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The Israeli Dilemma: **A Debate between** **Two Left-Wing Jews** Letters between **Marcel Liebman** and **Ralph Miliband**

Selected, with an introduction and epilogue
by **Gilbert Achcar**

Who should have community and national rights in Palestine? If Israelis have the right to security, can this 'right' be at the expense of Palestinians? What should be done when conflict broke out between these two? What are the conditions for a lasting peace between Israel and the Arabs? How should secular Jews outside Israel define their loyalties and their Jewishness?

These letters between Ralph Miliband (1924-1994) and Marcel Liebman (1929-1986), his closest friend, begin in May 1967, on the eve of the Six Day War. These two brilliant intellectuals had much in common. They were born to Polish Jewish parents in Belgium, deeply affected by Nazism and WW2, and became friends in London in 1953, when Liebman was studying at the LSE.

Miliband: Being Jewish does not in itself justify a frenzied pro-Arab attitude. ... It is true that I would consider the extermination of two million Jews ... as an appalling catastrophe. But I like to think that I would feel just the same way if I were not Jewish myself.

Liebman: I'm afraid that you are reacting as a European and a Jew rather than as a socialist. If the discussion were about any other nation playing the role that Israel is playing, you would have different standards than the ones you have for 'our brothers'. ... And yet God knows that I feel Jewish in all sorts of ways...

Contents: Introduction, correspondence, ...to a brotherly convergence (by way of conclusion).

Market: General, Undergraduate and Post-graduate; Student Reading List; Library

Keywords: Israel, Palestine, Jews, History, Politics, Socialism, Conflict and peace Studies, Identities, Culture, Democratic Theory.

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