Opinion

Column/Simson L. Garfinkel

Israel has its shortcomings

This summer I worked at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovoth, Israel. After years of being a member of a Zionist youth movement, spending the summer in Israel was an overwhelming experience: I do not like Israel anymore.

Israelis like to point out that their country is a much nicer place to live than most other places in the world. It is definitely true that Israel has a much higher standard of living than countries such as Egypt, Vietnam, or Cambodia. But I find inconceivable their claims that Israel has taken the best that the United States has to offer and improved it.

During my stay there, many Israelis told me that I should choose to live permanently in Israel; indeed, this was the goal of my Zionist youth movement. At the start of the summer I was considering this option seriously but now I've opened my eyes. The United States has its problems, to be sure, but a person would have to be very unhappily here to want to move to Israel.

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President Reagan assures the taxpayers that for a few trillion dollars, the Pentagon can make weapons "impotent and obsolete." When will Git, Colombia, say "we have a more important principle first used by the Romans?"

What bothered me even more than the Israeli social problems were the attitudes of the Israelis themselves. Israelis do not place the same importance on time as we do. Things go slowly here, people stand in lines without complaining. A customer walks into a store to buy something and the shopkeeper is reading a newspaper; the customer waits. People talk, tell jokes, and drink coffee, but they don't seem to take their last productivity. It is a much calmer life style. There is a lot of time.

Guest Column/Seth A. Gordon

SDI technology will be unreliable

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