New York, 1982), 64.

¹⁰Diane Winston, "Vietnam and the Jews," in Jack Nusan Porter, ed., The Sociology of American Jews (Boston, 1978), 190. Also see Kendrick, 171 ff. and Halberstam, 496 ff.; Larry Berman, 32 ff.

¹¹James Pinckney Harrison, The Endless War: Fifty Years of Struggle in Vietnam (New York, 1982), 249.

¹²See Halberstam, 501-502 and Harrison, 249 ff. for an in-depth description of this incident. Podhoretz argues that the Johnson Administration acted in good faith since "the evidence . . . is that the attack . . . was not deliberately provoked by the United States," 69 and note 19, 217. Most scholars feel that the U.S. boats were sailing close to the coast to provoke the North Vietnamese to use their radar, thereby enabling U.S. intelligence to pinpoint radar installations. Hanoi claims, to this day, that the August 4 incident never occurred.

¹³Congressional Record, p. 18449 in James Haskins, The War and the Protest: Viet Nam (New York, 1971), 88.

¹⁴Harrison, 248.

¹⁵Quoted in Thomas Powers, The War at Home: Vietnam and the American People (New York, 1973), 16.

¹⁶Podhoretz, 72.

¹⁷Halberstam, 652; Larry Berman, 52.

¹⁸Halberstam, 512-3; Kendrick, 179.

¹⁹Podhoretz, 71.

²⁰Powers, 26.

²¹Powers, 25.

²²Powers, 33.

²³Arthur Liebman, Jews and the Left (New York, 1979), 1.

²⁴Philip Rahv quoted in Gary A. Glickstein, "Religion and the Jewish New Left," American Jewish Archives, 26:1 (April 1974): 23.

²⁵Mordecai S. Chertoff, ed., The New Left and the Jews (New York, 1971), 175; Liebman, 539, argues with this definition.

²⁶ Richard Rovere quoted in Glickstein, 23; cf. Geraldine Rosenfield, "Interim Report on the New Left and Alienated Youth," report for the AJCommittee, Information Service (December 1967), 28-29.

²⁷ See Sandy Vogelgesang, The Long Dark Night of the Soul: The American Intellectual Left and the Vietnam War (New York, 1974), 1 ff. for a fuller treatment of the alienation and elitism felt by the intellectual Left in the 1960's. She believes that the Left's rejection of the government destroyed any chance they had at influencing the American public. Also see Ronald Sanders, "Reflections on Three Wars," Midstream 13:6 (June/July 1967): 66-67.

²⁸ Powers, 5-6; cf. David Halberstam, "Getting the Story in Vietnam," Comm, 39:1 (January 1965), who feels that reporters did have fundamental disagreements with the optimistic picture given by American officials in Vietnam at this time.

²⁹ Gass, 41. Also see Kendrick, 150.

³⁰ Powers, 28.

³¹ Powers, 36. Also see Halstead, 30 ff.

³² Jack Nusan Porter and Peter Dreier, eds., Jewish Radicalism: A Selected Anthology (New York, 1973), xxi ff. Only one-fifth of the students at the University of California at Berkeley were Jews, yet 32% of the Free Speech Movement demonstrators were Jews according to Porter and Dreier, xxi and note 9, p. 1 and Liebman, 68 and note 112, p. 623. Lucy Davidowicz concurs with this figure in AJYB 66 (1965), 175. An American Jewish Committee-American Council on Education study done in the early 1970's found that three times as many Jews saw themselves on the Left as non-Jews (8.8% vs. 2.7%), see Stephen D. Isaacs, Jews and American Politics (Garden City, NY, 1974), 99.

³³ Isaacs, 99. In answering "Do you see yourself as being on the Left?", 8.8% of the Jews vs. 2.7% of the non-Jews answered affirmatively. 46% of the Jews saw themselves as liberal vs. 28.6% of the non-Jews.

³⁴ See especially Liebman, 3 ff.; Porter and Dreier, xx ff.; Isaacs, 99; Nathaniel Weyl, The Jew in American Politics (New Rochelle, NY, 1968), 1; Pessin, 28.

³⁵ Ray H. Abrams, Preachers Present Arms: the Role of American Churches and Clergy in World Wars I and II, with Some Observations on the War in Vietnam, 2d. edn., (Scottsdale, Pa., 1969), 263-4.

³⁶ PRA, 4 (1930-32): 237, declaration of May 12, 1932. The year before (July 6-8, 1931) the RA passed a resolution in favor of disarmament and the "elimination of compulsory military training ... in universities," PRA, 4 (1930-32): 119.

³⁷During the Vietnam war the U.S. recognized two types of CO status--the person "opposed to both combatant as well as non-combatant duty" (1-0 Status) and the individual "willing to go in but does not want to carry a gun" (1-AO Status), see Col. Paul Ankst, "The Present Draft Law and Proposals for Revision," in Military Conscription in the United States (New York, 1967), 13.

³⁸CCARY, 41 (1931): 66. This was passed only after a lengthy discussion, see pp. 76-85. Reiterated in 1936 by the Committee on International Peace, in CCARY, 46 (1936): 67.

³⁹JPF Tidings, 6:1 (May 1949), AJA, JPF File. The Reconstructionist movement also supported the rights of the CO.

⁴⁰PRA, 8 (1941-1944): 49 and Leon S. Lang, "President's Message," 8-9. Also see Abrams, 271-2. There was a similar response among Reform rabbis, many of whom renounced their former pacifistic beliefs--CCARY, 50 (1940): 119 ff.

⁴¹See PRA, 8 (1941-44): 49; CCARY, 61 (1951): 189. Each organization established a Committee on Conscientious Objection in the 1940's.

⁴²JPF Tidings, 15:1 (April 1962), AJA, Jewish Peace Fellowship File; Interview with Naomi Goodman (October 30, 1983).

⁴³CCARY, 61 (1951): 188-189.

⁴⁴PRA, 15 (1951): 37; cf. CCARY, 74 (1964): 57.

⁴⁵Letter from JPF (May 1963) and JPF Tidings, (April 1964): 2, AJA, Jewish Peace Fellowship File. Even if every request did not lead to a declaration of CO status, it seems reasonable to assume that the number of requests indicates an increased interest in pacifism. Also see remarks of Rabbi Arthur Gilbert in a letter from the JPF (May 2, 1962), AJA, Jewish Peace Fellowship File, where he points to an increase in the number of Jews "who are considering registering as conscientious objects to military service."

⁴⁶PRA, 27 (1963): 236.

⁴⁷Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC, 46th General Assembly (Washington, 1961): 10-11.

⁴⁸Jacob Agus, "Judaism and Peace in Our Times," (October 28, 1963), AJA, Peace File.

⁴⁹Arthur Lelyveld, excerpts from a forum paper on "The Pursuit of World Peace," (November 20, 1963), AJA, Peace File.

⁵⁰PRA, 26 (1962): 245.

⁵¹CCARY, 70 (1960): 73.

⁵²Maurice Eisendrath, "The State of Our Union: President's Message to the UAHC," (Chicago, November 16, 1963), AJA, UAHC File; cf. Agus, op. cit., 3.

⁵³Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC, 47th General Assembly (Chicago, 1963), 13.

⁵⁴These were authored by Hans Morgenthau (July 1961), Joseph Zasloff (February 1962), Morgenthau (May 1962), and Oscar Gass (May 1964). The fifth article, by Saul Padover, appeared in the October 1963 issue of Hadassah.

⁵⁵Hans Morgenthau, "Asia: the American Algeria," Comm, 1:32 (July 1961): 44.

⁵⁶Saul K. Padover, "The Muddle in Vietnam," Had, 44:2 (October 1963): 22.

⁵⁷The Vietnam conflict was called "a dirty and futile war" as early as January 1964 in an editorial in JCur, a leftist magazine, but the readership and influence of this magazine was miniscule.

⁵⁸CCARY, 74 (1964): 84.

⁵⁹News release of JWV (November 24, 1965), AJA, JWV File.

⁶⁰See Maurice Eisendrath, "Report to the Board of Trustees, UAHC," (New York, November 21, 1964), AJA, Maurice Eisendrath File; cf. reports from 1960, 1962, and 1963, which are found in the same file.

Chapter Two

¹Podhoretz, 80. Podhoretz argues (I believe correctly) that Johnson's gradual escalation of the war did have certain short-term benefits, but, in the long run, was a mistake because there was no dramatic symbol created which could be used to generate enthusiastic popular support for the war (e.g., Pearl Harbor during World War II); cf. Abrams, xxvi, who agrees. The decision-making process which led to the 1965 escalation of the war is discussed, in detail, by Larry Berman in Planning a Tragedy.

²Quoted in Powers, 96 (November 30, 1965).

³In Falk, 29.

⁴Powers, 48.

⁵Internal Security Subcommittee of Senate Judiciary Committee speaking about the "teach-in" movement, quoted in Vogelgesang, 75.

⁶Powers, 170. Many in Congress were dissatisfied with the war by this point, but because of various factors, failed to vote against this appropriations bill. Also see Podhoretz, 83.

⁷John E. Mueller, War, Presidents, and Public Opinion (New York, 1973), 53. A Gallup poll taken in the autumn of 1965 showed that 64% of Americans favored greater involvement in the war, Podhoretz, 85-86. Podhoretz, 81-82, indicates that newspapers and magazines also supported the war at this time. See appendix B1.

⁸Podhoretz, 84.

⁹Powers, 54.

¹⁰Podhoretz (1972) quoted in Vogelgesang, 97. Although his comments come from a period later than the one discussed here, they were typical of the liberal camp. Other moderates included Irving Howe and Nathan Glazer, in Vogelgesang, 82 ff.

¹¹Susan Sontag (February 20, 1966) quoted in Vogelgesang, 73; cf. remarks of Nat Hentoff, 86. Also see Powers, 63.

¹²Quoted in Vogelgesang, 95.

¹³Quoted in Powers, 71.

¹⁴Powers, 183.

¹⁵Resolution on Vietnam adopted by the Executive Board of the CCAR, AJA, VNW File. See appendix C1.

¹⁶Jacob J. Weinstein, "Report on Vietnam," Midstream, 11:3 (September 1965): 13 stresses the need for negotiations "if only to expose the monolithic callousness of Chinese totalitarianism;" cf. "Vietnam--the Search for Peace" (May 11, 1965), Religious Action Center, Eisendrath--Vietnam File, where Eisendrath(?) says "we [antiwar critics] are opposed to Communism and its expansion by force or subversion." Note that these comments were made early in the war. In later years such a position was rare among doves.

¹⁷CCARY, 75 (1965): 67.

¹⁸In JCur, 6 (June 1965), 25.

¹⁹Maurice Eisendrath, "Report to the Board of Trustees," UAHC (New York, May 22, 1965), AJA, Maurice Eisendrath File, 6.

²⁰See Eisendrath, "The State of Our Union: President's Message to the 48th General Assembly of the UAHC" (San Francisco, November 14, 1965), AJA, UAHC File, 12 ff. Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn of Boston, a prominent Reform rabbi who also

spoke at the general assembly agreed. "If we do not speak out now against the war in Vietnam, we shall then have to answer to our tradition ... and to God," see "Reform Jews Call for an Armistice in Vietnam," NYT (November 18, 1965), AJA, Judaism, Reform File.

²¹See Policy Statement of National Council of Churches (December 3, 1965) and the Ecumenical Council (Roman Catholic) in Concern, (January 1-15, 1966), AJA, VNW File.

²²Resolution on "World at Peace," Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC (San Francisco, 1965): 1-2; see appendix C2. Also see "Reform Jews Call for an Armistice in Vietnam," NYT, AJA, Judaism, Reform File.

²³Winston in Porter, 191.

²⁴See JCur, 7 (July/August 1965): 39. The President of the RA, Max Routtenberg, stated that "peace must be established through negotiation and not by means of armed intervention," but the RA never passed any resolution endorsing this statement, PRA, 29 (1965), 19. JCur, 8 (September 1965): 32 says the RA did condemn America's Vietnam policy, but I can find no substantiation for this assertion.

²⁵Rabbi Jacob R. Weinstein, president of the CCAR, stated, in a September 1965 article, that in response to a questionnaire sent to 100,000 individuals in the clergy "better than 80 percent were unqualifiedly opposed to our military intervention. The other 20 percent were equally divided between those who approved of our intervention as the lesser of two evil choices and those who felt that they were not well enough informed to offer an opinion," Midstream, 11:3 (September 1965): 3.

²⁶Letter from Clergyman's Emergency Committee for Vietnam (April 30, 1965) and "Call to Vigil," Interreligious Committee on Vietnam, AJA, VNW File.

²⁷Weinstein, 5.

²⁸There is debate as to why Jews joined interfaith groups. Some feel it was because they took more forceful stands than Jewish groups, others conjecture that these rabbis were uncomfortable about opposing American policy from a solely Jewish perspective and possibly compromising the Jewish community. See Winston in Porter, 199-200.

²⁹Weinstein in an October 15, 1965 report to the CCAR Executive Board, in JCur, 11 (December 1965): 28. Also see Eisendrath, "State of our Union" (San Francisco, November 14, 1965), AJA, UAHC File, 15, 18. In a sermon delivered on October 22, 1965, Rabbi Philip E. Schechter, Congregation Beth Israel (Atlantic City, NJ), expressed distress at the many colleagues who spoke against the war over the High Holy Days. Hebrew Union College Library, Vietnam Conflict Box.

³⁰CCARY, 75 (1965): 68.

³¹JCur, 11 (December 1965): 28.

³²Eisendrath, "The State of Our Union," (1965): 14 ff.

³³"Right to Dissent," Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC, 48th General Assembly (San Francisco, November 1965), 28; see appendix C3.

³⁴Ibid., 3.

³⁵"Some Casualties of the War Spirit," Recon, 31:17 (December 24, 1965): 3.

³⁶Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, "Vietnam," JSpec, 31:1 (January 1966): 3.

³⁷News release of JWV (November 24, 1965), AJA, JWV File, 1. Tarlov estimated that 75 percent of American Jews supported the President at this time. After the Fulbright hearings of the late winter, however, support for the war dropped considerably. The editorial titled "Some Casualties of the War Spirit," Recon took exception to this assertion by Tarlov and asked, "Who gave the JWV the right to speak for Jews 'in general'?"

³⁸JCur, 2 (February, 1966): 32.

³⁹See "Policy in Vietnam Backed by Rabbi," NYT (May 27, 1965) AJA, VNW File; sermon of Philip E. Schechter, Congregation Beth Israel (Atlantic City, NJ, October 10, 1965), HUC-JIR Library, Vietnamese Conflict Box; "An Open Letter to President Ho Chi Minh," Rabbi Bernard S. Frank, Reform Congregation Beth Or (January 14, 1966), AJA, Bernard S. Frank File.

⁴⁰Memo from Nelson Glueck to faculty, staff, and students of HUC-JIR (December 1965), AJA, Peace File.

⁴¹Letter of Jacob Weinstein to CCAR members (January 31, 1966), AJA, VNW File. Although he does not say that many who were at the meeting were uneasy about Goldberg's defense of America's commitment to the present South Vietnamese government.

⁴²See appendix B3 and B4.

⁴³Policy Statement on Vietnam issued by the SCA, AJA, VNW File; see appendix C4.

⁴⁴Henry Siegman, "Introduction," in Siegman, ed., Judaism and World Peace: Focus Vietnam (New York, 1966), 10.

⁴⁵"Vietnam and Peace," CBW, 33:3 (February 7, 1966): 3. My emphasis.

⁴⁶PRA, 30 (1966), 128; see appendix C6. My emphasis.

⁴⁷CCARY, 76 (1966): 53.

⁴⁸Ibid., 19.

⁴⁹Winston in Porter, 194-5; "Excerpts from the American Jewish Congress Resolution on Vietnam, Adopted at the National Convention, 1966," CBW (3/25/68): 17; see appendix C5. Winston says the resolution was passed in April, but the AJCongress passed resolutions on May 1, 1966, the last day of the convention, see CBW, 33:8 (April 25, 1966): 2.

⁵⁰Albert Vorspan, "Vietnam and the Jewish Conscience," American Judaism, 15:3 (Spring 1966): 9, 52.

⁵¹Sermon of Rabbi Norman D. Hirsch (March 25, 1966), AJA, VNW File; Leonard Beerman, Schedule of Vietnam Teach-In, UCLA Vietnam Day Committee (March 25, 1966), AJA, Beerman File; Sermon of A. L. Feinberg (April 29, 1966), AJA, Feinberg File; Rabbi Edgar E. Siskin, "Intervention and American Society" (November 10-13, 1966), AJA, Siskin File; Address of Daniel Jeremy Silver, "An Open Letter to President Johnson on Vietnam" (February 20, 1966), AJA, Peace File.

⁵²Arthur Lelyveld, "Jewish Imperatives and World Peace," in Siegman, Judaism and World Peace, and Lelyveld, "Peace: Jewish Imperatives," CBW, 33:6 (March 21, 1966): 9-10.

⁵³Michael Wyschogrod, "Peace: the Real Imperatives," CBW, 33:7 (April 4, 1966): 8.

⁵⁴Irving Greenberg, "Judaism and the Dilemmas of War," in Siegman, Judaism and World Peace, 17-24.

⁵⁵Rabbi Richard Israel in "The Clergy on Vietnam: Discordant Answers," CBW, 33:7 (April 4, 1966): 6.

⁵⁶Seymour Siegel, "Reflections on War and Peace," in Siegman, Judaism and World Peace, 12-16.

⁵⁷"Rabbinical Unit Urges: Back LBJ Quest for Peace" (January 28, 1966), AJA, Peace File.

⁵⁸"Rabbi Sees Split on War Widening," NYT (July 10, 1966), AJA, VNW File. In the same article Rabbi Bernard Twersky, information secretary of the RCA, emphasizes the "moral obligation [of religious leaders] ... to move Hanoi ... to the negotiations table."

⁵⁹News release of JWV, "JWV Challenges Rabbis to State Positions" (January 13, 1966), AJA, JWV File, 3.

⁶⁰Ibid.

- ⁶¹JTA, Weekly News Digest (September 9, 1966).
- ⁶²Jacob A. Rudin, "Vietnam--Lessons for Zionists," The American Zionist, 56:5 (February 1966): 39-47.
- ⁶³"The Peace Offensive," JFron, 33:1 (January 1966): 3 ff.
- ⁶⁴JCur, 2 (February 1966), 32.
- ⁶⁵"Religious Leaders on War and Peace," Recon, 32:3 (March 18, 1966): 3.
- ⁶⁶Jacob Weinstein, "President's Message," in CCARY, 76 (1966): 9.
- ⁶⁷Vorspan, 9.
- ⁶⁸Winston in Porter, 196; News release of JWV, "President Johnson Commends JWV on Dissent Position" (August 21, 1966), AJA, JWV File.
- ⁶⁹JTA (September 9, 1966), AJA, VNW File. On June 7, 1966 seven groups (AJCong, B'nai Brith, Jewish Labor Committee, UAHC, United Synagogue of America, National Council of Jewish Women, and UOJCA) plus 31 local Jewish communities signed a document stressing the right to protest the Government's policies.
- ⁷⁰NYT (September 11, 1966), AJA, VNW File.
- ⁷¹Phil Baum, "Johnson, Vietnam and the Jews," CBW, 33:13 (October 24, 1966): 4; Winston in Porter, 197; JTA, Weekly News Digest (September 23, 1966), AJA, VNW File. Tarlov denied this claim again in a letter (February 9, 1967) to Maurice Eisendrath, in News release of JWV, "JWV Condemns Eisendrath Attack on President Johnson" (February 27, 1967), AJA, JWV File.
- ⁷²Lucy S. Dawidowicz, "Intergroup Relations in the United States," in AJYB, 68 (1967): 80.
- ⁷³In JCur, 20:10 (October 1966): 11. For all of this talk, however, Johnson's actual support of Israel remained high; see "Analysis: Regrettable and Unnecessary," Near East Report, 10:19 (September 20, 1966).
- ⁷⁴Baum, 8.
- ⁷⁵"Johnson and the 'Jewish Community'--A Diplomatic Episode," "Unfortunate Conference," NYT (September 18, 1966), AJA, Lyndon Johnson File. Baum, 9 feels the attack by the NYT is unwarranted.
- ⁷⁶JTA (September 23, 1966), AJA, VNW File.

⁷⁷ News release of JWV, "Vast Majority of Jews Support President's Vietnam Policy, JWV Declares" (November 15, 1966), AJA, JWV File.

⁷⁸ Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, "Jews and Vietnam," JSpec, 31:9 (November 1966): 3. Henry Dicker, "Jews and Vietnam," (letter) JSpec, 32:1 (January 1967): 26, disagrees with this assessment (and rightly so, see below p. 259).

⁷⁹ Maurice Eisendrath, "Letter to the President," American Judaism, 16:2 (Winter 1966-1967): 25. My emphasis. Yet later in the article he contradicts this when he criticizes American Jewry for its "discreet and humiliating silence" towards the war.

⁸⁰ Eisendrath, "Report to the UAHC Board of Trustees" (New York, December 3, 1966), AJA, UAHC File.

⁸¹ "No 'Jewish' Position on Vietnam," JFron, 33:8 (October 1966): 3. In an editorial in the July/August issue, JFron questioned the attempt to achieve consensus by "stifling discussion or impugning the patriotism of doubters," see "Where are We Going?," JFron, 33:6 (July/August 1966): 3. Also see "The Jews and Vietnam," Recon, 32:11 (October 14, 1966) and Henry Siegman, "Vietnam and Religion: Relevance and Responsibility," CBW, 34:6 (March 20, 1967): 9.

⁸² "U.S. Jews Split on Vietnam Issue," Detroit Jewish News (September 30, 1966), AJA, VNW File; cf. figures in appendix B3.

⁸³ Daniel Jeremy Silver, "Editor's Comments," (Vietnam) CCAR Journal, 13:7 (October 1966): 4.

⁸⁴ "Johnson and the 'Jewish Community'--a Diplomatic Episode," NYT, AJA, Johnson File.

⁸⁵ Arthur Liebman, 68, notes 111 and 112, p. 623; cf. Porter and Dreier, xxi ff. The Vietnam Issue: University Student Attitudes and the 1966 Congressional Elections (Washington, 1966), 11, showed that in March 1966 "religious preference does not appear to be a significant factor in determining the direction of one's attitude toward Vietnam policy but cannot be ruled out as a factor in determining the intensity with which one holds such an attitude," although few Jews were included in this study.

⁸⁶ Dicker, 26.

⁸⁷ News release of JWV, "JWV Supports U.S. Air War in Vietnam" (December 30, 1966), AJA, JWV File. This contradicts what Tarlov said at an earlier date, see note 59, chapter 2. Also see News release of JWV, "JWV Award to Cardinal Spellman" (March 6, 1967), AJA, JWV File.

⁸⁸Irving Greenberg in Siegman, Judaism and World Peace, 17.

⁸⁹See Michael Wyschogrod, "The Jewish Interest in Vietnam," Trad, 8:4 (Winter 1966): 13; Meir Kahane, et. al., The Jewish Stake in Vietnam (New York, 1967): 8-9, 58; Moses Feuerstein and Rabbi Pesach Levovitz in NYT (October 25, 1966), AJA, Feuerstein File.

⁹⁰Kahane, 91 ff.

⁹¹Wyschogrod, Trad, 15. Also see Kahane, 18 ff.

⁹²From Resolutions Adopted by the UOJCA, 68th Anniversary National Biennial Convention (November 1966), "Vietnam"; see appendix C7.

⁹³Implied in statement by Charles S. Liebman, "Judaism and Vietnam: A Reply to Dr. Wyschogrod," Trad, 9:1-2 (Spring/Summer 1967): 160. Also see Siegman, CBW, 10.

⁹⁴In JPO (March 31, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

⁹⁵See "Toward Peace in Vietnam," JFron, 34:1 (January 1967); "The War in Vietnam," Recon, 32:18 (January 20, 1967); "Senator Kennedy's Peace Offensive," JFron, 34:3 (March 1967); Falk; Arnold Jacob Wolf in JPO (March 31, 1967); A. J. Heschel, "The Moral Outrage of Vietnam," 53-4, Michael Novak, "Stumbling Into War and Stumbling Out," 13 ff., and Robert McAfee Brown, "An Appeal to the Churches and Synagogues," in Brown, et. al. Also see "Vietnam: the Clergyman's Dilemma," AJA, VNW File; and CALCAV, Pamphlet of speeches given at Riverside Church on April 4, 1967, AJA, VNW File, which are interfaith statements on the war. For a treatment of these issues among intellectuals in the Left see Vogelgesang, 110 ff.

⁹⁶JCur, 6 (June 1967): 32-3

⁹⁷Falk, 27. Also see Rabbi Gittelsohn in JPO (March 31, 1967), AJA, VNW File and Morris Laub, "Maimonides on War and Peace (with special application to Vietnam)," AJA, Laub File, 13 ff.

⁹⁸Letter of HUC Committee of Concern to fellow students (March 30, 1967), AJA, Peace File. Also see AJA, Miscellaneous File, HUC-JIR, "Program for participation by student body in 'Spring Mobilization to end the War in Vietnam'" (March 1967).

⁹⁹CALCAV, Pamphlet of speeches given at Riverside Church on April 4, 1967, AJA, VNW File, 20.

¹⁰⁰Laub, AJA, Laub File, 13. Charles Liebman, 159 agrees. Siegman, CBW, 10-11 questions the use of halacha (Jewish law) in this debate for two reasons. First, the U.S.

government is unconcerned with Jewish law. Second, inherent in the suggestion is that Jews can only talk about issues which are dealt with halachically.

¹⁰¹Charles Liebman, 159. This article is a response to Wyschogrod's elucidation of an Orthodox position in support of the war.

¹⁰²Paul Levenson, "Soldiers Should Know Better! An Answer to the Jewish War Veterans," JCur, 21:5 (May 1967): 17; Abraham Feinberg, Hanoi Diary (Don Mills, Ontario, 1968), foreword.

¹⁰³Ronald Sanders, 66. He is referring to those critics on the radical Left who equated the destruction in Vietnam with the Holocaust, but the antiwar position of this article in general leads one to believe that he would take an equally harsh view of those on the right who equated the Nazis with America's enemies in Vietnam. Also see Jacob Weinstein, "President's Message," CCARY, 77 (1967): 8.

¹⁰⁴See Levenson, 16 and "Jews Backing Rabbis on Stand Against War," JPO (March 31, 1967), AJA, Miller File. Also see sermon of David Polish, "The Involvement of Judaism in Vietnam" (November 24, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

¹⁰⁵Charles Liebman, 157, 160; cf. Deane William Ferm, "Who Speaks for the Church and Synagogue on Vietnam?," Recon, 34:5 (April 19, 1968), 10.

¹⁰⁶Siegman, CBW, 8-9. Rabbinic stands against the war were praised in "Rabbis Who Fight for Peace," Israel Horizons, 15:2 (February 1967): 9 and "Rising Tide for Peace in Vietnam," JCur, 21:3 (March 1967): 3.

¹⁰⁷"Jews Backing Rabbis on Stand Against War," JPO, AJA, Miller File.

¹⁰⁸Letter of Sheldon Blank to HUC Community (April 2, 1967), AJA, Peace File.

¹⁰⁹This runs counter to the argument made by Arnold Pessin, "Rabbis as Political Activists: An Investigation," Ideas, 1:3-4 (Spring/Summer 1969): 27 ff., who says rabbis were not activist, but only issued statements about the war. Furthermore, Pessin claims "they delivered their opinions without passion and with an air of general uncertainty." While this may have been true of many rabbis, a number of influential rabbinic personalities did take strong stands on this topic. Pessin challenges the leadership of rabbinic groups who "inflate" the antiwar feeling of the "average rabbi" who is not so involved in "secular causes" but he does not consider that any leader will tend to deal with larger, less parochial issues.

110 Powers, 85-6, 186 ff. The places the students would not go to in 1964 included Cuba and the Dominican Republic, as well as Vietnam.

111 "The Right of Public Protest," CBW, 32:15 (November 29, 1965): 3-4 and Maurice Eisendrath, "The State of Our Union," (1965), 18. The Reconstructionist magazine questioned the inequities of the draft system and its use as a means of punishment in two editorials in early 1966--"Vietnam Disenchantment and the Draft," Recon, 31:18 (January 7, 1966) and "Religious Leaders on War and Peace," Recon, 32:3 (March 18, 1966).

112 Rabbi Leonard Beerman quoted in Isidor Hoffman, "What is Happening to the Jewish Conscientious Objector?," in Military Conscription in the United States, 32; "The Jewish Attitude Towards the Vietnam War," JCur, 21:3 (March 1967).

113 Hoffman, in Military Conscription, 27. Beerman feels this is a very conservative estimate of the number of Jews interested in CO status. Also see letters from Michael Robinson of June 1, 1966 and March 10, 1967, AJA, JPF File.

114 Military Conscription, 1. For critiques of the draft system of that period see remarks of Marvin Braiterman, counsel for the UAHC Commission on Social Action; Hoffman; and Ralph Potter, "A Moral Critique of the Draft Board," in Military Conscription.

115 Laub, AJA, Laub File, 15 f.

116 In "Jewish Private Holds No Grudge," JPO (March 24, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

117 Louis Levitsky, "Is Vietnam Our Business? This is Not a War of National Defense," United Synagogue Review, 20:2 (July 1967): 13.

118 JCur (March 1967); "Jewish Private Holds No Grudge," JPO; letters to the editor, JPO (April 7, 1967), and JTA "Weekly News Digest" (March 3, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

119 Political advertisement, "They Are Our Brothers Whom We Kill," NYT (January 23, 1966), AJA, Peace File.

120 Cover letter of the Fellowship of Reconciliation for the pamphlet, "They are Our Brothers Whom We Help" (December 1, 1966), AJA, Peace File. A rabbinic student at HUC-JIR, Roy Tanenbaum, wrote to the JPO to create a Vietnamese Orphans and Wounded Childrens Fund. In an argument similar to that of the Fellowship he said, "We, as Jews and American, regardless of our political persuasion, need assume our share of responsibility for the tragedies in Vietnam," JPO (February 10, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

¹²¹See JPO (February 24, 1967), AJA, VNW File; Political advertisement of Fellowship of Reconciliation, NYT (April 2, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

¹²²Heschel in Brown, et. al., 53. The organizers hoped 5,000 clergy would attend, see "Vietnam: The Clergyman's Dilemma," CALCAV (1966?), AJA, VNW File. Also see Declaration of individuals against the Crime of Silence (Los Angeles, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

¹²³"Vietnam: The Clergyman's Dilemma," AJA, VNW File.

¹²⁴CALCAV, Pamphlet "Crisis of Conscience" (1967?) says there were 84 local clergy-lay groups.

¹²⁵Feinberg, 14, 21-23.

¹²⁶Ibid., 7, 66.

¹²⁷Ibid., 104. The same sentiment is also expressed on pp. 209, 213.

¹²⁸Feinberg, 19-20, 24.

¹²⁹Jacob Weinstein, "President's Message," in CCARY 77 (1967): 7. Also see sermon by David Polish, "The Involvement of Judaism in Vietnam" (November 11, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

¹³⁰Leonard Beerman, Leo Baeck Temple Bulletin (Los Angeles, April 1967), AJA, VNW File.

¹³¹Eisendrath, 25.

¹³²New releases of JWV, "JWV National Commander Condemns Congressmen Opposing Vietnam Appropriations: (February 27, 1967); "JWV Condemns Eisendrath Attack on President Johnson" (February 27, 1967); and "JWV Criticizes Dr. King for Equating America in Vietnam with Nazis" (April 5, 1967), AJA, JWV File.

¹³³JCur, 5 (May 1967), 32-3. Also see Levenson, 16.

¹³⁴"War Vets Stalk from Room When U.S. Viet Position Hit," JPO, AJA, New York, NY--Temple Emanuel File; Weinstein, "President's Message," in CCARY 77 (1967), 8. Tarlov's answer to these accusations may be found in News release of JWV, "Rabbinical leader criticized for distortions" (June 22, 1967), AJA, JWV File.

¹³⁵JTA Weekly News Digest (September 2, 1966), AJA, VNW File.

¹³⁶Charles Liebman, 160.

¹³⁷"Reform Rabbi Deserts Pacifists, Backs LBJ," JPO (April 21, 1967), AJA, Silverman File. Another CCAR rabbi,

chaplain Robert L. Reiner gave his support to the Administration, but asserted the right of rabbis to dissent from government policy, see JPO (March 1967), AJA, VNW File. Also see Rabbi Israel Koller in JPO (March 31, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

138 "Eisendrath Challenged on Floor of Convention," JPO (February 24, 1967), AJA, Eisendrath File.

139 "Temple Emanuel Leaves Association Over Vietnam," NYT (May 5, 1967), AJA, VNW File. The rabbi of the congregation, Julius Mark, himself critical of U.S. policy in Vietnam, supported Eisendrath's right "to express his views on Vietnam," but argued that the Temple's board had "good and sufficient reasons" for its actions. See "Reform Union Assails Emanuel in Letter to Jewish Leaders," NYT, AJA, VNW File.

140 Some even suggested the formation of a new organization, though Bachrach refused. See "Emanuel Head Says Stand Widely Upheld," JPO, AJA, New York, NY--Temple Emanuel File.

141 News releases of UAHC (May 4, 5, 19, 1967), AJA, VNW File. In late May 86 UAHC trustees, at the annual board meeting, approved Eisendrath's "Right and obligation" to speak out on public issues, see "Eisendrath Gets Support of Union," NYT and Eisendrath, "Report to the Board of Trustees," UAHC (New York, May 28, 1967, 36, AJA, Eisendrath File, where he apologized for having "caused embarrassment to anyone ... to any of our congregants, to the President ..." as a result of his article in American Judaism (Winter 1966/1967). Also see CCARY 77 (1967), 104.

142 "Emanuel Withdrawal Challenged, Upheld," JPO (May 26, 1967), AJA, New York, NY--Temple Emanuel File.

143 Siegman, CBW, 10.

144 "Reform Rabbinical Students Call for Viet Bombing Halt," JPO (May 26, 1967) and The American Israelite (Cincinnati, May 11, 1967), AJA, VNW File.

145 Eisendrath, "Report to the Board of Trustees" (1967), 38. It is interesting to note that in his remarks he said he saw himself as a follower, not a leader in the antiwar movement. Within the Jewish community, however, only A. J. Heschel was more well-known for his antiwar position.

Chapter Three

¹ Powers, 189.

² Powers, 244.

³ "Antiwar Movement Makes Rapid Gains Among Seminarists," NYT (March 3, 1968), AJA, VNW File.

⁴Vogelgesang, 6.

⁵Vogelgesang, 127. Ronald Sanders, 66-67 makes the same point, arguing that the protest of the "elite" may simply be a "necessary outlet."

⁶Vogelgesang, 5; cf. Political advertisement of the Committee of Professions, "Pentagon: War and Protest," NYT (December 3, 1967), AJA, VNW File, which defends civil disobedience at the March on the Pentagon as having been non-violent.

⁷Vogelgesang, 123.

⁸See Theodore Draper, "Vietnam and American Politics," Comm, 45:3 (March, 1968). For indications of the growing tension in the antiwar movement see Powers, 234 ff.; Vogelgesang, 134; and the discussion of the Labor Day weekend meeting of the National Conference of New Politics, below p. 110 ff.

⁹See Mueller, 57; appendix B1 and B2. The fears that violent civil disobedience would sully the antiwar opposition and lead to increased support for the war never materialized to any great extent.

¹⁰McCarthy won 42% of the vote and 20 of the 24 state delegates to the Democratic National Convention that summer. "One month before Tet, 56% of the American people considered themselves hawks, while 28% classified themselves as doves. One month after the offensive, hawks and doves each claimed 41% of the population," see Andrew Kohut and Laurence H. Stookey, "Religious Affiliation and Attitudes Toward Vietnam," Theology Today 26 (January 1970): 465.

¹¹Quoted in Vogelgesang, 141. She shows, on following pages, that a number of radical intellectuals agreed, at the time, that perhaps they had rejected the American political process too hastily.

¹²Mueller, 54-5; Kendrick, 250; Robinson and Jacobson in Isard, 68 ff. A NYT survey of May 26, 1968 reported that the most important problems facing the nation in the eyes of most Americans were:

Vietnam	42%
Race relations	25
Crime and Lawlessness	15

See Robinson and Jacobson, in Isard, 67, note 9.

¹³In Support Newsletter 8 (August 1969), AJA, Manuscript File: Maurice L. Zigmond. Two-thirds of those surveyed said protests were worthwhile, only 7% felt they should never have occurred. In addition, a large plurality said that they "respect those who refuse to go into the armed forces when drafted." Robinson and Jacobson, in Isard, 74, argue that

an antiwar attitude was not a reflection of a cross section of American college students, but was most prevalent among students in the "better" schools on the East or West coasts and those who were enrolled in general arts and science programs. "The vocal minority most opposed to Vietnam," they found in their study, "has probably created the misimpression that the majority of college students share their feelings."

¹⁴Arthur Hertzberg quoted in Lucy S. Davidowicz, "The Arab-Israeli War of 1967: American Public Opinion," in AJYB, 69 (1968): 203. This article is an excellent and concise analysis of the effect the Six Day War had on American Jewry and in America generally.

¹⁵In Porter and Dreier, xxii-xxiv.

¹⁶In Isqacs, 101-102.

¹⁷M. Jay Rosenberg, "My Evolution as a Jew," Midstream, 16:7 (August/September 1970): 51.

¹⁸In Mordecai Chertoff, "The New Left and Newer Leftists," in Chertoff, 179.

¹⁹See Powers, 262 ff; Geraldine Rosenfield; and Dawidowicz in AJYB, 69 (1968), 228-229.

²⁰See various commentators in Dawidowicz in AJYB, 69 (1968), 225-6.

²¹Rosenberg, Midstream, 52. Steven Kelman, "Where the New Left is At," Dimensions, 3:1 (Fall 1968): 26, asserts that only a "minute" number of Jews defected from the New Left as a result of the Six Day War.

²²For a full elaboration of the argument see sermon by David Polish, "The Involvement of Judaism in Vietnam," (November 24, 1967), AJA, VNW File; Maurice Eisendrath, "Report to the Board of Trustees," UAHC (New York, May 28, 1967), 24 ff., AJA, Eisendrath File; Abraham Feinberg, "Our Mission to Hanoi," JCur, 21:8 (September 1967): Charles Liebman, 157; Peter Weiss, "Israel and Vietnam," Israel Horizons, 15:6 (July/August 1967): Abraham Feinberg, "Vietnam's Challenge to Conscience and the Jewish Tradition," delivered at Kresge Auditorium, MIT (Boston, March 10, 1968), AJA, Feinberg File; Jacob Weinstein, "President's Message," CCARY, 77 (1967): 8 ff.; Levi A. Olan, "President's Message," CCARY, 78 (1968): 13 ff.; Morris Laub, "Vietnam Dov and Israel Hawk," Conservative Judaism, 22:2 (Winter 1968): 77 ff.; Rabbi Edward M. Gershfield, "On the 70th Anniversary of the Rabbinical Assembly," PRA, 34 (1970): 92. All of these individuals make the same general points. These arguments continued to be used long after this period; See "Israel and South Vietnam in Different Categories," Recon 35:13 (December 12, 1969): 4-5; "Israel and Vietnam," JFron

36:11 (December 1969): 3; Y. Arieli, "The Middle East Crisis--Israelis Explore Alternatives," Dimensions 5:1 (Fall 1970):13; Balfour Brickner, "How to Cope with Anti-Israel Animus Among Radical Jewish Youth," Jewish Digest 16:8 (May 1971): 36. Also see Irving Howe, "Vietnam and Israel," Jewish Digest 16:6 (March 1971): 22 ff., who was a moderate leftist intellectual.

²³Michael Wyschogrod, "Jewish Interest in Vietnam," (letter) Tradition, 9:3 (Fall 1967). Also see News release of JWV, "Rabbinical Leader Criticized for Distortions," (June 22, 1967), AJA, JWV File.

²⁴Mueller, 57.

²⁵Isaacs, 99; cf. Mueller, 143-4. See appendix B3 and B4.

²⁶In Robinson and Jacobson, in Isard, 66.

Differences in Background Characteristics of Respondents with Various Orientations Toward the Vietnam War

Category	Agrees With:	Description	Percentage in June, 1967
Extreme Hawk	All out military effort	Lives in West Suburban resident Voted for Barry Goldwater	18%
Moderate Hawk	Administration's policy, but wants escalation to force negotiations	Lives in South People over 50 Income under \$5000	40%
Moderate Dove	Administration's policy, but wants reduction in escalation to encourage negotiations	Lives in East People under 35 Jews	36%
Extreme Doves	Unconditional halt to bombing and withdrawal of American troops from South Vietnam	Negroes The poor Women City residents	6%

²⁷Oheb Shalom's Response to Vietnam Survey in Eisen-drath, "Report to the UAHC Board of Trustees," (New York, May 19, 1968): 36-39, AJA, UAHC File.

²⁸Charles Liebman, "The Orthodox Rabbi and Vietnam," Trad, 9:4 (Spring 1968). Liebman, it should be remembered,

was one of the few Orthodox rabbis who publicly expressed opposition to the war.

²⁹ Abraham Feinberg, "Vietnam's Challenge to Conscience and the Jewish Tradition," 8-9, AJA, Feinberg File, said, "the rank of middle class Jewry do not bristle with dissent."

³⁰ See appendix B4.

³¹ "Rabbi Asks End of All Bombing in North Vietnam," NYT (June 19, 1968), AJA, VNW File.

³² The Jewish Veteran 23:8 (September 1967) and News release of JWV, "JWV Commander Sees President Johnson" (September 22, 1967), AJA, JWV File; and "From Revulsion to Action on Vietnam," JCur, 21:9 (October 1967).

³³ News releases of JWV, "Commander Samuels of Jewish War Vets Reaffirms Support for President's Vietnam Program" (January 4, 1968); "JWV Commends President Johnson" (April 1, 1968); "JWV Commends President Johnson on North Vietnam Bombing Halt" (November 1, 1968), AJA, JWV File.

³⁴ Geraldine Rosenfield "American Jewish Community Responds to Issues," in AJYB, 70 (1969): 255.

³⁵ See JCur 22:2 (February 1968): 36.

³⁶ Rosenfield in AJYB, 70 (1969), 255.

³⁷ PRA, 32 (1968): 247-249, see appendix C8.

³⁸ Winston in Porter, 202.

³⁹ National Council of Jewish Women, Council Woman (Winter 1968), AJA, VNW File. The vote in support of this resolution was quite close.

⁴⁰ Rosenfield in AJYB, 70 (1969), 255.

⁴¹ Weinstein in CCARY, 77 (1967), 7-11, UAHC resolution quoted in Eisendrath, "Report to the UAHC Board of Trustees," (1968), AJA, UAHC File, 37.

⁴² Eisendrath, "Report to the UAHC Board of Trustees," (1968), AJA, UAHC File and Roland Gittelsohn in "Rabbi Asks End of All Bombing in North Vietnam," NYT (June 19, 1968), AJA, VNW File.

⁴³ See JCur 22:3 (March 1968): 34; Rosenfield in AJYB, 70 (1969), 255; JTA Weekly News Digest (January 12, 1968), AJA, VNW File; CCARY, 78 (1968), 88.

⁴⁴ See Eisendrath, "Report to the UAHC Board of Trustees" (1968); Eisendrath addressed religious leaders from around

the world at a New Delhi Conference and called for an end to the bombing, see JTA (January 12, 1968), AJA, VNW File; Weinstein in CCARY, 77 (1967); Olan in CCARY, 78 (1968), 13 ff. For Glueck see Interview with Dr. Sheldon Blank, December 5, 1983.

⁴⁵Letter from Charles Kroloff to Maurice Eisendrath (November 22, 1967), Religious Action Center (Washington, D.C.), Eisendrath--Civil Disobedience/Dissent File; Richard John Neuhaus, "The War, the Churches, and Civil Religion," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 387 (January 1970): 131.

⁴⁶David Haber, "The Significance of the Conference on Vietnam," (letter) CBW, 35:8 (May 6, 1968): 2. Phil Baum, "Conference on Vietnam," CBW, 35:6 (March 25, 1968): 2, also talks about this conference. He asserts that besides the "agencies within the Reform movement, AJCongress is the only Jewish group to adopt a position on Vietnam." It may be true that no other group within the organized Jewish community took as liberal a position as these groups, but it should be obvious at this point that a number of other Jewish organizations had made statements on Vietnam. It is one thing to disagree with different points of view, but quite another to say that they do not exist.

⁴⁷"Resolution: For an End to the War in Vietnam," Sixth Biennial National Conference for Progressive Israel (December 1967), AJA, VNW File.

⁴⁸The best, succinct description of the Christian reaction to the Six Day War is in Dawidowicz in AJYB (1968), 218-224. Also see Winston in Porter, 199-200 and Neuhaus, 135.

⁴⁹Ferm, 7.

⁵⁰Neuhaus, 129 ff. Also see Pessin, 33-34.

⁵¹"Antiwar Movement Makes Rapid Gains Among Seminar-ians," NYT (March 3, 1968) and NYT (January 7, 1968), AJA, VNW File. Dr. Sheldon Blank indicates that the faculty of HUC-JIR (Cincinnati), for example, was only mildly opposed to the war, see Interview with Dr. Sheldon Blank, December 5, 1983. In an April 28, 1968 political advertisement in the NYT, "The War is Over? No!," AJA, VNW File, the student presidents of 500 American universities (including Gerald B. Zelermeyer of JTS) called the Vietnam War "unjust and immoral." HUC students and faculty took part in the "Vietnam Commencement" at the University of Cincinnati. See "69 at UC Sign War Protest," Cincinnati Enquirer (May 24, 1968), AJA, VNW File.

⁵²JCur 22:4 (April 1968): 4. The theme of guilt was rare in the peace movement until 1967. At that time,

exasperated with the continued escalation of the conflict, a few sensitive individuals began to assert that the war implicated all Americans. Levi A. Olan, CCAR President declared (June 1968), "war by its very nature is a community sin from which no one is exempt."

⁵³On the conference see "Clergy and Laymen in Washington," Cincinnati Peace Exchange, 1:1 (March 1968): 2; letter of CALCAV (1968?), AJA, VNW File. On the involvement of HUC-JIR students see letter to HUC students on the Mobilization of CALCAV; Sheldon Blank, "Memo to HUC Cincinnati Faculty and Graduate Fellows" (January 30, 1968) and Larry Goldenberg, letter to HUC-JIR students (January 25, 1968), AJA, VNW File. For a more complete discussion of the involvement of seminarians in the antiwar debate see below, pp. 140, 152 ff.

⁵⁴Baum, CBW (1968), 2; Political advertisement, "Negotiation Now!" (1968?) and "A New Strategy for Peace in Vietnam," National Committee for a Political Settlement in Vietnam (1968), AJA, VNW File.

⁵⁵Arthur Lelyveld, "The Values We Stand For," CBW, 35:6 (March 25, 1968); Feinberg, "Vietnam's Challenge to Conscience and the Jewish Tradition," (1968), 15, AJA, Feinberg File; David Polish, "Vietnam and Jewish Responsibility," CBW, 35:2 (January 22, 1968); David Polish, "The Involvement of Judaism in Vietnam" (November 24, 1967), AJA, VNW File; JCur, 22:5 (May 1968), 34, where Eisendrath and Lelyveld refer to the "immorality of the war." Also see "Peace and Its Enemies," Recon, 33:14 (November 17, 1967), where the editorial position against the war first put forth in the January issue ("The War in Vietnam") is reaffirmed. One Orthodox rabbi who agreed with this point of view was Aaron Soloveichik, Dean of the Hebrew Theological College in Skokie, Ill., see JCur, 22:11 (December 1968): 31.

⁵⁶Kaufman in "Rabbis Upheld," JPO (March 22, 1968), AJA, Lipman File; Seymour Siegel, "Is Vietnam Our Business? War is Sometimes Tragically Necessary," United Synagogue Review, 20:2 (July 1967): 14; Abraham Zeligovitz (pseudonym), "Vietnam, Jewish Survival and Israel," Recon, 34:10 (June 18, 1968).

⁵⁷"Peace and Its Enemies," Recon and "What Do Demonstrations Achieve?," JFron, 34:10 (November 1967). Also see Murray Polner in JPF Newsletter, 2:3 (December 1968-January 1969), AJA, JPF File. Heschel quoted in "Antiwar Movement Makes Rapid Gains Among Seminarians," NYT (March 3, 1968), AJA, VNW File; cf. remarks of Eisendrath, "State of Our Union" (1967), 48, where he stresses the need to obey the law.

⁵⁸See Interview with Dr. Sheldon Blank (December 5, 1983). Also see "80 Arrested Here: Blocked Draft Center," Cincinnati Enquirer (December 16, 1967); The Post and Times-

Star (Cincinnati, December 11, 1967); Cincinnati Enquirer, letter to the editor by three HUC students (February 12, 1968), AJA, VNW File. Also see miscellaneous documents referring to this event in the personal papers of Dr. Sheldon Blank.

⁵⁹"War Protesters Promised Church as Sanctuary," NYT (October 3, 1967), AJA, VNW File. The "Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority" was published in the New York Review of Books and in The New Republic, two left-leaning magazines, the same month. Also see New York Review of Books (October 26, 1967), letter by Mitchell Gordon, AJA, VNW File.

⁶⁰Powers, 193. The anti-draft movement received a great deal of impetus from the national coverage of heavy-weight boxing champion Muhammed Ali's refusal to be inducted. See Lawrence Baskir, Chance and Circumstance: the Draft, the War, and the Vietnam Generation (New York, 1978), 63 ff.

⁶¹Baskir, 11-12, 81. "Draft resistance" included everything from failing to register to burning one's draft card, from not appearing for induction to fleeing the country to escape the draft.

⁶²JCur, 23:7 (July/August 1969): 46.

⁶³In Berel Wein, "Jewish Conscientious Objectors and the Vietnamese War," Jewish Life, 37:1 (September/October 1969): 23 and Letter from M. Robinson and I. Hoffman (October 10, 1967), AJA, JPF File.

⁶⁴PRA, 15 (1951), 37; CCARY, 74 (1964), 57; Pamphlet, "Can a Jew be a Conscientious Objector?" (January 15, 1968), AJA, JPF File. Non-religious CO was upheld in the Welsh decision of the Supreme Court in 1970, see pamphlet, "Who is a Conscientious Objector?" National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objection (April 1972), HUC Library, Pacifism Box.

⁶⁵CCARY, 77 (1967): 53; Eisendrath, "The State of Our Union," (Montreal, November 12, 1967): 48 and "Rabbi Links War in Vietnam with Urban Blight," NYT (November 13, 1967), AJA, Eisendrath File.

⁶⁶"Resolution: For an End to the War in Vietnam" (1967), AJA, VNW File. For AJCong see JCur, 22:11 (December 1968): 31 and Rosenfield in AJYB, 70 (1969), 255.

⁶⁷For RA see PRA, 32 (1968), 249; see appendix C8. Also see Eli A. Bohnen, "Presidential Address," PRA (1968), 4. For Orthodox Jews see Rosenfield in AJYB, 70 (1969), 255 and JCur, 22:11 (December 1968), 31. Also see Everett Gendler, "War in the Jewish Tradition," in James Finn, A Conflict of Loyalties: the Case for Selective Conscientious Objection (New York, 1968), 100.

⁶⁸ King in Powers, 162. On October 18, 1967 Jewish and Christian leaders "publicly pledged to risk fine or imprisonment to assist those who resist the military draft on grounds of conscience," in NYT (January 7, 1968), AJA, VNW File.

⁶⁹ JCur, 21:11 (December 1967), 73; CCARY, 78 (1968), 138; a draft counselling center was also set up in Chicago, see Porter and Dreier, xxxviii.

⁷⁰ Quoted in JPF Newsletter, 2:3 (December 1968-January 1969); Rosenfield in AJYB, 70 (1969), 255.

⁷¹ "Civil Disobedience Issue Stirs Temple," JPO (March 15, 1968); "Rabbis Upheld," JPO (March 22, 1968), AJA, Lipman File. Also see Temple Sinai Bulletin, (Washington, D.C.) 10:10 (March 1, 1968); Merle Singer and Eugene Lipman, remarks at a seminar which took place after services (March 15, 1968), AJA, Miscellaneous File-Vietnamese War. Another rabbi of the Washington area, Stanley Rabinowitz (Conservative), supported their position. "When law and justice are in conflict," he reasoned, "it is the duty of religion to support justice." Rabbi Harry J. Kaufman (Orthodox), however, basing his view in the Talmudic rule that "the law of the land is the law," maintained that "civil disobedience to a law of the land is contrary to Jewish law," see JPO (March 22, 1968), AJA, Lipman File. Gilbert Rosenthal, "Civil Disobedience," Conservative Judaism, 22:4 (Summer 1968): 46, said civil disobedience is proper, but one must "weigh the means resorted to in his disobedience so that they are commensurate with the values at stake."

⁷² JPF Newsletter, 1:1 (December 1967); Letter by Michael Robinson (May 6, 1968); Letter from Robinson and Hoffman (December 19, 1968); Shalom (Winter 1968); JPF Newsletter, 2:1 (August/September 1968); 2:2 (October/November 1968); 2:3 (December 1968/January 1969). A number of non-members also gave the JPF financial support; see interview with Naomi Goodman, who says these represented a fair percentage of the JPF budget.

⁷³ "The Draft and the Jew: Must I Destroy Life?" and "Can a Jew be a Conscientious Objector?" (January 15, 1968), AJA, JPF File; Interview with Naomi Goodman.

⁷⁴ See various documents in AJA, Manuscript File: Maurice Zigmund.

⁷⁵ "First Rabbinic Students Returns His Draft Card," JPO (December 13, 1968): "Rabbinical Student Here Turns in His 4-D Card," Cincinnati Enquirer (December 5, 1968), AJA, Halper File. Also see AJA, Tape: Jeff Halper. Glueck's strong support of "intellectual and spiritual freedom" of HUC-JIR students and faculty indicated in Interview with Dr. Sheldon Blank and Michael Meyer, "A Centennial History,"

in Samuel E. Karff, Hebrew Union College--Jewish Institute of Religion at One Hundred Years, (1976), 230-231. Halper took his draft card back two months later, see Jeffrey Lazar, "American Jewish Reaction to the Vietnam War" (1969), 16, AJA, Lazar File.

⁷⁶Reuven Kimelman, "A Jewish Peace Demonstration," Judaism, 18:3 (Summer 1969); JPF Newsletter 3:1 (February/March 1969), AJA, JPF File.

⁷⁷JPF Newsletter, 3:2 (April-June 1969): 1; JCur, 23:7 (July/August 1969): 46; JCur, 23:8 (September 1969): 8.

⁷⁸Letter from Maurice Eisendrath to Rabbi Aryeh Lev (May 19, 1967), Religious Action Center: Eisendrath-Vietnam File; Isidor Hoffman, "What is Happening to the Jewish Conscientious Objectors?," in Military Conscription in the United States, 29; and NYT (March 3, 1968), AJA, VNW File.

⁷⁹Weinstein in CCARY, 77 (1967), 7. For the discrepancy between the number of chaplains procured and the number needed by the armed forces see appendix B5.

⁸⁰Rosenfield in AJYB, 70 (1969), 255. Information on the RCA reaction is only secondary--see PRA, 32 (1968), 202 and Gittelsohn in CCARY, 79 (1969): 58-59.

⁸¹PRA, 32 (1968), 201 ff. and Eli A. Bohnen in PRA, 32 (1968), 3.

⁸²Bertram Korn in CCARY, 78 (1968), 40-44. The same points were made the year before, see CCARY, 77 (1967), 39.

⁸³Gamoran, et. al. in CCARY, 78 (1968), 45 ff. A powerful condemnation of military chaplaincy was made by Louis J. Feldman on October 22, 1969, see AJA, Miscellaneous File: Pacifism. "We [rabbis] must stay out of the military and help others stay out.... We have not deserted the Jewish serviceman," Feldman answered those who were against ending the program, "we would like to see them alive. We cannot achieve this end by joining the very institution that would send him to his death."

⁸⁴CCARY, 79 (1969), 44-72.

⁸⁵Letter of Golub (March 7, 1968), AJA, Golub File; Gerry J. Rosenberg, "Rabbi in Vietnam," Jewish Digest, 13:7 (April 1968): 12; Rosenfield in AJYB, 70 (1969), 256.

⁸⁶Newsletter of JWV (May 23, 1968), AJA, JWV File.

⁸⁷Resolution on Military Chaplaincies (May 1968), Private papers of Dr. Sheldon Blank. The president of the RCA criticized this proposal the following month, see Rosenfield in AJYB, 256.

⁸⁸"The Rabbi's Obligation in Peace and War," Recon, 34:5 (April 19, 1968): 5 and "The Chaplaincy Draft Reconsidered," Recon, 34:7 (May 17, 1968): 5.

⁸⁹See appendix B5.

Chapter Four

¹CCARY, 79 (1969): 98-99.

²Letter of Ad Hoc Committee for a Coalition (Cincinnati, July 4, 1969), AJA, VNW File.

³Sam Brown in "Homefront: USA, 1963-1973," a segment in Vietnam: A T.V. Documentary. Audio tape in author's possession.

⁴"The Moratorium Organizers: Cluttered Precision," NYT (October 15, 1969), AJA, VNW File; Life magazine said, "it was the largest expression of public dissent ever seen in this country," in Halstead, 488; cf. Earl Raab in AJYB, 71 (1970): 209; Kendrick, 295 ff.

⁵Letter of Rabbis Eisendrath and Gittelsohn to Social Action chairmen, rabbis, and Commission on Social Action, on the Vietnam Moratorium (October 3, 1969) and Political advertisement, "Vietnam Moratorium Committee" (September 18, 1969), AJA, Eisendrath File; "Reform Backs Anti-War Act," JPO (October 10, 1969), AJA, Peace File.

⁶J. David Bleich, "Reflections on the Viet Nam Cease-Fire," Sh'ma, 3:48 (February 16, 1973): 57.

⁷In support of the Moratorium the UAHC and CCAR asked Reform congregations to back the protest and the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai Brith, a group which sought to strengthen interreligious ties and to protect the rights of Jews, flew its national headquarters flag at half-mast. Hadassah used the occasion to express its support for responsible dissent. See Geraldine Rosenfield, "Vietnam War, Draft, Dissent," in AJYB, 71 (1970), 338. In Philadelphia, 56 rabbis issued a statement in support of the war's end, concluding their remarks with a quote from Isaiah 32:17. See "Jews Asked to Continue Moratorium," Jewish Exponent (October 17, 1969), AJA, Peace File.

⁸"Jewish Group Marches on Eve of Protest," Cincinnati Enquirer (October 14, 1969); "Plans for the Moratorium," Vietnam Moratorium Committee, JPF (1969); and Marc Gellman, "HUC's Shofar Thing," Independent Eye, 2:12 (Cincinnati, October 7-November 7, 1969), AJA, VNW File. Also see JPF Newsletter, 3:3 (October-December, 1969).

⁹M. Jay Rosenberg, Midstream, 52.

¹⁰Sam Pevzner, "Hemispheric Solidarity in Montreal," JCur, 23:2 (February 1969): 5-8. One of the speakers at this conference, Abraham L. Feinberg, said he felt, "sure the National Liberation Front will win," and went on to embrace the North Vietnamese delegates to the conference amid a "tumultuous and prolonged ovation." In mid-January a workshop for Jewish radicals was held in New York City, see JCur, 23:2 (February 1969), 46.

¹¹In Mordecai Chertoff, "The New Left and Newer Leftists," in Chertoff, 190-191; cf. M. Jay Rosenberg, Midstream, 53.

¹²Kendrick, 186; cf. Porter and Dreier, xxvii.

¹³In "Homefront: USA." Also, see George E. Gruen, "The United States, Israel, and the Middle East," AJYB, 71 (1970), 238. For statistics see Andrew Kohut and Lawrence H. Stookey, 465.

¹⁴Kissinger in "Homefront: USA," Nixon in NYT (October 12, 1969), quoted in Haskins, 68; cf. Fred Halstead, Out Now! A Participant's Account of the American Movement Against the Vietnam War (New York, 1979), 483. This theory is also suggested in "Call to the Quiet Hawks," JFron, 36:10 (November 1969): 3. Also see "Moratorium Gains Community Support," unknown source (October 1969), Religious Action Center, Eisendrath--Vietnam File.

¹⁵JCur, 24:1 (January 1970): 54.

¹⁶Jewish Exponent (October 17, 1969), AJA, Peace File. My emphasis.

¹⁷Winston in Porter, 203; "National Fast for Jews Called by Jewish Radicals," JPO (November 28, 1969), AJA, Peace File. This article indicates that hundreds of Reform Jewish youth were also in Washington during the Mobilization, many of them participating in special services for peace at an area synagogue. Also see Cincinnati Enquirer (November 15, 1969) for a description of events at HUC-JIR. Sam Pevzner, "Jewish Activism in Washington, Nov. 13-15," JCur, 24:1 (January 1970): 14, said there was tension between those who were in the "activist Left" and others who were more moderate, "religious-oriented young people;" cf. JCur, 24:1 (January 1970), 54.

¹⁸"Rabbi Assails Nixon's Vietnam Policies," NYT (October 27, 1969), AJA, VNW File.

¹⁹Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC, 50th General Assembly (1969): 16. See appendix C10.

²⁰News releases of JWV, "Jewish War Vets Condemns Mis-treatment of U.S. Prisoners" (March 31, 1968) and "JWV Protests Inhuman Treatment of Prisoners by North Vietnamese" (August 21, 1968), AJA, JWV File.

²¹In 1965 even the most liberal of Jewish groups, the CCAR, denied the option of unilateral withdrawal as a viable alternative. Indeed, as late as mid-1969 Poale Zion seems to have rejected unilateral withdrawal in favor of a "mutual withdrawal of troops." See Howard Michael David, "Washington Note," JFron, 36:7 (July/August 1969):4. Also see JFron, 36:11 (December 1969): 29 ff. and appendix C9.

²²Seymour Siegel, "Vietnam Journal," Conservative Judaism, 24:1 (Fall 1969): 36 ff. He suggests that the U.S. forge closer bonds with the "moderate" elements in South Vietnam which are anti-Thieu and anti-communist; cf. Balfour Brickner, "Personal Report from Saigon" (July 16, 1970), AJA, Miscellaneous File--Balfour Brickner, who also condemned the Thieu government.

²³Rosenfield in AJYB, 71 (1970), 338.

²⁴Mayer Abramovitz, "First Things First," in PRA, 34 (1970): 123-126; cf. Wein, 22 ff.

²⁵News release of JWV, "JWV National Commander Pledges President Continuing Support for End of War Effort" (November 4, 1969), AJA, JWV File. David B. Hollander, "The Moral Prerequisites of Peace: A Word on the Vietnam Protests," Ideas, 2:1 (Autumn 1969): 49 ff. makes many arguments, including that we are not privy to military information and, therefore, should not criticize the government; protests may have lengthened the war; Jews will suffer from the climate of "revolution;" and that Judaism's ultimate goal is truth, law, and freedom, not peace. Also see "Jewish Organizations Back Nixon's Vietnam Policies" (undated), HUC-JIR Library, Vietnamese Conflict Box.

²⁶Gruen in AJYB, 71 (1970), 238; "Israel and Vietnam," JFron, 36:11 (December 1969): 3.

²⁷Torczyner's comments are mentioned in a letter appearing in the American Zionist, 60:4 (December 1969): 48; "Jews and the Moratorium," American Zionist, (November 1969), 3. For a rebuttal of this editorial see Sidney Brooks, "Jews and the Moratorium," (letter) American Zionist, 60:6 (February 1970): 45, who wrote, "the question is not whether it is 'good or bad for the Jews' (a deplorable measure of judgment), but whether Jews act in good faith and in honest reflection of their understanding of the teachings of Judaism applied to our times and issues." This was the same disagreement expressed by other Jews in earlier years. Do we, in other words, judge the war from the perspective of Jewish survival or Jewish moral teachings. Porter and Dreier,

xxvii, argue that Torczyner actually stated that his hawkish position was "to guarantee the support of the Nixon Administration for Israel," but I have seen no substantiation for this.

²⁸"Israel and Vietnam," JFron (December 1969), 3.

²⁹"Golda Replies to Student Questions," Had, 52:4 (December 1970): 27.

³⁰"Atrocities," JFron, 36:11 (December 1969): 3; "A Stillness at Songmy," Recon, 35:14 (January 2, 1970): 3-4; News release of AJComm (December 7, 1969), AJA, VNW File; News release of JWV, "Songmy Massacre Comparison to Nazi Atrocities Criticized" (December 2, 1969), AJA, JWV File.

³¹As, for example, in "Non-Wars and Non-Peace," Recon, 36:3 (March 27, 1970): 5-6.

³²Kohut, 464 ff. Also see appendix B3 and B4, from Mueller, 143-144.

³³Leo Landman, "Law and Conscience: the Jewish View," Judaism, 18:1 (Winter 1969): 29.

³⁴See Roland Gittelsohn, "Judaism on War, Peace and Conscientious Objection," Jewish Digest, 15:7 (April 1970): 51 ff. and Committee on Chaplaincy, CCARY, 80 (1970), 43, which praises Jewish leaders of the past who "cherished duty to conscience above the demands of the state."

³⁵Wein, 25 ff. He attacks supporters of Jewish CO status as "heterodox Jews" whose scholarship is weak and who confuse Jewish and Christian values.

³⁶Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC, "Selective Service" (1969), 3-4. For Massachusetts bayt din see JCur, 24:4 (April 1970): 46. AJCong in Rosenfield, in AJYB, 72 (1971): 257. The AJCong and AJComm filed amicus curiae ("friend of the court") briefs with the Supreme Court on behalf of a young man who refused induction on the grounds of ethical and moral conscientious objection (the Selective Service allowed CO only if based on religious beliefs). The AJCong brief went on to show that SCO was a Jewish "moral imperative;" see Jewish News (Neward, N.J., January 23, 1970), AJA, VNW File and Rosenfield in AJYB, 72 (1971), 257.

³⁷JCur (January 1970), 54; Rosenfield in AJYB (1970), 238.

³⁸JPF Newsletter 4:1 (January/February 1970); 4:2 (March/April 1970): 4; Letter from Michael Robinson (April 3, 1970), AJA, JPF File. Also see Isaacs, 97-8. For rabbinic support of CO claims see Brian Donovan, "The Man Who Beat the Army," The New Republic (January 31, 1970): 17-19, AJA,

VNW File. Also see Ben Gollub, "Judaism on Conscientious Objectors" (unknown source, 1970), AJA, JPF File. The National Council of Churches supported clergy who worked with draft evaders, too; see "Amnesty: To Forgive or Not to Forgive Dissenters," NYT (February 20, 1972), AJA, VNW File.

³⁹JPF Newsletter, 4:4 (August-November 1970): 3. It is difficult to say how many men were actually counselled by the JPF during the war. Allan Solomonow estimated, in 1970, that about 8,000 individuals were counselled per year, see Donovan, AJA, VNW File. Naomi Goodman estimates that "several thousand young men were counselled" throughout the duration of the war, see Interview with Naomi Goodman (October 30, 1983).

⁴⁰According to Siegel, Conservative Judaism, 39. For the number of chaplains see PRA, 34 (1970): 188; CCARY, 80 (1970), 43; and appendix B5. Lt. Robert Golden, a chaplain in Vietnam, in a letter to Rabbi Moshe Tutnauer, in Conservative Judaism, 24:3 (Spring 1970), 58-59 said there were four Jewish chaplains in Vietnam.

⁴¹Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC, "Procurement of Reform Jewish Chaplains" (1969): 11. A. J. Heschel was also unhappy. See "Guardian of Morals in War is Heschel Idea," JPO (October 15, 1970), AJA, Heschel File. In 1971 the CCAR Committee on Civilian Chaplaincy declared the idea of such a chaplaincy as economically unfeasible, CCARY, 81 (1971): 32.

⁴²Halstead, 539 ff.; Nixon quoted in "American Jewry Reacts to Cambodian Invasion," Jewish Exponent (May 15, 1970), AJA, VNW File; Arthur Liebman, 68 and notes 109-110, p. 623. The participation rate for other religious groups was 82% for Catholics and 71% for Protestants, see pp. 573-574.

⁴³Winston in Porter, 105; Rosenfield in AJYB, 72 (1971), 256; Jewish Exponent (May 15, 1970), AJA, VNW File.

⁴⁴Jewish Exponent (May 15, 1970); News release of AJComm (May 10, 1970); and "Seminary Students for Peace to Lecture Against U.S. Policy in Southeast Asia," The Detroit Jewish News (June 5, 1970), AJA, VNW File; cf. Eliezar Schweid, "The Middle East Crisis--Israelis Explore Alternatives," Dimensions, 5:1 (Fall 1970): 10, who calls the opposition movement "immoral" because of its violent methods. For UOJCA see Resolutions Adopted by the UOJCA, 72nd Anniversary National Biennial Convention (1970): 25-7; see appendix C11 and C12.

⁴⁵Rosenfield in AJYB, 72 (1971), 257; News release of AJComm (May 19, 1970); Jewish Exponent (May 15, 1970), AJA, VNW File. Also see CCARY, 80 (1970), 44. These groups also used the opportunity to repeat the call for an end to U.S. interference in Vietnam. Smaller, local Jewish groups also

opposed the Cambodian incursion and the war in general. See Letter from MBR (May 11, 1970) and Political advertisement, "Peace Issues Committee of Jewish Family Service" (June 21, 1970), AJA, VNW File. For interfaith actions see JPF Newsletter 4:3 (May-July 1970): 2; NYT (May 27, 1970), AJA, VNW File, which tells of 1,000 clergy in Washington to lobby for the McGovern, Hatfield Church bill. Also see Brickner, 16, in AJA, Miscellaneous--Balfour Brickner File, who also chides the "Out Now!" position.

⁴⁶For Orthodoxy see Resolutions adopted by the UOJCA (1970), 26 and appendix C11 and C12. Time magazine quoted a "high Israeli diplomat" as saying: "If the U.S. lets (Cambodian Premier) Lon Nol down, the Russians will conclude that the Americans have gone soft. It will also be bad news for us." See Jewish Exponent (May 15, 1970), AJA, VNW File. Also see Murray Polner in JPF Newsletter, 4:4 (August-November 1970), who says the "tendency of official Israeli spokesmen" is to support Vietnam in order to safeguard U.S. backing of Israel.

⁴⁷Convention resolutions of JWV (June 3-7, 1970); News release of JWV, "JWV National Commander Endorses President's Peace Proposal" (October 8, 1970), AJA, JWV File.

⁴⁸Jewish Exponent (May 15, 1970) and Detroit Jewish News (June 5, 1970), AJA, VNW File. During the week of May 11-15 at HUC-JIR (Cincinnati), mornings were devoted to colloquia on the war and current social problems. See Private papers of Dr. Sheldon Blank. One rabbinic student in Cincinnati, Bruce Cohen, was active in a Cincinnati "sit-in" held on May 2. See "133 War Protesters Jailed," Cincinnati Enquirer (May 2, 1970), AJA, VNW File. Also see Political advertisement, "If Not Now, When?," NYT (July 15, 1970), AJA, Peace File.

⁴⁹Winston in Porter, 205.

⁵⁰Jewish Exponent (May 15, 1970) and Detroit Jewish News (June 5, 1970), AJA, VNW File; "Rabbi Seeks Injunction," NY Post (May 30, 1970), AJA, New York, NY--Temple Emanuel File; Jakob J. Petuchowski, "Left Turn! The Politics of American Reform Judaism," Ideas, 2:4 (Winter 1970): 51.

⁵¹Gallup poll (January 31, 1971) in pamphlet distributed by the Jewish Radical Community and Radical Zionist Alliance of Los Angeles, AJA, VNW File.

⁵²Geraldine Rosenfield, "American Jewish Community Responds to Issues," in AJYB, 73 (1972): 295-6.

⁵³In The Voice of Micah 1:2 (March 1971): 5-6, AJA, Peace File. See appendix C13.

⁵⁴"Jewish Campaign for the Peoples' Peace Treaty," in The Voice of Micah (March 1971), AJA, Peace File. An adver-

tisement for this campaign appeared in NYT on March 7, 1971, see JCur, 25:6 (June 1971): 11. Also see "Some Questions and Answers: the Jewish Campaign for a Peoples' Peace Treaty to End the War in Indo-China," National Committee for the Jewish Campaign, AJA, Left Wing Movements File and pamphlet distributed by Jewish Radical Community and Radical Zionist Alliance of Los Angeles: 1 ff., AJA, VNW File.

⁵⁵ Pamphlet, "A Jewish Campaign for the Peoples' Peace Treaty," AJA, Left Wing Movements File.

⁵⁶ JCur, 26:5 (May 1972): 46; JPF Newsletter, 6:2 (January-April 1972): 1.

⁵⁷ "The Price," Recon, 37:1 (March 5, 1971): 4; JCur 25:5 (May 1971): 10; JCur, 25:6 (June 1971): 32; Rosenfield in AJYB, 73 (1972), 296.

⁵⁸ Halstead, 614 ff. He argues (p. 633) that this demonstration was the key reason for the decrease in U.S. troop strength in Vietnam from more than 330,000 in April 1971 to 69,000 one year later. Perhaps this is partially true, but Nixon already announced a 100,000 person reduction on April 7, 1971. Jewish participants at the Washington march on April 24 were housed at the UAHC's Religious Action Center, B'nai Brith Headquarters, Temple Emanuel, and the Community of Micah, see JCur, 25:6 (June 1971), 46.

⁵⁹ "Annual Meeting: National Conference of Jewish Communal Service," Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 48:1 (Fall 1971): 5 ff.; CCARY, 81 (1971): 26; Geraldine Rosenfield, "Humane Concerns: Amnesty, War, Violence," in AJYB, 73 (1972): 234; JCur, 25:8 (September 1971): 32; JCur, 25:7 (July/August 1971): 16; JCur, 26:2 (February 1972): 46-47; Telegram from Dr. M. Eisendrath and Rabbi D. Polish to President Nixon (December 28, 1971), Religious Action Center, Eisendrath--Vietnam File; JCur, 26:2 (February 1972): 25; Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC, "Indochina" (1971): 7, see appendix C14. Also see Political advertisement for November 27, 1971 "Sabbath of Peace," NYT (November 5, 1971), AJA, Peace File; JPF Newsletter, 6:2 (January-April 1972): 1.

⁶⁰ Saul Padover, "The Muddle in Vietnam: 1963-1971," Had, 52:9 (May 1971): 40; Archie Simon, "Vietnam," (letter) National Jewish Monthly, 86:1 (September 1971): 76; George E. Johnson, "Death and Davening in Vietnam," National Jewish Monthly, 86:4 (December 1971): 31.

⁶¹ News releases of JWV, "JWV Supports Nixon Initiative: (January 26, 1972 and "JWV Cammander Declares Vietnam Veterans Getting Bad Deal, Urges Swift Reforms" (March 19, 1971), AJA, JWV File.

⁶² A Louis Harris poll of December 1971, in Kendrick, 339, found that of all Americans 65% felt it was "morally

wrong: to be in Vietnam, a three-to-one majority wanted "completely out" by May 1972, and 53% felt Nixon's withdrawal was too slow. In November 1971 draft calls were down 80% from April. During the fiscal year 1972 (July 1, 1971-June 30, 1972) draft calls "were down to about 12% of the fiscal 1968 peak," in Halstead, 650, 677.

⁶³"Cry Our Beloved Country," Recon, 36:15 (February 5, 1971): 4; cf. "Non-Wars and Non-Peace," 5-6. Also see Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, "The Unfreedom of the American Jewish Press," JSpec, 36:5 (May 1971): 2; Mark S. Golub, "Calley: When Victims Become Victors," Sh'ma, 1:13 (April 30, 1971): 97-98; Abraham J. Heschel, "Required: Moral Ombudsman," United Synagogue Review, 24:3 (Fall 1971): 4 ff.; News release of JWV, "JWV Urges President Nixon to Consider Clemency for Lt. Calley" (April 1, 1971), AJA, JWV File.

⁶⁴JCur, 25:8 (September 1971): 32. For Philadelphia actions see Sanford Weinreb, "A Jewish Coalition for Peace," CBW, 39:7 (April 28, 1972): 24 ff. and Philadelphia Jewish Times (January 27, 1972), AJA, VNW File. Fifteen area rabbis endorsed this project (eight Conservative and seven Reform). Other antiwar activists also criticized the perception among many Americans that the war was over. See, for example, remarks of Rabbi Leonard Beerman in "Clergy, Laymen Shocked by War Visit," Los Angeles Advocate (March 15-31, 1972); Pasadena Star News (March 1, 1972); and "Antiwar Activity Shifts to Church and Synagogue," Los Angeles Times (April 11, 1972), AJA, Beerman File. Also see Political advertisement, (November 5, 1971), AJA, Peace File; JPF Newsletter, 6:2 (January-April 1972): 1.

⁶⁵Rosenfield in AJYB, 73 (1972), 296; JPF Newsletter, 5:1 (January-May 1971): 2; Proposed resolution for MBR concerning selective conscientious objection status (March 18, 1971), AJA, VNW File.

⁶⁶Emanuel Rackman, "Our War Resisters: A Proposal," Sh'ma, 1:15 (May 28, 1971): 113 ff.; Maurice Lamm, "After the War--Another Look at Pacifism and SCO," Judaism, 20:4 (Fall 1971): 429-30. Following the war Richard G. Hirsch, Thy Most Precious Gift: Peace in Jewish Tradition (New York, 1974), 68, wrote that "although the issue of selective conscientious objection as such was never posed in Jewish sources, in the opinion of the author, the spirit of the tradition would tend to support such a category."

⁶⁷NYT (May 10, 1972) in Halstead, 669.

⁶⁸Rosenfield in AJYB, 74 (1973): 234-235; CCARY, 82 (1972): 92-93; JPF Newsletter, 6:2 (Fall 1972); "In Vietnam: Ends and Means," Recon, 38:4 (May 19, 1972): 4-5; JCur, 26:7 (July/August 1972): 35-6, 46; "Out of Vietnam Now!," JCur, 26:6 (June 1972): 3; Statement of MBR (1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File. For AJComm see "Statement on

the Indo-China War" (May 8, 1972), AJA, VNW File; see appendix C15.

⁶⁹CCARY, 82 (1972), 93.

⁷⁰Statement of college students to MBR (unknown source, April 1972?), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File. The date is probably late April because the statement says it was written three weeks after the bombing began. This could only refer to the resumption of bombing on April 6, 1972. "Seek Peace and Pursue It....," statement of MBR (1972) and Letter of Rabbi Judea B. Miller to Rabbi Cary Yales and other rabbis incarcerated (Malden, Mass., May 23, 1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File.

⁷¹Letter of Judea B. Miller (May 23, 1972) and "'No Business as Usual--The War Must End Now'--Why Local Rabbis Protest Vietnam," Jewish Advocate (Boston, June 15, 1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File; "Rabbis React to Viet Protest," Jewish Advocate (Boston, May 19, 1972), AJA, Peace File; Rabbi Al Akelrad in "6 Rabbis Arrested in Antiwar Protest," Boston Herald Traveler (May 18, 1972), AJA, VNW File.

⁷²Letter from six rabbis incarcerated at Federal Court House (Boston, May 17, 1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File.

⁷³Letter of Judea Miller (May 23, 1972); Jewish Advocate (May 19, 1972), AJA, Peace File.

⁷⁴Jewish Advocate (June 15, 1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File.

⁷⁵Letter from six rabbis to Justin L. Wyner, president of Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Boston (May 26, 1972) and Letter from Herman Brown, Executive Director of JCC of Metropolitan Boston to Rabbi Cary Yales (June 9, 1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File. For public reaction see letters to the editor, Jewish Advocate (May 25, 1972), AJA, Peace File and "What's This 'Obedient' Civil Disobedience?," Jewish Advocate (June 15, 1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File. Also see Maurice Eisendrath, "Report on UAHC," in CCARY, 82 (1972), 106; Alexander Graubert, "Protesting the Mass Board Protest," Sh'ma, 2:37 (September 15, 1972): 133-134; and Ira Youdovin, "Should We Then Have Done Nothing?," Sh'ma, 2:37 (September 15, 1972): 135.

⁷⁶Winston in Porter, 206; "Eisendrath Stands Still Argued in Jewish Circles," JPO (December 21, 1973), AJA, Eisendrath File.

⁷⁷JPF Newsletter, 6:2 (Fall 1972); "30-40 Rabbis are Fasting Over Vietnam," JPO (September 15, 1972) and "Protest on Vietnam Becomes Nationwide" (September 22, 1972), AJA, VNW File; Rosenfield in AJYB, 73 (1972), 235. Also see

News release of National Ladies Auxiliary of JWV, "Assistant Secretary of Labor Addresses Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary" (November 14, 1972), AJA, JWV File.

⁷⁸Padover (1971), 40; Letter to the editor by A. J. Heschel, NYT (October 27, 1972), AJA, Heschel File; statements of Kushner and others in Jewish Advocate (June 15, 1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File; J. Barry Gurdin, "The Jewish 'Draft Dodger'," JCur, 21:9 (October 1972): 13; JPF Newsletter (Fall 1972).

⁷⁹Nathan Glazer, "Revolutionism and the Jews: the Role of the Intellectuals," Comm, 51:2 (February 1971): 57; JCur, 25:8 (September 1971): 32.

⁸⁰Henry Siegman, "The Orthodox Silence on Viet Nam," Sh'ma, 2:36 (September 1, 1972); Michael Wyschogrod, "We Testify by Our Faithfulness," Sh'ma, 2:36 (September 1, 1972); Mark S. Golub, "The Morality of Wyschogrod's Orthodoxy," Sh'ma, 2:39 (October 13, 1972); Michael Wyschogrod, "God's Mercy is Beyond Our Searching Out," Sh'ma, 2:39 (October 13, 1972); Sholom Gold, "On the Conservation of Jewish Energy," Sh'ma, 2:40 (October 27, 1972); Sholom Klass, "No Silence on Communism as Our Enemy," Sh'ma, 3:41 (November 10, 1972); Abraham R. Besdin, "The Sensitivity of Silence," Sh'ma, 3:41 (November 10, 1972); Eliezer Berkovits, "There are Reasons for Orthodoxy's Silence," Sh'ma, 3:41 (November 10, 1972); Gerald Goldman, "When Silence is Partisan," Sh'ma, 3:41 (November 10, 1972); Emanuel Rackman, "Silence--a Response to Complexity," Sh'ma, 3:41 (November 10, 1972); Norman E. Frimer, "We Must See Smoke Behind the Silence," Sh'ma, 3:42 (November 24, 1972); Saul Berman, "But We are Commanded Not to be Silent," Sh'ma, 3:42 (November 24, 1972); Emanuel Feldman, "Our Masters Teach Even by Their Silence," Sh'ma, 3:42 (November 24, 1972); Henry Siegman, "An Argument From Silence is No Argument," Sh'ma, 3:42 (November 24, 1972); and Bleich, 57-58.

⁸¹Murray Friedman, "Politics and Intergroup Relations in the U.S.," in AJYB, 74 (1973): 139.

⁸²Rosenfield in AJYB, 73 (1972), 235; Statement by Leonard Beerman for UAHC (January 21, 1973), AJA, Beerman File; letter to the editor by Judea B. Miller, Jewish Advocate (January 11, 1973), AJA, VNW File; Geraldine Rosenfield, "American Jewish Community Responds to Issues," in AJYB, 75 (1974-75): 283-284; Political advertisement, "Tu B'Shevat Convocation for Peace," NYT (January 19, 1973), AJA, Peace File; M. Jay Rosenberg, "News, Views, Reviews--A Tree for Vietnam and for Ourselves," National Jewish Monthly, 87:6 (February 1973): 30 ff.

⁸³Jewish Advocate (June 15, 1972), AJA, Miscellaneous--Rabbis File; Rosenberg, 32-3. A final protest against the war came from J. David Bleich who, silent until this point,

now spoke out against the "unconscionable" act of fighting during the five day period between the signing of the Peace Accords and the day the ceasefire went into effect. This fighting was, he cried out years too late, a "war crime." See Bleich, 57.

Chapter Five

¹Podhoretz, 164 ff. For letters Nixon sent to Thieu see George E. Gruen, "United States, Israel, and the Middle East," in AJYB, 77 (1977): 79-80.

²Letter and pamphlet of "Trees and Life for Vietnam" (Hebrew date--Sivan 4, 5733; June 4, 1973), AJA, Heschel File. It is mentioned again only in a letter from Naomi Goodman and Isidor Hoffman, JPF (April 10, 1975), HUC-JIR Library, Pacifism Box.

³Rosenfield in AJYB, 77 (1977), 139; "What About Vietnamese Refugees?," JCur, 29:6 (June 1975): 3; CCARY, 85 (1975): 68; The Jewish Veteran, 30:4 (July/August 1975): 10, AJA, JWV File; Resolutions Adopted by the UOJCA, 80th Anniversary National Biennial Convention (1978); see appendix C17 and C19. The CCAR continued to press for "relief funds" to be sent to Vietnam to help in "the rebuilding of that devastated country" even after the communist victory, CCARY, 85 (1975), 68. Also see Alexander Schindler, "Report of the President of the UAHC to the Board of Trustees" (Southbury, Conn., May 30-June 1, 1975), AJA, UAHC File; Lucy Steinitz, "Perspective: Welcoming the Stranger," Moment, 5:6 (June 1980): 7-9; "Not With a Bang," Moment, 1:1 (May/June 1975): inside cover.

⁴"Jews Help Resettle Vietnam Refugees," Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 52:1 (Fall 1975): 104-105 and "Jewish Communities Help Resettle Indochinese Refugees in U.S.," Journal of Jewish Communal Service, 55:4 (Summer 1979): 387. For a personal account of adopting refugees see Steinitz, 7 ff. and Louis Finkelman, "Ho Home on the Range," (letter) Moment, 6:1 (December 1980): 12-13. Of the 2400 Indochinese refugees resettled through HIAS by September, 1975, 76% were sponsored by individuals, 24% by more than thirty Jewish communities, see JCur, 29:10 (November 1975): 35.

⁵Resolutions Adopted by the UOJCA, 80th Anniversary Biennial Convention, "The Tragedy of Southeast Asia" (1978): 20-22; see appendix C19; JCur, 34:1 (January 1980): 35; Marc Tanenbaum, "Cambodia--Another Holocaust," Present Tense, 7:2 (Winter 1980): 64.

⁶"Cease Fire: Will the People Learn?," Recon, 39:1 (February 1973): 3. Jewish organizations were unusually quiet after the signing of the peace treaty. The only groups to issue statements welcoming the peace immediately after the

signing were the AJCong and AJComm, see Rosenfield in AJYB, 75 (1974-75), 283-4.

⁷"Amnesty: To Forgive or Not to Forgive Dissenters," NYT (February 20, 1972), AJA, VNW File.

⁸For general background see Baskir, 207 ff.; Balfour Brickner, Keeping Mercy for Thousands: A Study Kit on Amnesty (New York, 1973), 1 ff.; and NYT (February 20, 1972), AJA, VNW File.

⁹Letter of MBR (May 11, 1970), AJA, VNW File; JPF pamphlet, "This is About Amnesty and the Jewish Tradition" (undated), AJA, JPF File; Rackman, Sh'ma (May 28, 1971), 115; Louis Bernstein, "The Rackman Proposal: a Disagreement," Sh'ma, 1:15 (May 28, 1971): 116. Also see convention resolution of JWV (New York region, June 3-7, 1970): 1, AJA, JWV File, which opposed "granting amnesty to draft dodgers."

¹⁰JCur, 26:7 (July/August 1972): 36; "Controversy on Vietnam: Amnesty," National Jewish Monthly, 86:8 (April 1972): 55-56. Also see Heschel in Brickner, Keeping Mercy, 1 and Gurdin, 13.

¹¹Isaacs, 97-98.

¹²"Rabbis Urge Nixon to Grant Amnesty," Boston Globe (March 12, 1973), AJA, VNW File; Proposed MBR Resolution on Amnesty (March 12, 1973), AJA, Miscellaneous--MBR File; JCur, 27:4 (April 1973): 30; JCur, 27:5 (May 1973): 46; JCur, 27:8 (September 1973): 32; CCARY, 83 (1973): 49; Resolutions Adopted by the UAHC, 52nd General Assembly, (New York, 1973): 11; see appendix C16 and C18; Brickner, Keeping Mercy, 1 ff.; JCur, 28:7 (July/August 1974): 32; Rosenfield in AJYB, 76 (1976): 180-181.

¹³Milton Ellerin, "Politics and Intergroup Relations," in AJYB, 76 (1976): 138; Baskir, 211; Rosenfield in AJYB, 76 (1976), 180-181; JCur, 28:10 (November 1974): 26; CCARY, 85 (1975): 68; CCARY, 86 (1976): 64; Schindler, "Report," (1975): 26, AJA, UAHC File.

¹⁴Baskir, 227; Rosenfield in AJYB, 78 (1978): 160; Rosenfield in AJYB, 79 (1979): 164; Resolutions Adopted by the UOJCA, 78th Anniversary National Biennial Convention, "Amnesty" (1976): 30. This statement does express discomfort at using "American history" together with "the Jewish religious tradition," for it adds the word "L'havdil" (a term indicating an incongruity). Also see letter of Naomi Goodman to President Jimmy Carter (November 6, 1977): 1, AJA, JPF File.

¹⁵News release of JWV, "JWV Protests Inhuman Treatment of Prisoners by North Vietnamese" (August 21, 1968), AJA, JWV File; NYT (March 8, 1971), AJA, VNW File; News release

of JWV, "JWV Commander Declares Vietnam Veterans Getting a Bad Deal, Urges Swift Reforms" (March 19, 1971), AJA, JWV File.

¹⁶Eisendrath, "Report," (New York, May 19, 1968), AJA, UAHC File.

¹⁷See, particularly, Norman Podhoretz, "Vietnam and Collective Guilt," Comm, 55:3 (March 1973): 4 ff., who said the war was not immoral, but "ill-conceived." His book, Why We Were in Vietnam, is a lengthy explication of his views on Vietnam ten years after it ended. For a critique of this work see Theodore Draper, Present History (New York, 1983), 355 ff.

¹⁸M. Jay Rosenberg, National Jewish Monthly, 30; Samuel Rabinove, "Vietnam, the Guilt We Need to Face," Sh'ma, 3:41 (April 1, 1977), 86; Winston in Porter, 207-208; cf. remarks of J. I. Fishbein, editor of Chicago Jewish weekly, the Sentinel, who made the same point in 1972 when he accused American Jews of indifference to the war: "We go our unconcerned way like the Germans, knowing but not really caring," in JCur, 26:10 (November 1972): 3.

Conclusion

¹Golub (1972), 147. In fact, one suggestion after the war was to observe both "the Holocaust in Europe ... (and) the tragic events of the sixties" on Yom ha-Shoah (Holocaust remembrance day), see Gerald Engel, "The 'Mein Kampf' Film and the Vietnam War," Recon, 40:3 (April 1974): 14; cf. Sanders, 66, who chides those who equate Vietnam with the Shoah.

²Porter and Dreier, xxxvii.

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