The End of Israel?

"The very idea of a 'Jewish state'—a state in which Jews and the Jewish religion have exclusive privileges and from which non-Jewish citizens are forever excluded—is rooted in another time and place. Israel, in short, is an anachronism."

With that argument, Judt, who is director of the Remarque Institute at New York University, has touched off a furor. Israel is the product of what he regards as an antiquated 19th-century notion, the nation-state based on "ethnoreligious self-definition." And its existence as a nation-state is complicated by demographic realities. Within five to eight years, Arabs will outnumber Jews inside the borders of the "Greater Israel" formed by lands Israel has occupied since the 1967 war. That leaves Israel with three choices, Judt argues. It can pull back to the 1967 borders and retain its Jewish majority and its democratic character. It can expel the Arabs from the occupied territories, with dire consequences. Or it can retain the territories and surrender its Jewish character.

Judt thinks it's too late for Israel to pull back. "There are too many settlements, too many Jewish settlers [more than a quarter-million], and too many Palestinians, and they all live together, albeit separated by barbed wire and pass laws." The two-state solution that has been the goal of all peace negotiations is therefore, in Judt's view, "probably already doomed."

The only palatable alternative he sees is "a single, integrated, binational state of Jews and Arabs," their security "guaranteed by international force." Judt concedes that this is "an unpromising mix of realism and utopia" but insists that it's the best course available.

His critics, however, call his argument fantasy or worse. If the nation-state is an "anachronism," retorts Michael Walzer of the Institute for Advanced Study, then why begin its abolition with Israel? Why not France, or Sweden, or Japan? And Walzer is not the only critic to point out that Judt's binational state wouldn't be binational for long. A Palestinian majority would make a Palestinian nation-state. The only question is how much blood would be shed in the process. Brown University's Omer Bartov notes that Hamas and Islamic Jihad would never share sovereignty with Jews.

Yes, says Walzer, the road to a two-state solution is difficult. But an Israeli pullback is possible, and polls show that majorities of both Palestinians and Israelis favor two states. It's their current leaders who stand in the way. Over the longer term, it ought to be obvious that "two anachronistic states are better than one."

King Coup

Military coups seem pretty much a thing of the past in most of the world. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia, only a few coups have succeeded (notably, in Haiti and Pakistan) since the mid-1980s. But sub-Saharan Africa is another story altogether: Between 1985 and 2001, it experienced 21 successful coups and 41 failed attempts, reports McGowan, a political scientist at Arizona State University.

Coups d'état began to become frequent and widespread in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1960s, he says. Between 1956 and 2001, the 48 independent African states experienced 80 coups, 108 failed attempts, and

139 coup plots. Eighteen countries suffered more than one coup, and Nigeria, Benin, and Burkina Faso had six apiece. West Africa, with one-third of the states but 45 percent of the coup attempts, is the most coup-prone region.

Only six African countries have been completely free of coup plots and attempts, but three of those (Namibia, Eritrea, and South Africa) became independent or majority ruled only in the 1990s. "Only the multiparty democracies of Botswana, Cape Verde, and Mauritius," McGowan observes, "have been both independent for more than 25 years and entirely free of the coup virus."

Despite the trend toward democratization in the 1990s, the African propensity for coups hardly changed, though their success rate diminished. In the dozen years before 1990, there were 54 attempted coups, 26 of them successful; in the next dozen years, there were 50 attempts, 13 successful. "New, weakly institutionalized democratic governments are as apt to suffer from the coup virus as are weak one-party and military regimes," McGowan points out.

But since 1990, a slim majority (27) of the African states have had no coup attempts. The reasons vary, says McGowan. In some countries, "the military has been bought off by sharing in the spoils of the regime"; in others, civil wars are in progress. And a dozen of the coup-free states have "functioning multiparty democratic political systems." Democracy, even when well-established, does not eliminate the risk of a coup, he observes, but it helps.

Europe à la Carte

"Europe Divided? Elites vs. Public Opinion on European Integration" by Liesbet Hooghe, in *European Union Politics* (Sept. 2003), Sage Publications, 2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, Calif. 91320.

When it comes to an integrated Europe, leaders and led appear far apart, with the former enthusiastic and the latter not very. But that common perception is something of an illusion, contends Hooghe, a political scientist at the University of North Carolina. In reality, the elites and the citizenry are looking to the European Union for different things.

"Elites," she says, "desire a European Union capable of governing a large, competitive market and projecting political muscle; citizens are more in favor of a caring European Union, which protects them from the vagaries of capitalist markets."

Recent surveys seem at first to confirm the oft-sighted huge gap between national leaders, 93 per-cent of whom regard EU membership as, on balance, a good thing, and the public, of whom only 53 percent agree. But when the questioning gets to specific policy areas, the gap narrows or disappears.

The real elite-public difference, Hooghe argues, is in the sorts of issues the two groups want the EU to handle. Some 69 percent of the national lead-
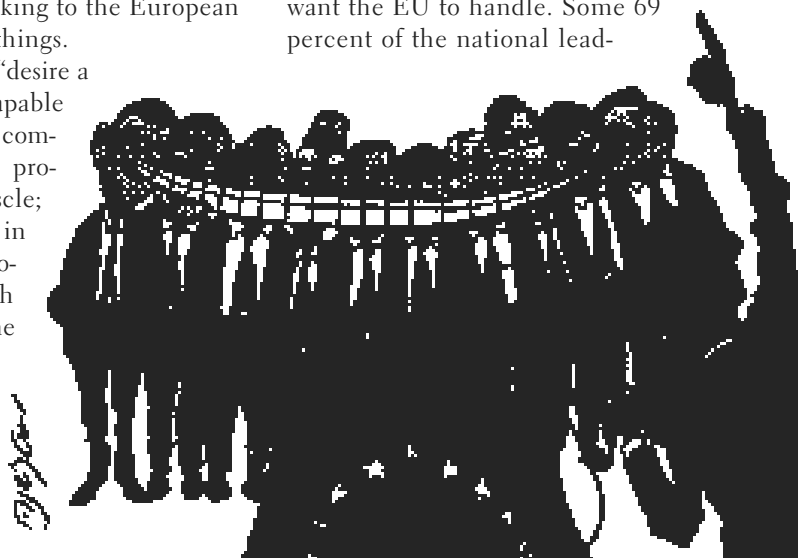
Europe's leaders attempt to put the best face on European unity.