varied opinions on the subject of a Volcker strategy, none very promising. One view is that there is no need to control the Fed. Volcker is doing a fine job, can be trusted, and is completely under White House control. No supply-sider, monetarist, or Keynesian true to his model would say this after the last five years, but the argument survives. It is bound to fade, absent a Volcker loosening in the coming months.

Another school concedes that Volcker may be a grave threat, but says there is nothing that can be done to hold him in check. "The markets and the bankers wouldn't stand for it" if Volcker were removed, one White House aide argues. And short of removal, this school argues, there is little you can do to rein in a Fed chairman.

Actually, if the "market" is any guide, the replacement of Volcker with a suitably knowledgeable man—Preston Martin, Lew Lehrman—might prompt a Wall Street rally. The market reacted favorably throughout 1983 to news leaks suggesting Volcker would not be reappointed. My own guess is that the news of Volcker's replacement would at worst produce a drop on the market one day of 15 points, to be met by a rise the next day of 15 points. It might prompt a major rally. In any

case, the reaction of the stock market over three days is no datum on which to base four years of economic policy. As for the notion that there are no levers short of firing Volcker, let me suggest at least four:

First, put a spotlight on the Fed's operations. One bill now in Congress would require immediate and complete release of the Fed's minutes, including transcripts. This would at least clarify what the Fed is up to. There are solid economic grounds for doing so: Markets will function more smoothly if they do not have to rely on tea leaves and $200,000 a year Fed-watcher consultants for information about what the bank plans. And there are ample political grounds for making the nation's most powerful economic institution more accountable.

Second, have a clearly defined monetary policy—the best way to promote accountability. Jack Kemp has a bill to base that policy on the gold standard. Others would prefer a quantity rule (monetarism) or interest rate targeting, and have their own bills in the hopper. Almost all agree, however, that Congress, which created the Fed, can tell the Fed how to conduct policy, and that the economy would be better off with even a bad policy than with none at all.

Third, change the Fed chairman's

term to coincide with the President's. At present, a President must wait two-and-one-half years to name his own man at the bank. A number of bills would alter the term to allow a President to appoint the chairman within a few months of his own inauguration. Volcker himself supports the idea, and has offered to step down if such a bill were passed. Reagan should take that offer up.

Fourth, even without taking any of the above steps, the White House could substantially influence Fed policy simply by telling the Fed what it wants. Unfortunately, when Reagan tried this in his first term, his signals were either hopelessly vague or, worse, contradictory. Sometimes Reagan asked for a Fed policy to "continue growth at a sustainable, non-inflationary level." Oh really? And how do you do that?

There are, however, strong reasons to think the President will adopt one or all of these strategies. For one, we have the rising prestige, within the White House and even in *Time* and *Newsweek,* of the supply-side model, which has after all predicted virtually every turning point over the last six years. One only hopes that Mr. Reagan will set himself up for a regular briefing from a Reynolds, Roberts, or Jude Wanniski about the cause of high in-

terest rates or the nuts and bolts of the Fed. He has apparently been doing so in sparse measure through such aides as Bruce Chapman and Edwin Meese, whose understanding of the monetary debate has allowed them to fill a gaping power vacuum on the Reagan team.

Then, too, there are politics. The battle for Reagan's succession is already underway. Jack Kemp seems to be leading a growing consensus in Congress, academia, and the popular press that the Fed must once again be reined in. Though they disagree violently about what Fed policy should be, liberals and conservatives, monetarists and supply-siders alike seem to agree that something on the order of the steps outlined above must be done. Kemp is hardly likely to stop pushing the issue he has championed now that he is unofficially running for President.

One certainty: No President or presidential candidate can safely afford to ignore the Fed. Richard Nixon told me not long ago that one of his "biggest mistakes" was not learning about the operations of the Fed, an ignorance that led him to lose in 1960 and to buy the mistaken arguments of Volcker and Company in the 1970s. George Bush, Howard Baker, and Robert Dole, take note.   □

John Train

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

The key to our defenses may lie just beyond the horizon.

Imagine a city of 5,000 whose inhabitants dwell far below street level and rarely come up to daylight. Why bother? After all, there's nothing you can do when you get to the surface except stand in a confined area, called "Vulture's Row," where you can look around but only walk a few dozen steps.

Virtually cut off from the rest of the world—mail comes and goes at intervals, but there is no telephone—the

John Train is author of The Money Masters, Remarkable Names, *and other books, and is a columnist in* Le Matin *(Paris),* Harvard Magazine, *and* Investors Chronicle *(London).*

city makes its own rules. Indeed, in organization it resembles Plato's ideal republic. There are the leaders (Plato's "guardians") and the led. Poverty has been vanquished. All know their place and work pretty much 'round the clock. Fourteen-hour days aren't unusual. As republics go, it's certainly a lot closer to Sparta than Athens: there's little room for art or philosophy, and a lot of emphasis on the martial virtues.

There are some odd features about this city. For instance, every now and again you're conscious of a tiny earthquake: The whole city shudders slightly, and you hear a gasping sound, as though Old Faithful had spouted up

above. Then, there's the quantity of electrical wiring. It's almost unbelievable. In some areas if you look up you can see running along the ceiling hundreds and hundreds of conduits, large and small, from the equivalent of fingers to bundles like arms or even legs. If you pulled them all together they might be as thick as a man's torso, or even the body of a horse.

I recently came back from the city in question. It is stationed just off the Persian Gulf, and its name is the USS *America,* one of the fourteen aircraft carriers that form the core of our sur-

face navy, and probably the one that will move into action if the Saudis or their neighbors appeal for air cover against Iranian attack on their territory or their shipping. Much careful general staff calculation goes on in Teheran, Baghdad, Riyadh, and elsewhere about what the *America* represents, with its accompanying ships and their potential reinforcements. If ever fully committed, the *America* by itself could probably destroy the Iranian air force *in toto* and demolish all the significant targets in the country. That, in fact, is its business.

Carrying out that business requires a sophistication and complexity far beyond any normal ship. In fact, the

America has almost all the components of an airbase on shore: not just jet bombers and fighters and hangars and barracks and munition storage facilities, but a television station, a typewriter repair shop, a jail, and a health club. It has huge warehouses, room upon room full of state-of-the-art electronics, a hospital, and newspaper offices—in all about 2,400 compartments.

Now, a single tiny computer chip these days equals a large conventional calculator. A microcircuit card contains dozens of chips, and amounts to the heart of a powerful computer. Some dozens of these cards make a "black box," whose computing power is almost unimaginable. Well, some of the planes on the *America* contain dozens of "black boxes," equaling whole armies of technicians operating with the speed of light. The support and maintenance of these systems requires a complement of testing machines, which are themselves composed of enormous arrays of microcircuits and are in some instances the size of a small room. The whole repair section has hundreds of men working in it. You might call it an electronic village within the maritime city, representing a commitment of capital and talent that could never be matched by a Third World antagonist. It's required to keep the system going, including AWACs, bombers, tankers, radar jamming planes, fighters, and "smart" munitions. That system in turn produces the extraordinary kill ratios against hostile aircraft—Syrian, Libyan, and so forth—ten to one,

twenty to one, fifty to one, that we see in recent air encounters. You need the whole electronic village to make the system work.

It should come as no surprise that the *America* contains very few old-fashioned mariners, men who could take a small boat across an ocean. In fact, it's quite possible that not a single member of the 5,000-man crew could navigate with a sextant, and little chance that if the skipper, like Captain Bligh, were put over the side in a lifeboat by mutineers, he and his key officers would be competent to sail off to the nearest island. This is a different kind of ship, a ship not of sailors but of specialists, right down to the ship's dog, who is used not as a mascot, but rather to sniff out illegal drugs.

This isn't even a ship that allows the men on board to roam the decks. Unlike a cruiser, for instance, with its extensive free deck space, the four-and-a-half-acre flight deck of the carrier is off limits except to the pilots and the men who handle the planes. At any moment an F-14 may come screaming over the stern to land, or be catapulted off the bow. And one of the greatest perils to flight operations is foreign object damage, FOD in carrier lingo. A loose object dropped on deck can be sucked into a fighter's jet engines at the moment of takeoff, with catastrophic results, so not the smallest fragment of litter is ever allowed to remain. Off-duty crewmen wandering around would be all too likely to drop something, even if they were not in danger from aircraft or an inconvenience to the men moving the planes in and out of congested spaces.

Add to this that *America*'s decks are given over to its 90 planes—most of which are lashed into position topsides—and it becomes clear that a carrier is more a part of the air than the sea. Of the 5,000 men on board, half belong to the air wing, and half run the ship. Both the skipper and his executive officer are fliers, as is the admiral whose flag streams overhead as commander of the group of ships of which the carrier is the core. The airmen form the unmistakable elite of the carrier. They are dressed not in blues, like the navy enlisted men who work the ship, nor in khaki, like the officers, but in dark green flight suits with bulging pockets. The carrier itself, to use a term one hears constantly in discussions of naval warfare, is essentially the "platform" for the air wing it carries.

The significance of airpower for today's navy is not difficult to explain. Since 1945, there have been well over a hundred occasions in which we have sent our navy into a hostile environment. In most of them a carrier group was the heart of the force. The unique

advantage of naval airpower is that it can be deployed either defensively or offensively, and in a way that administers just the amount of power desired. In a defensive situation the carrier can be extremely useful: In evacuating our embassy in Saigon, the *Midway*'s flight deck was necessary to land the large air force helicopters that were used. In its offensive posture, the carrier can administer the entire spectrum of force, from a mere demonstration, such as sending supersonic jets to scream past a few yards above an objective, to machine guns, cannons, rockets, or bombs, including atomic bombs. So the arrival of a carrier group in a warlike mood is a threat that's always taken most seriously by its potential target. More than one international crisis has simply stopped when a U.S. carrier group got within range. People complain about gunboat diplomacy, but it's a lot cheaper than landing an expeditionary force. Furthermore, not only is putting men ashore, or dropping them, much more of a commitment—you can count on the locals to attack them and you've got to keep them supplied—but you may have a lot of trouble getting them off. A carrier, on the contrary, has its own supply system, and when the need has passed it just drops down over the horizon again.

The Falklands war illustrates the point admirably. The British knew from their intelligence sources that the Argentines were thinking of invading. They didn't want to reinforce their handful of troops on the islands for fear of appearing provocative. But a "fully capable" carrier group in the area early in the game would have ended the discussion. It could have started to sink the invading transports from hundreds of miles away as they entered Falkland territorial waters. There would have been no war.

In short, the carrier is a sword: It advances a deadly point toward the enemy. Right in front of his face, in fact. And like any sword, it can administer nicely controlled force: a silent threat, a feint, a slap with the flat side, a flesh wound, or a deadly thrust to the vitals. If your opponent also carries a sword, having one yourself doesn't establish superiority. However, of all the world's navies only ours has a fully developed air arm. The big carrier, like the skyscraper, is an American specialty (although both the steam catapult and the angled flightdeck are British inventions, along with the mirror-based optical landing control system). It's so complicated and expensive that for the moment we're the only serious practitioners. A number of other navies have limited-

purpose carriers, a few have a couple of big ones, but none has a full fleet of carrier forces that can defend itself against all attackers from the air, the surface, and under the sea—and launch its own attacking planes, with its own air cover and refueling aircraft, against the target. That's likely to remain true. It's almost a form of industrial warfare. We're better at that than Russia or China, say, but even more important, it suits our geography. Wyoming doesn't feel like an island, but on the map the U.S. is a huge land mass largely surrounded by water. So just as it was for England in past centuries, our fleet has become our basic line of defense.

In addition, our system of alliances requires control of the seas. Japan has no oil of its own, and depends for survival on a line of tankers, like a procession of ants carrying bits of leaf from a fallen tree back to the anthill, running from the Arabian Gulf across the Indian Ocean and through the East Indies to Japan itself. All across that vast distance there flows, day and night, every day of the year, an artery of tankers a few miles apart bearing Japan's energy supply. If the Soviets ever cut that artery, they bring Japan to its knees. The same is true of the other arteries that run from the oil wells of the Middle East: one through the Suez Canal into the Mediterranean, and the other around the Cape of Good Hope and up the west coast of Africa to Europe. Cut those arteries and Europe starts to die. Threaten plausibly to cut them and Europe starts making concessions, fast.

That is the harsh language of seapower. International politics is harsh. The Berlin blockade was harsh, Eisenhower's use of the atomic threat to stop the Korean War was harsh, recovering the Falklands was harsh. But these things happen constantly. There are several dozen countries at war in the world right now. If we don't want to be limited to either strategic bombers and invasion forces or nothing at all, then we need naval airpower.

A good example lies at our doorstep. If there were a conventional war in Europe, we'd have to supply NATO via the Gulf of Mexico, through which passes most of our ship traffic with that part of the world. But Cuba is a bone blocking the throat of the Gulf, lying just a few miles off Florida. To neutralize Cuba's powerful air force, and the Soviet subs based there, would require tactical airpower. We could reach only part of the island from the U.S. For the rest we'd need carrier-based aircraft.

From a strategic standpoint, then,

the carrier is irreplaceable. Now, one can find a substitute for the carrier in most of its functions: the Rapid Deployment Force to land troops abroad, missile-firing vessels for fleet action, land air bases for land bombardment, and so on. In practice, however, there are many problems with each alternative.

The Rapid Deployment Force does not really exist, but if it ever does it will have problems in many situations. How do you deploy it where you can't land transport planes?

Missile-firing vessels, in place of carriers, admittedly have a seductive logic to them. After all, just as the airplane has superseded the naval gun, so too the missile—in essence a cheap, non-returnable aircraft—is superseding the plane. You can shoot a missile at an enemy, goes the argument, without risking the loss of a plane. But to do that you have to move your ship correspondingly close to the enemy. In other words, to spare the plane you put the ship at risk. And you can't fire a missile at what you don't know is there, so you probably need air reconnaissance, again presumably requiring a carrier. Then, a missile carried near the target by plane gives that much more reach. And, as in the Exocet attack on the *Sheffield,* a radar-guided missile, like a falcon, needs to be shown a target and "locked on," which is done by the plane that carries it. There are, in a word, many situations in which the carrier is indispensable even for missile attacks.

And there are many disadvantages to land bases. The last forty years have seen America lose many such bases outright—Cam Ramh, Ton Son Hut, and others—while through combat operations from Korea to Vietnam no one has ever sunk a carrier. Foreign bases are also exorbitantly expensive; they create political friction, and they require their own ground defense. For the sake of overseas bases, America has been forced into exceedingly costly deals with Greece and Spain. At other times the price has been higher, and bases have so aroused local political emotions that they have weakened the position of a government friendly to the United States. Is it any wonder that countries in the Middle East have been sensitive about giving us base rights, even to protect their oil?

And which is more vulnerable? In Vietnam we lost a total of 400 planes sitting on the ground to enemy action—equivalent to more than all the aircraft on four carriers—plus 2,000 damaged. Our carrier-based planes did not sustain any such loss or damage. Targeted exactly, land bases can be hit by missiles at any time. On a lower level of conflict they require infantry to protect them. That infantry in turn

requires air power, and before you know it you're hooked. By comparison, a carrier group is the very model of independence and flexibility.

There remains, of course, the great argument: Doesn't the carrier make a huge, lucrative target—especially to the shore-based missiles or the lucky torpedo boat attacks of some two-bit country? Quite true. A carrier in that situation is like a Rolls Royce in Harlem. But the point is that because a carrier has its planes and missiles do the attacking, it's able to stay out of harm's way, well offshore.

It is this elusiveness that makes a carrier a difficult objective to sink. Theoretically, for instance, a ship like

radar, and bobs about tracking its target almost like a boxer. If a cruise missile gets in close enough, or a bomber penetrates the screen of outlying ships, the Phalanx squirts super-hard uranium-core high-velocity shells at it during its last seconds of flight, simultaneously tracking both the target and its own projectiles until there's a hit. The Phalanx should be able to down an Exocet. At that prodigious rate of fire, the Phalanx wears out its barrels in seven minutes, and is worn out completely after an hour of firing—more than it would ever get.

Even if a missile should get through, say an Exocet, it is doubtful that a carrier could be incapacitated. Nine heavy bombs once exploded on the deck of the *Enterprise* in a catastrophic acci-

to sacrifice, it still won't be *that* much smaller or cheaper. *America* is about 1,140 feet long, the smallest size that can simultaneously land aircraft and catapult them off. Planes have to glide down, not crash down: You need at least four lines of arresting wires with 40-foot gaps between them, followed by a 320-foot runout, plus on-deck storage space. In other words, a carrier really can't be much shorter, unless you switch to the Harrier type of short-takeoff jet that the British use. Then, however, you are accepting a grave performance handicap against a potential adversary.

You might chop off 150 feet, an eighth of its length, but this could mean sacrificing the all-around capability, so that you would need to send two carriers instead of one into a danger zone, an even more expensive hostage to fortune. Furthermore, they would each have to be defended, so you might end up increasing the size of the entire group.

In seeking a defender of the "more smaller carriers" theory, one is always referred to Senator Gary Hart. He seems to be much the best-known protagonist of this idea. But in examining his statements on the subject, and talking to naval officers who have spent a great deal of time going over this question with him, I strongly suspect that Hart's obduracy on the subject is an *idée fixe*. He does not seem influenced by the facts of the case, but rather treasures it as one of his inventory of "new ideas," perhaps not susceptible to analysis in terms of dollars and cents or the efficient creation of power.

Hart seems to think that we need smaller carriers because we need more carriers. It's the cop-on-the-beat principle, which holds that we have responsibilities all over the world, and the task of discharging them is more than our present fleet of fourteen carriers can handle. Well, the Navy doesn't agree. Like a pack of radio patrol cars, a carrier moves right along. At thirty knots it can arrive from even 2,000 miles away in three days, and with its thousand-mile reach can put its planes on the target after two. Military threats don't evolve so fast that the U.S. has to have a policeman on every corner.

But the ultimate argument against more, smaller carriers is probably financial. It costs twice as much to apply the same force using two smaller carriers as one big one, because of economies of scale. In the Falklands, the British had to use most of their carrier's Harrier jets just to defend the ship. So, even if the mini-carrier strategy were intrinsically desirable, it almost certainly isn't cost-efficient.

No, we don't need a new fleet of mini-carriers. What this country needs is a few good ships. □

One of the lessons of the Falklands seems to be that a specialized carrier may be less useful than a "fully capable" one.

the *America* is vulnerable to sub-launched missile bombardment. But in actual fact, a submarine may never be able to figure out where its target is. The carrier, its electronic countermeasures, and the ships in its fleet with their electronic jammers are equipped to confuse an electronic searcher. The Soviets have satellites that look for electronic emissions, but the carrier group as a matter of routine can turn off all its radiation-producing equipment when such satellites, which have a known schedule, pass overhead. The Soviets also have infra-red spy satellites, but they can't do the job through overcast or in foul weather, and anyway can be confused by decoys, as, indeed, can the satellites that look for electronic emanations. The Soviets have visual satellites, but they don't work at night or through clouds. They have radar satellites, but they can be jammed. And indeed, all of these satellites would be attacked on the outbreak of hostilities.

In any event, under normal circumstances, an enemy submarine can be detected 100 or more miles away, even if its presence is not already known from intelligence data, and can be attacked by the ship's anti-sub aircraft.

Other forms of attack are equally tricky. The carrier defends itself with its own fighters, and is in turn defended by a screen of missile-firing warships. In addition, it carries Sea Sparrow missiles, and for close-in defense, Phalanx 20-millimeter guns with six rotating barrels, like Gatling guns. The Phalanx fires 3,000 rounds a minute● 50 a second—and sounds like a motorcycle. It is aimed automatically by

dent, causing damage comparable to nine conventional missiles. That ship was hurt, but was back in flight operations two hours later. In other words, the carrier is one tough target.

What about the idea of more, smaller carriers? When you stand on the bridge of the *America* and look out at the watery world around you with the skipper's eyes, you become skeptical about that notion. The world's naval staffs are still pondering the lessons of the Falklands, but one of them seems to be that in an unpredictable situation a specialized carrier may be less useful than a "fully capable" one that you can send into action, confident that it can take care of itself. The *America,* for instance, carries not only F-14 Tomcat Mach-2 fighters, but A-6E Intruder attack planes—armed with bombs and missiles—S-3A Viking antisubmarine planes and SM-34 antisubmarine helicopters, EA 6-B Prowler ECM (electronic countermeasure) planes, which mess up an attacker's radar, and other special-purpose aircraft, such as E-2C Hawkeye early warning reconnaissance planes. (The Falklands, incidentally, showed the indispensability of these early warning aircraft.) When you talk about a smaller carrier you have to leave things out—but what? You need fighters to defend the ship and your own bombers; certainly, given the Russians' enormous production of submarines, you must be able to defend yourself from undersea attack; you need reconnaissance aircraft, and so on. Furthermore, if you buy a smaller carrier, sacrificing whatever you have

Micah Morrison

UNITY IN WEAKNESS:
ISRAEL ENTERS A NEW ERA

The strange and mysterious ways of democracy.

Rotation, or *rotatzia* in the Hebrew derivative, is the new *bon mot* of Israeli politics. Labor party leader Shimon Peres and Likud chief Yitzhak Shamir will rotate the premiership under the recently concluded agreement for a national unity government. The unity agreement rotates on an elaborate Labor-Likud formula designed to paper over differences on peace and security issues. The myriad small parties which held the balance of power in practically every government for the past thirty-six years have for the time being been rotated out of office. And the ideological godfathers of the two main currents of Zionism—Labor's David Ben-Gurion and the Likud's Vladimir Jabotinsky—are probably rotating in their graves at the spectacle of the two major parties sharing power in a massive twenty-five seat cabinet.

Israeli politics may never be the same. The results of the July 23 Knesset (parliament) elections and the lengthy coalition negotiations that followed it have reshaped the political map. The socialist Labor Alignment has split, with its left wing—the Mapam party, the Citizens' Rights Movement, and Labor superdove Yossi Sarid—going into the opposition. The conservative Likud has lost some of its right-wing partners, most notably the Tehiya (Renewal) party, which advocates the quick annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. New parties are on the scene, new alliances are forming. The powerful camp of religious voters is splintered and in disarray. On the extreme Left, two parties which receive the tacit backing of the PLO gained six seats in the 120-member unicameral parliament. On the extreme right, the rabidly racist rabbi from Brooklyn, Meir Kahane, can now be found frothing from a back bench in the Knesset.

Micah Morrison is a free-lance writer based in Jerusalem.

How did this odd turn of affairs come about? An examination of the six-month electoral wrangle that led to the formation of a national unity government may help explain how all of these strange fellows came to share the same political bed, and may help illustrate the nature and pitfalls of Israeli democracy, the life expectancy of the new government, and the problems Israel faces in the immediate future.

Our story begins with the Tami (Israeli Heritage) party of Mr. Aharon Abuhatzeira. Tami is the paradigmatic small party in Israeli politics. Created a month before the 1981 Knesset elections when Mr. Abuhatzeira broke from the National Religious party (itself a major broker in the constellation of small party powers), Tami claimed to represent the interests of Israel's Sephardim, Jews of North African and Middle Eastern ancestry. To many in Israel at the time it appeared that Mr. Abuhatzeira was capitalizing on a period of social tension between Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews. Ashkenazim are Jews of East

European and Western origin, and generally are the better educated and wealthier members of Israeli society. Mr. Abuhatzeira's ethnically based electoral pitch met with some success in 1981, and Tami entered the Likud with three Knesset seats, giving the Likud a slim coalition majority but placing the government at Mr. Abuhatzeira's mercy. Without Tami, the Likud did not have the Knesset muscle necessary to govern, yet Tami's unceasing efforts to feather its own nest with increased budgets had the coalition on the brink of collapse on several occasions.

By early 1984, Tami strategists estimated that the party's strength would soon begin to decline in the face of stiff anti-inflation measures being pushed by the Likud. The Finance Ministry was attempting to slow inflation and trim the foreign debt by reducing ministerial budgets and cutting back on the heavy subsidies on food and fuel. The budget reductions threatened to bite into Tami's pocketbook, and the three-man faction opposed them.

In March, the then-intact Labor Alignment declared its intention to

table an early elections motion. Labor argued that the country was being ripped apart by fast-running inflation (some 200 percent in March, more than 400 percent annually by mid-September), sapped by a $20 billion foreign debt, and morally drained by the ongoing conflict in Lebanon and the Likud's policy of increased West Bank settlement. The Likud, however, could at the time point to a relatively low level of unemployment, a continuing slow rise in the standard of living despite inflation, and a healthy degree of public support for its West Bank program. So Prime Minister Shamir and his Likud colleagues were not overly perturbed when they heard Labor's declaration to move for early elections. Only a few days before, Mr. Abuhatzeira had assured his partners in government that he would stay in the coalition. Labor could muster only fifty-six opposition votes; it needed at least five more to pass the motion, and all Likud coalition members seemed firmly in hand. But something was rotten in the coalition, and by the time Likud realized the bad smell was coming from Mr. Abuhatzeira it was too late.

On March 22, Mr. Abuhatzeira threw the political world into turmoil when he announced he would vote for Labor on the early elections motion. Feeling the budget pinch and calculating he could go into the next Knesset with more power, he used his three votes and those of two other Likud mavericks to bring down the government. But when the election results came rolling in late in the night of July 23 it was clear that Mr. Abuhatzeira had made a devastatingly bad move, a move that raised questions about his own political future, and about the efficient functioning of Israeli democracy.

Although modern Israel is only thirty-six years old, its parliament