

**AN IMPERIALIST HAWK:  
THE IMAGE OF ISRAEL IN SOVIET CARICATURES (1947-1987)**

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Submitted to  
Central European University  
Nationalism Studies Problem

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

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Budapest, Hungary

2007

## **Table of Contents**

Table of Contents.....	2
List of Illustrations.....	3
Acknowledgments .....	4
Introduction .....	5
Chapter I. Political caricature as an ideological weapon of Soviet propaganda.....	11
Chapter II. The image of Israel in Soviet caricature between 1947 and 1966: From Ally to Enemy. ....	18
1. Introductory notes.....	18
2. A brief overview of Soviet-Israeli relations (1947-1966). ....	19
3. The image of Israel in <i>Pravda</i> before the Six-Day War.....	21
Illustrations.....	29
Chapter III. The image of Israel in Soviet caricature between 1967 and 1973: The Peak of Political Confrontation. ....	30
1. Introductory notes.....	30
2. A brief overview of Soviet-Israeli relations in 1967-1973.....	30
3. The image of Israel in <i>Pravda</i> in 1967-1973.....	31
4. Main themes and motifs in anti-Israeli caricature in <i>Pravda</i> .....	38
5. Main methods of depicting Israel in caricature. ....	50
Illustrations.....	56
Chapter IV. The image of Israel in Soviet caricature between 1974 and 1987: From “Stagnation” to Perestroika. .	63
1. A brief overview of Soviet-Israeli relations after 1974.....	63
2. The image of Israel in <i>Pravda</i> in 1974-1987. New scenarios for anti-Israeli caricatures.....	64
Illustrations.....	77
Conclusion .....	82
Bibliography.....	86
Appendix 1.....	91
Appendix 2.....	93

## **List of Illustrations**

Figure 1. English-French “peacelove”. November 2, 1956.....	29
Figure 2. Sentenced to the pillory. November 12, 1956.....	29
Figure 3. They came to the consensus. March 18, 1960.....	29
Figure 4. A Masquerade-Ball in the house of Mister K ( <i>fragment</i> ). December 31, 1968.....	56
Figure 5. Washington has blessed Israeli provocations. December 18, 1969. ....	57
Figure 6. A transatlantic voluntarily service bureau. January 5, 1970.....	57
Figure 7. A fan of imported birds. January 23, 1968.....	58
Figure 8. A mirror similarity. March 10, 1970.....	58
Figure 9. Dollar cartridges. August 3, 1971.....	58
Figure 10. A godsend. February 28, 1973.....	59
Figure 11. Golda Meir's map. March 28, 1971.....	59
Figure 12. Aggressor’s sleight of hands. October 21, 1971.....	59
Figure 13. - Who will be the next? December 13, 1972.....	60
Figure 14. They help to kill. August 10, 1969.....	60
Figure 15. Straight negotiations or straight fire? May 17, 1969.....	60
Figure 16. Laces from Brussels. February 25, 1971.....	61
Figure 17. A similarity of views. July 5, 1970.....	61
Figure 18. What he has stolen... October 16, 1973.....	61
Figure 19. - I like this version most of all. December 3, 1971.....	62
Figure 20. In a circle of admirers. June 24, 1972.....	62
Figure 21. An Israeli occupant: - We will force Arabs to study. March 21, 1976.....	77
Figure 22. The wholesale and retail trade. September 8, 1978.....	77
Figure 23. A popular method in the construction industry. August 14, 1976.....	77
Figure 24. An Israeli approach to the “autonomy”. November 21, 1979.....	78
Figure 25. - For you, boss, we can do everything... February 21, 1980.....	78
Figure 26. Marionette-like vandal.... July 15, 1982.....	79
Figure 27. The aggressor studies Nazi lessons... October 11, 1982.....	79
Figure 28. Uncle Sam: - Please, do not interfere... June 4, 1980.....	80
Figure 29. The most beloved child. July 28, 1976.....	80
Figure 30. Sometimes they scream at each other... May 5, 1981.....	81
Figure 31. A tamed predator. January 31, 1983.....	81

## ***Acknowledgments***

I am very grateful to my supervisor Michael L. Miller for his guidance and support in writing this thesis. I would also like to thank the staff of the Open Society Archives for cooperation and the CEU Academic Writing Center, and Thomas Rooney in particular, for very useful comments. My work was developed due to the valuable suggestions of John D. Klier, Mária M. Kovács, András Kovács, Rogers Brubaker and Grigory Melnitser.

## ***Introduction***

It is difficult to overestimate the role of historians in human society. They fulfill very important functions by preserving contemporary events and restoring those segments of history, which had been lost. There are plenty of different sources, which allow a researcher to find historical truth - from archeological finds to different forms of art. Newspapers are extremely important sources of historical information about the post-Gutenberg era. Periodicals not only tell stories, providing historical facts about something, which does not exist anymore; they also help us to understand the mentality of people who were making the particular newspaper and who were reading it. How people and events were depicted in a newspaper reflects how they were perceived in real life during the chosen historical period.

The Soviet daily newspaper *Pravda* is the primary source for the present research. I use it to study a complicated issue – the relations between the Soviet Union and the State of Israel. However, there was no need to reconstruct the historical events, which determined those relations. There are many informative and carefully written books, articles and monographs, which provide the whole history of Soviet-Israeli relations. The books by Avigdor Dagan (1970), Robert Freedman (1975, 1991), Martin Gilbert (1999), Yosef Govrin (1998), Arthur Klinghoffer (1985) and Yaacov Ro'i (1980) are among the best academic works on this topic. In my thesis I focus on the narrower problem which has not been properly studied before – on the image of Israel in Soviet caricature.

Caricature as a specific genre of Soviet periodicals was a very popular method of interpretation of current events. By visualizing the situation, caricature makes it easier for the audience to understand. It was also the genre capable of adding an emotional component to the monotonous news coverage in Soviet periodicals. Caricature in the USSR had certain ideological

purposes: as a rule it was directed against the enemy, internal or external, which had to be morally demolished. Despite this propaganda task, Soviet caricature (and the Soviet press as a whole) can serve as a historical document, because it shows the official government position on particular events. Caricature was a mirror of the Soviet views of the whole world. To some extent, all seventy-four years of Soviet rule can be studied by only “reading” Soviet caricatures.

Caricatures as a valuable source of information about Soviet history were used previously by David Low (1950), Michael Milenkovitch (1966), Zosa Szajkowski (1980), Benjamin Pinkus (1988). However, their goals were different from the one presented in this paper. Low focused exclusively on the caricatures from “Krokodil” (“Crocodile”), a Soviet satirical magazine, and only before the death of Stalin. Pinkus presented complex research of the life of Soviet Jewry, but he did not pay attention to caricatures particularly and did not use them as an indicator of the public opinion towards “enemy countries”. Milenkovitch, on the contrary, focused mainly on Soviet caricature, but he investigated too broad a topic – “the image of the outside world”, and his conclusions are not applicable to the period after 1966. Finally, Szajkowski devoted only a few pages of his sourcebook on Russian antisemitism to the caricatures depicting Zionism and the State of Israel and he did not make necessary analysis of the pictures – his aim was to collect the images, not to draw conclusions.

The present thesis aims to fill the gap in previous research and add new facts to the existing body of knowledge concerning Soviet caricature. This research examines how the stereotypical image of Israel in Soviet caricature was created and how it was changing during the long period of Soviet-Israeli political confrontation. It considers the significant changes in the depiction of Israel and ties it to the demands of the political situation. The paper also discusses the main themes of anti-Israeli caricature and the most important methods of visualizing the enemy, which

were employed by Soviet caricaturists. It also answers the question whether or not antisemitic motifs were used in anti-Israel drawings.

Studying the history of Soviet anti-Israel caricatures involves studying of three interdependent complicated issues: Soviet policy towards the Middle East, Soviet antisemitism and Soviet ideological struggle against Zionism. I discuss foreign policy considerations, which determined official Soviet position towards Israel, in the following chapters. Now I would like to explain briefly the connection between antisemitism and anti-Zionism in the USSR.

First of all, it is necessary to underline that anti-Zionist propaganda was a stable line in the whole Soviet propaganda machine since 1920s while any form of hatred against Jews was officially forbidden. The ideological origins of the Soviet stance of Zionism lie in Marx's works on the Jewish problem. From his point of view, the solution of the Jewish problem is possible only through the assimilation of the Jew in a socialistic society<sup>1</sup>. Lenin's opposition to Zionist movement dates back to his controversy with the Bund. Lenin viewed the Bund's insistence on Jewish nationality and their claim for the sovereign state as an obstacle to proletarian unity, which was indispensable to the struggle for successful world revolution, and moreover, as un-Marxist, "reactionary" idea<sup>2</sup>. Jewish nationalism could easily separate the Jews from the Soviet Union, and that is why, according to Lenin, Russian Jews must be assimilated and must accept a common "Soviet" nationality. Such a critique of Zionism was the original base of Soviet anti-Zionist position.

During Stalin's rule the large-scale antireligious propaganda linked Zionism with Judaism, and anti-cosmopolitan campaign fixed the perception of Zionism as nationalistic, bourgeois and frankly anti-Soviet ideology which must be fought against. Stalin's epoch in Soviet history made

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<sup>1</sup> Sharif, 1977: 80

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.: 84.

the concept of anti-Zionism an official euphemism that allowed for the deployment of well-worn antisemitic stereotypes<sup>3</sup>. In the second half of the twentieth century Zionism became perceived as an ideology of the newly born state of Israel. The Soviet strategic alliance with the Arab countries in the 1950s was accompanied by the adoption of an anti-Israel stance. Until the end of 1980s two words “Israel” and “Zionism” were used as synonyms in Soviet press.

Throughout the history of the USSR the official propaganda tried to avoid antisemitic rhetoric, which contradicted with the Soviet class approach to nations. However, the critique of Zionism involved some antisemitic motifs. The observation of Martin Luther King Jr. - “When people criticize Zionists, they mean Jews”<sup>4</sup> – can be fully applied to the Soviet situation. Antisemitism in the USSR was wearing an officially approved mask of anti-Zionism. This observation is important for the analysis of anti-Israeli trend in the Soviet periodicals.

In this paper I argue that the image of Israel in caricatures was implicitly antisemitic. It means that the denunciation of Israel as a political enemy in *Pravda* was partially achieved through using of traditional antisemitic motifs. The influence of government and popular antisemitism can be observed in Soviet caricatures, and I will talk about this issue in my research. However, from my point of view, the internal Soviet antisemitism was not a dominant factor, which determined the content of the image of Israel. I believe that the portrayal of Israel in caricature was dictated mostly by the external political situation and must be studied in the context of the Cold War.

I analyze anti-Israel caricatures which appeared in *Pravda* between 1947, when the UN decision about the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine was made, and 1987, when

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<sup>3</sup> Antisemitism: A Historical Encyclopedia, 2005: 725

<sup>4</sup> Cited in Seymour Martin Lipset. “The Socialism of Fools: The Left, the Jews and Israel”. *Encounter magazine*, December 1969: 24.



friendly relations with Israel were restored by Mikhail Gorbachev. As a source of caricatures I use issues of the official Soviet daily *Pravda* – the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. *Pravda* was published in over six million copies and remained the most important medium in the state propaganda machine until the collapse of the USSR in 1991. *Pravda* definitely set the tone for the journalists and caricaturists of other periodicals. Very often the headlines of the *Pravda*'s articles and the ideas of its caricatures were repeated later without even minor changes in other newspapers and magazines. That is why I am sure that the portrayal of the State of Israel in *Pravda* reflects the official Soviet policy towards the Jewish state.

The chosen focus determined the methodological tools used in the present research. The primary methods are the content-analysis as an element of media analysis for interpreting messages of caricatures, and quantitative methods for collecting and analyzing such data as the annual number of caricatures or frequency of using of the particular method in portraying Israel.

The chronological structure of this research was also determined by the research questions. The first chapter provides the scholarly context for the present research. It offers a brief survey of the approaches to the phenomenon of political caricature in general and in the USSR in particular, and explains why caricature was an important propaganda tool. The following three chapters present the results of my analysis. Chapter II deals with the first twenty years of Soviet-Israeli relations. It shows how the attitude towards Israel was formed in the official newspaper, when and why the image of Israel first appeared in Soviet caricature. Chapter III analyses the period of Arab-Israeli wars (1967-1973) when the tradition of depicting Israel as an enemy in caricature was created. The most significant themes and methods of anti-Israel caricatures are discussed in detail in this chapter. Chapter IV examines the last phase in the history of Soviet anti-Israeli caricatures which started after the Yom Kippur war and lasted until 1987, when Mikhail

Gorbachev made active steps towards the reformation of the Soviet domestic policy and reestablishment of good relations with Israel. It shows how anti-Israel caricature developed until the beginning of *Perestroika* and which new motifs were introduced after 1973. Each of these chronologically organized chapters has a short historical overview of Soviet-Israeli relations. At the end of chapters II, III and IV, several caricatures, which are significant for the discussed period, are provided.

## ***Chapter I. Political caricature as an ideological weapon of Soviet propaganda.***

The caricature as a specific journalistic genre is usually studied in the framework of the state mass-media. This chapter summarizes to a great extent the findings and conclusions of the following researchers: R. William Ayres, Richard Cottam, W.A.Coupe, Eberhard Demm, Roy Douglas, Renée Gadsden, M. D. George, Richard Herrmann, Gayle D. Hollander, Thomas M. Kemnitz, David Low, Michael M. Milenkovitch, Benjamin Pinkus, Lawrence H. Streicher. I will start with a short characterization of the role of the media in the Soviet governmental propaganda system. Then, I will turn to the main features and functions of the caricature and its contribution to the formation of the enemy image in the press.

The most important and socially needed function of the mass-media is to keep the public informed about current events. However, the lack of democracy in some countries leads to the situation in which the mass communication process is functioning to fulfill only one single task – to propagandize the ideas of the ruling party, even if such propaganda distorts reality. In non-democratic societies the authority of the media as an agitation-propaganda apparatus is enormous, because it is a part of the process of political indoctrination.

Such a view of the media was very common among Russian Bolsheviks. Lenin's views concerning the press were closely connected to the role he attached to agitation and propaganda in the class struggle. The leader of the Russian revolution asserted that art must serve propaganda, which meant in practice the strictest control of creative works in accordance with official policies and principles<sup>5</sup>. “The press is the sharpest and most powerful weapon of our Party”, declared

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<sup>5</sup> David Low, 1950: 164.

Josef Stalin at the Twelfth Party Congress<sup>6</sup>. The same idea has been repeated by other chief Communist leaders. During the seventy years of Communist rule newspapers were one of the most important devices through which the government transmitted its decisions and justified its policies.

All genres of Soviet journalism, not only the genres of information and opinion, were adapted for carrying an unequivocal, clearly understandable message dictated by the official ideology. The satirical genres such as the feuilleton, pamphlet, parody, caricature and joke were widely used in various Soviet newspapers and magazines. I will focus exclusively on the phenomenon of the Soviet caricature, which became one of the most important forms of political propaganda in the periodicals of the USSR.

Soviet caricature emerged during the Russian civil war as a means of satirical denunciation of the enemy<sup>7</sup>. It was used by both the Red Army and the White Army. Caricature as a pictorial image based on exaggeration and grotesque was really a “people’s genre”: Russian peasant’s art – *lubki* – has a long tradition of drollery. So it is not surprising that the Russian Bolsheviks have found caricature useful in the “socialization of the emotions”<sup>8</sup>. The Great Soviet Encyclopedia entry on caricature in 1957 says that it is one of the most important forms of socio-political satire, ridiculing and exposing actual negative occurrences taken from the life of the people. Caricature serves as a sharp weapon of political agitation... Contemporary progressive caricature... participates in the struggle for peace, for democracy and socialism, mercilessly exposing imperialist warmongers and their collaborators<sup>9</sup>. Caricature became so significant for Soviet propaganda for several core reasons. First of all, as any other kind of visual image, it is easily

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<sup>6</sup> Joseph V. Stalin, Stenographic Account of the XII Party Congress, 1923, p.123. Cited by Milenkovitch, 1966: 7.

<sup>7</sup> Milenkovitch, 1966: 15.

<sup>8</sup> Low, 1950: 163.

<sup>9</sup> Great Soviet Encyclopedia, 1957, vol. XX: 201.

understandable even to uneducated people (and “politically illiterate”, in Soviet terms). The accessibility makes it very influential. As T.Kemnitz underlined, many more people grasp the point of the cartoon on the editorial page than read the editorials or signed columns<sup>10</sup>. One caricature is capable of describing an international or domestic situation better and faster than a whole issue of the official newspaper. It shows contemporary events in black and white, and the absence of the alternative meanings makes the picture politically reliable. And it is still perceived as an entertaining image, even if it has purely political purposes. Moreover, caricature has claims to truth as do other forms of art which attempt to represent and reflect the reality. It may in fact enclose strategic lies or illustrative half-truth, but nobody can blame the caricaturist for the distortion of the reality. Such distortion is the main characteristic of the genre.

What else made the genre of political caricature so important for the Soviet regime? Caricature serves as an influential form of public criticism. It is definitely negative<sup>11</sup>. Because of its destructive capacity, a caricature can channel the reader’s aggression onto a chosen image or concept which was considered alien to the socialist ideas<sup>12</sup>. Actually, we should differentiate between two types of Soviet caricature. The first type was called *druzheskii sharzh* (friendly sketch) – this was a non-critical depiction of the Soviet people or even Soviet leaders, who, as a rule, are shown in a victorious struggle against everything which was associated with evil.

The second type is a caricature containing a negative message<sup>13</sup>. It can critically depict razor-sharp social problems of a country’s internal life, but in the Soviet case such a caricature was reserved, first of all, for foreign leaders and customs (the main targets were capitalists, interventionists, fascists and other “westerners”). Use of such caricatures seemed to be a way not

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<sup>10</sup> Kemnitz, 1973: 84.

<sup>11</sup> Streicher, 1967: 431.

<sup>12</sup> Gadsden, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Milenkovitch, 1966: 15.

only to justify Soviet foreign policy, but also to divert popular attention from internal difficulties and failures. In this study I refer to this “critical” type of caricature as the most significant and multifaceted, and the most effective means for socialist “brain washing”.

Finally, the caricature, using cliché and stereotypical portrayal of the outside world, was one of the main tools for creating the image of the enemy. Needless to say that the existence of the enemies – inside the country and outside of it – was vitally important for the ideological purposes of mobilizing the public. In my research I use the concept of the enemy image which was introduced by Richard Herrmann<sup>14</sup>. According to his theory, the perception that elites hold of other actors in the international system fall into integrated images, including enemy image. The classic enemy image perceives a great threat from another state. As R. William Ayres summed up, “A holder of the classic enemy image would therefore describe the perceived enemy as implacably hostile and bent on domination; as appearing strong, but actually being a “paper tiger”; containable by strong will on the part of the leader’s state; and as having a monolithic, highly rational decision structure capable of carrying out highly complex and integrated strategies”<sup>15</sup>. According to my hypothesis, the image of Israel in the Soviet press resembles this enemy pattern.

Soviet caricature is a valuable indicator of the enemy image because of its impact (as a visual and written message) and for ease in identifying clearly the themes and symbols contained with it. Further, since all Soviet information flowed from a central propaganda machine, the cartoons reflect the overall content of Soviet propaganda<sup>16</sup>. According to the theory of political caricature by L. Streicher, the caricature may be observed as a guide for public aggression, because it dramatizes aggressive tendencies through the definition of targets. “Private feelings”

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<sup>14</sup> Herrmann, 1985.

<sup>15</sup> Ayres, 1997: 433.

<sup>16</sup> Milenkovitch, 1966: 2 (Preface).

became integrated into public sentiments of “self-defense”, which led to the collective hatred towards the things ridiculed in the caricature - state, social group, concrete person or social phenomenon<sup>17</sup>. As E.Demm noted in his article about First World War caricatures, the use of personalities – politicians, generals, diplomats – who represent the politics of the enemy countries was also very essential, because this “personification” can transfer negative emotions from a concrete person, depicted as ridiculous or horrid, to the country as such<sup>18</sup>.

The caricaturists, like all journalists, are concerned with the creation and manipulation of public opinion. Demm says that during an armed conflict caricaturists tend to become propaganda agents<sup>19</sup>. However, caricature is important not only in an age of “hot wars”, but in the period when any kind of conflict – domestic or international – occurs. As I will show in my analysis of the Soviet official press, the number of caricatures produced increases during conflict situations as an immediate reaction to them. Not only the USA, but other Western powers clearly associated with capitalism, imperialism and anti-Sovietism, became permanent targets of Soviet caricatures.

By employing and reinforcing traditional stereotypes, clichés and evaluative symbols, Soviet caricaturists managed to create an impressive gallery of ugly monsters, representing “capitalist” countries. For example, selfish and dollar-mad Uncle Sam usually represented the United States, while an arrogant Lion was a symbol of Great Britain. Very often unattractive animals - spiders, hawks, bulldogs, snakes - were used to characterize countries (and also to “dehumanize” the country leaders). Some of the images became stable and were repeated from one newspaper issue to another. Some researchers, such as David Low, argue that Soviet caricature was not unique in any degree and there are no “new imaginary, new symbols or new

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<sup>17</sup> Streicher, 1967: 438.

<sup>18</sup> Demm, 1993: 178.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.: 166.

conventions”, there is only “the repetition of the old-fashioned figures”<sup>20</sup>. That was written in 1950. In this paper I show that, in fact, many new symbols and motifs emerged in Soviet caricature since the middle of the century.

Absurd situations, symbolic deformation of the real world, exaggeration, allegories and grotesque make the caricature funny and entertaining, but simultaneously all these methods serve to visualize the image of the enemy and promote increased aggression towards “unmasked” victims. A humorous cartoon becomes also a cartoon of opinion.

Thus, the caricature tends to interpret current events. However, it is important to analyze it in the wider political and ideological context. The caricature seems to be independent from the neighboring articles, but we can not catch all the nuances and understand hidden messages in the picture without some knowledge about the situation in general and the reactions on it which appeared in the newspaper. Captions (caricature legends) are also significant for the researcher. Sometimes the caricature becomes completely meaningless without the caption<sup>21</sup>. My analysis will be based on the complex perception of the image of Israel in Soviet caricature. I will consider each single image to be a part of the whole propaganda campaign.

As I noted in the introductory chapter, caricatures successfully served as mirrors of Soviet policies, both internal and external. Their role in historical research is not limited by uncomplicated illustration of the facts. Caricatures *may serve as facts*. They help us to reconstruct the political climate of the historical past. As M.D.George determined the role of satirical prints for the historians, “we go to them for immediate reactions to events, for trends of propaganda, waves of emotion, common assumptions, myths, fantasies, distorting mirrors, political climates –

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<sup>20</sup> Low, 1950: 168.

<sup>21</sup> Coupe, 1969: 81.



for what is called public opinion”<sup>22</sup>. A set of caricatures taken from the Soviet periodicals is a valuable source of information about the Soviet epoch in Russian history. The following three chapters show how Soviet caricatures portrayed the state of Israel in order to fulfill ideological purposes of the state propaganda.

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<sup>22</sup> George, 1953: U1.

## ***Chapter II. The image of Israel in Soviet caricature between 1947 and 1966: From Ally to Enemy.***

### **1. Introductory notes.**

This chapter deals mostly with the anti-Israel articles, because only three anti-Israel caricatures were published in *Pravda* between 1947 and 1966. Twenty years of existence of the Jewish state in Palestine were not mirrored by the Soviet caricature, which, as a rule, provided an immediate reaction to all significant political changes on the international arena. Does it mean that there were no important events, which were related to the state of Israel? Does it mean that the process of creation of the image of Israel in Soviet caricature started only in June 1967 as a result of the Six-Day War? Or, maybe, during this long period Israel was considered a friendly state, which could not be mocked on the pages of the official newspaper? The present chapter attempts to answer these questions. First, I offer a brief overview of Soviet-Israeli relations in this period; second, I chronologically describe how the state of Israel and the Middle East situation were presented in *Pravda* before 1967.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the absence of caricatures may also be significant. A caricature was a weapon of Soviet propaganda which was used to attack a political enemy. This weapon was never directed against those states which were considered Soviet allies nor against neutral states, if they really remained neutral. It is easy to decide that Israel was not a political opponent of the USSR before the Six-Day War. However, the whole history of diplomatic relations between the two countries says that the State of Israel was associated with the Western, pro-capitalist world. Why was the sharpest weapon of Soviet press not directed against the Jewish state in Palestine? It seems to be natural to condemn Israel in caricature in the period when a new

wave of antisemitism was sweeping the Communist world. To answer these questions I will reconstruct the events chronologically.

## **2. A brief overview of Soviet-Israeli relations (1947-1966).**

The period between 1947 and 1967 in Soviet-Israeli relations started with significant Soviet support for Israel and finished with a strong alliance with Israel's enemies. Why did this drastic shift happen? There were two main factors, external and internal, which determined Soviet policy towards the state of Israel. First, the political competition between the USSR and the United States for controlling the strategically important and oil-rich Middle East, and second, the issue of the Soviet Jewry, which is closely connected with the implicit Soviet anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism and the question of Jewish emigration to Palestine. In November 1947 the Soviet representative in the UN, as well as other pro-socialist delegations, voted for the partition of Palestine and the establishment of the two independent states – one Jewish, the other Arab<sup>23</sup>. It was a surprising move after many years of the hostile Soviet attitude towards the Zionist idea. But the reasons of this decision are clear today: the USSR wished to push British colonialism out of the region and to form a united anti-Western front in the Middle East<sup>24</sup>. In May 1948 the Soviet Union recognized the newly born Jewish state *de facto* and *de jure* and declared its political and military support for Israel in the war against the Arab invaders. In September the Israeli embassy was opened in Moscow<sup>25</sup>.

Already in autumn of 1948 two areas of conflict emerged: the “invasion of American capital” into Israel and Israeli attempts to encourage Soviet Jews to abandon their Soviet

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<sup>23</sup> Govrin, 1998: xx-xxi.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.: xvii.

<sup>25</sup> Dagan, 1970: 28-35.

citizenship and to emigrate<sup>26</sup>. The refusal of Ben-Gurion's government to be communist-oriented and the growing solidarity of the Soviet Jews with the state of Israel displeased Stalin. The antisemitic campaign against "rootless cosmopolitans" of 1948-49 led to the suppression of Jewish culture in the USSR<sup>27</sup>. Jews were systematically dismissed from leading positions in many sectors of society, and many of them were arrested. In 1952 Prague show trials against Rudolf Slansky, the Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, and other Czech communists of Jewish origin<sup>28</sup>, were sharply criticized by Israel and by Zionist leaders all over the world<sup>29</sup>. Soviet anti-Semitism culminated in the "Doctor's Plot". In January 1953 *Pravda* announced the arrest of a group of Jewish doctors<sup>30</sup>, accused of being paid agents of Zionist organizations and of planning to poison Soviet leaders<sup>31</sup>. Shortly after these arrests Israeli Foreign minister M. Sharett made the statement about the "hatred against Jews officially adopted in the USSR"<sup>32</sup>. After this open ideological conflict, friendly relations between the USSR and Israel were severely strained. In February 1953 a small bomb exploded at the Soviet mission in Tel Aviv, and this "act of Zionist criminals" became a legitimate occasion for breaking off diplomatic relations with Israel<sup>33</sup>.

The unexpected death of Joseph Stalin in March 1953 led to the release of the accused doctors and to the restoration of diplomatic ties. However, during the next fifteen years the relations between two countries were far from being friendly. Anti-Israel attitudes in the Soviet

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<sup>26</sup> The Soviet discontent was first expressed in the article by the Soviet Jewish writer Ilya Ehrenburg. See *Pravda*, "Regarding one letter" [Po povody odnogo pis'ma], September 21, 1948.

<sup>27</sup> Pinkus, 1988: 145-161.

<sup>28</sup> Rulolf Slansky was accused of weaving a plot with Israel and Zionist organizations to overthrow the communist regimes in Czechoslovakia and neighboring countries. Slansky and ten his co-defendants were executed on December 3, 1952.

<sup>29</sup> Ro'i, 1980: 358-371.

<sup>30</sup> *Pravda*, "Vicious Spies and Killers under the Mask of Academic Physicians" ["Podlye shpiony I ubiytsy pod maskoi professorov-vrachei"], January 13, 1953.

<sup>31</sup> Ro'i, 1980: 372-377.

<sup>32</sup> Govrin, 1998: xxxiv.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.: 3-7.

foreign policy became obvious as the result of the Soviet alliance with the Arab world, mostly with Egypt and Syria<sup>34</sup>. The Soviet-Egyptian arms deal in 1955 led to the serious infringement of strategic balance in the Middle East. When the Suez War of 1956 started, the Soviet Union demonstrated its blatantly anti-Israeli position<sup>35</sup>. In the middle of the 1950s political, cultural and economic contacts between the USSR and Israel were sharply reduced. The Soviet administration staked a very great deal on anti-Western Arab regimes, which were seen as a strategic weapon in the Cold War. The political and ideological confrontation with Israel reached its peak in 1967 in the immediate aftermath of the Six-Day War.

### 3. The image of Israel in *Pravda* before the Six-Day War.

Even before the decision of the United Nations about the creation of the independent Jewish state, the Palestinian problem was visualized in *Pravda*. In the first half of the twentieth century the “Palestinian problem” in the Soviet press meant British control over the territory, which had geopolitical importance for the Soviet Union. The anti-colonial policy of the Communist Party demanded the condemnation of colonial powers which did not promote, and moreover rejected, the right of people to self-determination and to sovereign self-governed national state. An occasional caricature of the British Mandate period criticized English colonialism. For example, in 1929 a caricature in *Pravda* depicted “the English Pharaoh, going from Egypt to Palestine”<sup>36</sup>. The biblical motif was given an up-to-date message: the English government, just like the ancient ruler of Egypt, enslaved tribes and does not want to let them go<sup>37</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Klinghoffer, 1985: 20-33; Ro'i, 1980: 479-484.

<sup>35</sup> Pinkus, 1988: 247.

<sup>36</sup> *Pravda*, August 29, 1929.

<sup>37</sup> In fact, English troops were sent to Palestine to suppress Arab riots; the Jews were not involved.

The anti-colonial content of the “Palestinian problem” in *Pravda* remained unchanged even after UN General Assembly Resolution 181, which proclaimed the partition of Palestine. Not only English politicians, but also Americans, were blamed for their wish to establish total control over Palestinian territory, which was viewed by American representatives in the UN as “a regime of trusteeship”<sup>38</sup>. In the middle of May 1948, when the Palestinian crisis reached its peak, *Pravda* started to publish daily uncommented chronicle under the general title “The Events in Palestine”. The first message of this chronicle informed the audience about the Proclamation of the sovereign State of Israel. One of the following messages added that five Arab armies (Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon and Iraq) immediately invaded the newly created Jewish state. *Pravda* wrote that the Soviet Union, which recognized Israel *de jure*, had to condemn the Arabs who “fight against the Jewish right to have their own state” and started armed conflict with the lawfully and legitimately created state<sup>39</sup>. Soviet diplomat Andrei Gromyko, who one year earlier delivered a speech in the United Nations to support the Jewish struggle for their own state, declared that he did not understand the position of Arab countries, which violated peace in the region with the aim to suppress the Jewish movement for national independence. His speech in the Security Council of the United Nations was reported at length, like many of Gromyko’s other speeches<sup>40</sup>. *Pravda* explained the aggression of Arabs as an act in the interests of Western imperialists<sup>41</sup>.

Surprisingly, the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 was reported without using caricatures. It is necessary to note here that the quantity of caricatures on the pages of *Pravda* was very irregular

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<sup>38</sup> *Pravda*, “What is hiding behind the Palestinian crisis?” [Chto skryvaetsya za krizisom v Palestine?], May 4, 1948; “On the UN General Assembly’s emergency session” [Na chrezvychainoi sessii General’noi Assamblei], May 8, 1948.

<sup>39</sup> *Pravda*, “About the Palestinian situation” [K sobytiyam v Palestine], May 29, 1948.

<sup>40</sup> *Pravda*, “On the UN Security Council” [V Sovete Bezopasnosti], May 24, 1948.

<sup>41</sup> *Pravda*, August 28, 1948.

in the 1940s and 1950s. One period of the year could be “caricature-rich”, but the next few months could have almost no illustrations. As a rule, “caricature-rich” periods were the periods of foreign policy crises, and caricatures in *Pravda* mirrored mostly foreign leaders and events. From the end of the 1940s until the beginning of the 1960s Soviet caricatures usually depicted: 1) militarism and colonialism of the USA (greedy American senators, aggressive war generals and predatory capitalists from Wall street were usually depicted; a cowboy or Uncle Sam wearing a cylinder hat represented the whole country); 2) regressive and pro-American political orientation of England (the English Lion was shown serving its American master); 3) revanchists from West Germany, who were depicted as criminal leaders who continue Hitler’s policies; 4) capitalistic France, which has betrayed its glorious revolutionary past and joined the anti-Soviet camp (often depicted as a Gallic cock); 5) other less important political powers, who took an unambiguously pro-American position (unattractive images of Josip Broz Tito, General Franco, Chiang Kai-shek were introduced). Neither Israelis, nor Arabs appeared in caricatures before 1956.

As noted before, Soviet support of Israel did not last long. Already in 1953 the obvious wish of Ben-Gurion to avoid Soviet interference in Israeli politics made Soviet-Israeli relations quite strained. In February 1953, *Pravda* published a long and angry article about the “terrorist act” at the Soviet mission in Tel-Aviv<sup>42</sup>. The author, Y. Zhukov, wrote that the Israeli government was guilty of this crime, and Israeli police even encouraged “Zionist terrorists” to explode a bomb in the Soviet embassy. The main idea of the article was that “mad dogs from Tel-Aviv” were openly preaching hatred of the Soviet Union and planning hostile actions against the country which purged the world of Nazis and saved the Jewish nation. Israeli leaders who apologized for this incident were called deceivers who conduct dishonest games. The decision of

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<sup>42</sup> *Pravda*, “The terrorist attack in Tel-Aviv and deceitful games of Israeli governors” [Terroristicheskii akt v Tel-Avive I fal’shivaya igra pravitelei Izrailya], February 14, 1953.

the Soviet leaders to break diplomatic relations with Israel was also reported. This article seems to be very significant because it was the first extremely hostile response to the events in Israel. The tone of the article can be compared to the tone which was employed during the anti-Israeli campaign in 1967. In June 1953 diplomatic ties were restored, but the State of Israel was never perceived as an ally anymore.

Israel first appeared in Soviet caricature in 1956 as a result of the Suez crisis. In the middle of the 1950s Soviet foreign policy became Arab-oriented. The new party leader Nikita Khrushchev underlined that “a friendship with Egypt and Syria” was one of the most important purposes of the contemporary foreign policy<sup>43</sup>. The Soviet leadership had confirmed the desire to be friends with Egypt in July 1956, when Moscow supported the Egyptian nationalization of the Suez Canal. *Pravda* called this action the sovereign right of Egypt, a lawful act, which does not contradict international law. Western Europe worried that the canal would be controlled by one country and made attempts to change the situation. *Pravda* wrote that England and France interfered in internal affairs of the sovereign country in order to continue the Egyptian colonial yoke. On October 31, 1956, the newspaper, which had not even mentioned the name of Israel in relation to the Suez conflict before, reported that Israeli troops invaded Egypt, and it must be seen as an “aggressive act”<sup>44</sup>. It is significant for understanding the image of Israel to underline that Israel was seen as a puppet in the hands of western countries, whose actions were not independent. “It is obvious that Israel would not venture such an aggressive action against the Egyptian Republic without the support of the USA, England and France”, was declared in *Pravda*<sup>45</sup>, although the USA, in fact, opposed the invasion. Even in the war chronicle which had been

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<sup>43</sup> *Pravda*, “Khrushchev’s Report to the XX Party Congress” [Doklad N.S.Khrushcheva XX S’ezdy Partii], February 15, 1956.

<sup>44</sup> *Pravda*, “The invasion of the Israeli Army into Egypt” [Vtorzhenie izrail’skih voisk v Egipet], October 31, 1956.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*



published daily in *Pravda* in October-December, the main initiators of the conflict were listed in the following order: “England, France and Israel”.

This understanding of Israel as a minor and dependent political power found its expression in caricature. The first anti-Israel caricature in *Pravda*, which appeared in November 1956, did not introduce a recognizable image of Israel<sup>46</sup>. It depicted England and France as two unpleasant men who are preaching peace, but at the same time throwing bombs at Egypt. A big gun is attached to the belt of the Englishman. “Israel” is written on its holster (See Figure 1). Thus, we can see that the state of Israel was not personified yet. It was shown as the tool of other aggressors, who use it for their dirty needs. The second and last Israeli-related caricature of 1956 was published ten days later. The caricaturist put interventionists in a pillory<sup>47</sup> (See Figure 2). There were two big human figures, representing English and French colonialism, and one small, almost half-sized, slender man among them hiding from world condemnation. This small figure was the first attempt to visualize the state of Israel. But there was no artistic tradition of depicting Israel in caricature yet, and the little figure on the caricature lacked any distinctive features. There was not even a six-pointed star – it was employed as a symbol of Israel at the end of 1960s. Only the context made it possible to recognize Israel in this insignificant figure.

After 1956 the Israeli theme disappeared from the Soviet press and from Soviet caricature again. In 1957 the Middle East was presented in caricatures, but only in connection with American attempts to control the oil industry in the region. Israel did not have a significant amount of oil and was not directly involved in this Cold War conflict. In 1958 the USSR made decisive steps toward rapprochement with the Arab world<sup>48</sup>. In May Gamal Abdel Nasser, the

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<sup>46</sup> *Pravda*, November 2, 1956.

<sup>47</sup> *Pravda*, November 12, 1956.

<sup>48</sup> *Pravda*, “The friendship between Soviet people and Arab countries becomes stronger” [Krepnet druzhba narodov SSSR I stran arabskogo vostoka], April 22, 1958; “Long live the friendship between Soviets and Arabs” [Da zdravstvuyet sovetsko-arabskaya druzhba], May 17, 1958.

president of the United Arab Republic<sup>49</sup>, visited Moscow and was warmly greeted by Khrushchev. The Soviet leader delivered a speech in which he admired “the heroic struggle of the Arab people for its freedom and independence, its courage which has been demonstrated in the days of war against English, French and Israeli interventionists”<sup>50</sup>. The events of 1948 were called “the sacred Arabian war against aggressors”<sup>51</sup>. Thus, the Soviet attitude towards Arab countries made a 180-degree turn. In 1948 Arabs were called aggressors while the Jews were called fighters for independence. Ten years later Israel became an aggressor which discriminated against Arab people and their national movements. During the summer of 1958, when the American military invaded Lebanon, Soviet caricature introduced a heroic, even romantic image of Arabs, devoted to their fair struggle against Western colonialism. It meant that Arab countries were seen as allies while the enemies of the Arabs (including Israel) were seen as political opponents.

The third caricature which dealt with Israel appeared only in 1960. Its occurrence was motivated by the informal visit of Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion to the USA. It was the frank demonstration of the Israeli alliance with the main enemy of the USSR. In March the caricature in *Pravda* depicted Ben-Gurion together with the German statesman Konrad Adenauer ringing a huge bell titled “international tensions”<sup>52</sup> (See Figure 3). The figure of the Israeli politician is significantly smaller than the figure of his German partner. The neighboring article again called Israeli leadership a “Western instrument” in the hostile military activity of imperialists.

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<sup>49</sup> UAR was the state formed by the union of the republics of Egypt and Syria in 1958. It existed until Syria's secession in 1961, although Egypt continued to be known as the UAR until 1971.

<sup>50</sup> *Pravda*, “The Meeting of friendship between the USSR and the UAR” [Miting druzhby narodov Sovetskogo Soyuza I Ob’edinennoi Arabskoi Respubliki], May 16, 1958.

<sup>51</sup> *Pravda*, “The speech of N.S.Khrushchev” [Rech’ N.S.Khrushcheva], May 1, 1958.

<sup>52</sup> *Pravda*, March 18, 1960.

It is important that for the first time the state of Israel was represented in *Pravda* through a real person – the Israeli leader – like other Western countries. However, the figure of Ben-Gurion in the caricature did not bear any resemblance to the actual prototype. It was necessary to add the text “Ben-Gurion” to make the figure recognizable. We can only notice a long hooked nose. It can not be considered a specific Israeli feature, because, as a rule, Soviet caricaturists gave unattractive long nose to all capitalists - it was the way to create funny and unattractive image of the enemy. However, from the very beginning of the capitalist era the Jews became identified with capitalism. This view of the Jews was very popular in the antisemitic rhetoric of European socialists in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (see, for instance, works of Pierre Leroux, who wrote about capitalist “Jewish spirit”, or Werner Sombart, who called the Jews the originators of capitalism). In this context the “Jewish noses” of capitalists in Soviet caricatures can be seen as the continuation of the earlier European tradition of depicting capitalists.

This was the last anti-Israeli caricature which was found in *Pravda* before the Six-Day War. Even the name of the Jewish state was not mentioned often on the pages of the official newspaper. Before 1967 Israel was not considered a dangerous opponent in the international political arena. A competition for controlling the Middle East was the privilege of the superpowers, such as the USSR and the USA. Newly born Israel was seen as a country which made steps towards the alliance with the western world, but the Soviet Union did not feel any threat from Israel because it already managed to establish political cooperation with the Arab East. So, Israel was not very important for the Soviet foreign policy. And that is why there was no tradition to depict Israel in caricature. The tradition of visualizing the enemy demanded, first, a conflict which effects the strategic interests of the Soviet Union and, second, more than three caricatures in twenty years. In this respect, the period in Soviet-Israeli relations which started in 1967 is more interesting for a researcher. But *Pravda* publications of 1947-1966 are also important, because they demonstrated

the gradual worsening of the political climate between the two countries and a shift in the image of Israel from the prospectively pro-Soviet state and ally in the Middle East to the enemy and aggressor.

## Illustrations



**Figure 1. English-French "peacelove".** November 2, 1956. "Israel" is written on the gun holster. "Egypt" is written on the left part of the picture.



**Figure 2. Sentenced to the pillory. November 12, 1956.** "Get out from Egypt", "Remove aggressors' armies from Egypt" is written on posters.



**Figure 3. They came to the consensus. March 18, 1960.** "Ben-Gurion" is written on the left figure, "Adenauer" - on the right figure. "International tensions" is written on the bell.

# **Chapter III. The image of Israel in Soviet caricature between 1967 and 1973: The Peak of Political Confrontation.**

## **1. Introductory notes.**

The previous chapter dealt with three caricatures which appeared during the long period of twenty years. The present chapter is organized differently because it deals with more than two hundreds anti-Israeli caricatures which were published in *Pravda* over six and a half years, beginning with the Six-Day War. The aim of this chapter is to describe the themes and motives, which became a basis for the image of Israel as an enemy in Soviet press. First of all, I offer a short historical overview of this period. Second, I examine what *Pravda* wrote about Israel, how many caricatures appeared annually and what can be derived from their character. After that I turn to the analysis of the main themes and motifs of caricatures, which I group together according to their content. Finally, I discuss some important methods of representing Israel in caricature.

## **2. A brief overview of Soviet-Israeli relations in 1967-1973.**

During and after the Six-Day War, which was partly a result of Soviet activity in the Middle East, the USSR was expressing sharp condemnation of Israeli “aggressiveness”. Actions of the Egyptian government such as the concentration of troops, tanks and heavy artillery on the Israeli-Egyptian border, the removal of the UN forces, which had been monitoring this border since 1957, and the blockade of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping were characterized in the USSR as preventive measures<sup>53</sup>. Soviet representatives in the United Nations demanded an

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<sup>53</sup> Govrin, 1998: 307-314.

immediate cease-fire and the withdrawal of the Israeli Defense Forces to their previous positions. On June 10, 1967, the Soviet Union again broke off diplomatic relations with Israel and forced other countries of the Socialist block, except Romania, to follow its example<sup>54</sup>. A large-scale anti-Israeli and anti-Zionist campaign started in the Soviet mass-media during the period between the two wars. The propaganda machine tried to form the image of Israel as the enemy, as a servant of American imperialism, as an inciter to war, endangering peace in the Middle East, who dispossessed Arabs from their lands, pursuing a cruel regime of terror and oppression against its Arab minority<sup>55</sup>. In its ideological war against Israel Soviet propaganda used such methods as a deliberate distortion of the information, an employment of fictional elements in reporting news, non-objective and biased approach to selection of facts, an exclusion of the opponent's opinion from the text, using insulting language and negative visual images, including caricatures. At the same time the Soviet Union continued to provide all kinds of support for Arab countries and defended their interests in the United Nations.

### **3. The image of Israel in *Pravda* in 1967-1973.**

There were no caricatures or significant articles dealing with Israel during the first half of 1967. The USA remained the most important target of Soviet caricatures, according to the ideology of the Cold War. Starting on June 6, 1967, when the Middle East conflict turned into a real war, *Pravda* published dozens of texts, both short chronicles and big articles, categorically condemning "Israeli aggression". Arab actions were called "defensive measures"<sup>56</sup>, and the leadership of the USSR and other countries from the socialist bloc declared their support for the

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<sup>54</sup> Pinkus, 1988: 253-254.

<sup>55</sup> Govrin, 1998: 326.

<sup>56</sup> *Pravda*, "Arabs are awake" [Arabskie strany nastorozhe], June 2, 1967.

“fair struggle for national independence” by the Arabs<sup>57</sup>. The coverage of the Six-Day War in *Pravda*, like the coverage of other political conflicts, split the whole world into two hostile groups: the Soviet Union with its anti-colonial politics, pro-communist states and their “Arab friends” on the one side, and Israel together with Western “imperialism” on the other side. Israel, like in 1956, was shown as “the obedient executor of imperialistic criminal plans”<sup>58</sup>. Thus, at the beginning of the Middle East conflict Israel again was perceived as a dependent political actor, which acts in the interests of great Western powers, first of all the USA. However, an alternative portrayal existed: some caricatures in the 1970s described the State of Israel as a relatively independent aggressor, a full member of the anti-Soviet camp. The main goals of Israel and its Western “patrons”, according to *Pravda*, were “to restore foreign colonialism on the Arab East” and “to change ‘regimes’ in progressive Arab countries”<sup>59</sup>. On June 11 the newspaper informed the public about the severance of Soviet diplomatic relations with Israel<sup>60</sup>.

There were nine anti-Israel caricatures in *Pravda* during June 1967. They highlighted America’s and NATO’s role in Israeli aggression. Already in July the monthly quantity of caricatures was sharply reduced (three pictures in July, two in October and none in December). My initial hypothesis about the highest number of caricatures in 1967 was obviously incorrect. Anti-Israeli articles, indeed, appeared in almost every issue of *Pravda*, but caricatures were not given a great significance yet. However, those eighteen caricatures which were published during June-December 1967 were the first attempts of Soviet caricaturists to “visualize” the state of

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<sup>57</sup> *Pravda*, “The declaration of the central committees of the Communist and working parties and governments of Bulgaria, Hungary, GDR, Poland, the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia” [Zayavlenie...], June 10, 1967.

<sup>58</sup> *Pravda*, “The solidarity with Arabs” [Solidarnost’ s arabskimi stranami], June 7, 1967.

<sup>59</sup> *Pravda*, “The declaration of the central committees...” [Zayavlenie], June 10, 1967; “Lessons of aggression” [Uroki agressii], July 12, 1967.

<sup>60</sup> *Pravda*, “Note of the Soviet Government to the Government of Israel” [Nota Sovetskogo pravitel’sstva pravitel’stvy Izrailya], June 11, 1967.



Israel. It was the beginning of a tradition which was actively developing throughout the period examined in this chapter. Already in June 1967 Israel was given a distinctive symbol – the six-pointed star. It became a compulsory part of depicting Israel during the examined period, just like the dollar-sign or abbreviation “US” were compulsory to depict the United States.

In June-August 1967 the Soviet press wrote a lot about alleged “atrocities” of the “Israeli soldiery” on the occupied territories such as violent murders of prisoners of war and Arab civilians, and bombardments of hospitals and ambulances<sup>61</sup>. In July *Pravda* hastened to declare the failure of the Israeli-American military campaign, because “aggressors” were not able to overthrow Arab governments and impose imperialist control over their territories<sup>62</sup>. The newspaper claimed that Israeli troops must be forced to leave Arab lands. The reports from the UN Security Council debates on the Middle East problem became one of the most popular genres in the newspaper during the first year of conflict. The refusal of “Israeli militarists” to accept a cease-fire was highly criticized. Israelis were named not only “aggressors” [*agressory*], but also “invaders” [*zahvatchiki*], “occupants” [*okkypanty*], “robbers” [*razboiniki*], “criminals” [*prestypniki*], “extremists” [*ekstremisty*], “terrorists” [*terroristy*], “barbarians” [*varvary*], “marauders” [*marodery*], “murderers” [*dusheguby*], “militarists” [*militaristy*], “pirates” [*piraty*], “expansionists” [*ekspansionisty*] (“expansionists” was often hyphenated as expan-sionists in order to emphasize the word “Zionists”).

In 1968 it became clear that the conflict was not settled, and the Six-Day War turned into a drawn-out Arab-Israeli confrontation. In January *Pravda* published five caricatures which dealt basically with American military support of Israel. The rest of the year saw only 10 caricatures

<sup>61</sup> *Pravda*, “Stop crimes” [Ostanovit’ prestuplenia], June 16, 1967; “Roistering occupants” [Beschinstva okkupantov], June 19, 1967; “Burnt with napalm” [Obozhzhennye napalmom], July 3, 1967.

<sup>62</sup> *Pravda*, “Lessons of aggression” [Uroki agressii], July 12, 1967.

altogether, but anti-Israeli articles appeared regularly. They explained that Israel was conducting a policy of endless expansion, according to “the idea of a Greater Israel from the Euphrates to the Nile”, and it was getting ready for a new war with the Arabs<sup>63</sup>. With this purpose, according to *Pravda*’s reports, Israel constantly arranged provocations on the cease-fire line in violation of Security Council Resolution 242<sup>64</sup> and tried to postpone the establishment of peace in this region. All this rhetoric was reflected in caricature. In October Israel received fighter-bomber aircrafts *Phantom* from the United States, and this became the main topic of anti-Israeli caricatures till the end of the year. At the end of December 1968 *Pravda* published a big New-Year caricature, which depicted all enemies of the Soviet Union attending “A Masquerade Ball in the house of Mister K” (probably, capitalism?)<sup>65</sup>. A female Israeli “robber of territories”, accompanied by “Zionist capital”, as it was explained in a caption, occupied a place of honor in this gallery of monsters, and it was the first sign that Israel became seen as an independent member of the hostile camp (See Figure 4).

During 1969 the Arab-Israeli conflict gained even more significance in *Pravda*. Each month one to six caricatures depicted the Middle East situation. Editorial articles and reports from foreign correspondents in Arab capitals regularly informed the public that the state of Israel continued its “expansionist policy”, and it would not be easy to achieve peace<sup>66</sup>. Local collisions between Israelis and Arabs were always shown in the newspaper as imprudent “provocations” by Israel. Caricatures mirrored aggressive tendencies of Israel, financial and military support of

<sup>63</sup> *Pravda*, “Captured by the self-deceit” [V pleny u samoobmana], February 2, 1968; “What Israeli governors want” [Kuda tyanut izrail’skie praviteli], October 13, 1968.

<sup>64</sup> This Resolution, often referenced in the Soviet press, was adopted on November 22, 1967 in the aftermath of the Six Day War. It called for the establishment of peace in the Middle East by “withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict”.

<sup>65</sup> *Pravda*, December 31, 1968. This caricature will be referred to in Chapter III.

<sup>66</sup> *Pravda*, “The imperative need for the fair and strong peace in the Middle East” [Spravedlivyi i prochnyi mir na Blizhnem Vostoke – nastoyatel’ naya neobhodimost’], January 25, 1969.

“Israeli hawks” by the American government and Zionist organizations and double-faced Israeli leaders, who talk about their desire to start the peace process, but, in fact, continue the war. In December a wide-scale anti-Zionist campaign started in *Pravda*, which, in fact, used the concepts “Israel” and “Zionism” as synonyms. This campaign, activated by the Party leadership, seemed to be the result of the obvious Israeli control over the Middle East, which was considered as a part of the Soviet sphere of influence. Moreover, despite anti-Israeli propaganda, the Six Day War increased Jewish national consciousness and awareness of Israel’s existence and welfare, and the exodus of the Soviet Jewry started<sup>67</sup>.

The year of 1970 is especially significant because of dozens of lengthy pseudo-scientific articles about the essence of Zionism and the highest quantity of anti-Israeli caricatures. Sixty three caricatures dealing with Israel were published during this year (the highest monthly number of caricatures – ten - was in March). I expected that 1967 or 1973, when Arab-Israeli wars actually occurred, would be the most caricature-rich years. However, the most aggressive denunciation of Israel in *Pravda* began between the two wars. The newspaper frequently reported new “Israeli provocations”, which were “encouraged” by the USA. Headlines like “1,096<sup>th</sup> day of the Six-Day War” were quite common<sup>68</sup>. American interest in the Middle East was shown as not merely political, but also economic: American monopolies had aspirations to control Arab oil fields. Articles about harmful, reactionary and anti-Soviet content of the Zionist ideology appeared every month together with public letters of Soviet Jews, who angrily condemned Israel and Zionism. Comparisons between Zionism and Fascism became popular in anti-Israeli rhetoric. Caricatures often compared Israeli actions with aggressive behavior of other states, first of all

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<sup>67</sup> Many authors referred to the Six-Day War as a turning point in the history of Jewish emigration from the USSR. See, for example, Pinkus, 1988, p.311-312 and Gozman, 1997, p.409.

<sup>68</sup> *Pravda*, “The 1,096<sup>th</sup> day of the Six-Day War” [1096 den’ Shestidnevnoi voyny], June 6, 1970.

with the American colonial war in Vietnam. During this year the Israeli theme in caricatures became almost as popular as the American theme.

The year 1971 offered 20 caricatures. The anti-Zionist campaign, however, did not cease. Moreover, it introduced some new topics such as the western protest against discrimination of the Jews in the Soviet Union. Of course, *Pravda* claimed that the discrimination was invented by Zionist “hunters of souls”<sup>69</sup>, who want to demolish Soviet ideals and to entice naïve Jews to come to Israel<sup>70</sup>. Soviet journalists distorted the main Zionist and traditional Jewish ideas, interpreting, for example, the idea of “choseness” as openly chauvinistic<sup>71</sup>. In December 1971 one of *Pravda*’s headlines declared that “Zionism is a form of chauvinism and racism”<sup>72</sup>. This definition became a basis of the Soviet anti-Zionist campaign in the 1970s which led to the UN Resolution 3379, which equated Zionism with racism. Anti-Zionist articles fulfilled two tasks: they discredited both the political enemy (Israel) and the hostile ideology (Zionism). However, anti-Zionist propaganda was not fully successful among Soviet Jews. During the climax of the anti-Zionist campaign many of them applied for exit permits, demonstrating the mistrust towards official propaganda<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>69</sup> In his book “The Devil and the Jews” J. Trachtenberg described a wide-spread medieval anti-Jewish belief that the Jews are servants of the Devil. In the Christian mythology Devil hunts human souls. Probably, by naming Zionists “hunters of souls” the author of the article, purposely or unconsciously, referred to the traditional antisemitic rhetoric.

<sup>70</sup> *Pravda*, “Anti-Sovietism is a Zionists’ profession” [Antisovetizm – professiya sionistov], February 18-19, 1971; “For whom Zionism catches souls?” [Dlya kogo lovit dushi sionizm?], May 23, 1971.

<sup>71</sup> Such an approach to the religious Jewish ideas can be traced back to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century thinkers, in particular, to the German scholar Johann David Michaelis, who argued that the self-conception of God’s Chosen People completely separates the Jews from other peoples, and “as long as the Jews continue to observe the Mosaic Laws”, they can not be treated as equal human beings. Thus, in this case Soviet journalists again employed traditional anti-Jewish argument.

<sup>72</sup> *Pravda*, “Zionism is a form of chauvinism and racism” [Sionizm – raznovidnost’ shovinizma I rasizma], December 18, 1971.

<sup>73</sup> See Pinkus, 1988, p.259.

Caricatures in *Pravda* also participated in the exposure of Zionists, deriding the Jewish Defense League<sup>74</sup>, the Western media which were discussing antisemitism in the USSR, and Israeli leaders who called upon the Jews of the Diaspora to make *aliyah* to Israel. Anti-Zionist caricatures during the second half of the twentieth century were a part of the political campaign directed against Israel. The Soviet Union as a state struggled against the State of Israel, which was a representative of the hostile imperialistic camp. The ideology of Communism struggled against the ideology of Zionism, which was as a part of the hostile Capitalist ideology. A conflict of ideologies was obligatory for Soviet propaganda: it demonstrated the eternal character of conflict, its absoluteness, which is not the result of the political conjuncture.

The year 1972 did not add much new to the existing understanding of Middle East conflict and the image of Israel as an enemy. The same main motifs – Israeli attempts to sabotage the peace process, its alliance with reactionary regimes and tendency to keep occupied territories – were repeated. The theme of huge military expenses of Israel, which led to downturn in living standards in the country, was emphasized. The motif of Palestinian struggle against Israel was used in articles and caricatures as an indicator of internal disharmony in the country. Israel remained one of the most discussed topics on international affairs pages of *Pravda*. On the average, three anti-Israeli caricatures appeared every month. The annual quantity reached 35 caricatures. But the record of 1970 was never broken.

The year 1973 witnessed the Yom Kippur War. I expected to observe a new increase in the number of anti-Israeli caricatures, but I actually discovered a decrease – on average of 2 caricatures per month and 24 during the whole year. But not only the quantity was significant.

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<sup>74</sup> The Jewish Defense League (JDL) is an American militant Jewish organization whose goal is to protect Jewish people and property from antisemitism. During the early seventies the League campaigned to allow the emigration of the Jews from the USSR.

The caricatures changed. They became small, dim, less expressive, and the variety of themes was obviously reduced. Even the new war in October failed to “reanimate” them. The history of this period explains this phenomenon. It was the beginning of the *détente* in the Cold war. In other words, both American and Soviet governments took steps towards relaxation in tensions<sup>75</sup>. Indeed, the image of the ugly American Uncle Sam almost completely disappeared from *Pravda* in 1973. The American theme, which was central to anti-Israeli caricatures in previous years, also disappeared, and it influenced the content of caricatures. The main intrigue was removed, and caricaturists had less variety of motifs to be depicted. This does not mean that Israel was left “alone”. The countries of Western Europe, NATO, reactionary African and Asian regimes, Zionists and large monopolists were still shown as Israeli “partners in aggression”. At the end of the year caricatures depicted mostly the oil crisis in capitalist countries, which was a result of the Arab refusal to ship petroleum to nations that had supported Israel (i.e., to the United States and its allies in Western Europe).

#### **4. Main themes and motifs in anti-Israeli caricature in *Pravda*.**

After the short content-analysis of *Pravda*’s publications with special emphasis on the quantity of caricatures I can turn to the substantial side of anti-Israeli images. I found several main motifs of anti-Israeli caricatures in *Pravda*. Altogether those motifs, repeated many times, became the basis for the creation of the image of Israel in Soviet caricature.

***American support for Israeli aggression.*** This motif was one of the most important and definitely the most frequently used in Soviet caricatures. The recognizable figure of Uncle Sam

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<sup>75</sup> The new era in American-Soviet relations begun already in May, 1972, when President Nixon visited Moscow and signed two agreements, one regarding space exploration and a second on cooperation in science and technology. After Moscow Summit American and Soviet leaders exchanged several visits and agreed on future improvement of peace coexistence. See Hill, 1993, pp. 195-220.

(or, as an alternative, images of American monopolists/capitalists or predatory military generals of the US army) “accompanied” Israel in most of its actions, rendering multilateral political, diplomatic, military and financial support. Thus, caricatures in *Pravda* were directed both against Israel and the USA, and this fact indicates that the persecution of Israel in Soviet press was one of consequences of the Cold War. Caricaturists tended to depict American “support” in a literary sense: in one picture an American general stands behind an Israeli soldier and passes him bombers for attacking Arab lands<sup>76</sup> (See Figure 5); in another caricature an American colonizer hammers into the soil of the Sinai desert a striped boundary post of Israel - a symbol of territorial captures in the Soviet caricature<sup>77</sup>; one more picture has shown American capitalist holding a step-ladder for an Israeli soldier in order to help him to destroy a boundary post “Arab territories”<sup>78</sup>. Very often Israeli “aggressors” were shown shooting Arabs from comfortable positions on an American officer's peaked cap, or from the belt of a fat “Imperialist”<sup>79</sup>. The majority of caricatures depict a figure of the Israeli smaller than a figure of the American – sometimes significantly smaller – to underline the real balance of powers. At least two caricatures depict Israel as a little boy, a spoilt child of Uncle Sam, who receives military toys from his loving father<sup>80</sup>. This motif also shows the formal subordination in Israeli-American relation.

*American military support of Israel* was extremely disturbing for the Soviet Union, because it gave Israelis a real opportunity to win the conflict, despite Soviet shipments of weapons to Arab countries. The theme of weapons in general was present in all caricatures – it was almost impossible to find the depiction of an Israeli man without a weapon. It was a part of the tradition – to show Israeli militarism and brutality through pistols, bombs, machine guns,

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<sup>76</sup> *Pravda*, December 18, 1969.

<sup>77</sup> *Pravda*, June 15, 1967.

<sup>78</sup> *Pravda*, November, 16, 1972.

<sup>79</sup> *Pravda*, March 8, 1972; March 29, 1970; July 23, 1971.

<sup>80</sup> *Pravda*, June 13, 1970; July 31, 1970.

rockets, mostly “Made in the USA”. The typical caricature “Transatlantic merchant” depicted Uncle Sam walking along the cease-fire line with an ice cream-like carriage full of strategic bombers and giving his weapons to Israelis, who are happy to use them against Arabs<sup>81</sup>. Another allegoric picture showed an Israeli soldier (as usual, he wears a helmet with the Star of David on it), who kindles a big fire, symbolizing the Middle East conflict, and the American helps his partner to fuel the fire by bringing weapons - “fuel from Washington”, as the caption explains<sup>82</sup>.

The motif of the American military help was embodied in a number of very similar caricatures, depicting bulky boxes and bags filled with weapons, which were sent to Israel through the mail, sold in the special military shop “Aggressive goods”, given as a New Year’s gift from American Santa, or delivered directly to an entrenchment. A less common way to depict the same thing was to show the American capitalist as a sidekick, who carries arms instead of a little Israeli<sup>83</sup>, or as an admirer of an Israeli mistress, who presents her a fresh bouquet of arms<sup>84</sup>. American shippings of the *Phantom* fighter-bomber aircrafts to Israel were given a special significance in caricatures. Already in 1967 Soviet caricaturists allegorically depicted *Phantoms* as predatory hawks (See Figure 6). Later the Israeli Air Forces became also called “Israeli hawks”. In one caricature such a hawk symbolically pecked a pigeon of peace<sup>85</sup>. Another picture showed a little pet-shop where a hook-nosed Jew, “a fan of imported birds”, buys parrot-like *Phantoms* in a cage from an American dealer<sup>86</sup> (See Figure 7). Since 1967 *Pravda* used caricatures for harsh criticism of the US diplomats, who were talking about the necessity to

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<sup>81</sup> *Pravda*, October 11, 1969.

<sup>82</sup> *Pravda*, January 8, 1972.

<sup>83</sup> *Pravda*, January 22, 1972.

<sup>84</sup> *Pravda*, September 21, 1970.

<sup>85</sup> *Pravda*, September 10, 1969.

<sup>86</sup> *Pravda*, January 23, 1968.



establish peace in the Middle East while their colleagues were selling *Phantoms*, a symbol of aggression, to Israel. I will discuss this in detail below.

*American financial support of Israel*, in the way it was embodied in Soviet caricature, explained why “young” and tiny country was not immediately defeated by the Arab coalition. Through caricatures *Pravda* tried to show that Israel was helpless without American money. Caricaturists usually depicted how dollar coins magically turn to bombs or to machine gun cartridges<sup>87</sup> (See Figure 9). The motif of alms could be seen quite frequently: one picture derided military commander Moshe Dayan who, just like a beggar, asks generous America for money “for food and for bomb shells”<sup>88</sup>; another caricature depicted greedy Israelis, who are dancing around Uncle Sam and trying to catch his coins with their helmets<sup>89</sup>; in another interesting drawing an American greets his Israeli friend in an airport by extending his hand for a handshake, and the Israeli man also extends his hand, but with the palm upward, which means a request for money<sup>90</sup>. According to Soviet caricatures, Israeli “occupants” were receiving significant donations not only from the US government, but also from banker Zionists all over the world, and they used this money to continue their “expansionist program”<sup>91</sup>. Jewish greed for money was a popular motif of antisemitic drawings in the ninetieth and early twentieth centuries. This motif was inherited by Soviet caricature.

The sub-theme of *Arab oil industry* is closely connected to the American alliance with Israel. Many caricatures tell a story about two “robber brothers” in the captured Arab territories: the Israeli usually carries weapons while the American monopolist carries oil derricks and tanks

<sup>87</sup> *Pravda*, August 10, 1969; August 3, 1971.

<sup>88</sup> *Pravda*, November 23, 1972.

<sup>89</sup> *Pravda*, April 24, 1971.

<sup>90</sup> *Pravda*, September 2, 1971.

<sup>91</sup> *Pravda*, July 15, 1969; May 30, 1970.

with Arab oil<sup>92</sup>. During the autumn of 1973 caricatures depicted the oil crisis. Caricaturists laughed at imperialists, who are not receiving Arab oil anymore because of their pro-Israeli position<sup>93</sup>.

I want to underline that “aggressive actions” of the State of Israel in the Middle East were often compared in caricatures to the *similar aggressive behavior of American troops* in Vietnam. A typical caricature depicted an American soldier with bloody hands after the attack on the village of Songmi and a bloody-handed Israeli soldier after the bombing of a factory in Abu Zaabal –two figures resemble each other as twins, maybe, except the fact the Israeli nose is longer<sup>94</sup> (see Figure 8). Military generals from Pentagon were called “teachers”, who help Israelis to study and apply the “burnt ground tactics”<sup>95</sup>. The similarity of American and Israeli goals and methods was emphasized in order to explain to the public that the Jewish state must be perceived as a hostile imperialist power.

It is significant that the support of Israel by the USA was sometimes presented in caricatures through religious, mostly Christian, symbols. One caricature depicted Cardinal Spellman<sup>96</sup>, the Archbishop of New York, acting not as a God’s servant but as a Pentagon agent, giving an Israeli aggressor an indulgence, which forgives the sins of Israel “in the past and for another hundred years”<sup>97</sup>. Another picture introduced the image of the American angel, the divine envoy, who encourages an Israeli soldier to destroy and to kill<sup>98</sup>. One more caricature depicted an American ally as an angel: a winged banker sends a golden rain, a godsend to Israel<sup>99</sup> (See Figure

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<sup>92</sup> *Pravda*, March 8, 1970; May 14, 1970; May 18, 1971.

<sup>93</sup> *Pravda*, November 23, 1973; December 14, 1973.

<sup>94</sup> *Pravda*, March 10, 1970.

<sup>95</sup> *Pravda*, February 4, 1970.

<sup>96</sup> Soviet press criticized Cardinal Spellman for being a representative of both Catholic Church and US military power and, especially, for his approval of the Vietnam War and Israeli actions in the Middle East.

<sup>97</sup> *Pravda*, June 18, 1967.

<sup>98</sup> *Pravda*, May 4, 1970.

<sup>99</sup> *Pravda*, February 28, 1973.

10). Religious motifs were used with the purpose of denunciation of the enemy. It is widely known that the USSR made the elimination of religion one of the ideological objectives. The regime ridiculed all forms of religion, harassed believers, and propagated atheism in the schools. Depicting Israelis as religious people, caricaturists underlined, first, the incompatibility of their beliefs with Soviets ideals, and second, the immorality of people who perform criminal actions against Arabs and at the same time pretend to be obey religious moral laws.

*The support of Israel by other countries* was also a popular motif in Soviet caricature. America was the best Israeli “partner in aggression”, but not the only one. Great Britain was criticized for financial help and, especially, for selling submarines to Israel<sup>100</sup>. “Revanchists” from West Germany were depicted in caricatures as having purposes, which are similar to Israeli territorial ambitions: FRG, through Soviet eyes, aspired to get back territories, which were occupied by Germany in 1937<sup>101</sup>. South African Republic and Israel were shown as allies because they exchanged weapons and because both had “racist regimes”<sup>102</sup>. Reactionary leaders of Saigon supported Middle East aggressors and even established diplomatic relations with Israel<sup>103</sup>. NATO as a union of capitalist countries was also shown as pro-Israeli organization<sup>104</sup>. Thus, most of the caricatures were two-edged – they attacked Israel and other anti-Soviet states together with their “harmful ideologies”.

*Illegal military occupation of Arab territories* remained one of the most popular motifs in Soviet anti-Israeli caricature. A striped boundary post or road guide sign “Israel” with arrows pointing in opposite directions became symbols of Israeli “expansionism”. The first sub-theme was exposing *Israeli plans for the forced alteration of the Middle East map*. The typical

<sup>100</sup> *Pravda*, April 7, 1970; March 23, 1972; May 15, 1972.

<sup>101</sup> *Pravda*, July 4, 1967; November 18, 1967; November 6, 1968.

<sup>102</sup> *Pravda*, May 30, 1972; September 29, 1972; August 11, 1973.

<sup>103</sup> *Pravda*, December 11, 1972; January 3, 1973.

<sup>104</sup> *Pravda*, June 17, 1967; June 1, 1973.

caricature was depicting Israeli “tailors” with scissors, who cut off the best pieces of the Middle East in order to attach it to their state<sup>105</sup>, or an Israeli soldier lying down on the regional map in order to show how much land he is going to capture<sup>106</sup>. The most primitive plots were showing the Israeli army building boundary posts on Arab lands and enjoying full American approval of their actions. There were more unique attempts to “visualize” the conflict. For example, one caricature has shown the Israeli, who sawed a Muslim half-moon on the top of the mosque with a handsaw, and attached two halves crosswise – to make the Star of David<sup>107</sup> (See Figure 12). The second sub-theme was *Israeli attempts to keep control over captured territories*. Many drawings represented newly built militarized Israeli settlements on the Arab lands, where a tank is hiding behind the house or house itself looks like a fortification<sup>108</sup>. One caricature depicted soldiers involved in digging entrenchments near the Suez Canal and calling these war preparations “agricultural work”<sup>109</sup>.

The third sub-theme - the idea of building a “*Greater Israel*” from *Euphrates to Nile* is the most significant, because it employs traditional antisemitic myth about Jewish aspiration to world supremacy. This myth was popular in Tsarist Russia due to “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion”, the famous literary forgery, which was the beginning of contemporary conspiracy theory literature. In the USSR this motif, which can be observed in many caricatures, was connected, first of all, with the activity of the influential international Jewish and Zionist organizations. In some pictures the idea about a “Greater Israel” was shown as ominous, but the majority of caricatures were making fun of it, showing, for example a tiny Israeli sportsman who tries to lift up a huge bar “Greater Israel”, but it is too heavy for him, and he has to ask America and FRG for

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<sup>105</sup> *Pravda*, June 24, 1967.

<sup>106</sup> *Pravda*, September 15, 1972.

<sup>107</sup> *Pravda*, October 21, 1971.

<sup>108</sup> *Pravda*, September 10, 1967; March 3, 1973.

<sup>109</sup> *Pravda*, October 12, 1970.

help<sup>110</sup>. One caricature attributed this “crazy idea” to Golda Meir: Israeli Prime Minister with emphasized Semitic features (such as a prominent, arched nose, large mouth and black hair) was shown placing the map of the Greater Israel (with the Sinai Peninsula) on the wall while her colleagues are printing more maps for distribution<sup>111</sup> (See Figure 11). What we can see on those caricatures it was not the real conspiracy theory, but it was an attempt to employ the myth with political purposes.

Some other caricatures dealing with the occupation of Arab lands remind us about traditional religious anti-Jewish accusations. One drawing represented armed Israeli soldiers deporting Arabs from Jerusalem to Golgotha<sup>112</sup>. It is symbolic that the Jews who are still accused of killing Christ were shown in Soviet caricature as people who take their contemporary enemies to the place of crucifixion. Another picture was titled “The new Messiah of Israeli soldiery”: an Israeli officer in a uniform and with a smoking gun is holding “the holy book” called “Annexation”<sup>113</sup>. This drawing again demonstrates the immorality of the enemy who is guided by the “religion of aggressiveness”.

*The aggressive politics of Israel* was present in the majority of Soviet caricatures, but in some of them it became the main focus. As a rule, Israelis were depicted as extremely violent, almost insane, people, whose actions are dictated by a blind hatred of Arabs and the whole progressive world. *Aggressive “blindness”* was shown through atom bombs, planes or gun barrels on their eyes<sup>114</sup>. The Israeli brutality was presented in caricatures through cynical attacks against civilian objects. One drawing showed an Israeli pilot on a US *Phantom* bombing an

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<sup>110</sup> *Pravda*, July 1, 1969.

<sup>111</sup> *Pravda*, March 28, 1971.

<sup>112</sup> *Pravda*, January 4, 1971.

<sup>113</sup> *Pravda*, October 1, 1967.

<sup>114</sup> *Pravda*, October 20, 1970; April 17, 1973; October 18, 1973.

Egyptian school<sup>115</sup>; another one titled “Robber’s watch” depicted Israeli crimes (bombing of an Egyptian school, a Syrian village, a Palestinian refugee camp), which are chronologically placed on the clock dial<sup>116</sup>. However, the motif of madness coexisted with *the motif of a rational cruelty*. For example, one caricature depicted the meeting of Israeli military generals, who are looking at the “schedule of provocations” placed on the wall and deciding which Arab state must be attacked today<sup>117</sup> (See Figure 13).

After 1969 Soviet caricature quite often represented *Israel’s huge military budget*. The indicative caricature titled “The insatiable belly of Israeli militarism” showed a big horse representing military spending and a tiny hen representing the social sphere, who share the same feeding trough – the Israeli budget<sup>118</sup>. To show a suffering worker who has financial problems because of the unproportionally high military expenses of the government was another way to criticize Israeli militarism in caricature<sup>119</sup>. The militarization of the State of Israel, which was disturbing for the USSR, was represented, in particular, through the scene in an Israeli school, where children sit in tanks instead of desks and study military plans instead of a regular curriculum. The caption informed readers that military training is claiming a quarter of all school hours in Israel<sup>120</sup>.

Another sub-theme which seems to be important is *the depiction of Israelis as criminals*, mostly as thieves, robbers and pirates. The motif of piracy was, presumably, derived from the specific appearance of Israeli politician Moshe Dayan, who was represented in Soviet caricature as the one-eyed captain of pirates. Israeli “pirates of modernity” were equipped with traditional

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<sup>115</sup> *Pravda*, April 11, 1970.

<sup>116</sup> *Pravda*, February 24, 1973.

<sup>117</sup> *Pravda*, December 13, 1972.

<sup>118</sup> *Pravda*, July 11, 1972.

<sup>119</sup> *Pravda*, December 6, 1972; June 7, 1973; July 16, 1973; November 28, 1973.

<sup>120</sup> *Pravda*, July 21, 1973.

attributes of piracy (striped vest, one earring, a dagger on the waist belt and a black flag with a skull and crossed bones), and with very modern weapons – planes, bombs, military cruisers<sup>121</sup>. Once Moshe Dayan was depicted in a female crinoline, which “helps a thief from Tel-Aviv to hide captured territories”<sup>122</sup> (See Figure 4). Another caricature portrayed Israel as a poacher who is going to cut down the green cedar of Lebanon<sup>123</sup>. The depiction of Israel as a state with aggressive and even criminal behavior was a way to justify Soviet policy towards the Jewish state.

*The problem of peace in the Middle East* was another popular motif in Soviet anti-Israel caricatures. The message of all drawings of this kind was the same: the peace settlement of the conflict is unprofitable for Israeli aggressors, who do not want to return Arab territories. Caricatures tended to demonstrate Israeli (and, in many cases, American) duplicity and insincerity in peace negotiations, the huge difference between their words and deeds. A mask which hides the real face of aggressor became a symbol of the Israeli position. Caricatures depicted, for example, an armed Israeli soldier, who chooses the mask of an angel for a carnival<sup>124</sup>; an Israeli politician wearing the laurel wreath, a symbol of peace<sup>125</sup>, but having a machine gun ready<sup>126</sup>; or a tank masked as the pigeon of peace<sup>127</sup>. Israeli refusals to follow UN declarations were criticized through caricatures quite often. One caricature showed Israeli army which obediently stops fire on the cease-fire line, but opens it again when the line is left behind<sup>128</sup>. Most of the caricatures convinced the public that Israelis can not be trusted when they are talking about peace. One of the pictures showed an artfully grinning diplomat from Tel-Aviv with the

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<sup>121</sup> *Pravda*, March 30, 1969; August 25, 1971.

<sup>122</sup> *Pravda*, December 31, 1968.

<sup>123</sup> *Pravda*, March 2, 1972.

<sup>124</sup> *Pravda*, December 22, 1969.

<sup>125</sup> A laurel wreath is widely known as a symbol of victory. In Soviet caricatures it was more often used as a symbol of peace.

<sup>126</sup> *Pravda*, November 17, 1970.

<sup>127</sup> *Pravda*, July 12, 1970.

<sup>128</sup> *Pravda*, June 11, 1969.

gun directed to the chair “for the Arab side”<sup>129</sup> (See Figure 15). There was no clear continuity of antisemitic traditions in caricature, but anti-Jewish drawings from nineteenth century Europe or from the Nazi press were also depicting an artful Jew who always conducts dishonest games.

*American involvement in the sabotage of the peace process* was also very important. Usually caricatures were blaming the USA for their claims in the UN about the necessity of peace and for weapon trade with Israel at the same time. One caricature depicted Americans who demonstratively refused to sell planes to Israeli delegation, but were selling it secretly, under the table<sup>130</sup>. Another picture was making fun of Uncle Sam, who tried to show his non-participation in Middle East wars, but an Israeli soldier takes bombs from the pocket of this “peacemaker”<sup>131</sup>. *Pravda* informed the Soviet audience that “Washington and London declared the balanced policy on Middle East”, and caricaturist had shown the scales with two equally heavy bowls, but the bowl for Israel has a tank on it while the bowl for Arabs has tons of papers - “peace promises”<sup>132</sup>. In general, “war and peace” caricatures were very pessimistic: they were showing that militarist politics of Israel would not change and would not bring peace to the region. As all other forms of Soviet propaganda, caricatures offered a one-sided view of events: according to *Pravda*, all Arabs wanted peace, but all Israelis wished to continue the war.

*Zionism and its reactionary essence* was another popular theme of Soviet caricature, because *Pravda* depicted Zionist capital as a very important source of financial support for Israeli aggression. Zionism and Israel were even represented through the same symbol – the Star of David. As was noted earlier, Zionism was perceived as an anti-Soviet ideology. This view could be seen in caricatures quite often, especially in 1970-1972. An interesting caricature depicted

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<sup>129</sup> *Pravda*, May 17, 1969.

<sup>130</sup> *Pravda*, June 24, 1970.

<sup>131</sup> *Pravda*, April 14, 1970.

<sup>132</sup> *Pravda*, January 19, 1970.



Jewish alchemists (one of them wearing a *yarmulka*, a traditional skull-cap), who are preparing a poisonous “witch's potion, which is called the ideology of Zionism”. The ingredients of this potion are “anti-Communism”, “anti-Sovietism”, even “antisemitism”, which is illogically, different poisons and, of course, a lot of dollars<sup>133</sup>. This caricature could be used as a visual aid for those who tried to understand what Zionism was about. Another drawing depicted the World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem as a purely anti-Soviet meeting<sup>134</sup>, which again remind us about the conspiracy theory. The same idea was emphasized in the caricature depicting Brussels Conference in support of Soviet Jewry: a Zionist wearing at the same time a *talit* (Jewish prayer shawl) and a typical “capitalist” hat spins laces of “anti-Soviet provocations”<sup>135</sup> (See Figure 16). Zionist’s big mouth, thick lips, prominent nose and sarcastic smile help to identify him as a Jew. Laces which he spins remind us of the spider’s net, and this image brings us back to the Jewish conspiracy theory: Zionist make his “anti-Soviet” net in order to achieve more influence in the world politics. It was not hard to guess that *Pravda* called the claims that state-encouraged antisemitism does exist in the USSR “anti-Soviet”. The existence of the Jewish problem in the Soviet Union was denied by Communist ideologists from the 1930s. One caricature called the Jewish question in the USSR “a soap bubble of Zionist”, which means “a fake problem, fiction”<sup>136</sup>.

As already mentioned, the theme of financial support of Israel included significant Zionist donations, and it was also embodied in caricature. I will not discuss it in detail, because those pictures were transmitting an already familiar message: those who support Israel actually help to kill (See Figure 14). I want to mention *the concept of Zionism as racist ideology*. This sub-theme

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<sup>133</sup> *Pravda*, January 16, 1972.

<sup>134</sup> *Pravda*, January 18, 1972.

<sup>135</sup> *Pravda*, February 25, 1971.

<sup>136</sup> *Pravda*, February 23, 1971.

was also visualized. A typical caricature has shown a racist and a Zionist both wearing white robes and hoods á-la Ku Klux Klan and showing very similar political programs<sup>137</sup> (See Figure 17). What distinguishes them are the eyeholes of Zionists' hood shaped as Stars of David. It is also significant that a Zionist is shorter than his "colleague": anti-Semitic drawings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries traditionally portrayed Jews as a short race.

## 5. Main methods of depicting Israel in caricature.

Until this moment I was discussing mostly *what* was represented in anti-Israel caricature in the period between 1967 and 1973. Now I want to focus on *how* the image of Israel was created. In other words, which characteristics could be used to describe the allegoric portrayal of Israel in Soviet caricature? There were no obligatory standards of the image. Every caricaturist had his unique way of drawing a figure which symbolized Israel. For example, in anti-American caricatures a skinny long-nosed Uncle Sam and a fat bald monopolist were representing the same country. In the case of Israel, military officers, anonymous politicians and Zionist capitalists were small and fat, almost round-shaped, while Israeli soldiers and the occasional worker were skinny. Some caricaturists depicted Israelis through traditional Semitic features, which were present in the European anti-Jewish caricatures of the nineteenth century and in Nazi propaganda press - arched and hooked noses, large mouths and ears, puffy lips, black curled hair, small chin, short legs, big belly. In some caricatures all these features were present, in other drawings only one or two specifically Jewish features could be observed. Usually a prominent nose was a sign of being Jewish, just like in earlier antisemitic caricatures<sup>138</sup>. However, the significant number of Soviet

<sup>137</sup> *Pravda*, July 5, 1970.

<sup>138</sup> As Joseph Jacobs, a literary and Jewish historian, noticed, "The nose does contribute much toward producing the Jewish expression". Cited by Gilman, 1991: 180.

caricatures depicted Israelis without any “Jewish” distinguishing features. Israelis in caricatures, indeed, had disproportionate bodies and unattractive faces, but they were often depicted like Americans or other Westerners. It is very important, because it helps to understand the image of Israel in the Soviet propaganda. Explicitly antisemitic images could not be published in the USSR. At the same time the anti-Western propaganda was always allowed. Israel was perceived as a pro-Western state and it was depicted accordingly. “Jewishness” of Israel was only the second important factor. The first factor, which determined attitude, was its Western orientation. Some antisemitic motifs in Soviet caricatures were a method of depicting Israel as unattractive as possible.

As noted above, almost all Israeli figures were shown carrying weapons. Many of them were significantly smaller in comparison with American, German, South African and other caricature figures. Sometimes Soviet caricaturists drew real people, actors of Israeli politics. In these cases they tried to achieve similarity to the prototypes. The images of the elderly Golda Meir and one-eyed Moshe Dayan were the most popular throughout the examined period. The Star of David was widely used as a distinctive Israeli symbol. It was placed on Israeli tanks and planes, helmets and bags, houses and cars.

I am going to examine two aspects of the image of Israel in greater detail: *the allegoric portrayal of Israel as an animal* and *gender aspects of the image*. The depiction of a real person or a country as an animal with some human features (or as a human being with animal features) is a traditional method of categorization and ironic evaluation, which caricaturists used for centuries. It is called zoomorphism. Each animal is associated in mass consciousness with specific qualities or behavior. For example, a snake is an old symbol of evil and insidiousness; a sheep is a symbol of humility in many cultures; a wolf usually represents aggressiveness, greed and cruelty, etc.

However, in caricatures animal images do not necessarily bear all traditional features. For example, the British Lion in the Soviet press was not depicted as a symbol of power, courage and greatness. On the contrary, it was usually humiliated and made the subject of constant sneers. The state of Israel was not given a permanent animal symbol in Soviet caricature. However, the identification of Israelis with hawks could be observed regularly<sup>139</sup>. Hawks are a versatile predatory, and the comparison with hawk was definitely negative. Hawk symbolized Israeli aggressiveness, and it was also a reference to the wide use of military aviation by Israel. Moreover, the hawk was also presented as a contrast to the dove, an international peace symbol. A predatory bird which usually attacks its victim from the air was an excellent allegoric representation of the Israeli politics, as it was viewed in the Kremlin.

There were other attempts to show Israel as an animal. Some of those animals were not associated with aggressiveness. For example, one caricature depicted Israel as a nestling of a big bird (America), who receives more “military food” than others<sup>140</sup>. This image probably appeared to show the dependent position of Israel. One more picture depicted Israel as a frog, which is flying over Arab cities supported by two predatory birds – the USA and West Germany<sup>141</sup>. In this case the aggressive essence of Israeli patrons was underlined, because a frog can not fly itself. But those pictures can be called exceptions to the rules. As a rule, Israel was portrayed as an archetypical aggressive creature, for example, a wolf, which gnaws a bone and can not pretend to look innocent<sup>142</sup>, or a sly fox – a negative hero of Russian folklore<sup>143</sup>, or a giant octopus stretching its arms to the foreign lands<sup>144</sup>. The allegoric image of a Jewish octopus was not

<sup>139</sup> *Pravda*, December 2, 1968; April 4, 1970.

<sup>140</sup> *Pravda*, July 14, 1971.

<sup>141</sup> *Pravda*, March 13, 1970.

<sup>142</sup> *Pravda*, June 26, 1967.

<sup>143</sup> *Pravda*, June 17, 1973.

<sup>144</sup> *Pravda*, June 13, 1967.

invented in the USSR: the history of this traditional image goes back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. For example, Nazi cartoonists drew an octopus with a Star of David whose tentacles covered the globe<sup>145</sup>. Soviet anti-Zionist propaganda used another traditional dehumanizing image - the image of a spider. It did not appear in *Pravda*, but it could be seen in other newspapers and on covers of anti-Zionist books<sup>146</sup>. I also noted that sometimes Israel was depicted as a human being, but one who almost lost his human appearance. In other words, caricatures were depicting Israeli soldier with sharp canine teeth for biting the opponent<sup>147</sup> (See Figure 18), or with unnaturally long hands with sharp claws, similar to animal paws<sup>148</sup>. All those methods were used for dehumanizing the image of Israel and making it as unattractive as possible.

One more method of stereotypical portrayal of the state of Israel was a gendered one. As I said above, Israel was usually shown as a male figure. Its masculinity, brutality and male aspirations of domination were emphasized. However, the alternative image of Israel – the female image – appeared in 1970. Probably caricaturists were looking for new scenarios for caricatures, for new original ideas for transmitting the old message. Before 1970 there were only a few attempts to present a woman – and this woman was usually Golda Meir. In 1970 the caricaturist A. Bazhenov introduced a totally new image – a militarized, always armed fat Israeli female soldier, who bears some male features, but behaves as a woman. We can assume that the fact that military service is compulsory for Israeli women was the basis for such a representation. But I believe that it was, first of all, a fresh way to present American-Israeli relations. The majority of “gendered” caricatures depicted Uncle Sam being in love with an Israeli woman. It was the

<sup>145</sup> See Joël and Dan Koteck, 2003: 158.

<sup>146</sup> The most often referred “Zionist spider”, making its web from slander, lies, provocations, and anti-Sovietism, appeared in the newspaper *Soviet Moldavia*, August 27, 1971. See also Gitelman, 1988: 271.

<sup>147</sup> *Pravda*, October 16, 1973.

<sup>148</sup> *Pravda*, January 14, 1970.

original (and understandable for “politically illiterate” audience) way to explain American kindness and generosity towards Israel. One picture represented an armed Israeli woman with curly “Jewish” hair, in a military helmet, who asks her American admirer to buy her one more “present” – a *Phantom* – displayed in the show-window of ladies' boutique<sup>149</sup> (See Figure 19). On another picture Uncle Sam brings his lady a “military bouquet” made of rockets instead of roses<sup>150</sup>. As a wealthy cavalier, the American willingly provides his mistress with money<sup>151</sup>. However, he does not like to demonstrate his feelings: according to another picture, when the international community is watching them, he pretends that he does not love Israel<sup>152</sup>. Wide support of Israel from the Western world was even explained through some sexual connotations (to the extent which was acceptable for the chaste Soviet newspaper). A few times an Israeli woman was depicted not as an overweighted, armed “aunt”, but as an attractive young lady. Once she was even depicted as a cabaret dancer in a décolleté and black stockings, who entertains “Western monopolists”<sup>153</sup> (See Figure 20). This depiction of Israel resembles a traditional stereotypical image of the Beautiful Jewess with dark hair and black eyes, which was popular in European, especially 19<sup>th</sup> century German-language literature. In his article on Jewish female sexuality, Sander Gilman wrote about the traditional coexistence of two related images of a modern Jewish woman – the *belle juive* and the *femme fatale*<sup>154</sup>. Both images appeared in the discussed caricature, but the second one - the Jewess as a destructive seductress, almost prostitute, who is dangerous for non-Jewish males – was especially important. It is obvious from the caricature that an Israeli *belle* is seducing old rich bankers in order to receive their financial

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<sup>149</sup> *Pravda*, December 3, 1971.

<sup>150</sup> *Pravda*, September 21, 1970.

<sup>151</sup> *Pravda*, April 18, 1970; December 10, 1970.

<sup>152</sup> *Pravda*, January 26, 1970.

<sup>153</sup> *Pravda*, June 24, 1972.

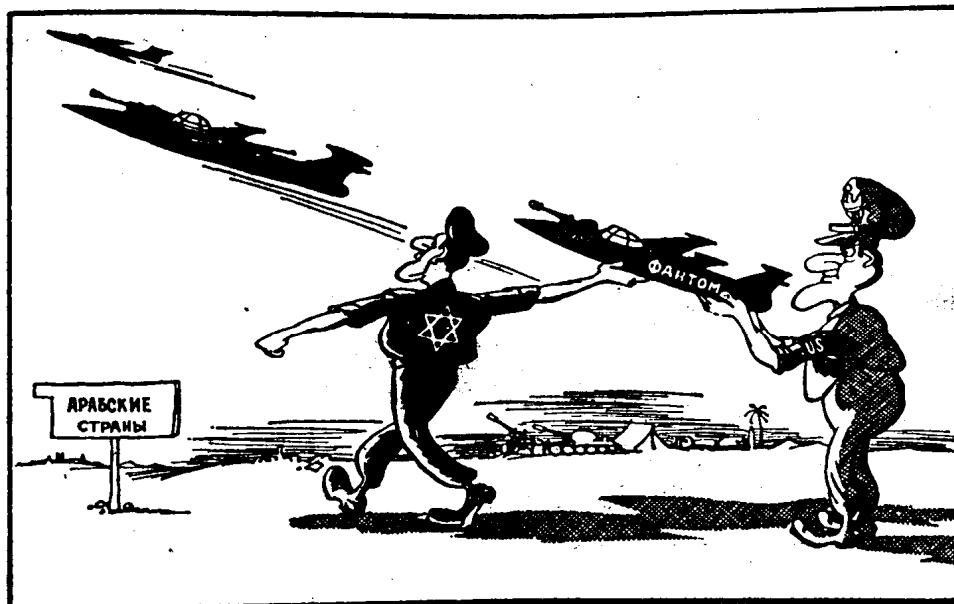
<sup>154</sup> Gilman, 1993: 198, 202, 204.

support. The emergence of the gendered image of Israel in Soviet caricature proves that the tradition of depicting the Jewish state was actively developing in the period between 1967 and 1973.

Summarizing this chapter, I want to underline that in the following years (after 1973) the interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict in *Pravda* did not cease. Even the decline in the quantity of anti-Israeli caricatures was not very significant. However, the years which were examined in this chapter were decisive for the emergence of the image of Israel as an enemy, both in verbal form (articles) and in visual form (caricatures). The tradition of depicting Israel was created, developed and fixed. The main motifs and methods of anti-Israeli caricature remained unchanged from 1973 till the beginning of *Perestroika*, when political relations with Israel were finally improved.

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Израильские провокации с благословения Вашингтона.

Рис. В. Волкова.

Figure 5. Washington has blessed Israeli provocations.  
December 18, 1969. "Arab countries" is written on the road sign.



Заокеанское «Бюро добрых услуг».

Рис. А. Баженова.

Figure 6. A transatlantic voluntarily service bureau. January 5, 1970.



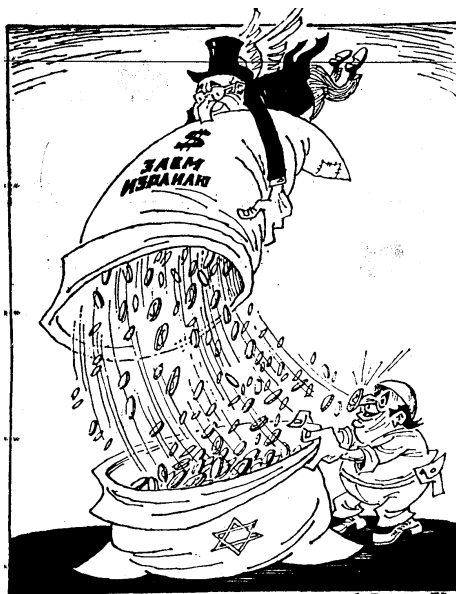
Figure 7. A fan of imported birds. January 23, 1968.  
"Phantom" is written on each bird.



Figure 8. A mirror similarity. March 10, 1970. Blood from American hands - "Songmi", from Israeli hands - Abu Zaabal.



Figure 9. Dollar cartridges. August 3, 1971.



МАННА НЕБЕСНАЯ...

Рис. М. Абрамова.

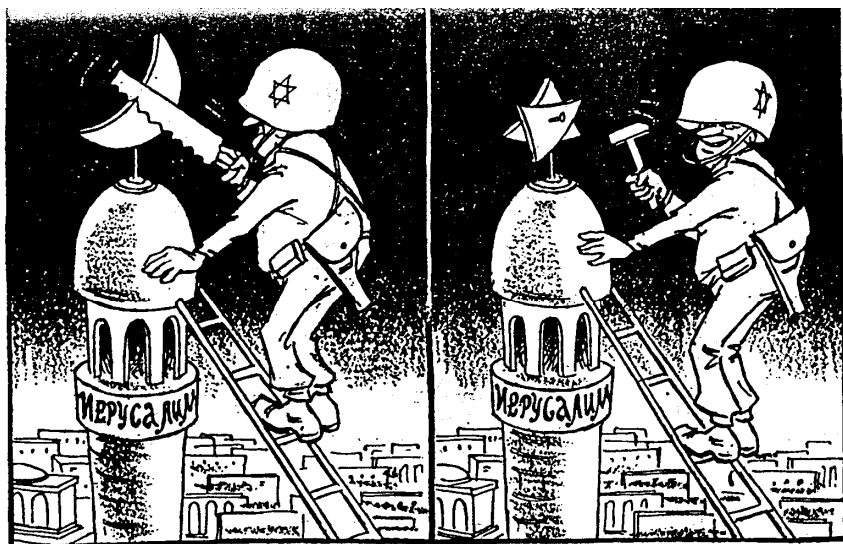
Figure 10. A godsend. February 28, 1973.  
"A credit for Israel" is written on the money



Карта Голды Меир.

Рис. В. Фомичев

Figure 11. Golda Meir's map. March 28, 1971.  
"Greater Israel", including "Sinai", is on the map.



«ЛОВКОСТЬ РУК» АГРЕССОРА.

Рис. Д. Агаева.

Figure 12. Aggressor's sleight of hands. October 21, 1971.  
"Jerusalem" is written on the mosque's tower.



— Кто у нас на очереди сегодня! Рис. Д. Агаева.

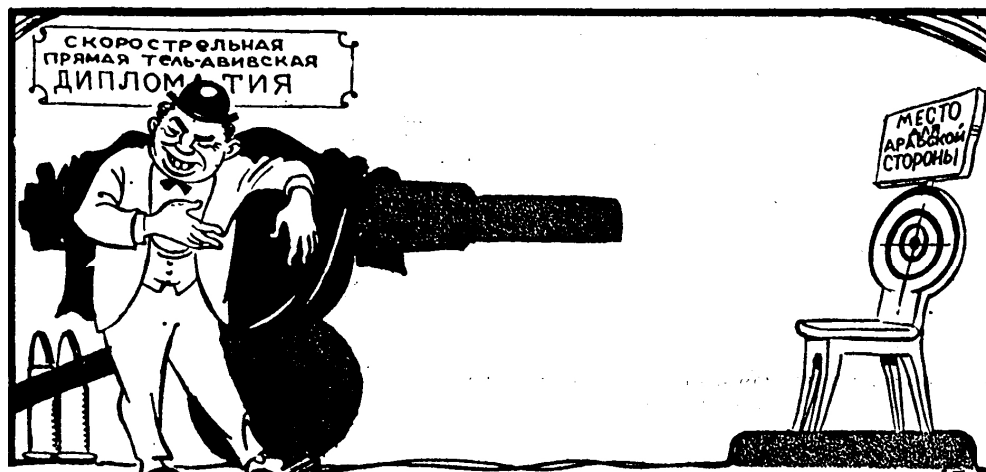
Figure 13. - Who will be the next?  
December 13, 1972. "A schedule of provocations" "against Lebanon" and "against Syria" is on the wall.



ПОМОГАЮТ... УБИВАТЬ.

Рис. М. Абрамова.

Figure 14. They help to kill.  
August 10, 1969.



«Прямые» переговоры или прямая наводка!

Рис. В. Фомичева.

15. Straight negotiations or straight fire? May 17, 1969.  
"Fast shooting Tel-Aviv diplomacy" is written above the gun. "Place for the Arab side" is written on the chair.



Figure 16. . Laces from Brussels. February 25, 1971. "Anti-Soviet provocations" is written on laces. "Zionist conference in support of Soviet Jewry" is written on the chair. "Brussels administration" is written on the stool.



Figure 17. A similarity of views. July 5, 1970. Two figures are holding "A program of racist" and "A program of Zionists".

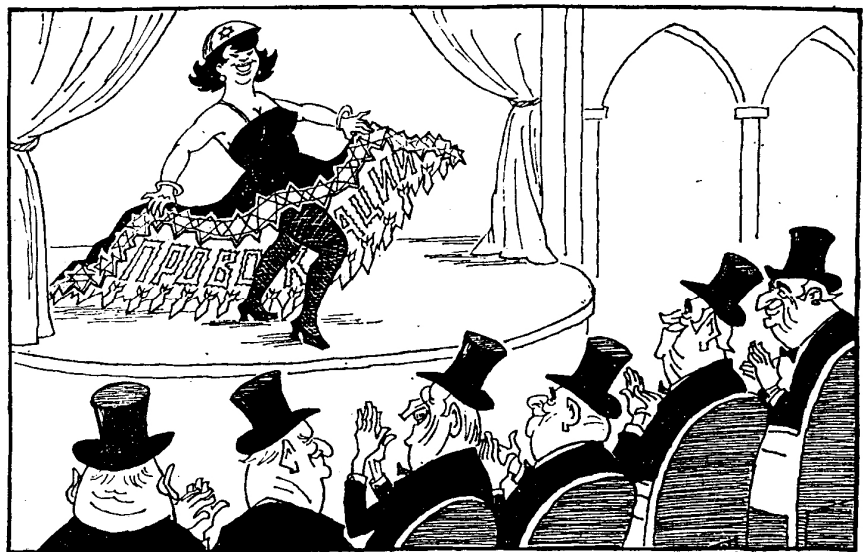


Figure 18. What he has stolen... October 16, 1973. "Arab lands" is written on the piece of a captured territory.



— Эта модель мне нравится больше всего. Рис. А. Баженова.

Figure 19. - I like this version most of all. December 3, 1971.  
"Israel" is written on woman's dress.



В кругу поклонников. Рис. М. Абрамова.

Figure 20. In a circle of admirers. June 24, 1972.  
"Provocations" is written on the dancer's skirt.

## ***Chapter IV. The image of Israel in Soviet caricature between 1974 and 1987: From “Stagnation” to Perestroika.***

### **1. A brief overview of Soviet-Israeli relations after 1974.**

The anti-Israeli trend in Soviet foreign policy did not cease after 1973. Until the middle of the 1980s the USSR did not have any official contacts with Israel and continued to present it in the press as a hostile regime, which must be condemned constantly. The Soviet Union was supporting Arab countries and anti-Israeli terrorist organizations, and initiating various anti-Israel resolutions in the United Nations, including the notorious UN General Assembly Resolution 3379 (adopted on November 10, 1975), which equated Zionism with racism<sup>155</sup>. Moscow frequently compared Israeli actions in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon with the actions of the Nazis in occupied Europe during World War II. The national awakening of the Jews in the USSR and a massive Soviet Jewish movement for emigration supported in the West led the Communist leadership to intensify Judeophobic propaganda campaign, masquerading as anti-Zionism, which was demonizing the Zionist movement and ascribing it an evil and corrupting essence<sup>156</sup>. In 1983 the Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Public, consisting mostly of the Jews, started its anti-Israel propaganda activity<sup>157</sup>. Soviet press, radio and TV sharply criticized not only military operations of Israel (especially its attack on Lebanon in 1982), but even peace agreements with Arab countries (in particular, the peace treaty with Egypt in 1979, also known as the Camp David, because it was seen in Moscow as an Israeli attempt to impose the deal unprofitable for Arabs).

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<sup>155</sup> Encyclopedia Judaica, s.v. “Anti-Zionism, contemporary”.

<sup>156</sup> Korey, 1995: Preface.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.: 86-114.

Only in 1985, when Mikhail Gorbachev came to power and declared the beginning of *Perestroika* (“restructuring”), did Soviet policy towards the Middle East conflict and Israel start to change. Among the core aspects of the “New thinking” in Soviet foreign policy were the termination of the unconditional support of all “anti-imperialistic” forces in the Third World and the new approach to the relations with former ideological “enemies”. The steps, which had to be made towards quiet diplomacy with Israel, were the Soviet diplomatic recognition of Israel, more freedom for Soviet Jews to emigrate and even Israeli support for an international conference on the Middle East<sup>158</sup>. After several false starts in 1985 and 1986, Soviet-Israeli relations began to improve rapidly in 1987<sup>159</sup>. The epoch of *glasnost* (“openness”), which was introduced by Gorbachev, allowed the official Soviet press at the end of the 1980s to publish relatively objective materials about Israel for the first time in history. In July 1988 the Israeli consular delegation arrived to Moscow; in 1989 trade relations between two countries were restarted<sup>160</sup>. Then in October 1991 the two states fully restored diplomatic relations<sup>161</sup>.

## **2. The image of Israel in *Pravda* in 1974-1987. New scenarios for anti-Israeli caricatures.**

This part of the thesis examines publications and caricatures in *Pravda* with special emphasis on what was new in caricatures compared with the previous period. As I noted above, the tradition of depicting the state of Israel in *Pravda* was already created before 1974. But this tradition never ceased to develop, because the content of Soviet “caricatures of opinion” was closely connected with political events. The changes in the political situation, which occurred

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<sup>158</sup> Ignatius, 1989: 119.

<sup>159</sup> Freedman, 1991: xiii, 10-12.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.: 54, 77-78, 90.

<sup>161</sup> The USSR, 1993: 5, 746.



between 1974 and 1987, offered new scenarios for caricaturists while the main themes, which were described in the Chapter III, remained amazingly stable.

The political conflict between the USSR and Israel did not disappear after the relaxation in tensions with the USA. The best way to characterize this situation is to employ medical terminology: 1967-1973 were a “relapse” of the criticism towards Israel in Soviet press, while the following period made this “disease” chronic. It means that Israel became one of those enemy-states which were criticized in *Pravda* on a regular basis in order to keep people aware about the reactionary politics of those states. Israel was even criticized when there were no military actions or events which could cause Soviet anger. I call this type of propaganda “a preventive critique”. During the pre-*Perestroika* period between 16 and 29 anti-Israeli caricatures appeared in *Pravda* every year, with the only exception 1982 when, as the result of the Israeli-Lebanon war, the annual quantity of caricatures went up to 40.

In 1974-1975, after two years of Soviet-American negotiations, the official newspaper seemed to be optimistic about the future relationship between the two superpowers. It made efforts to demonstrate to the public that the Cold War finally has ended. In these years the most discussed themes of the external relations in *Pravda* were the supporters and opponents of the Cold War, the continuing energy crisis, inflation and unemployment in the West, and the fall of the Greek military “junta”. *Pravda* avoided criticizing the USA directly; instead it fiercely denounced NATO and Israel. These two targets became the most important ones during the period of détente, when the United States unexpectedly ceased to be a mortal enemy. It does not mean that the official press completely removed critical remarks on American actions from its pages. *Pravda* did not criticize the American government and its decisions, but it was allowed to publish unpleasant remarks about the Pentagon, the CIA and American monopolies which were represented as opponents of the “*razryadka*” (Russian word for détente). Israel was also shown as

the state which did not want to achieve global peace and cooperation. In 1974-75 *Pravda* devoted some articles and caricatures to the new Israeli “provocations” against Syria and Lebanon and, as in previous years, to the huge military budget which negatively affected the state economy. Now the Pentagon (not the USA in general) became reported to be an Israeli “friend”. One caricature depicted an Israeli diplomat, who is singing a serenade to the Lady Pentagon wishing to receive more weapons from her<sup>162</sup>. It is significant that many caricatures were not directed against the concrete actions of Israel, but against “the aggressive direction” of this state in general. This is evidence for my claim about the “chronic” character of the conflict. As a rule, caricatures repeated old accusations and employed the same scenarios, and that is why they were monotonous and lacked originality.

The year 1976 is especially interesting because the image of Uncle Sam, which obviously presented the USA as an enemy, appeared in *Pravda* again. The critique of the CIA and the Pentagon became more frequent and virulent. More and more articles discussed the huge military expenditures of the American government and the “anti-Soviet hysteria” in the US, which was initiated by the supporters of the Cold War. Even the word “colonialism” was again applied to the American foreign policy. “This year was not a good one in terms of relaxation in tensions”, wrote a Soviet journalist in the article titled “Soviet-American relations today”<sup>163</sup>. However, there was no turning back to the ideological war yet. The image of America appeared in anti-Israeli caricature again, but in many cases it was a distanced image: for example, “American help” was shown, but Uncle Sam was absent<sup>164</sup>, or Israel was depicted together with its “imperialistic patron”, who lacked any distinguishing features<sup>165</sup>.

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<sup>162</sup> *Pravda*, September 19, 1974.

<sup>163</sup> *Pravda*, “Soviet-American relations today” [Sovetsko-Amerikanskije otnosheniya segodnya], December 11, 1976.

<sup>164</sup> *Pravda*, February 4, 1976.

<sup>165</sup> *Pravda*, September 2, 1976; September 28, 1976.

The return of the US theme to anti-Israeli caricatures determined their character: most of the scenarios were borrowed from the anti-Israeli rhetoric of 1967-1973. However, some new elements could be found. For example, *Pravda* started to write more about those Israeli citizens who decided to re-emigrate from the country. One caricature titled “An escape from Hotel-Aviv” depicted scared people who run away from the building full of guns and other weapons. The caption commented that in 1975 the inflow of immigrants had fallen to 40 percent, while the number of people who wish to leave Israel constantly grows<sup>166</sup>. Anti-Israeli caricatures also started to pay more attention to the theme of the discrimination against Arabs. Caricatures showed a brutal suppression of Arab population on both Israeli and occupied territories, for example a severe dispersal of the demonstration of Arab schoolchildren by armed Israeli soldiers<sup>167</sup> (See Figure 21) or a heavily-guarded Israeli prison in the heart of the Arab city<sup>168</sup> (See Figure 23). Other themes remained more or less stable: it was underlined that Israel was opposed to the peace settlement in the Middle East, that it received foreign donations, that it made a criminal alliance with the racist regime of South Africa, etc.

The year 1977 introduced more highly critical anti-American caricatures than the previous one. The rapid development of American military technologies, especially the emergence of such weapons as the cruise missile and the neutron bomb, was very disturbing for the USSR. Articles and caricatures were showing the “arms race” as an attempt to cancel all achievements of the *razryadka*. Several articles devoted to relations with the USA emphasized that the danger of returning to the Cold War appeared because of the provocative actions of the American side. The new term “Cold *razryadka*” was applied to the situation. The growing conflict with the USA, as

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<sup>166</sup> *Pravda*, February 2, 1976.

<sup>167</sup> *Pravda*, March 21, 1976.

<sup>168</sup> *Pravda*, August 14, 1976.

usual, influenced anti-Israeli caricatures. The hand of Uncle Sam, which governs Israeli actions against Arab neighbors, appeared again after the few years of existence of the “independent” image of Israel.

During this year *Pravda* harshly criticized the political program of Menachem Begin and Likud Party, which won the 1977 elections in Israel<sup>169</sup>. In June the newspaper devoted some articles to the tenth anniversary of the Six-Day War under the common heading “Middle East knot”. One article explained that the policy of Tel-Aviv towards Arabs and especially Palestinians was becoming even harder, and new “provocations” could be expected<sup>170</sup>. In this period Israel was also mocked for its participation in the Western campaign for human rights, which criticized the internal situation in the USSR and was considered anti-Soviet in Moscow.

1978 was also a year of “transition” from the détente to the new wave of hostility between the superpowers. Only 16 caricatures dealt with Israel in this period. However, the number of anti-American caricatures, depicting the neutron bomb in particular, increased, making the Soviet public to forget about the process of *razryadka*. The main topic of anti-Israeli articles and pictures was the tragedy of Palestinians, whose right to self-determination was not recognized by Israel, as well as the Israeli attacks on Lebanon supported by the Lebanese Christian political party<sup>171</sup>. The theme of the “explosive situation” in the Middle East remained one of the most important “international” concerns, and Israel, equipped with American weapon, was blamed for the crisis as before. However, in 1978 *Pravda* introduced one more pro-imperialist, pro-American actor in the Middle East politics. Unexpectedly it was Egypt. The President Anwar Sadat neutralized

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<sup>169</sup> Soviet critique was based on the fact that Likud has espoused hawkish policies towards the Palestinians, including opposition to Palestinian statehood and support of the Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

<sup>170</sup> *Pravda*, June 15, 1977.

<sup>171</sup> It became also known as the Lebanese Kataeb Social Democratic Party or the Phalange. Its politics was pro-Western, and they opposed any pan-Arabism. They cooperated with Israel from the very beginning of the Lebanese Civil War.

Soviet sympathies to the former “Egyptian friend”. In particular, Sadat made steps towards the reestablishment of relations with Washington and removed Soviet personnel from advisory roles in the country. But the really decisive actions in the Egyptian “divorce” with the Soviet Union were Sadat’s visit to Jerusalem and participation in Camp David negotiations with Israel, which were organized by the American government<sup>172</sup>. Egypt became referred to as a “reactionary Arab regime”. In autumn the Soviet caricature for the first time offered an unattractive image of Egypt, which receives American weapons side by side with an Israeli soldier<sup>173</sup> (See Figure 22).

In 1979 the theme of the Camp David became one of the most discussed issues on the pages of *Pravda*. Peace negotiations between Egypt and Israel were viewed in Moscow as “a treachery of the Egyptian leadership, which has entered into shameful cooperation” with aggressors against its own interests and the interests of the whole Arab world<sup>174</sup>. According to the newspaper, the real aim of the peace treaty was to organize a regional anti-Arab military union in order to straighten American positions in the Middle East<sup>175</sup>. *Pravda* underlined that the return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt would not bring peace to the region, because Israel did not agree to return all those territories which were occupied in 1967. Caricatures totally corresponded to this rhetoric. The image of Egypt which, as a rule, resembled Sadat, became an organic part of anti-Israeli caricatures together with the USA and Israel. However, Egypt was shown as a manipulated actor, who, first, was bribed by the US, and second, was deceived in Camp David. Together with Israel, Egypt was depicted in caricature as an American instrument for tightening hold on the oil

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<sup>172</sup> The Camp David summit was promoted and organized by Jimmy Carter in September, 1978. This event brought together President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel. After almost two weeks of secret negotiations Egypt and Israel recognized each other’s sovereignty and vowed to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of each state. A self-governed authority was to be established on the West Bank and Israeli military and civilian administration eventually withdrawn. The Palestinians were to be represented in all negotiations and their “legitimate rights” respected. See Ziring, 1992, pp. 270-271.

<sup>173</sup> *Pravda*, September 8, 1978.

<sup>174</sup> *Pravda*, “Tel-Aviv shows its cards” [Tel-Aviv raskryvaet karty], February, 11, 1979.

<sup>175</sup> *Pravda*, “The angry condemnation” [Gnevnoe osyzhdenie], March 28, 1979; *Pravda*, “The Camp-David approach to peace” [Mir ‘po-kempdavidski’], April 2, 1979.

sector in the Persian Gulf<sup>176</sup>. The sub-theme of the Palestinian fate became even more prominent during this year. The Israeli decision to create Palestinian Autonomy areas in the West Bank and Gaza was shown as an attempt of the Israeli “soldieri” to intensify repressions against Arab population in those areas and force them to forget about their own sovereign state. Caricatures depicted an artful Israeli soldier, who brought slavery (shackles) into the region instead of the declared autonomy<sup>177</sup> (See Figure 24). Israeli attacks on Lebanon also remained a popular scenario for caricatures during this year.

On June 19, 1979, the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and the American president Jimmy Carter signed the new Treaty on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, and the ugly image of America again disappeared from *Pravda*, but not for long – only for a few weeks.

In 1980 Soviet newspapers were writing a lot about the situation around Afghanistan and the Olympic Games in Moscow. But Israel and its American “friend” were not forgotten. Moreover, the growing number of anti-American caricatures, especially after the American decision to boycott the Olympic Games, was an indicator of rapidly worsening relationships. The theme of the Egyptian dependence on the US was developed. One caricature showed an Egyptian and an Israeli diplomat, who servilely clean Uncle Sam’s boots and look at his bags full of dollars<sup>178</sup> (See Figure 25). The Palestinian theme also remained current: Camp David was interpreted as a violation of the Palestinian rights, and this violation was advocated by the US, “a wolf in sheep's skin”, according to caricatures<sup>179</sup>. One relatively new topic which appeared in caricatures in that year was the declaration of Jerusalem, including its Arab part, as Israel's

<sup>176</sup> *Pravda*, April 24, 1979; August 12, 1979; October 2, 1979.

<sup>177</sup> *Pravda*, June 12, 1979; November 21, 1979; December 2, 1979.

<sup>178</sup> *Pravda*, February 21, 1980.

<sup>179</sup> *Pravda*, June 4, 1980; June 6, 1980; October 28, 1980; November 2, 1980.

“eternal capital”<sup>180</sup>. *Pravda* called this declaration “an extremely provocative” and “totally illegal act”. Caricatures demonstrated that Israel had no reasoning for such an action except the position of power: for example, in one picture a Knesset parliamentarian is proclaiming Jerusalem the Israeli capital standing on the top of the tank<sup>181</sup>.

It is also significant that in previous three to four years, and especially in 1980, the Star of David as a mandatory distinguishing emblem of Israel had completely disappeared from caricatures. It was replaced by the primitive text “Israel” or “Tel-Aviv” on a military helmet. Sometimes only a caption helped the audience to identify Israel. It is not easy to understand why Soviet caricaturists stopped using the six-pointed star. Probably, the reason was the accusations of the Soviet Union of anti-Semitism as a part of the Western campaign for human rights. To avoid this accusations the Star of David, which remained first of all an international symbol of Jewry, was removed from caricatures. Using the text “Israel” instead of Magen David was a way to underline the purely political character of the Soviet-Israeli conflict.

The year 1981 introduced the motif of American aspirations to world domination. In other words, the USA, according to *Pravda*, claimed some distant territories of the world as a sphere of America’s “vital interests”. The Middle East was perceived as one of these territories. Caricatures, just like in the pre-Israeli period, started to depict mutual relations between the US and the Arab East without Israeli participation, for example the American pressure upon Egypt or monopolist's plans of getting the Middle East oil. But the Israeli theme was constantly present in *Pravda*. First of all, the attacks on Lebanon together with Lebanese Christian groups were criticized. Second, the Palestinian struggle against Israel received full approval of the Soviet Union. The Palestine

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<sup>180</sup> Jerusalem was supposed to be declared an international city, according to the 1947 UN Resolution that called for the partition of the British Palestine Mandate into Jewish and Arab State. However, in July 1980 Knesset approved the formal annexation of East Jerusalem by Israel, which caused a widespread Muslim anger. See Ziring, 1992, 216.

<sup>181</sup> *Pravda*, April 4, 1980; July 23, 1980; August 4, 1980, August 12, 1980.

Liberation Organization was called “the only lawful representative of Palestinian people”<sup>182</sup>. Third, *Pravda* intensified the criticism of the Begin government, which “has led the country to the economic crash”<sup>183</sup>.

In 1982 the anti-Israeli campaign received a new justification – the Israeli army attacked the PLO in Lebanon (those events are known as the First Lebanon War or the Operation Peace of the Galilee). Many new caricatures depicted an armed Israeli soldier covered with blood, whose violence against Lebanese civilians was encouraged by the US. The state of Israel in *Pravda* was openly called “the center of international terrorism”, and the operation in Lebanon was viewed as “a terror and genocide”<sup>184</sup>. Like at the end of the 1960s Israel was often depicted as a marionette in American hands. In Soviet caricatures militarists from Washington are pushing an Israeli soldier towards Lebanon, letting out an aggressive Israeli genie from a bottle, shaking a bloody hand of the Israeli murderer who has justified American expectations (See Figure 26) and opening a barrier to let an Israeli tank to cross the border with Lebanon<sup>185</sup>. Only a few caricatures depicted Israel without the American “patronage”. Instead they made a striking comparison between Israel and the Nazi regime. This motif appeared already in 1967, but only in 1982 was it actively used in caricature. Three out of four “Nazi” caricatures depicted an ominous Hitler-like or swastika-like shadow which pursues Israel everywhere. One picture contains a road sign “The world domination”, which guided fascist in the 1940s and is guiding Israelis now<sup>186</sup>. “Exterminating Palestinian and Lebanese people, Zionists more and more resemble fascist executioners” - commented *Pravda*<sup>187</sup>.

<sup>182</sup> *Pravda*, “Stop Israeli aggression” [Polozhit’ konets izrail’skoi agressii], May 26, 1981.

<sup>183</sup> *Pravda*, “militaristic madness” [Militaristskii ygar], June 1, 1981.

<sup>184</sup> *Pravda*, “A Threat to Lebanon” [Ugroza Livany], March 2, 1982; “Israel must be forced to stop aggression” [Prinudit’ Izrail ostanovit’ agressiu], August 2, 1982.

<sup>185</sup> *Pravda*, June 24, 1982; July 2, 1982; July 15, 1982; February 4, 1982.

<sup>186</sup> *Pravda*, June 6, 1982.

<sup>187</sup> *Pravda*, “Israel must be forced to stop aggression” [Prinudit’ Izrail ostanovit’ agressiu], August 2, 1982.



Unlike previous Arab-Israeli conflicts, the Lebanon war lasted for a few months, and it gave *Pravda* an occasion for many articles and caricatures, which criticized Israeli atrocities such as attacks on civilian targets, cruel treatment of the population in the occupied territories, and marauding. But the worst crime which Israel was blamed for was the Sabra and Shatila massacre<sup>188</sup>. Yasir Arafat placed the responsibility on Israel, and the Soviet press presented his private opinion as an indisputable fact. The motif of blood and corpses, which was actively present in cartoons from March, intensified even more. An Israeli soldier, a representative of the “fascist Zionist groups”, was depicted standing on human skulls<sup>189</sup> in a pool of blood symbolizing genocide<sup>190</sup> (See Figure 27). Those expressive drawings in the horror genre in the official press were sometimes more influential than numerous reports about Israeli bombings.

During the next year *Pravda* became extremely anti-American. The USA was derided through caricatures every day. The criticism of President Reagan and his program became stronger. Soviet correspondents in the United States wrote about the internal crisis, unemployment, poverty and criminality, and criticized the government for the spreading of the anti-Soviet hysteria. The hostility towards the US was so strong that America was blamed for all kinds of international tensions. It is significant that at the end of 1983 *Pravda*’s caricaturists started to depict the Lebanon crisis without Israel. The denunciation of the USA and its “anti-Arab” trend became more important at the moment. Anti-Israeli caricatures were at the same time highly anti-American: in 1983 seventeen caricatures out of twenty three depicted in a way an American role in the bloody performance on the Middle East stage. In particular, caricatures

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<sup>188</sup> Also known as the West Beirut Massacre. On September 17-18, 1982, elements of the Christian Phalange militia entered the Palestinian refugee camps in West Beirut and started mass killing of Palestinian civilians. Israeli forces moved to the camp to stop this action, but almost 2,000 camp inhabitants were already dead (Ziring, 1992, 252-253).

<sup>189</sup> This motif can be also considered traditional. For example, the image of a Jew sitting on human skulls appeared on the cover of the Polish edition of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion (Poznan, 1943).

<sup>190</sup> *Pravda*, October 11, 1982.

showed American attempts to hide Israeli “terror” behind the peace claims and even to justify the Israeli invasion into Lebanon<sup>191</sup> (See Figure 28). In fact, Israeli-US relations were severely strained by the Lebanese conflict. But Soviet propaganda never mentioned this fact: in the model of the world, which it tried to fix in conciseness of the Soviet people, one aggressor always supports another aggressor, especially in the Middle East, which “is doomed to be turned to the American base for the anti-Soviet activity”<sup>192</sup> (See Figure 30). One significant caricature titled “A tamed predator” depicted a hawk from Tel-Aviv, whose beak is covered with blood of the Lebanese victim (See Figure 31). An invisible hand holds the end of a rope, which is attached to a hawk’s leg. Dollars on the rope make it clear that American Uncle Sam is master of the Israeli murderer<sup>193</sup>. This caricature is significant because it explains the whole image of Israel in Soviet press. There are all typical features: the hawk (the most important animal image of Israel), its dependence from the USA (rope which controls it), its territorial aspirations (the hawk is sitting on the broken boundary post labeled “Lebanon”), its militarism (the predator has a gun, its coat made of bombs instead of feathers), and its cruelty (victim’s legs in a pool of blood).

In 1984 only eight caricatures depicted the state of Israel in *Pravda*. But it did not mean that Soviet leaders changed their view of Israel. Those eight caricatures were no less hostile. It seems that the large-scale anti-American propaganda superseded all other forms of propaganda in the official newspaper. At the beginning of the year at least eleven caricatures blamed the US for the Lebanon War and its consequences; Israel did not even appear in those pictures. The article titled “Who is undermining the peace process in Lebanon” explained that the war, first of all,

<sup>191</sup> *Pravda*, February 15, 1983; May 26, 1983; October 21, 1983.

<sup>192</sup> *Pravda*, “We wish a fair peace in the Middle East” [Za spravedlivyi mir na Blizhem Vostoke], April 5, 1983.

<sup>193</sup> *Pravda*, January 31, 1983.

served American interests<sup>194</sup>. Those few cartoons which dealt with Israel emphasized the economic crisis in the country or showed Israeli repressions against Lebanese people. In general, nothing new could be seen in anti-Israeli caricatures in 1984. Propagandists switched to the tactics of the continuous repeating.

In March 1985, *Pravda* reported that Mikhail Gorbachev was appointed the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union<sup>195</sup>. Of course, positive changes in the foreign policy towards the Western world could not yet be observed. However, at the end of November Gorbachev met with Reagan and proposed multilateral cooperation. After this event the quantity of anti-American caricatures diminished. In the depiction of Israel the old theme of Israeli refusal to leave occupied lands was frequently used. A few caricatures employed a similar scenario of the demonstrative removal of Israeli forces from Lebanon: under slogans “We are leaving”, Israelis were moving in a circle and again coming back to Lebanon<sup>196</sup>. The Israeli attack on PLO bases in Tunisia on October 4, 1985 was fiercely criticized in *Pravda*. New “provocation” of Israeli “vultures” was depicted in the caricature through the image of a terrorist, who throws a warm-blooded plane-dagger to the sovereign Tunisian Republic<sup>197</sup>. Together with highly critical publications and caricatures more and more articles about the activity of the Communist Party of Israel became published in *Pravda*. It was the first sign of intensifying contacts with Israel.

In 1986 only seven anti-Israeli caricatures were published. Most of them – four – appeared in November as an answer to the “anti-Syrian campaign” in Israel, which was

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<sup>194</sup> *Pravda*, “Who is undermining the peace process in Lebanon” [Kto prepyatstvyet miry v Livane], February 4, 1984.

<sup>195</sup> *Pravda*, “The results of the plenum of Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union” [Informatsionnoe soobschenie...], March 12, 1985.

<sup>196</sup> *Pravda*, January 29, 1985; March 23, 1985; June 22, 1985, November 26, 1985.

<sup>197</sup> *Pravda*, October 5, 1985.

interpreted as Israeli readiness to the new war. The image of an American Uncle Sam played an important role in those drawings. One caricature depicted Israel as a little spiteful dog who barks at Syria in a duet with the British Lion; both are being encouraged by their American master<sup>198</sup>. But caricatures became less dramatic: there was no more blood, corpses or scenes of intense violence against humans. In 1987 eight anti-Israeli caricatures appeared in *Pravda*. From May to November there was only one anti-Israeli picture. The depiction of Israel in caricature seemed to come to its end. But in December two more caricatures criticized Israel – this criticism was caused by the popular Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule. It was the beginning of the First Intifada. However, this new wave of violence in the Middle East did not give a second birth to the anti-Israeli caricatures. Already in 1988 the Soviet press became more tolerant towards Israel, and military conflict in Palestine became covered more or less objectively.

The period between 1974 and 1987, which has been examined in this chapter, can be characterized as a period of the continuous anti-Israeli propaganda. Even the beginning of *Perestroika* did not demonstrate significant changes in the depiction of Israel in *Pravda*. Thus, the image of Israel as an enemy was present in the Soviet periodicals during twenty years between 1967 (when it was created) and 1987 (when it gradually ceased to be important).

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<sup>198</sup> *Pravda*, November 16, 1986.

## Illustrations



Израильский оккупант: — Мы заставляем арабов учиться из-под палки.  
Рис. Ю. Черепанова.

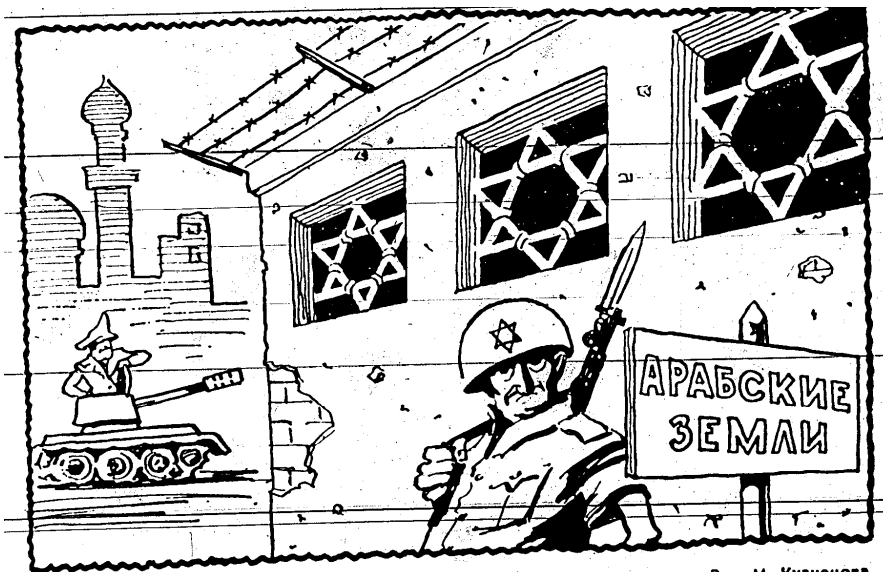
Figure 21. An Israeli occupant: - We will force Arabs to study. March 21, 1976. "Give freedom to Arabs" is written on the poster.



Оптом и в розницу.

Рис. В. Фомичев.

Figure 22. The wholesale and retail trade. September 8, 1978. "A map of captures territories" — is written on the map. "For Israel" — on the bowl with weapons. "For Egypt" — on the box with weapons. "Weapon trade" — on the scales.



Избитый прием в «строительной» практике.

Рис. М. Кузнецова.

Figure 22. A popular method in the construction industry. August 14, 1976. "Arab lands" is written on the sign.

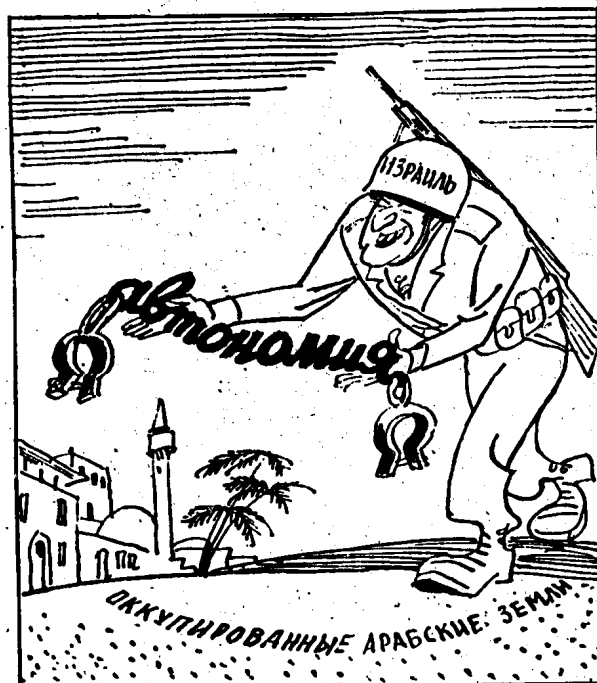


Figure 24. An Israeli approach to the “autonomy”.  
November 21, 1979. “Israel” – is written on the helmet.  
“Autonomy” – on the shackles. “Occupied Arab lands” – the  
bottom of the picture.



Figure 25. - For you, boss, we can do everything... February 21, 1980. “Tel-Aviv” – left  
figure. “Cairo” – right figure. “[Military] Bases” is written on Sam’s boots.

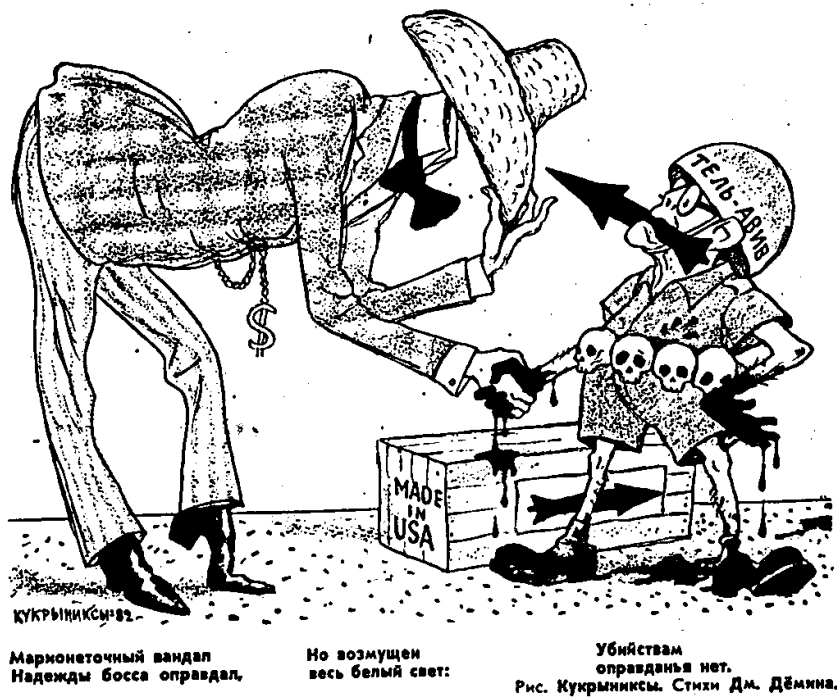


Figure 26. Marionette-like vandal / Has justified the expectations of his boss / But the whole world is revolted / Because there is no justification for murders. July 15, 1982. "Tel-Aviv" is written on the helmet.



Figure 27. The aggressor studies Nazi lessons / His way is covered with blood / But fascist Zionist groups / Will not escape all nations' judgment! October 11, 1982. "Burnt ground tactics" is written on the asphalt paving machine. "Genocide" –the bottom of the picture. "Blitzkrieg" – on the sword. "A concentration camp for Arabs" – right side of the picture.

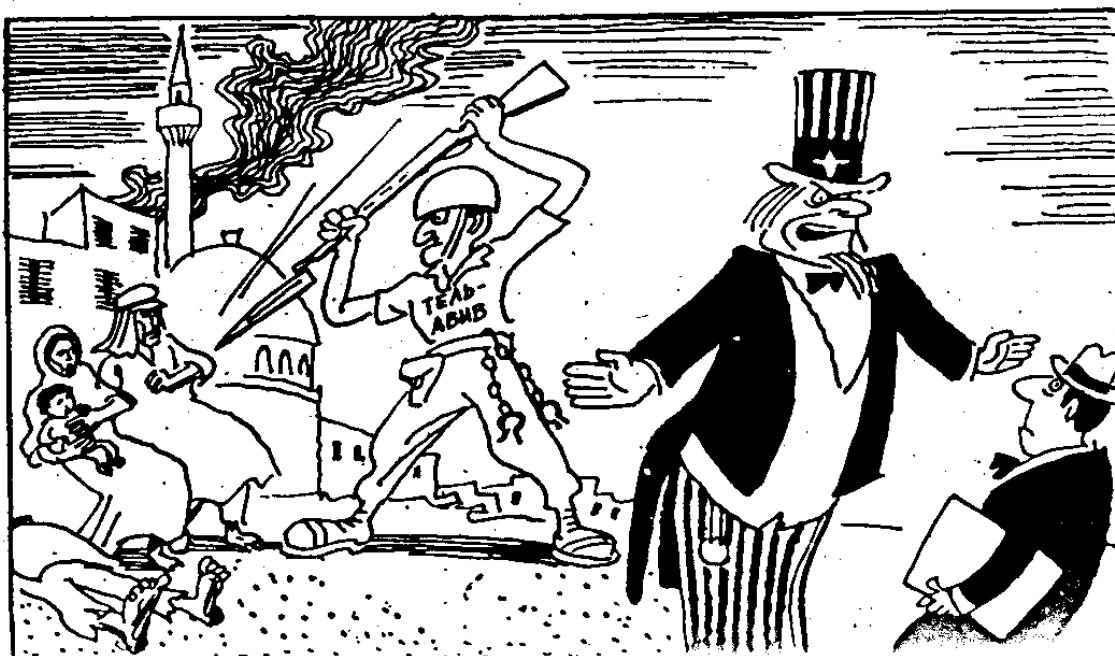


Figure 28. Uncle Sam: - Please, do not interfere in the peace process in the Middle East. June 4, 1980. "Tel-Aviv" is written on the soldier's shirt.



Figure 29. The most beloved child. July 28, 1976.



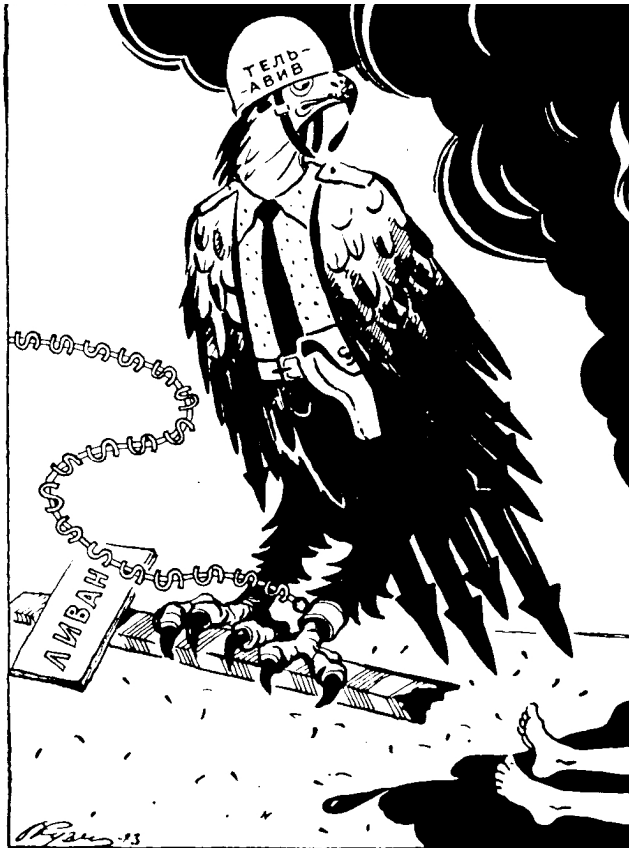


Figure 30. Sometimes they scream at each other: "It's a lie!" / Sometimes they are explicitly angry: "It's an insult!" / But it is widely known that they are the best friends / and their quarrels are fake. May 5, 1981. "We are expressing our discontent" – left poster. "Our serious disagreements" – right poster.

Порой они кричат друг  
другу:  
«Ложь!»  
Порой публично сердятся:  
«Обида!»

Известно: их водой  
не разольешь.  
А для чего же ссорятся!  
Для вида!  
Рис. В. Фомичева.  
Стихи Н. Энтелиса.

Figure 31. A tamed predator. January 31, 1983. "Tel-Aviv" - on the helmet. "Lebanon" - on the broken boundary post.



Ручной хищник.

Рис. М. Кузнецова.

## Conclusion

This research examined the Soviet portrayal of Israel in caricature from the establishment of Israel until Soviet *Perestroika*. For this purpose more than 12,700 daily issues of the official newspaper *Pravda* were looked through. Approximately 472 anti-Israel caricatures were analyzed. The analysis of both images and articles, which mirrored the official attitude towards the state of Israel for more than forty years, made it possible to draw the following conclusions.

The first nine years of existence of the Jewish state in Palestine were not reflected in Soviet caricatures. However, in the 1950s articles in *Pravda* demonstrated a significant shift in the government position towards Israel: Soviet political considerations demanded a reliable alliance with Arab countries, which basically meant a complete ideological “divorce” with Tel-Aviv. The first anti-Israeli caricature appeared in *Pravda* as the result of a concrete political event – the Suez Crisis, which affected Soviet geopolitical interests. There had been no tradition of depicting Israel in caricature up to this point. The tradition was born between 1967 and 1973, during the period of continuing Arab-Israeli military confrontation, when Soviet press organized a wide-scale anti-Israel propaganda campaign. Dozens of caricatures were published to express sharp criticism of Israel’s Western orientation and its “chauvinistic policy” of oppressing the progressive Arab forces.

The core themes, which formed the tradition of anti-Israel drawings in *Pravda*, were: 1) the financial, military and diplomatic support of Israel by the United States of America, which led to the association of Israeli aggression with the goals of the American foreign policy; 2) the support of Israel by other “imperialist” forces, which justified the Soviet treatment of Israel as an enemy state which belongs to the anti-Soviet bloc; 3) Israeli military occupation of Arab territories, which was strongly opposed in the USSR because it offset the balance of power in the

Middle East; 4) Israeli aggressive politics towards all peace-loving nations, first of all, towards the Palestinians and neighboring Arab countries, which was considered as a fulfillment of certain strategic agreement with the USA directed to the turning of the Middle East to American military base; 5) The problem of peace in the Middle East, which was discussed through blaming Israel and its American “boss” for the endless conflict and for their attempts to avoid the peace settlement; and 6) Zionism as a racist ideology, which guided Israeli leaders’ military actions against Arabs and their anti-Soviet propaganda.

There was no generally accepted, “canonic” image of Israel in *Pravda*’s caricatures. However, I discovered the main methods of depicting Israel. There was surprisingly big number of caricatures which showed Israeli figures without specific Jewish body features (curly hair, hooked nose, black eyes, corrupted figure, etc.). Very often Israel was portrayed similar to the portrayal of other “imperialist” forces. A six-pointed star, captions “Israel” or “Tel-Aviv”, sometimes context, made it possible to identify the central figure of caricatures. This fact supports my statement that antisemitism in anti-Israel caricatures was implicit, non-obvious. There was criticism towards Israel and or Zionism in caricatures, not towards Jews.

Traditional antisemitic motifs were employed by Soviet caricaturists. However, some of them were used also against other hostile powers. For example, Israelis were depicted as people who must never be trusted. But all political opponents of the Soviet Union were showed as deceitful, unreliable and dishonest political actors. The antisemitic motif of the aspiration to world domination was not ascribed to Israel only. The United States of America with its sphere of “vital interests”, West Germany with its territorial claims, and Great Britain as colonial power, were often criticized for the same aspiration to world supremacy. It is obvious that tiny Israel could not be compared to superpowers. Presenting Israel as a state which had super-power aspirations, *Pravda* used traditional anti-Jewish accusations with the primary purpose to show

Israel as an imperialist state which is as predatory as other members of the anti-Soviet camp, not as a group of the “elders of Zion”.

So, antisemitic motifs in the anti-Israel propaganda campaign did not aim to demolish the Jewish nation – they were employed, first of all, to create the unattractive image of the political enemy. In this particular case, the Jewish state was the enemy. When it was established in 1948, there was no tradition of depicting Israel, and Soviet caricaturists had to invent it. For this purpose they employed the existing tradition of depicting the Jews, which was to a large extent antisemitic.

Among other interesting methods of creating the image of Israel in Soviet caricature I mentioned, first, the allegoric portrayal of Israel as an animal, mostly as a predatory hawk, which was a way to “dehumanize” the opponent, and second, the “gendered” image of Israel, which even involved some sexual connotations and served for the visualizing of Israeli-American relations.

The anti-Israel campaign in Soviet periodicals lasted until the beginning of *Perestroika*. The political events, mostly military and diplomatic conflicts, influenced the content of anti-Israel caricatures by introducing new scenarios and sub-themes. The tradition of depicting Israel continued to develop while the main motifs remained unchanged. After the Yom Kippur War the annual quantity of caricatures went down, with the only exception of 1982, when the First Lebanon War occurred. When Gorbachev took office as general secretary of the CPSU in 1985, he introduced a new thinking of Soviet foreign policy, which involved, in particular, a new diplomatic dialogue with Israel. When these new political ideas turned into deeds anti-Israel caricatures became rare in *Pravda* and finally disappeared as a sign of improved mutual relations.

This research has demonstrated the political character of anti-Israel caricatures. The state of Israel was perceived as an enemy primarily because of its Western orientation, not because of

its ethnic composition. The multilateral competition of the superpowers had greater impact on the image of Israel in Soviet press than Soviet antisemitic attitudes. Soviet anti-Semitism reached its peak in 1953, but not one caricature illustrated this ideological trend. As a rule, caricatures appeared as an immediate reaction to political events. Soviet-American confrontations and rapprochements significantly influenced anti-Israel caricatures. That is why I propose that anti-Israel caricatures in *Pravda* should be studied in the context of the Cold War, and not exclusively in the context of Soviet anti-Semitism, which never existed officially.

Of course, this research did not cover all aspects of the complex problem of the image of Israel in Soviet official press. However, it contributed to the existing base of knowledge about contemporary anti-Israelism and Soviet journalism, and it offers many interesting perspectives for the future researches. In particular, it would be interesting to study the image of Israel as an enemy in Arab newspaper, or to make a comparative analysis of the visual image of Israel in Soviet and in post-Soviet periodicals.

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## **Appendix 1.**

**Table 1. The monthly and annual quantity of anti-Israel caricatures in *Pravda* (1967-1977).**

	<b>1967</b>	<b>1968</b>	<b>1969</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1972</b>	<b>1973</b>	<b>1974</b>	<b>1975</b>	<b>1976</b>	<b>1977</b>
<b>January</b>	0	5	2	7	1	4	2	2	4	1	0
<b>February</b>	0	1	2	5	1	2	2	1	3	4	2
<b>March</b>	0	0	6	10	3	3	2	0	2	3	1
<b>April</b>	0	0	2	9	2	0	2	1	1	4	2
<b>May</b>	0	0	1	3	1	4	3	2	1	2	1
<b>June</b>	9	1	1	4	1	3	4	0	2	0	0
<b>July</b>	3	0	5	7	3	2	2	1	4	1	2
<b>August</b>	1	1	2	0	4	5	4	1	3	1	0
<b>September</b>	1	0	1	6	1	3	1	3	3	3	1
<b>October</b>	2	1	2	6	1	3	2	2	3	1	3
<b>November</b>	2	2	2	4	0	3	2	3	1	1	4
<b>December</b>	0	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>

**Table 2. The monthly and annual quantity of anti-Israel caricatures in *Pravda* (1978-1987).**

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
<b>January</b>	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	3	1	2
<b>February</b>	0	0	1	1	2	6	0	0	0	0
<b>March</b>	3	2	0	1	2	1	3	5	0	1
<b>April</b>	3	3	4	0	4	4	0	2	0	2
<b>May</b>	2	6	3	3	2	4	0	0	1	0
<b>June</b>	0	3	2	1	7	0	0	1	0	0
<b>July</b>	2	0	2	3	7	1	0	0	0	0
<b>August</b>	1	3	2	3	4	3	2	0	0	1
<b>September</b>	1	1	1	1	5	1	1	0	0	0
<b>October</b>	0	2	2	0	5	2	1	2	0	0
<b>November</b>	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	4	0
<b>December</b>	2	1	0	3	0	1	1	2	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>

## ***Appendix 2.***

**Chart 1. The annual quantity of anti-Israel caricatures in *Pravda*  
(1967-1987).**

