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LIKUD: A BALANCE BETWEEN IDEOLOGY AND RELIGION. THE FIRST TIME IN THE GOVERNMENT (1977–1984)

O. Aloshyna

Independent Researcher (Ukraine)

oxana.remarovich@gmail.com

The election of 1977 was traditionally called the Likud “upheaval”. The delicate balance between the secular and religious political powers in the State of Israel became possible. Moreover, the role of the orthodoxies and nationalists rapidly increased. As a result of this election, a right-wing party would lead the government for the first time since the State of Israel gained independence. The return of religion to the political sphere can be estimated as the phenomenon of the new Israeli politics. The power of the religious parties consists in the formation and provides coalition governments. At the same time, the religious block was unable to maintain a central role in state policy. But it took the same important place in Knesset like from 1948 as the consistent partner in government coalitions. The religious parties have totally integrated into the political system of the state. Consequently, they achieved significant benefits for themselves. Furthermore, it was the first time in thirty years when the political parties started to represent a cultural and political variety of the entire population of the country. Thus, the state can be defined as the religion-state of the religion-nation as many of the citizens did not belong to a part of this religious community. In fact, the cultural war began between two segments of society – the secular “Israeli” and the religious “Jewish”. Both believed that they had to determine the character of the State of Israel. After all, such a political party as Likud exhaustively demonstrated that consolidation of democratic systems could not occur without the inclusion of religious parties. As the result, the political image of Likud as a “religious-oriented party” contributed to the change of political power from Labour to Likud.

Keywords: civil religion, Israeli political parties, Knesset, Likud, religious parties, State of Israel

On the 17th of May 1977 the leader of the Likud union – Menachem Begin got his first electoral victory. The accession to power of the Likud party in 1977 brought about great opportunities for the religious sector in terms of strengthening the religious status quo and support of the religious settlement movement. It determined the style of Begin’s policy on religious issues as well as the strengthening of the civil religion. Begin believed that Likud was the expression of a new civil religion. Civil religion was backed up by the support of a concept of preservation of control over the territories, occupied in the course of the Six-Day War. The civil religion in Israel as a form of religious influence can be defined as the merging of national (state) values and religious values. The set of values should be generally accepted, constituting the core of social systems and sacred for individuals. It is made up of statements, symbols, rituals, and institutions that legitimize, create a particular society to achieve political goals.

Menachem Begin became the embodiment of the official expression of the civil religion and its transformation to a more traditional form. Begin cultivated the coalition of

national policy with Judaism, developing the civil religion, considerably based on traditional Judaism. The approach of Begin opened new possibilities for a coalition and enlarged the electoral base due to traditionally oriented electors, not belonging to the ultra orthodox movement.

After the election victory, the leaders of the Likud made the reconstruction and renewal of ideologization methods of Israeli policy by virtue of reinforcement of the nationalist component in it. To that effect leaders of the Likud took a number of steps in order to delegitimize the old regime of the Ma'arakh, and represented Likud leadership as genuine adherents of "fathers" of Israel. As part of this effort, they attempted to revise the history of the establishment of the state, highlight the crucial role of revisionist military units Etzel and Lehi (militant group) in Palestinian Yishuv and emphasized the importance of the revisionist movement in Zionism.

Menachem Begin publicly represented himself and the Herut party as the patriots of the nation and guides of the idea of Jewish unity. Requests for continuation and advancement of its role in the history of the Yishuv and in the early years of establishment of the state reflected more particular and far-reaching changes in the Likud's position. When Likud became the dominant bloc, the political transformation of society began to be apparent, the signs of which were in the late 1970s – early 1980s.

In the times of the Likud governance, such problems as broad settlement policy, the priority of religious issues (the definition "Who is Jewish?"), and economic transformation of the state according to the traditional program of Likud in this field became the major issues. In order to better understand the attitude of the Likud to religion, it is necessary to tell about the position of this bloc in the early 1980s. Though the Likud, in general, was a social bloc, religion was an important component of its ideology and the relations with the religious parties were stable.

The important factor, which ensured the cooperation of the Likud with religious Zionism, was the strengthening of positions of young people, opposing any concessions in terms of Middle East settlement. During the period of the government of "national unity", the concessions to the religious parties were not so considerable as during the governance of the Likud's bloc. As noted by Avi Shlaim, the 1977 elections represented a major landmark in Israel's history and it brought to the end three decades of Labour rule and ushered in a new era during which the right-wing Likud dominated Israeli politics [Shlaim 1996, 280].

This article aims to explain the Likud phenomenon as a whole and its balance between ideology and religion till 1984. The results that may seem obvious after Israel's elections are less amenable to analysis. The study is focused on the Likud voters that were predominantly from Sephardim groups. Also, the differences between voters from Sephardim groups with a predominantly Likud (right-wing) vote and a Labor party dominance in the Ashkenazim middle-class groups were highlighted. So, the religious Ashkenazim that voted for Aguda were opposed to the Sephardim that felt negative discrimination by religious parties that were controlled by Ashkenazim.

In 1977 the voting pattern was changed for two major religious parties of the country [Brichta 1979, 55]. Undeniably, other smaller parties also played an important role. They provide support to the major parties with the disproportionate influence of the coalition government and participate in it. Waterman asserts that the use of a single, national constituency and list system limits the extent and political relevance of direct correlations within clearly defined geographical units [Waterman 1981, 18].

The complicated system of interaction of the state and religion in Israel resulted in a number of studies of the Israeli experience, combining European democratic values and the Middle East approach to the preservation of the traditions, including religious ones. Invariability of the existing status-quo of the religion is ensured by orthodox and ultra orthodox religious forces, which co-exist and sometimes enter into a conflict with a system

of values, established by the government for consolidation of society. The article considers the peculiarities of the formation of “civil religion” as one of the forms of religious influence in Israel.

Problems of the interaction of the state and religion and the role of the latter in modern political culture remain central factors of modern life. As regards the State of Israel, the religious issue remains the central point of social and political discourse, since it affects all aspects of the life of the state and its citizens, including different aspects of private life. It was the period when the Likud party ruled in the State of Israel, though it did not meet the classic definition of the dominant party.

For the Likud, the Zionist vision of the future history of the State of Israel was prevalent despite the different place of origin, backgrounds, but the leaders tried to create a state based on secular principles rather than religious ones. That is why it is necessary to understand for further analysis how and why the Likud got the power and what role religion played in it.

As a result of the 1967 war the territories that were the core of the biblical promised lands, namely the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and East Jerusalem with the Temple Mount, were joined to Israel. Some religious Jews began to settle in those areas. Moreover, their influence in Israeli politics far exceeds their numbers; they occupy key positions in the military, mainly lower ranks government, and various layers of the bureaucracy. They can affect the decision-making process in government circles and provide a support base for religious activists [Gaier 2010, 8]. In this respect, religion has been quite influential in Israel’s policy towards the territories occupied in 1967.

Israel’s victory in that war gave rise to a more religious variety of Zionism. Some existing political parties representing orthodox Jews were gripped by religious nationalism. The religious-nationalist parties and groups constituting the far right of the Israeli political spectrum maintain a hard line on the matters relating to the territory. As the result, they have allied with the Likud Party.

The elections of 1977 caused the rise of religious nationalism. Before these elections, the religious parties focused on their material interests such as state patronage and funding for their own educational institutions and subsidized housing, exemption of Haredi males from compulsory military service, rather than broader issues, including domestic and foreign policy [Yael 1980, 73]. The handling of foreign and security policy was overseen only by the secular Labour Zionist leadership. But the situation has changed.

After the elections in the State of Israel, the religious parties appeared to be even more fractious than ever. It was the time of the fundamental changes in the Israeli political system brought about by the rise of Begin and Likud [Schiff 1990, 288]. Traditionally, there have been three main religious parties: the National Religious Party of Datim, the United Torah Judaism Party of Ashkenazic Haredim, and the Shas Party of Mizrahi Haredim in Israel representing their religious communities. After 1967, the NRP was the main religious-nationalist party. It worked hard to balance the demands of rival groups, of which some put settlements first and the others prioritized the use of religious practices in daily life. It has always been a member of all coalitions since 1948. After 1973, the party took a more nationalistic character, and its followers believed that settlements can become the base for the new Israel.

The religious core in the State of Israel was represented by NRP and Agudat Israel. Consideration of political decisions and the political position of the two parties mentioned above cannot be considered and analyzed in a simplified manner. A thorough analysis is required. Nevertheless, all religious parties can be labeled as “religious” but all of them claim to represent Orthodoxy Judaism. From this perspective, the analysis is quite different than in European religious parties. As Schiff [Schiff 1990, 289] mentioned, the two core religious parties are very different and have clearly distinguishable political and social features.

Until 1977 the National Religious Party was a Labour coalition partner, but after the elections, the NRP switched to the Likud government unity in 1984. Likud also gets support from the Haredi Agudat Israel Party. Even till 1988, Likud continued to lure the religious parties to gain their support for future coalitions [Newman 1989, 68]. The politics in Israel illustrates not only a deeper involvement of religious issues in domestic and foreign policy but also fierce struggles between the parties, including the religious ones.

Mafdal had two serious reasons to change their political pattern – a historic partnership with the Labour party. The first reason – Likud under the auspices of Begin tried to avoid secularism in public speeches and did not describe Israel as the “civil culture”. A second factor is the recognition of the Sephardi population. Gary Schifft mentioned that Mafdal got greater involvement in the general political life of the country – it began to view itself as a broad-based, religious-affiliated party with wide national appeal [Schiff 1990, 284]. But all these views crashed after the 1981 elections when they got only six seats.

Such dependence on the religious parties as coalition partners has enabled them to have normal and stable influence. The religious party representation has their minimum in 1981 – 12 seats, it's about 10 % of the total national votes. E. Rubinstein [Rubinstein 1979, 155] has noted that approximately a third of Israel's population maintained a religious or observant lifestyle. As the result, more than half of the religious constituency does not vote for any of the religious parties. Also, we can compare votes for NRP in 1977 – 66 % of the total votes for all religious parties and only 4 seats in 1984 – 31 % [Newman 1989, 67]. Of course, it can be caused by an increase of the religious settlements and switch to the right-wing parties such as Likud, Tehiya-Tsomet, and Morasha-Po'aeli Agudat Yisrael and the fact that the ethnic votes have been captured by the Tami party [Friedman 1984, 73].

It is fair to say that many voters of the National Religious Party (Mafdal) voted in 1981 for Likud, in response to the positive attitude of Begin to religion and religious traditions. The period of 1977–1984 was a period of the delicate balance between the two largest political blocs and the period of greatest mixing in terms of borders between political camps and their electorates. Also, worth mentioning that there are deep controversies in the state as regards its Jewish character, and as regards the issue of desirable manifestation of this character.

The Knesset is the Israeli parliament, consisting of 120 members. It is a body, in which both the head of the state and the Cabinet of Ministers are represented. None of the members of the Israeli parliament are elected by universal suffrage from any territorial district. During the elections in Israel, the electors vote for the parties. If the party gets 20 per cents of the votes, it possesses one-fifth of seats in the Knesset. The party and not electors shall determine who exactly will represent it in the Knesset. Such a system leads to the fact that members of the Knesset almost never vote contrary to the instructions, received from their parties.

In order to gain a seat in the Knesset, it is enough to win just one and a half percent of the votes during universal suffrage. In the Knesset, up to twenty parties were represented from time to time. In the course of the first 29 years of the existence of Israel, the most significant party was the Labor party. But even in its best times Labor party never managed to form a parliamentary majority (which required to gain 61 seats in the Knesset); it always ruled as a part of the coalition government.

Even though nominally the Likud was considered a pro-capitalist party, its economic policy was not so different from the policy of the Labor party. For a long time, the Likud defends the preservation of Judaea and Samaria as part of Israel; therefore, in foreign policy, this party follows more right-wing positions as compared to the Labor party.

Though, the Likud's accession to power in 1977 is only partially conditioned by its attitude to the issue of Judaea and Samaria. The party won the elections first of all due to the fact that it managed to catch better: attract a lot of voters-Sephardim, who constitute

more than half of the Israeli electorate. Sephardim had long ago and with good reason considered the Labor party to be the party of Ashkenazi, where Sephardim will hardly be admitted to leading positions. Many Sephardim are sure that Israelis supporting the Labor party are exactly those people, who look down at them as a lower class or “backward” group, and do not show any respect to their traditional Jewish system of values.

Extreme left-wing groups in Israel, demanding large-scale and immediate concessions to the Arabs at the turn of 1970–1980, looked complete outcasts and they could not win votes even for one mandate. Even from the beginning of their rise, when at their demonstration in the wake of the concerning inter-Arab massacre in the camps of Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon the same voting results were obtained. The leader of the Labor Party (Ma’arakh) Shimon Peres came before the revival of mighty extreme left-wing power, comparable with Mapam, in the early years of existence of the State of Israel, it was long before 1982. It is another matter that the majority of their adherents preferred to vote for HaMa’arakh and Israeli Labor Party (Avoda), in order “not to drop the vote”. While appraisal of elections and polls results it is necessary to take into account the described phenomenon and not to interpret them as real and definite readiness of electors to fully embrace political ideas and concepts.

Begin also emphasized that he, as well as Sephardim, is ousted from power, which is in the hands of the Labor party. Many religious electors were attracted by the right-wing orientation of the Likud, which is closer to their own traditional ideology. Due to that Begin relatively easily managed to attract religious parties in the coalition, formed by him, though the Likud came to power having won just forty-three seats, a little more than one-third of all seats in the Knesset. Begin even offered a seat in the government to ultra-orthodox Zionist party Agudat Israel.

Although during elections to the Knesset the religious parties won, as a rule, only from twelve to eighteen seats, nevertheless, it gave them enormous power; for the formation of the government, in which the majority of members of parliament would be represented, both the Likud and Labor party needed their support.

The 1984 elections saw a similar decrease in the vote for Aguda, from its traditional four seats (34 % of the total vote) to only two (1,7 %). The traditional support for Agudat Yisrael was due to a switch to a newly-formed Shas party which obtained over 3 % at its first attempt. The Shas obtained its support from two major quarters: the non-Hasidic Ashkenazim who had traditionally voted for Agudat and the religious or “traditional” Sephardim who perceived themselves as negative, discriminated by the Ashkenazi-controlled religious parties. It may suggest the general trend among the national religious population. It is harder to trace the cause and number of lost NRP votes than the ones of Agudat Yisrael. The choice of the religious population in the elections is very much dependent on the rabbis. The Likud, Tami, and Morasha all drew traditional NRP voters [Newman 1986, 133]. This indicates a general trend among the national religious population to vote in favor of those parties and policies that emphasize the indivisibility of a Greater Israel [Waterman 1981, 19]. This party election scenario has transformed the NRP into a right-wing satellite party of the Likud, contrasting with its previous centrist stance.

Participation of religious parties in the voting process in itself presents challenges. The range of voting data is really wide due to social-economic, ethnic, and demographic variables. But all this data didn’t include information about “religion” and “secular” affiliation. Hershkowitz [Hershkowitz 1987, 45] used votes for the religious parties to determine the residential concentrations of the religious population. A significant percentage of the population that define themselves as religious did not vote for religious parties [Newman 1989, 70].

Engagement of the representatives from the religious sector (religious parties) in the polemic between right-wing and left-wing brought more serious ideological context to

their opposition. If earlier the disputes between “doves” and “hawks” were limited to security considerations, historical rights, and issues of correlation of territorial (occupied territories) and demographic aspects, now controversies between Torah testaments and principles of the democratic state were added. It resulted in the introduction of levers of ideological, political, and cultural pressure on Israeli society; creation of a powerful political lobby, able to counter at government level any attempt to begin leaving the occupied territories or scale down there the construction of Jewish settlements, which considerably complicates the settlement process.

The Union of the Likud with religious camp, under the conditions of weakening of leading Israeli parties, incapacitates the Likud in terms of national and foreign policy, connected with Arabic factor, since if the requirements of coalition partners are not met, there is a threat of early parliamentary election and loss of power.

The dynamics of the conflict determined the content of the policy, carried out in respect of the Arabs – citizens of Israel, based on three inconsistent principles:

- 1) principle of democracy of the state;
- 2) Jewish and Zionist character of the state;
- 3) principle of the priority of security considerations of the state under conditions of unresolved conflict.

It has been reported that in many electoral districts in the socialist bloc ha-Ma'arach received no votes. Begin mounted the platform and said: “Today the most important event in the history of the Jewish people since the Zionist movement took place. In 1931 at the 17th Zionist congress Ze'ev Jabotinsky determined the establishment of the independent Jewish state in the coming decades to be the main goal of Zionism. Jabotinsky, unfortunately, did not live to see the establishment of independent Israel and present-day, turning the political picture upside down”. Begin saw people, according to Zionist ideology believed that each Jew, who performed Aliyah, should attain protection and support. Therefore, if the Jew did not find a workplace and appeared to be undefended in his homeland, it is equal to national misfortune. On a free market with its competition, many people felt threatened and genuinely believed that capitalism, which will result in the misery of social groups, is contraindicative to Israel. In the atmosphere of a hostile environment, security concerns may suffer due to economic elements. The absorption of new repatriates as one of the main national tasks seemed to them realistic only in conditions of the socialistic economy.

Begin consistently pursued the concept of his instructor Ze'ev Jabotinsky. The basis of the ideological platform of the party Herut, established by him, was formed by the principle of shared national objective compared to dual nature of Zionist and socialistic movement; the primacy of national and public interests over “class” ones; creation of a liberal society with the free economy and minimal government intervention; extension of the sovereignty of the Jewish state to the whole historical territory of Eretz Israel; establishment of relations with the Arabian neighbors from the perspective of the military and political force of the Jewish state. Begin considered the West Bank occupied during the war in 1967 as historical lands of Judaea and Samaria, considering it his duty to aid religious Jews to build settlements on these lands, which aroused opposition from the part of the Labour party and negative judgment from the part of UN.

He did not see the Sinai desert as part of biblical Greater Israel. Therefore, when President Sadat confirmed his readiness to “exchange peace for land”, Begin was ready for negotiations, the result of which was a treaty of peace with Egypt, signed on March 26, 1979. It is worth mentioning that NRP even traditionally obtained a portion of its votes from Israeli Arabs from 7 to 9,8 % in the 1981 and 1984 elections [Shamir, Arian 1982]. Also, there are a few of the extreme Haredim population that does not participate in the elections because they reject the legitimacy of the State of Israel. As the result, it's impossible to establish the precise correlations between voting behavior and residential

patterns beyond general trends [Newman 1989, 74]. From the time when Likud came to power, the Eretz Israel ideology (with territories and settlement movement) was transformed into a nationalist agenda and became the core of right-wing politics. Religious groups welcomed these results.

The Likud Party enjoyed the support of settlements. After 1967 the political system in Israel and voters started to become more ideologically radicalized, the religious-nationalist position towards the settlements became more acceptable for the new political mainstream. Nevertheless, religion was an important factor in Israel's policy. After the 1984 elections, Greilsammer demonstrated the difference between "old" and "new" urban settlements. Such division is very similar to the countrywide division between settlements [Greilsammer 1986, 93]. The old one identified with a high proportion of Ashkenazi voters with good socio-economic levels, and they gave their vote to the Likud and the Labor Party. In contrast, the new urban settlements that were characterized by a big number of Sephardic voters had a dominant pattern of voting for the Likud. But it should be mentioned that at the same time some part of the national religious electorate voted for the non-religious parties. As the result, it appears that the key factors influencing the voting process are ethnic origin and socioeconomic status [Newman 1989, 74].

The path to victory was made possible by an electoral coalition created by Begin. The first target was the Sephardic community that was a demographic minority in the Jewish population. Sephardic voters started to gradually vote in the elections, and Menachem Begin knew how to play up the sense of alienation of a growing number of them towards the Labour-Ashkenazi establishment. As Olmert notes, another demographic group that was cultivated by Begin in the long years of being in the political wilderness, were Religious Zionists. Their representative party, the National Religious Party was a loyal partner of David Ben-Gurion and the Labour movement, but their younger generation started to question the foundations of this alliance. Also, the effects of the wars of 1967 and 1973 played a key role in accelerating political change in Israel. It also led to a dramatic transformation in the religious Zionist community [Olmert 2013].

The main issues that Begin aspired to deal with can be defined as the right of the Jewish people to Eretz Israel, fight with poverty, and victory over the Labour Party. Likud's coming to power is the story of how Israel has changed from a variety of perspectives: demographic, ideological, and cultural, from the Ashkenazi – oriented, secular society of the Yishuv and dominant Labour movement, and became Israel dominated by the new contenders for power, new demographic communities which by virtue of their numerical superiority took over the country in 1977 [Olmert 2013]. It is definitely the case, which Likud knew better than Labour to adapt itself to the changes in Israeli society and took advantage of them. Nonetheless, from 1984 it has taken a third or less of the Knesset seats and sometimes even returned to opposition. As the ideology they positioned their Zionism between Labour's secular approach and Jewish religious nationalism, supporting a non-religious state while showing deep respect for Judaism as the cradle of the Jewish nation.

Also in May 1977, Menachem Begin proclaimed that "the titanic struggle of ideas stretching back to 1931", a reference that can be unclear for most of his listeners [Shlaim 2005, 278]. Because great job has been done since the ideas from proclaimed by Ze'ev Jabotinsky till Begin proceeded to implement the ideological elements of the Revisionist Zionists [Olmert 2013, 138].

Zionism drew attention to Jewish religious attachment to Jerusalem and the Land of Israel (Eretz Israel). However, the politics of Zionism were influenced by nationalist ideology, and by colonial ideas about Europeans' rights to claim and settle other parts of the world. Moreover, Jews were recognized as a distinct national group (rather than religious).

The connection between religion, politics and the State of Israel as the nation-state is closely linked to the principles that create political legitimacy and the basic character of a

state. The framework that allows religion to play an essential role not only in the state's ideological attitude but also in society and politics is in line with the position of the Likud [Gaier 2010]. Gaier mentioned that two main factors might illustrate these tensions. "Firstly, the concepts of statehood of the movement that promoted the creation of the state defined its legitimacy as the dominant agency from the pre-state period to the state formation until the establishment of power structures in which it implemented its agenda" [Gaier 2010]. Secondly, Gaier wrote that Rabbis as "potential rule makers" promoted consensus regarding the state legitimacy as a state that had been founded based on universalistic principles, providing different legal frameworks and institutions of law that – in terms of democratic freedom and equality – apply to all citizens [Gaier 2010]. Particularistic national-religious elements represent a historical and doctrinal continuity with the traditions of Judaism, so the basic duality of particularism and universalism essential in Judaism has been reproduced in the making of the states and is incorporated into the foundations of statehood as Gaier wrote [Gaier 2010].

The period from 1977 illustrated not only the significant participation of religious actors in domestic and foreign policy but also a clash between the religious parties based on their ideological and ethnic attitude and religious leadership and the competition between the national-religious and the ultra-orthodox block. This competition became obvious when the religious parties started to be more fragmented by splits and mergers.

The NRP and its ultra-orthodox counterparts Agudat Yisrael and Shas in 1984 also shared political roles in various ministries as well as economic and political institutions. In this context, the control of the Ministry of Religious Affairs as well as the implementation of Israel's Chief Rabbinate – constituted by an Ashkenazi and a Sephardi Rabbi – became the main issues in religious politics [Gaier 2010, 12]. Religious organizations and activists were involved not only in the issues restricted to purely religious disputes, but they have shown their ability to mobilize particular groups of society based on interest to the religious, ethnic, and political issues.

Generally speaking, the instrumentalization of religious parties by the state is targeted at:

- 1) marginalizing competing mainstream parties;
- 2) appeasing the religious sector by power-sharing in the government or limited legal, political, or institutional concessions;
- 3) gaining social and financial control over the institutions of the traditional religious sector;
- 4) legitimizing rule by religious means and symbols;
- 5) integrating religious groups as a force in the regional geostrategic agenda [Gaier 2010].

As Gaier wrote: "Implicit in this is often a trend to contrast the Western-style liberal democratic thought with the emergence of religious-political parties and non-parliamentary partisan movements not least to a religious-based threat to democracy" [Gaier 2010, 12]. Religion and politics tend to focus on the reasons why religion in societies has the dominant role in the light of the secularization pattern and on the impact of the religious parties in domestic and international politics. It is useful to understand that those religious voters in Israel since the beginning of the proclamation of independence were involved very actively in the issues with the political leaders. The State of Israel for many reasons avoided a theocratic model but still, the religious parties have successfully obtained disproportionate political discourse of power. Considering the concept of "religious nationalism", religious parties must be considered not only as political players but also as shaping powers and promoters of nation-building. Israel had to create identities, impose languages, and contend with artificial boundaries.

After the 1977 elections, the voting pattern for Israel's religious parties showed two important things. Firstly, every analysis of the voting behavior needs to take into account

that the Haredi population has a huge influence on the voting process: their voting decision and decision to participate in the elections as a whole. The second one is that some of the national-religious electorate votes for non-religious parties. Before the 1973 elections, the municipal elections were held on the same day as the national elections. That is why the voting patterns were similar. Ideological disagreements have always existed within Israel's religious sector, and have traditionally focused on the issue of settlements, but the change of voting pattern of religious groups happened for the country's two major parties and was caused by Likud's upheaval.

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О. І. Альошина

**Лікуд: баланс між ідеологією і релігією.
Уперше в уряді (1977–1984)**

Вибори 1977 року традиційно називали "потрясінням" Блоку Лікуд. Став можливим тонкий баланс між світською та релігійною політичною владою в Державі Ізраїль. Ба більше, роль ортодоксальних та націоналістичних партій швидко зростала. У результаті цих виборів права партія очолила уряд вперше з моменту здобуття незалежності Державою Ізраїль. Повернення релігії до політичної сфери можна оцінити як явище нової ізраїльської політики. Влада релігійних партій полягає у формуванні та забезпеченні коаліційних урядів. Водночас релігійний блок не зміг зберегти центральну роль у державній політиці. Але він займав те саме важливе місце в Кнесеті, що й з 1948 року, як постійний партнер урядових коаліцій. Релігійні партії повністю інтегрувалися в політичну систему держави. Отже, вони досягли значних переваг для себе. Ба більше, вперше за тридцять років політичні партії почали представляти культурну та політичну різноманітність усього населення країни. Державу Ізраїль можна визначити як релігійну країну релігійної нації, та все ж багато громадян не належали до частини цієї релігійної спільноти. Насправді культурна війна розпочалася між двома верствами суспільства – світськими ізраїльтянами та релігійними євреями. Обидві групи вважали, що саме вони мають визначати характер Держави Ізраїль. Зрештою, така політична партія, як Лікуд, вичерпно продемонструвала, що консолідація демократичних систем не могла відбутися без включення релігійних партій. У результаті політичний імідж Лікуду як "релігійно орієнтованої партії" сприяв зміні політичної влади з лейбористської на владу Блоку Лікуд.

Ключові слова: громадянська релігія, Держава Ізраїль, ізраїльські політичні партії, Кнесет, Лікуд, релігійні партії

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