

It is a small area - no larger than Lake Erie - which the Jewish people are now seeking to use as the geographical territory within which their national survival shall be assured. Nor is the present population of Israel large. As a result of mass immigration in the past four years the total has now reached approximately the level it had attained before the Arab exodus, but even now, after these four years of heroic rescue work, it is only about twice the population of Toronto.

The stature of a land, however, is not measured by a surveyor's instrument, nor the greatness of a nation by the census-taker. Israel's future rests on many things which mere statistics cannot show. This land now represents for a gifted but scattered and often frustrated people the possibility of realizing the twin principles of self-liberation and self-help which were advocated in the last century by Leon Pinsker as the only adequate answer to anti-Semitism. And in that land Achad Ha'am's ideal of the re-education of the Jewish people for normal living -- their inner rehabilitation -- is already beginning to be realized.

That great Jewish sociologist, the late Dr. Arthur Ruppin, to whose courageous work as one of the builders of Israel Dr. Weizmann has paid special tributes, stated in his book "The Jews in the Modern World" that the original source of anti-Semitism is the group instinct, which like the herd instinct of animals welds men connected by common descent, language, customs and interests into a cohesive community, but causes them at the same time to distrust members of other groups. When the Jews first migrated to Europe, he went on to say, they came as outsiders and long remained strangers by reason of differences of race, religion, culture and occupations. They had to make their way as representatives of one of the ancient eastern civilizations in the midst of a more primitive western culture. Anti-Semitism had its rise then in Europe as part of the general fear of and prejudice against strangers which permeated ancient and medieval society and is still with us in one form or another. The Jewish people arriving in Israel today from various points of the compass represent different levels of civilization, from the early patriarchal to the most sophisticated modern. The majority, however, are westerners, who are reversing the situation described by Dr. Ruppin, since they represent in the Eastern Mediterranean region, whose fortunes have declined so greatly since the Mongol invasions, the now materially more advanced civilization of the West. A question that exercises the minds of many Jewish and other thinkers is how this return and this re-establishment can be brought about without giving rise to epidemics of fear and race hatred in the new environment which might prove as destructive a force in the Middle East as anti-Semitism has been in Europe.

Civilized man has learned a good deal more today than was known a thousand years or even a hundred years ago about the deep and secret springs of human fear and about the most effective means of securing release from that fear, either for groups or for individuals. In this case there are factors which enable one to hope that the initial struggle to secure the establishment of a Jewish state, and the fears and the tensions which have inevitably accompanied that struggle are not to be a permanent feature of the environment in which Israel finds itself. It was in the belief, indeed, that these fears and tensions could be removed, that the majority of governments represented in the United Nations General Assembly