

(te•kūn) To mend, repair and transform the world.

TIKKUN

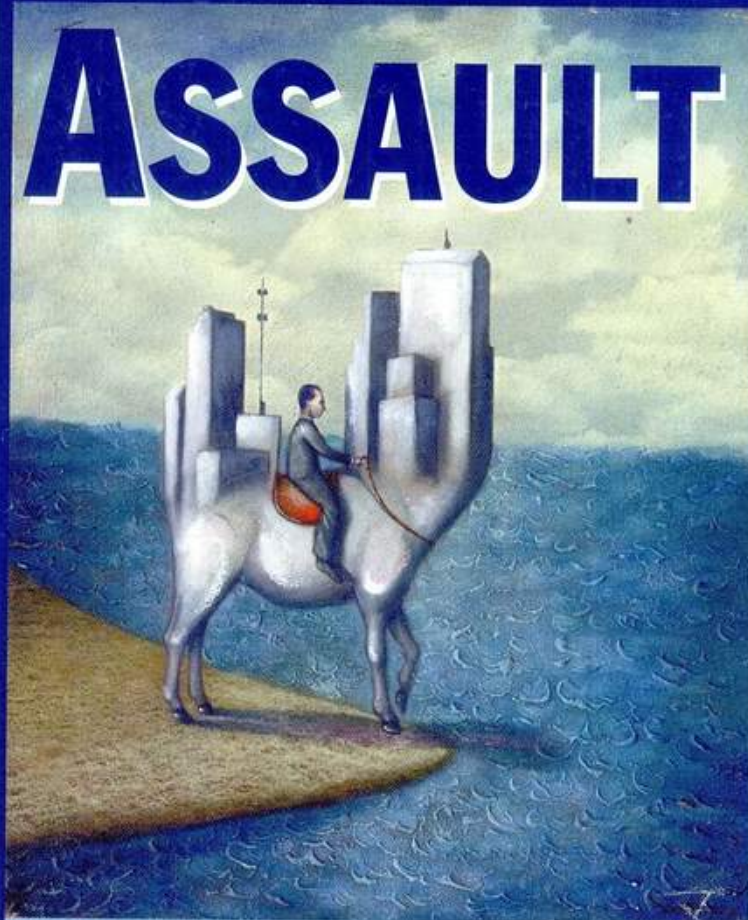
Eating Animals

Charles Patterson
Richard H. Schwartz
Jeffrey M. Freedman

A BIMONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY

MAY/JUNE 2003

ASSAULT ON IRAQ



THE SPIRITUAL ALTERNATIVE FOR FOREIGN POLICY

BY Peter Gabel

ESSAYS ON THE IRAQ WAR

Michael Lerner
Stephen Zunes
Arthur Waskow
Juan Cole
Charles Derber

BUSH'S EXTREMIST JEWS

Paul Buhle

ABUSING CHILDREN

Michael J. Bader

ANTI-SEMITISM AND AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT?

David Friedman • Mimi Schwartz • Joel Kovel
Milton Viorst • Richard Landes • Susannah Heschel

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PLUS:

Fiction by Joseph Skibell • Fran Bartkowski on Samuel Bak's Art
David Ost on the Poles and the Jews • Karin Badt on Polanski's *The Pianist*
Leonard Yehudah Angel on Emancipatory Spirituality • Mark LeVine on Rachel Corrie

It Used to Be

1

Fear itself changes, the very quality of it—
As, when diagnosed, you “thrill with fear,”
No longer the hypochondriac.

My oxygen machine chuffs and wheezes.
The purple-black seedpods of
Our locust tree litter the walk under my window.

2

It used to be that going fishing
Solved most things short of addiction,
And still I go down to Root River,
My heart not in the killing.

Now, it's the River of No Return for the fall run
Chinook and coho salmon out of Lake Michigan,
And one ill-fated steelhead trout I accidentally hook,
Chrome-bright and fresh:

a 12-pound hen I struggle

To release back into the river before its blood
Lactate gets so high it dies anyway.
Silver and purple gill covers jammed open,
It squirts dozens of yellow eggs over my
Hands, waders, cork grip of the rod.
Killing and maiming
Beautiful animals in the wild.
Flyfishing, the quiet sport.

Gasping for breath
That never comes, darkness at the edges
Spreading inward....

Who are You that inhabit so many forms?
Who exists in leaf mold, gill, and splash
Of locust branch
Caught in the stream,
In tiny golden egg-suns dripping upon the stones,
In the hooked, lake-run steelhead gasping
for breath?

Who are You
But the cry of anguish and of joy?
(But never my guilt, all mine, all mine.)

Oh end me, too, my unrepentant
And unremitting lashing, my
Slapping at the torrent, at the spray of
Foam, not drinking.

End me, like the black seedpods
Of the locust littering my sidewalk,
The roe caught in the rocks' crevices;
Finish me once and for all, Lord of forms,
Not fighting—
Into your swift flood release me.

—Tim Dekin

2 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

8 PUBLISHER'S NOTES: *Love in the Time of War.*

- 10 **EDITORIALS:** *Taking TIKKUN Idealism to Washington, D.C.* TIKKUN is more than a forum to express and debate ideas about the transformation of the world—we are also working on concrete political policies to bring about a viable solution to the Middle East crisis. Here we offer our response to Bush's "Roadmap to Peace," plus our *Resolution to Congress*, which we will present at our Teach in To Congress, June 1–4, plus reflections on *Rachel Corrie* and *Security After Iraq*.



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TIKKUN

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Letters to the Editor

Post Election Depression

To the Editor:

In your editorial "Countering Post-Election Depression" (January/February, 2003), you state, "... after all, if all the ideology is right-wing, why not vote for the real thing instead of some watered-down substitute?"

Harry Truman once observed that if you give a voter the choice between a Republican, and a Democrat who looks like a Republican, he will choose the Republican every time. Thanks to Bill Clinton's politics of accommodation, the Democratic party has been wrenched so far to the right that its candidates are no longer in touch with their roots. They waffle, they mumble, they test the winds continuously to discern the "moment" while hiding from the past and cowering before the future.

I'm sick of their intellectual and ideological cowardice, and, like millions of other concerned citizens of this country, I

feel anxious, depressed, angry, and impotent. As far as I'm concerned Lieberman, Kerry, Edwards, Gephardt, et al, "need not apply." I don't vote for Republicans or Republican sympathizers.

TOM LISTON
Stow, OH



Women of the Wall

To the Editor:

[Editor's note: Phyllis Chesler is a psychologist, women's rights activist, and one of our authors.]

On April 6, 2003, the Israeli Supreme Court, in a five to four vote, denied Women of the Wall their religious right to pray

aloud together at the Kotel in a halachic fashion, to read from a Torah scroll, and to wear tallitot. Our fourteen year struggle, which we have chronicled in our anthology, *Women of the Wall: Claiming Sacred Ground at Judaism's Holy Site*, has now resulted in three separate decisions in the Israeli Supreme Court. While the Court has acknowledged our right to

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all-female group prayer at the Kotel proper, they hold that the "feelings" of those who oppose us, many of whom have used violence to express their opposition, are important enough to bar women from exercising our legal, civil, religious and human rights. This latest decision illustrates the folly of expecting so-called liberal judges to issue enlightened, humane, and courageous decisions on behalf of justice for women. Even the highly respected Chief Judge, Aharon Barak, who has long required bodyguards because he has been threatened by *baredim* [ultra-Orthodox Jews], was unwilling to grant us freedom of worship as Jews in the Jewish state. Our struggle, like those of suffragists, abolitionists, and human rights activists will continue until we obtain our goal.

PHYLLIS CHESLER AND RIVKA HAUT
Brooklyn, NY

Dark Emotions

To the Editor:

Thank you, Miriam Greenspan, for your article "Healing Through the Dark Emotions" (March/April 2003). Thank you for noticing that DSM-IV discloses no connection between one's personal emotional disturbances and the state of the world! Thank you for exposing the collective denial of "the Age of Prozac" in which we are numbed out to the dark emotions which can, when attended to, help us become participants in the gift and work of transformation. Thank you for showing people how to "allow the energy of emotion to flow through the body to its end point." Thank you for pointing us to a genuine spiritual discipline which can liberate us from our false sense of being victims. Thank you for all the hard work and faith and surrender that you model from your early childhood until now—so you can guide others with integrity. May the teachings in your book, *Healing Through the Dark Emotions*, speak to the hearts and minds of a generation seeking liberation and clarity.

HAL EDWARDS
Northbrook, IN

Apology

We apologize for misspelling the name of the author of the poem "Survivable Space" on the inside front cover of our March/April issue. The correct spelling of her name is Lisa McCullough.

Iraq War and The Triumph of Fear

To the Editor:

Thank you for your wise and heartening editorial "The Triumph of Fear" in the March/April, 2003 issue of *TIKKUN*.

What you are doing is addressing the roots of fear on which political support for U.S. policy abroad is based.

There are three parts to what you've been saying in *TIKKUN*:

- 1) To make both the policy and the underlying fear visible;
- 2) To show why and how it does not and cannot work; and above all,
- 3) To change the way we think about security, safety, and peace.

I hope the following thoughts may be useful in your strategizing.

- 1) Make both the policy and the underlying fear visible:

We must not underestimate the intelligence or conviction of those driving American policy. The United States is committed to power politics based on overwhelming military power, as advocated most recently by Robert Kagan in *Paradise and Power*. Kagan is Director of the Project for the New American Century, whose champions include Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz. It aims to promote American global leadership, to maintain American interests, and to extend "an international order friendly to our security, our prosperity, and our principles." Kagan dismisses Europe's pursuit of international law as admirable but naïve in a dangerous world, quoting British Foreign policy adviser Robert Cooper, "Among ourselves, we keep the law, but when operating in the jungle, we must also use the laws of the jungle." For critics, this condemns the United States as a "rogue state," but it is a mindset that has guided the United States since 1945, with the partial exception of Carter, who is seen as a failure. See: www.newamericancentury.org

- 2) To show why and how it does not and cannot work:

The U.S. approach undermines its support among the world's people and increases its vulnerability to terrorism. It has profound parallels in Israel's strategy to deal with Palestinian opposition (including terrorism) over the past thirty years, which has not increased security for Israel.

It also has parallels with Britain's experience in Ireland, where a peaceful resolution is being slowly and painfully negotiated after decades of seeking a

security solution. There are also parallels in Europe and the end of apartheid in South Africa.

These stories need to be told.

- 3) To change the way we think about security, safety, and peace.

Yes, we must recognize our interdependence. But we must also show that the alternative works. Ultimately U.S. decision-makers, politicians, and the public must be persuaded that international law provides greater security than straight power politics. For that to happen, international law must be enforceable, which requires credible force as well as the institutions of justice. Americans also need to know that they have allies throughout the world who will march with them if they follow a path of peace and justice. (U.S. policy since September 11 has squandered much of the good will in response to that attack).

Although I have deep misgivings about our Prime Minister's support for Bush, he does have a wider vision. In a speech on Feb. 23, Tony Blair said, "at the same time as being prepared to take military action to fight terrorism or ethnic cleansing or states with Weapons of



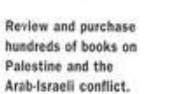
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LETTERS

Mass Destruction, we must tackle global inequality. There will be no lasting peace whilst there is appalling injustice and poverty. There will be no genuine security if the planet is ravaged by climate change."

In attempting to bridge the ideological division between Europe and the United States, the Prime Minister is engaged in one of the most important tasks for increasing global security and the international rule of law: convincing the Americans that the UN route can work.

I am opposed to war with Iraq, but the rule of international law means dealing with dictators like Saddam Hussein long before they become entrenched. It also means dealing with those complicit in their illegal actions, including governments and companies, who would be investigated and brought to trial.

The creation of an International Criminal Court and Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia are important steps towards this. But the biggest step must be to change the mindset of most powerful member of the UN Security Council.

This is a huge challenge: we need an alternative "project for American security" to convince Americans that collective security must be based on the impartial and effective rule of international law.

Thank you for your wise and important work.

TITUS ALEXANDER
London, England

To the Editor:

All over the world the airwaves convey images of mass protests against the war. Wars are cruel and destructive, but what kind of peace do we want?

Do we want to live in the giant shadows cast by lunatic dictators bristling with their atomic weapons? Do we want to live under constant threat of bio-terrorist causing the eruption of apocalyptic violence? A few ounces of anthracite can cause thousands of deaths and bring extensive economic dislocations.

The world is oblivious to the turbulent dangers ahead of us. President Chirac of France is like an ostrich who stuck his head into the Iraqi sand and proclaimed himself the icon of morality. I sincerely hope and believe that the removal of Saddam Hussein will bring a

measure of sanity and common sense into the murky world of international politics.

ALEXANDER KIMEL
Pompano Beach, FL

To the Editor:

A wise old guy, Origen, said something like: "Shoot for the stars and earth will be thrown in...." Guys like Lerner, Mandela, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King Jr. are those who slash and gnaw at the thorns and underbrush in order for the rest of us to have the chance/opportunity to shoot for the stars.... Not an easy path to follow, but the only one that justifies our short time on this rock in space.

JOHN HEERMANS
Chipata, Zambia

To the Editor:

Perhaps many of us know by now that our war of Iraqi "liberation" is not really about Saddam, terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction, or even oil. From position papers supported by many in or closely connected to the current administration, it seems more fundamentally about U.S. geopolitical control of the Middle East and a long-term plan for American global dominance.

In the late 1990's, William Kristol (editor of *The Weekly Standard*) and other highly placed conservatives in Washington hatched an organization intended to provide guidelines to secure perpetual U.S. military supremacy. It was christened "The Project for the New American Century."

Under the guise of securing the national defense, the ninety-page summary of the Project ("Rebuilding America's Defenses" published in September, 2000) calls for significant increases in military spending and revolutionary strategies leading to a "Pax Americana" by virtue of achieving overwhelming U.S. military dominance in any possible theater of war, and in multiple, simultaneous large-scale wars. It recommends that we maintain nuclear warhead superiority, increase our fleets of advanced attack weapons systems, deploy global missile defenses, control earth-orbital space (as well as cyberspace), deter the rise of any new great-power competitor, and dramatically enhance and modernize the capabilities of our conventional armed forces.

The underlying premise cautions our leadership that any geopolitical power

vacuum could threaten our hegemonic designs.

Other nations could climb to global ascendancy while we blithely entertain isolationist agendas. Instead, the PNAC argues that adequately expanded and equipped U.S. forces can and should be able to compel the Pax on a global scale by means of a series of military "operations," if necessary, and by the power of intimidation in the form of U.S. military presences garrisoned in every problematic region.

These foreign policy architects propose nothing less than the coerced democratization of the third world, whether or not the world is ready or capable of receiving such enlightenment from us. The PNAC would promote the reluctant U.S. policeman to high-tech standing army in a Reaganesque return to antiquated us-them values. And who are some of these folks who have signed on to this agenda? Elliott Abrams, Jeb Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz—to name some of the more recognizable.

JAMES DOYLE
Corte Madera, CA

To the Editor:

As an American Jew, I feel that George Bush has put us and Jews throughout the world in a dangerous situation. By invading Iraq he is perpetuating the traditional anti-Semitic "American Zionist" myth, encouraging the Arab world—and indeed the entire world—to conveniently link Zionists and Jews as part of the U.S. Administration's misdirected and reckless incursion.

To coin the phrase used in the initial bombing of Baghdad, the Bush Administration has turned the Jewish people into a convenient "Target of Opportunity." Once this war is over, it will be far too easy for those throughout the Arab world and beyond to bond this linkage, blame Israel for the entire war, and paint Jews with the tired, age-old rhetoric of hate.

LINDA KUNDELL
New York, NY

To the Editor:

I am deeply saddened by your repeated attacks on President Bush and your fellow Americans. I am from a Jewish family with roots in Lithuania, Russia, Romania, and Poland—such oppressive and dangerous places in the 1800s and early 1900s for Jews. My father's father fought with the Russian "white" army—the side that lost during one of many wars.



He left because the pogroms became so dangerous and deadly and came to America. My mother's family came to America in the late 1800s and worked very hard to build a successful business and succeeded in being able to send everyone in future generations to college.

In America, here, we have freedom of speech. We have freedom to travel throughout the country. We can send our children to school. Women and men can hold jobs and drive cars and not live in constant fear that they will be executed for having different religions, opinions, clothes, etc.

What ever happened to you at TIKKUN to sway so far off the course of Hope and Renewal for Jews as well as other oppressed peoples? Are you totally blind to the regime of Saddam Hussein and to his brutality of the Iraqi people? Do you pay attention to anything in the world outside your offices?

I think President Bush is doing the best he can under such difficult times. I am grateful for the military strength and dedication of our troops throughout the past 200-plus years that has allowed me to be able to be part of a country where I can have my own voice.

LAUREN R. JAMES
Boothbay Harbor, ME

To the Editor:

In your March/April editorial, you state that Bush is making the UN irrelevant. Correction—it is already irrelevant. Dozens of countries have found that the UN is irrelevant when they have found mass murder and torture necessary, the U.S. included. They could all count on the UN to do the one thing it is expert at—watching! The UN is a great idea on paper, and in your article, you offer a proposal for reorganizing the UN along lines that would more truly represent the world's peoples, but as it stands now, the UN is a joke, and the United States is only the most recent of a great many governments to demonstrate it.

I think that in the future, when people look back at our century and they pick it apart for its follies, the one that will stand out shining like a beacon, brighter than all our other insanity, is the lie of the United Nations—that the peoples of the world actually stand united.

EPHRAIM
Staten Island, NY

To the Editor:

Love, love, and love again ... even with suicide bombers, terrorists, and

assorted 7th century Islamic fundamentalists and acknowledged torturers. How will love soften Bin Laden or Saddam Hussein? Are you absolutely deluded?

When did you become a born again Christian? Justice, not love, was the cry of the Old Testament prophets ... who also understood and fought occasional wars of righteousness.

You wondered why the American people don't trust the peace movement with questions of national security. Your March/April editorial, which never once addressed the actual demands of the 9/11 terrorists, answers your own question. You fail to accurately identify the problem, acknowledge the depth of the problem, or the necessity to overcome the problem ... with any weapon except love, decency, and generosity.

It just hasn't worked. It won't work.

Perhaps we should ask all Americans to donate two years to the world's poor, take vows of voluntary poverty and simplicity, and transfer the planned tax cuts to third world dictators. May I suggest, in a capitalist democracy, that your vision will be a very hard sell? Why not accept the fact that the vast majority of Americans, loving themselves and their country, just want to be left alone by the Muslim terrorists? The Islamic fascists insisted on attacking us, and we are simply (and not so reluctantly) going to destroy all institutions under their control. The Taliban were overthrown and the Afghan women were liberated. Now it is Hussein's turn to face his fate, and his people's opportunity to enjoy more personal freedom than they have ever known.

ERIC H. ROTH
Los Angeles, CA

Editor Responds:

It is an old Christian slander of Judaism that it was a religion only of justice but not of love. In fact, the Torah makes one of the most extraordinary demands in the history of human ethics, rarely matched in other ethical traditions: "Thou shalt love the Other (the stranger)." This particular mitzvah is unconditional—it does not add, for example, "if you like the other's behavior or approve of his lifestyle or political system."

What is not true is that this strategy has been tried and failed. In this issue of TIKKUN, Peter Gabel spells out more of what we have in mind, and we'll be doing more of this kind of spelling out what it would mean in practice.



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LETTERS

On the other hand, TIKKUN was among the first voices in the progressive world to advocate the replacement of Saddam Hussein, whom we viewed as a demented and cruel oppressor of his own people. For that reason, we called upon the U.S. to intervene at the time he was killing Kurds, and we've been critical of his regime ever since. We would welcome a democratic government being created in Iraq, but that is neither the motive nor the likely outcome of America's invasion.

To the Editor:

I always have a soft spot in my heart for TIKKUN. I remember reading about how you people came out with less than complete devotion to the Likud-ridden regime in Israel and as a result the hate mongers opened up against you with everything they had. And I admired you for that. What you did took courage, a commodity that is in short supply these days.

The hate mongers in America are probably more powerful than their counterparts of the Likud in Israel. You interviewed Congressman Dennis Kucinich for whom I also have a soft spot in my heart. I frequently dream that somehow god will inspire the politicians to do their sworn duty and remove Bush and his henchmen. It seems to be a forlorn hope but given the threat against the world and Bush's proposed bloodbath, I still cling to that hope. My dream continues that, guided by divine intervention, the politicians will fasten on Dennis and make him president. Sometimes good things happen when the politicians elect a president. Thomas Jefferson was elected by the politicians. And I like to think that Dennis is an ideological descendant of Thomas Jefferson.

JERRY GREENBERG
El Dorado, AR

To the Editor:

I am a graduate student studying social work. I have been feeling the very hopelessness, frustration, and lack of balance that you address in your March/April editorial.

I regard myself as a progressive Jew and I, too, feel that our society has lost sight of some of the values that you mentioned. It's important to recognize that the problems in our world right now are not just international, but are here in our backyard. I work with dependent foster children. For many, poverty and poor educational opportunities, limited emo-

tional and other support, and lack of privilege is so much a part of their world.

Your editorial was about getting back to a place of humanity and care. But also passion for doing the right thing.

ELIZABETH E. BRAIT
Philadelphia, PA

Israel

To the Editor:

Can you or someone on your staff help me understand something, please. Up here in northern lower Michigan, the peace group is very pro-Palestine. They feel 100 percent that Israel is wrong in being in the Occupied Territories. I know there was a war and they conquered the area. But why are they really still there and why do they crush people's homes? It must be more than just the fear of reprisal and attack. Can you help me understand it better?

Also "they" say that Israel gets more U.S. money than any Arab nation or all of them together. Is this true? Many feel that all U.S. money should be withdrawn from Israel.

Some answers would help me and I would appreciate it.

EMMY LOU
Traverse City, MI

Editor Responds:

A serious answer to your questions can be found by reading my new book Healing Israel/Palestine (\$18 from Tikkun Books—go to www.tikkun.org or call 510-644-1200 to order it, or ask your local bookstore to order it from us). But here is a less serious and less sophisticated answer: Israel is wrong to be occupying the Territories, just as Palestinians were wrong to oppose the Jewish people's desire to return to their ancient homeland in the pre-1948 period. There is no excuse for Israel's destruction of people's homes, just as there is no excuse for Palestinians to blow up buses, coffee houses, and dance clubs and kill Israeli civilians.

Both sides have systematically been insensitive to the other, have consistently refused to see the other's humanity, have interpreted the other in the worst possible ways, and both sides have been cruel and unjust towards the other. And both sides need to repent and change their fundamental attitude toward the other.

There is no chance that the Palestinian people will ever achieve their fundamen-

tal needs for national self-determination until the Israeli people feel secure and not threatened by them. And there is no chance the Israeli people will ever achieve their fundamental needs for security and normalcy in the Middle East until the Palestinian people have achieved national self-determination and no longer feel oppressed or threatened by Israel.

The Left's approach is counter-productive: by threatening to cut off aid or use economic boycotts, they increase the paranoia in Israel, the sense of being threatened and alone—and since Jews have in fact been murdered by non-Jews in massive numbers in the past hundred years, they respond to this by saying: "If that is

how the non-Jews want to treat us, we'll go down fighting this time." What Israel actually needs is to hear the voice of a Palestinian version of Nelson Mandela—someone who can reassure the Israeli public in an effective way that they will have nothing to fear should Israel lift its repressive boot from the neck of the Palestinian population.

The American Left, to the extent that it indulges Palestinian fantasies of retribution against Israel, is actually undermining the real possibilities for Palestinian liberation, which will come only when the mainstream Palestinian movement renounces violence, has no tolerance for the voices of hatred or the voices of those who think that the way to deal with Israel is through coercion (be it violent or economic), and instead speaks to the humanity of the Israeli people in precisely the way that Martin Luther King Jr. spoke to the humanity of the whites who were oppressing Blacks in the U.S., and Mandela spoke to the humanity of the champions of apartheid.

To the Editor:

I have been bewildered often at the paucity of remedies presented by the so-called modern "Left"—aside from attacking Israel, that is.

Ariel Sharon was elected by the Palestinians. Had they come to terms with the existence of Israel and with the fact that the issues of the Middle East can be resolved only through regional cooperation, they would have found no better partners than Israelis and Ariel Sharon would not be in power today. The Middle East conflict is complicated and I



resent terribly having it summed up in one small flat sentence.

NIKKI BASUK
from the Internet

To the Editor:

I was pleasantly surprised to hear your views about the origins of conflict in the Middle East. I am a Roman Catholic who spent two months in the Middle East and I have developed tremendous respect for Islam. For a Rabbi to come out and declare that you have equal respect for Jews, Muslims, and Christians is courageous. Bravo!

Thank you for your voice of reason ... the world needs it.

JAMES BORD
Canada

To the Editor:

I recall listening to the polite, upbeat theories of TIKKUN on KPFA around the time of the Jenin massacre, and after reading Stephen Zunes' article "Iraq, Israel and the Jews" (March/April 2003), I'm given the same impression of TIKKUN that I had then. Your brand of "liberal" Zionism is meant for one purpose alone: to perpetuate the disaster of the Israeli experiment indefinitely. You think that by playing the "good cop" in the classic tactic of will-breaking that you can convince enough of your opposition that the nightmare of Israel is really just a matter of a few bad apples and that "Israel" is a civilized and appropriate answer to the world's injustice towards the "Jews."

I see a number of important flaws in your tacit assumptions. For starters, you presuppose that "Zionism" isn't racism as it clearly is and, thankfully, was recognized as such by the world in Durban not long ago. Even a cursory appraisal of the facts surrounding the invention of "Israel" will leave one with the inescapable conclusion that carving up someone else's country in the Middle East to redress the crimes of white people on behalf of other white people from Europe is, imperialist, colonialist, and, naturally, racist. Israel was intended to be and continues to be one of the most racist outposts of colonialism in the world.

When people accuse the Jewish Establishment of meddling in U.S. foreign policy, the accusations are always referred to as "anti-Semitic" by Zionist-apologists such as yourself. This is nothing more than the tired whinings of Jewish-McCarthyism; the same sort of

blind and rabid fear-mongering that, ironically, so many Jews have been the target of in the past. Surely you must realize that the day is fast approaching when your crying wolf will no longer elicit response in those who foot the bill for your worn-out experiment in Palestine—if nothing else because they have finally deconstructed your buzzwords like "anti-Semitism."

Your Bay-Area brand of Zionist rhetoric is just as dangerous as that of Wolfowitz or Pearle or Bronfman or Kissinger or Wiesel, because it is merely another attempt at obfuscation and revisionist history. It is the very idea of "Israel" that you fail to address as do all Zionists that will ultimately be your undoing, I fear.

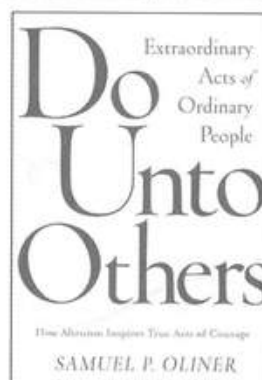
IZRAEL SHAMEER
from the Internet

To the Editor:

Thank you so much for your informative and thoughtful site. For the longest time, I was brought up to believe that all Arabs are dogs and that their sole intent in life is to crush Israel. Then, when I was in high school, I made friends with a Palestinian Christian and a Muslim girl from Lebanon. They were not anti-Semitic at all but at the same time, they were very well-informed about Israeli policies and completely opposed to them. My views started changing as I read more and my family has really turned on me because of my changing views of Israel and its policies in the Occupied Territories/Middle East. I have tried to show them sites like yours and give them materials to read but they just don't want to know. I believe this is true of many Israeli and American Jews. It is just too convenient to paint the non-Jews (even the Christians) as anti-Semitic and as terrorists. The behavior of my family and their friends forced me to question my faith in God for a long time, as I was constantly told by my community that it is impossible to be a true Jew and not support Israel wholeheartedly in everything she does. Well, they're wrong. Throughout the Bible, God accuses us of great evil and wrong behavior for which he will smite us. I believe in this case, this will be the downfall of Israel. Critics of Israel's policies are not always anti-Semitic, they are just well-informed. Israel's superiority complex and its pride will destroy it in the end.

MIRIAM SESHADRI
Ocean Township, NJ

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Love in the Time of War

George Vradenburg

As Gabriel Garcia Marquez' famous book, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, revealed, extraordinary insights about love can emerge in the most horrible of circumstances. Seeing the brutality and killing of this war on a daily basis naturally leads all of us to pray for a quick end to the pain and for a just peace. But the knowledge that the Iraqi people have been subjected to this brutality for over twenty years of Hussein's rule, and that American success in the war holds out the hope for a better world for them, is reinforcing the American people's commitment to the path on which this country is embarked as well as their prayers for the rapid success of American and British forces.

Some in the antiwar movement condemn the brutality of the United States, implying that American success will prove no better a result for the Iraqi people than the rule of Saddam Hussein.

On that, I differ. And I differ with passion.

How can one compare a nation that embeds *reporters* within its troops to report its own conduct, with a nation that embeds disguised *para-military forces* within its civilian populations to take advantage of its adversary's humanity?

How can one compare a nation that provides emergency medical care *equally* to itself and its enemy, with a nation that executes enemy troops with a shot to the back of the head?

How can one compare a nation that uses its technology and skill to avoid civilian casualties, with a nation that shoots its own people in the back when they seek safety?

How can one compare a nation that risks the life of its young to save the natural resources and environment of another people, with a nation that seeks to destroy its country's natural resources and despoil its country's environment out of pique and anger?

There is no moral equivalency between two such nations.

There is no question that the daily fog of war is providing confusing snippets of information and pictures that are being experienced differently by peoples around the world. Indeed, some in the antiwar movement seem to explain the high levels of current support for President Bush by accusing a "cheerleading" American press for misleading the American people about the brutality of war.

Americans aren't being misled. No one is confused. No one is ignoring the pain and suffering of fighters and civilians alike as a result of this war.

But Americans understand that death and brutality will end only if American and British forces are successful. If they are not, Hussein will, once again, visit death and brutality on his own people, and potentially on other peoples. Of this history leaves no doubt. Absent removal of Hussein, death and brutality will inevitably continue.

We cannot ignore the common humanity of mankind and our increasing interconnectedness by simply ignoring what Saddam Hussein has been doing to his people and his neighbors for over twenty years. The Iraqi regime claims that over 3,000 civilians have been injured by American bombing. But they killed over 50,000 civilians in Basra alone in 1991 after an uprising of Shia Muslims. And what of the hundreds of thousands of Kurds killed in 1988 from Hussein's use of chemical and biological weapons?

The only path to ending the suffering of the Iraqi people is the replacement of the Hussein regime with a government responsive to the welfare of average Iraqi citizens.

Are we truly committed to creating the environment and consciousness for a more loving and caring world, to "heal" a world in pain? If so, and if Saddam's removal will ease the pain of the Iraqi people, how can we bring that more caring environment about in Iraq without the use of force?

Some would argue that Hussein is not an immediate threat to the American people. But is there any doubt that he is an immediate threat to his own people?

Some would argue that UN inspectors should have been given more time to disarm Hussein of any weapons of mass destruction. But would that have disarmed Hussein of his capacity to continue a brutal and cruel repression of the Iraqi people?

Some would argue that the use of force to remove Hussein will create massive anti-American sentiment in the Arab world. But should we ignore the suffering of the Iraqi people because the steps needed to address that suffering run contrary to current popularity polls?

Freedom is the best environment for a more loving and caring world. And freedom has never come without sacrifice and, yes, the use of force. Freedom is dependent on the soldier willing to risk his life for peace.

A loving and caring world is dependent on the soldier who protects the innocent and the weak from the tyrant. □

George Vradenburg is co-publisher of Tikkun. This Publisher's Note reflects the personal views of the publisher and not the editorial views of the magazine.



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAN CHUNG / REUTERS

THE ASSAULT ON IRAQ



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS / AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Taking TIKKUN Idealism to Washington, D.C.

Introduction

Some of our readers think that the idealism we express in TIKKUN could never make a difference in "the real world." It's all very nice, they tell us, to speak about love, generosity, and caring, but those ideals have nothing to do with the world of "real" politics and social change.

We've countered that it is only with a different kind of vision than that of the self-described "political realists" that we are ever going to create a world in which safety, security, economic well being, and peace are possible. It is these self-described "realists" who brought us the war in Iraq, and they will bring us many more such unnecessary wars. It is only by championing a very different kind of vision that we are ever going to make significant steps to bring about a world in which we can actually feel secure.

That does not mean, however, that when we approach the concrete task of social change we have nothing to say but "we want a world of generosity, kindness, and love." Not at all. Instead we present specific short-term ideas about how to effect immediate change and frame them within the context of a larger vision of fundamental transformation—and we insist on the connection between the immediate steps and the larger vision. Keeping these two elements in balance is a part of what we mean by a spiritual politics.

And now we are asking you to turn all this into reality. We need you to come with us to Washington, D.C. to our Teach-In to Congress, June 1–4. Yes, we really need *you*, dear reader, to put your energy and money behind your ideals, and help us make this strategy real. Please take off from work and come to D.C. to be part of this gathering. And if you absolutely can't come, please make an appointment to see your congressional representative and your senators before June 1, and urge them to attend.

Following is our strategy for bringing TIKKUN's vision into the world of social change.

Israel and Palestine: A Rare Opportunity

In May and June there will be a unique opportunity for peace-oriented people to enter into and influence the national dialogue on Middle East peace. Not all moments are the same—sometimes it matters if you can "seize the moment" when such openings occur.

The reason for the opening? George Bush has an Iraq problem: how to show that something valuable will come out of this war. And the outcome that he has most clearly promised is some new progress on building Israeli/Palestinian peace. For that reason, Bush has adopted the language of a "Road Map to Peace"—a restatement of UN resolutions 242 and 338 and various public statements from nations around the world, calling for an exchange of land for peace, leading to a Palestinian state living in peace with Israel. But the Road Map adds a provision that this will be accomplished in three years, and that the four entities proposing this Road Map (the so-called "Quartet" of the UN, the United States, Europe, and Russia) will monitor the behavior of both sides to ensure that they actually take the necessary steps to bring this about.

Skeptics will rightly object, "We've been here before, and it has been nothing more than a public relations gesture to allow the Arab elites to say to their masses, 'See, our support for the war against Iraq has actually led to important steps for peace in the Middle East.'" These skeptics would certainly have a good point. After the first Gulf War, the first President Bush created an international conference at Madrid which haggled for years and produced nothing. The Israeli Prime Minister at the time, Likud's Yitzhak Shamir, later boasted that he would gladly have kept those negotiations going for the next ten years, because as long as Israel was engaged in "talks," it could continue occupying the West Bank and Gaza. If there is to be real peace, the skeptics say, let it start now! Or as another put it, "You can't jump over a chasm in incremental steps—one jump and do it right."

Well, that's true. If anyone really is ready to take the jump to end the Occupation, they should say so unequivocally now. But they won't start now, so it makes sense to figure out a process that could lead in that direction. And there is one thing that is very positive about the Road Map—it does a good job of articulating the steps needed for Israel to feel more secure. And that, we have argued, is one of the important elements in building a lasting peace. We support Israeli security—and we've often pointed out that Israeli security is entirely dependent upon Palestinians getting their legitimate needs for security and autonomy met as well. For this reason, the Road Map is a positive step in the direction of achieving security for both sides. And this is precisely what



Palestinians and Israelis mourn their dead.

worries the AIPAC and self-described “pro-Israel” lobbies. (Better to describe them as the pro-Ariel Sharon lobbies, who pursue policies which are actually destructive to the best interests of Israel. Since Israel’s interests would best be served by accommodation and reconciliation with the Palestinian people, we don’t cede them the “pro-Israel” designation.) For that reason, they have begun attempts to de-claw any positive elements in the Road Map by insisting that the U.S. focus attention solely on the issue of whether Palestinian violence has stopped, and not on the issue of whether Israel is withdrawing from the Occupied Territories or ceasing its destruction of Palestinian homes and civic institutions. Though framed as pro-Road Map, these attempts are really aimed at derailing the whole process.

As we’ve pointed out many times, making any path to peace dependent on a cessation of all violence gives a veto to the most extremist elements in both Israel and Palestine. This was one of the tragic failures of the Oslo Accord—it got derailed by the extremists precisely because its implementation could be blocked when either side saw the extremists on the other side acting against the spirit of Oslo (in the case of Palestinians, the acts of violence by Hamas; in the case of Israel, the creation of new settlements). The only path to peace that will work is one which absolutely commits to specific steps and specific outcomes that cannot be similarly derailed by acts of craziness on the part of extremists on either side.

Our response has been to energize friends on Capitol Hill to circulate a letter in “support of Bush and Powell” which attempts to strengthen their hand and stiffen their backbones in the face of a right-wing assault that would like to empty the Road Map of any significance before it starts. As you well

know, TIKKUN does not normally “stand with the President” on many matters, but the point here is to resist the mislabeled “pro-Israel” forces from destroying this process.

So Track One of our current strategy in D.C., then, is defending the Road Map from those who would rob it of any significance. In the current right-wing climate in the United States, a re-affirmation of a two-state solution is actually a positive step forward, particularly to the extent that it is connected with steps to provide for the integration of Israel in the region, peace with Syria, and an end to the Occupation.

As Israeli peace activist (and frequent TIKKUN writer) Uri Avnery puts it, “The Road Map confirms that there now exists a worldwide consensus about these objectives. This fact will remain even if nothing comes out of it. Those of us who remember that only thirty-five years ago there were hardly a handful of people in the world who believed in this vision can draw profound satisfaction from this Road Map. It shows that we have won the struggle for world public opinion.”

But Avnery and other peace activists also point out the limits of the Road Map: it doesn’t say what the borders of a Palestinian state would be, and it could therefore be construed according to Ariel Sharon’s vision of a Palestinian state: 40 percent of “The Territories,” and less than 9 percent of the pre-1948 Palestine that existed under the British Mandate. Such a Palestinian state would be less than useless—it would allow Israel to proclaim yet again that it had “generously offered” a Palestinian state, which would infuriate the Palestinians and ensure endless conflict, which would in turn be used once again by some in the Israeli camp as further proof that nothing will ever satisfy the Palestinians.

Moreover, at each stage the Quartet would have to decide if each side had fulfilled its obligations under the terms of the Road Map, so that a new phase could be entered. That might work if all of the Quartet parties had to negotiate with each other to make a decision about who was or was not fulfilling their obligations. But instead, as Avnery points out, the proposal asks that “the Quartet take all decisions unanimously.

THE RESOLUTION TO PRESENT TO CONGRESS AT OUR TEACH-IN, JUNE 1-4, 2003

A BALANCED SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST MESS

WHEREAS we recognize the humanity and fundamental decency of both the Israeli and Palestinian people, and wish to see them living in peace with each other, side by side in a safe Israel and a safe Palestine,

AND WHEREAS we abhor acts of terror against Israeli citizens and acts of violence or denial of human rights of Palestinians,

AND WHEREAS the continuation of this conflict is destructive to the people of the Middle East, counter to the best interests and values of the United States, and might contribute to an increase in anti-Semitism and anti-Arab sentiments both worldwide and in our own community,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT THE
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES URGES THE PRESIDENT TO:

Support an international UN protectorate for the West Bank and Gaza as an interim step (either through the UN or under the jurisdiction of a multinational force like NATO) to separate the two sides, provide protection for each, and meanwhile impose a settlement on both sides which includes:

- (a) Return of Israel to its pre-1967 borders, with minor border modifications (so that the sections of Jerusalem which had a Jewish majority by 1993 may be part of the State of Israel and Arab sections can become part of a Palestinian state), and other minor border changes mutually agreed upon;
- (b) Creation of an economically and politically viable Palestinian state in all of the pre-1967 West Bank and Gaza with small border changes as mentioned in (a), and with its capital in East Jerusalem;
- (c) An international fund to provide reparations for Palestinians and to fund generous resettlement opportunities in the new Palestinian state, and reparations for Israelis who fled from persecution in Arab lands, and to provide funds to resettle Israeli settlers within the pre-1967 borders of Israel;
- (d) Recognition and peaceful relations with all surrounding Arab and Islamic states;
- (e) Sharing of the water and other resources of the area and joint cooperation to preserve regional ecological balance;
- (f) Active participation of Palestine, in cooperation with international forces, in a serious effort to protect Israelis from those who may continue to struggle against Israel even after it has returned to its pre-1967 borders, and active participation by Israel and in cooperation with international forces to protect Palestinians from those who may use acts of violence to destabilize or undermine a new Palestinian state;
- (g) International guarantees of the military safety and security of both Israel and Palestine, either through inclusion of each in NATO, or bilateral mutual defense agreements with the United States, or some similar arrangements which will protect Israel and Palestine from other states which may have hostile intentions;
- (h) An international Truth and Reconciliation Commission, such as that which functioned in South Africa, to be created after the above points have begun to be implemented, and aimed at building a foundation for future trust and cooperation between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.

The Americans have a veto, which means that Sharon has a veto. Without his agreement, nothing can be decided." And that makes this Road Map essentially unworkable.

Moreover, there is no clear-cut timetable for implementation. And the obligations on the two sides are not equal. In the first phase, Palestinians are supposed to stop the armed intifada, establish close security cooperation with the Israelis, recognize Israel's right to exist in peace and security, and draft a constitution that will meet with the approval of

the Quartet. Israelis are required to allow Palestinian officials (not ordinary Palestinians) freedom of movement, improve the humanitarian situation, stop attacks on civilians and the demolition of homes, pay the Palestinians the money Israel owes them, and dismantle "settlement outposts" erected since Sharon came to power, in violation of the government's guidelines. There is no mention of freezing settlement activity in this phase.

Most importantly, there is no vision of what the final

settlement would actually look like. After jumping through all the hoops, the Palestinians are given no clear indication that they'd get back the West Bank and Gaza, which are the indispensable parts of any "trading land for peace" strategy. And it was that absence which proved to be the ultimate failure of Oslo, because without the clear incentive of a specific and satisfactory end point, it becomes politically impossible for Palestinian moderates to convince victims of the Israeli Occupation to give up their armed struggle.

So where does this leave us?

We have to take a two-track approach, and that is what we are doing with the Teach-In to Congress. The first track is to support the Road Map against attacks from the AIPAC and self-described "pro-Israel" forces. The second track is to show the deficiencies of the Road Map and build support for specific outcomes that will be endorsed from the start in the U.S.

The terms of that outcome are articulated in our Resolution to Congress shown on page 12.

Is it realistic to think that a Republican-controlled Congress with an accommodationist Democratic leadership that has been supporting the war in Iraq would be willing to pass this kind of a visionary resolution?

Of course not. Whereas there is some realistic possibility that forces in Congress might sign on to the "Support the President by backing the Road Map to Peace" perspective we are outlining in Track One, our Track Two is not going to get majority support.

But that's not our reason for introducing it. We are not a lobbying organization but an educational organization, and our goal is to start a conversation in this country, using Congress as the backdrop to make that conversation possible. If each of our readers who actually cares about Middle East peace were to show up in D.C. for this Teach-In, it would be large enough to guarantee a real impact, and could jump-start a national conversation about where the Road Map should go. If that happens, the perspective we are putting forward is actually quite moderate (what we call a "Progressive Middle Path") and could conceivably garnish majority support in this country if people actually heard about it. Whether they will hear about it or not is entirely in your hands—because if enough people show up in D.C., our ideas will break through to the media and will be used by Secretary of State Powell and others who want a resolution of the Middle East conflict as leverage to push forward a process that is more substantive than the version of the Road Map currently being discussed.

Will one meeting in Washington realistically make such a big difference?

Yes. If enough people come, it could jump-start a very different kind of public discourse.

But also, no. One time is not enough—it is only the necessary start. What will need to happen following the D.C. Teach-In to Congress is this:

1. We need to make this an annual event (as AIPAC does) and bring even more people next year.
2. We need people in every community to get this Resolution to Congress endorsed by their local city council, county board of supervisors, and state legislatures—in the form of a resolution urging Congress to pass this resolution. And we need you to get every church, synagogue, mosque, ashram, community organization, labor union, professional organization, social change group, and local branch of all political parties to publicly endorse it.
3. We need a crew of hundreds of people contacting media and to demand that they cover this perspective and stop covering the Middle East from the "blame the Palestinians" point of view; and we need that same group to be challenging Leftist media and demonstrators who put forward the "blame the Israelis" point of view. We should be advocating for a balanced "Progressive Middle Path" that transcends the blame game and acknowledges that both sides have co-created this mess and that both sides need to do repentance and atonement for the ways that they have inflicted violence and cruelty upon each other.
4. We need to have local Tikkun Communities all around the country, with people actually paying dues (not just supporting us in their minds, but also with their actual resources) and becoming informed on these issues so that they can articulate this perspective to their communities. There will be an opportunity for you to develop those skills this summer at the Tikkun Summer Institute (TSI) at the University of California in Santa Cruz, August 13–17. We hope you'll come to that, too (it's not only about the Middle East—it will also be a rich opportunity to further discuss and develop our theoretical foundations, our spiritual politics, our inner lives, and our joyful community). Details at www.tikkun.org (look under "Events" or "Calendar").
5. Although the Tikkun Community is organized like AIPAC—that is, not as a Political Action Committee (PAC), but as a public affairs committee—and hence cannot directly involve ourselves in supporting candidates for office—we can provide information that will be helpful for those who do. It is unlikely that such peace-oriented public affairs committees will ever be able to compete with the "domination over others" paradigm of the AIPAC-influenced PACs, at least not in terms of raising comparable levels of money. But what *is* possible is that, as our perspective becomes more widely understood and taught to a broader constituency of people, elected representatives will find that they need to position themselves in a more balanced way than they do today in order to maintain any semblance of moral credibility.

Yes, this is a long process. But the truth of why our perspective seems so "visionary" today is that this process has

Mourning Rachel Corrie

Hundreds of people from around the world have come to Israel during the past few years to serve as nonviolent witnesses, and to put their bodies on the line in (usually unsuccessful) attempts to separate Israelis and Palestinians and protect each from the other. In reality that has often meant attempting to stop Israeli troops from brutalizing Palestinian civilians, or Israeli bulldozers from destroying Palestinian homes. They have been led by the International Solidarity Movement (ISM).

Rachel Corrie was one of these witnesses—a young woman from the state of Washington who took her values so seriously she was willing to risk her life in defense of the powerless.

Rachel was crushed to death by a huge Caterpillar tractor that ran over her as she took nonviolent pose in front of the house that the Israeli army had determined

should be destroyed that day. The tractor then backed up (seemingly, according to eye witnesses, to finish the job). The photos we've seen make it implausible that this was a mere accident. But more to the point: this is only noticed because Rachel, 23 years old, was an American. Had she been a Palestinian, the army would have simply dismissed her death as that of a "suspected militant," or one of the other categories used to dismiss the significance of Israeli-imposed deaths of Palestinians.

We are outraged at the continuation of the Occupation as it now enters its thirty-seventh year! We know that as long as the Occupation lasts, there will be more and more people crushed under its weight. The best memorial for Rachel Corrie is to end the Occupation and accord the Palestinian people the dignity that they deserve.

not been pursued in a serious way, and the many people who actually want peace don't get together and develop serious strategies together. Everyone always has an excuse for why they don't have time, can't afford to take off from work, don't really "know enough" to talk to their elected representatives. This is the time to stop the excuses and get serious. Come to D.C. If you don't think you know enough, here's what to do: a. get and read carefully *Healing Israel/Palestine* (\$18, and free to anyone who joins the Tikkun Community at www.tikkun.org); b. get other people together to do a study group about the book; c. come to the D.C. Teach-In and we will instruct you in how to talk to elected officials; d. come to the Tikkun Summer Institute to gain more theoretical background and to get more training in articulating these ideas. If you think you'll never be able to talk about this stuff, but just want to support others to do it, fine—we'll have others with you when you meet with your elected representatives. And if you really can't come, then meet with your elected representative now, in the weeks before the Teach-In, and ask her or him to endorse and become a co-sponsor of the Resolution to Congress. If they say they disagree with it, get them to agree to sit for two hours to listen to our perspective, which will be presented at the Rayburn House Office Building on June 3 from 10 am–noon. And meanwhile, please donate money so that others who want to come but can't afford it can find their way eased by your generosity (send your credit card info on line www.tikkun.org or call us at 510-644-1200).

So much for those who think that we only have nice ideas but don't have a plan. If it doesn't happen, it's only because too many people who agree with it decide to depend on someone else to make it happen. We hope that you won't do that—that you will be the person who takes the leap and begins to make this happen.

After Iraq: A Path to Security

The militarists will be celebrating their victory—they have proven that the richest, most militarily powerful country in the world, ruled by the most reactionary leadership it has ever had, could:

- a. Intimidate its own Congress into authorizing a struggle which then empowered it to
- b. Intimidate the United Nations into voting for an ambiguous motion last Fall, which then empowered it to
- c. Ignore the United Nations when it no longer agreed that the previous vote had authorized unilateral actions of force, nor that force was the appropriate way to proceed at this moment, and instead
- d. Invade a small and relatively undeveloped country, with a population about one-fifth the size of its own and a military approximately one-twentieth the size of its own, and could
- e. Quickly smash the organized military of that country, occupy it, and set up proxies to run it with the support of an occupying army.

But many of us will be mourning. We won't be mourning Saddam Hussein or his murderous regime, the overturning of which we at TIKKUN have been advocating since 1988. It is better for the world that Saddam is no longer running Iraq.

We will be mourning:

- The deaths of many Iraqis and Americans who were killed by this invasion.
- The destruction of the United Nations as a force capable of restraining aggressors (in this case, the United States).
- The undermining of international law.
- The legitimization of unilateral pre-emptive intervention in states that might become at some future time a threat.

- The legitimization of violence and war as a vehicle for solving disputes and the slippery slope that will inevitably begin toward more and more wars and military intervention.
- The strengthening of the most militarist voices in American society.
- The capitulation of the American media to the impulse to cheer on the powerful, and the endless reframing of news in ways that would fit the call for increased right-wing versions of patriotism, while making invisible all those who did not share the official position on the war.
- The further decline of the Democrats as a serious voice of opposition to the Republican Party.
- The increased level of fear in everyone which leads to an increased willingness to tolerate or even support further restrictions of civil liberties.
- The spiritual/emotional depression that so many people feel as they force themselves to repress their righteous indignation, turn their attention away from the suffering of their fellow human beings in Iraq, and pretend that they just do not see.
- The demeaning of our common humanity when the media manages to present us to each other as though none of us cared about anyone but Americans; as though the suffering of others meant nothing to us; as though "we" are all cheering on the victory; as though the military is somehow "our" team in a way that young men conscripted into the Iraqi army without a choice are not; and as though "we" were all behind this venture and experiencing elation at "our victory."

And yet, we know that there are still grounds for hope—and that those who believe that the only path to security is through domination over others have not yet fully won the conversation in the public arena. We have been encouraged by the dramatic numbers of people around the world who have consistently taken to the streets, engaged in boisterous demonstrations, participated in nonviolent civil disobedience, and in other ways acted as though they had not yet forgotten their common humanity. In fact, we have seen dramatic proof of the near "breaking on through to the other side" consciousness that reminds us of how very close to the surface is our common desire for what Peter Gabel calls authentic relationship and mutual recognition and what I call the spirit of God in every human being. It is our central goal to nurture that aspect of our common humanity, to foster an Emancipatory Spirituality capable of transforming the world in this lifetime, on this planet, and before the apocalypse. One of the highest goals of the Tikkun Community, and of our conference/Teach-In to Congress in June as well as our Tikkun Summer Institute in August is to re-affirm in each of us what we all know but rarely dare speak: that we are all one, that we share a common set of needs, that we are mutually interdependent, and that we are all yearning for the

same love, recognition, and evolution of our capacities for kindness, generosity, and increasing awareness of the inter-relationship of all with all.

It is with this understanding that we approach the other major focus of the Tikkun Conference and Teach-In to Congress: why the militarist path is not the best path to security—either for the United States or for Israel. We will be talking in specific terms about our three-part plan for U.S. security:

1. Let the United States be, and be perceived to be, the world's leading force channeling its resources to end global poverty, homelessness, hunger, disease, and illiteracy.
2. Let the United States be, and be perceived to be, the world's leading force seeking to rectify 150 years of ecological irresponsibility in the advanced industrial societies.
3. Let the United States be, and be perceived to be, the country most advanced in generating among its citizens a New Bottom Line of generosity and kindness, ethical and ecological sensitivity, and the capacity to respond to the universe with awe and wonder.

We will explore how this could be translated into specific programs that would dramatically increase the safety and freedom from fear that dominates so much of contemporary American life.

So, even with all the killing and all the unnecessary pain, this remains a very exciting moment to be alive, and to experience and participate in the evolution of consciousness of the human race—even though it may be momentarily impeded by governments stuck in the reptilian brain or the "power over others" paradigm for national security. We shall not let hope die. □

The Tikkun Conference and Teach-In To Congress

June 1–4, 2003

You can register for the Conference any these ways:

- Register on line at www.tikkun.org. We have a secure site for registering with your credit card.
- Send a check made out to Tikkun Conference Registration, 2342 Shattuck Avenue, #1200, Berkeley, CA 94704 (checks must be received by May 27).
- Register by phone at: 510-644-1200

Registration Rates	BEFORE MAY 14TH:	MAY 14TH TO MAY 27TH:	AT THE CONFERENCE:
Standard Registration:	\$155	\$175	\$200
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The Death of Rachel Corrie

Mark LeVine

It's hard to imagine a more horrible way to die than to be crushed twice by a bulldozer. Particularly when you're just trying to protect a family whose only crime is that its land stands between the fourth most powerful army in the world and another in a seemingly endless supply of Palestinian homes marked for demolition. That is how 23 year-old Rachel Corrie died in March, on the wrong end of an Israeli bulldozer.

I didn't know Rachel personally, but I know her spirit and courage well. In 1996 I first met up with the people who would inspire the International Solidarity Movement, under whose banner she stood down the huge American-made Caterpillar bulldozer. Back then it was mostly semi-retired school teachers from the mid-west and a few recent college graduates who lived their faith in Hebron as part of the Christian Peacemaker Teams. Watching them practice unflinching non-violent resistance and mediation I felt embarrassed and even ashamed—if middle-aged Methodists from Minnesota were putting their bodies on the line for real peace and justice between Palestinians and Israelis, shouldn't twenty-something progressive Jews from the Coasts be there with them?

The initial attempts by me and a few others (including TIKKUN editor Michael Lerner) to start "Jewish Peacemaker Teams" to join our Christian comrades didn't bear fruit then, but within a couple of years the increasing toxicity of the Occupation led to the creation of the Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions, while American activists, including a significant number of Jews, were imagining what would become the ISM.

As America's war on Iraq grows bloodier, we would do well to reflect on the meaning of Rachel's life and death, and the powerful message of the ISM. She and the other human shields, like their colleagues in Iraq, are true soldiers of peace; fighting not for the ideology or benefit of any one country or leader, but rather for the singular principle that only totally selfless and committed non-violent action can overcome the dogs of war, the enmity and injustice of occupation, and the terror it breeds on all sides.

I envy Rachel and her comrades' courage and audacity, as over the last five years I have become too wise and committed

to life's mundane tasks (wife, kid, work) to have been in Gaza risking my life with Rachel. I feel guilty, too: Suppose I had been there? A long-haired American Jew yelling at the soldiers in Hebrew would have given them pause before crushing a goy. I don't use such ethno-religious terms lightly; for it is clear that for the ever more religiously and nationalistically militant Israeli soldiery any life besides that of a Jew is cheap, if not meaningless.

It's not for nothing that the last Israeli Education Minister called all Palestinians, on both sides of the Green Line, a cancer to be excised from the Israeli body. That was the Education Minister. That's what Israeli children are learning. Yes, Palestinian textbooks have yet to fully erase the anti-Semitism that stained their pages for decades, although they were well on their way before the IDF destroyed the Education Ministry last spring and walked off with tens of thousands of dollars in cash—supposedly for terrorists; more likely for textbooks.

What's more frightening than her killing is that Israel will pay no price for it—the IDF expressed "regret" and the White House said it will "assess the situation." But President Bush is too busy with the war to worry about Rachel, and the IDF—which in the last year has killed ambulance drivers, journalists, and senior UN personnel (not to mention hundreds of completely innocent Palestinian civilians of all ages) without reproach—will draw the obvious conclusions and step up the violence against the ISM and similar groups. (As this goes to press, another clearly identified ISM representative, Brian Avery, has been shot in the face by Israeli soldiers.)

The machinery of occupation that literally ran Rachel over is yet another reminder that the Occupation itself is one big war crime. Period. Moreover, Rachel's death is a sign of what's going to come in Iraq, as our "smart" bombs are already proving unable to discriminate between Iraqi civilians and soldiers.

Do Americans think our Occupation of Iraq will be any less criminal than Israel's of Palestine? Will Americans care any more than Israelis about what their sons are doing to the enemy and anyone else who stands in their path?

I'm pretty sure that Rachel would not want her death mourned any more than the thirteen year old Palestinian boy killed the same day as she. How many Palestinians were killed yesterday? How many Israelis were killed in that last suicide bombing? Where was it, Haifa? Hadera? Or Jerusalem? The numbers, names, and places just pile up until they seem natural, like the weather. They're not. And it's up to all of us to make sure Rachel's death—all their deaths—are not in vain. □

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Spiritualizing Foreign Policy

Peter Gabel

If President Bush and his advisors have their way, their military victory in Iraq will become the model for a series of future interventions—Iran, Syria, North Korea, and who knows where it will stop? As we now look at the death, destruction, hatred, and suffering that this war has generated, Peter Gabel's vision of a new approach to foreign policy is, if anything, more important than when it was written as the war began—because it gives us a model for how a peace movement steeped in the Tikkun approach to spiritual politics could provide a very different path for resolving and healing international conflict.

As the war in Iraq now becomes a daily reality and as the deadened-to-human-life consciousness of Bush/Cheney/Rumsfeld and the parade of the CNN generals and the killing headlines of the morning papers envelops all of us in the shadow of our fallen common humanity, we must take a deep breath and try to lift ourselves out of this shadow—not only by engaging in acts of resistance to the war but also by thinking our way out of the paradigm that accounts for war-consciousness and for the deadness to human life that is married to it. This deadness both produces war-consciousness and is produced by it, and it perpetuates itself over and over again from war to war, from generation to generation.

In Tikkun we have been trying to develop for many years now a new conception of spiritual politics that understands the world as a nexus of inherently social human beings linked to one another by more than the individualistic and material needs that have dominated prior political, economic, and social theories. We have claimed that we are each expressions of a loving energy and are animated by the desire for mutual recognition and affirmation of that loving energy—that we each long for recognition of our inherent worthiness and sacredness. We have also sought to analyze the social alienation that obscures this spiritual longing—the need to hide from the other behind masks and roles, to guard ourselves from the humiliation of a nonrecognition and rejection too painful to bear. We now

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know that it is this alienation of I from Thou, between I and Thou, within I and Thou, that keeps dragging us back into the shadow, and that accounts for the deadness, at the surface of the skin, in the constriction of the heart, and in the flattening of the perceptual field of the withdrawn mind's eye.

We must now apply this understanding to the development of a new conception of "foreign policy"—a term that I dislike because the Other is never "foreign." The term implies that we belong to a "we," represented by the nation-state, which is also "imaginary" to the extent that its function is partly to mask our isolation, to deny our alienation from the person next to us by insisting on our patriotic connection "in the sky." In spite of my dislike of the term, however, I will nevertheless use it here to try to help us imagine a new method of relating to the Other in the world that understands itself through the nation-state prism—keeping in mind, however, that the "foreign policy" that emerges from our vision of spiritual politics requires that we never see the Other as "foreign." Let's say that I am using "figures of speech" to communicate, but please imagine I am always keeping the quotation marks.

A foreign policy that emerges from this vision of spiritual politics understands that the present situation cannot be reduced to simple formulas that exclude spiritual understanding—the longing for authentic mutual recognition and affirmation of our fundamental humanity—that

forms the basis for our vision. It's not just about oil, or about the risk of terror and weapons of mass destruction, or about "lunacy," for that matter. Rather, at the heart of our problem is a complex historical process of distortion in the relation of self to Other that *encompasses* oil, and genuine concern about terror, and even an element of lunacy if it is understood to mean the distortion itself gone out of control.

In TIKKUN, we've often described this distortion as expressive of an historical disease of individualism and materialism, manifested in the competitive global market and in political systems that channel the frustration of the isolated individual into demonization of the Other. In the case of the Middle East, we rightly emphasize, for example, that historical dynamics dating back to the Crusades and certainly to the pre-World War I carving up of the Middle East by imperial Western powers, followed by the gradual development and expansion of globalization and capitalist markets, have contributed not only to material poverty in the Middle East but to the humiliation and degradation of entire cultures. This humiliation has contributed—sometimes with direct Western assistance because “we” perceived it to be in “our” interests—to the emergence of dictatorships and royalist antidemocratic regimes in places like Iraq and Saudi Arabia. This same humiliation of the Other's fundamental humanity has inspired the rise of fanatical, artificially connecting fundamentalisms that artificially restore a humiliated people's sense of worthiness, meaning, and purpose by glorifying the martyrdom of the suicidal killing of the humiliator, the imperial power who, degraded and fearful inside, becomes the source of the other's humiliation.

The key, as I see it, to the process of hopeful elevation, to lifting ourselves out of this System that we are all entrapped in, is to grapple with and begin to understand the meaning of *tikkun olam*, or the healing and transformation of the world. We must, with a heart that can think, grasp how the process of historical distortion and the cycle of humiliation reproduces itself as a process of “rotating paranoia.” By this I mean that each cell within the distorted System or distorted nexus of human interaction—and by “cell” I mean each individual person as an existing Someone and each artificial “collective” of such persons, like “the Muslim people” or “the American people”—finds its inherent social-spiritual longing for love, recognition, and peace repeatedly short-circuited by a paranoid fear of the Other, a fear that in any situation as complex as the current one has a long and patterned history of precisely this process, evolving pathologically like a single injured organism. On the hopeful side, we must always remember that the social-spiritual longing for love and mutual recognition is “fundamental” while fear and paranoia are not, but are rather derivative of the desire for love and recognition, expressions of the alienation of the fundamental loving desire from itself.

Thus as we analyze the current world situation and try to find a new spiritual-political way out of it, we must keenly attune ourselves to this underlying dynamic and its inherently contradictory “flow.” This attunement of our thinking, this “thinking with the heart,” must occur beneath the public clamor—beneath the paranoia-induction of repetitions of certain key names like Saddam Hussein, or George Bush for that matter, which freeze our attunement with a touch of terror, carrying as they do connotations of paranoia, fear, and rage. To heal the world requires thinking, and then gradually acting, underneath this surface of the world and with a single aim: to strengthen the confidence of the longing for love and recognition as it exists across the psycho-spiritual energy field that is the interconnectedness of social space. Like the movement of paranoia and fear, this strengthening also rotates, and through this rotation elevates *itself* into existence. But because of the Devil's paranoid power and the long history of the rotation and evolution of this paranoia, this process of rotating elevation requires our conscious assistance.

This brings us to the meaning of a new spiritual-political foreign policy. Healing the paranoid impulse that leads to periodic outbreaks of war, violence, and killing requires an intentional process that I will call “Surrounding.” “Surrounding” describes an international, transpersonal effort by the world community to simultaneously contain and reassure the herky-jerky impulse toward fear that irrationally escalates all conflict—that is, it requires both firmness in the sense that is not permissive toward violence in the Other, and love in the sense that it manifests, in its very way of being-toward-the-other, a recognition of the other's authentic humanity, even as the other resists that very recognition by throwing up a defensive wall of paranoia and engages in denunciatory words and actions toward the surrounding force.

Surrounding requires that we put up a kind of “Guard-all” shield that is as impervious as possible to the Other's denunciations, that understands they are but expressions of an individual or collective terror and anticipation of humiliation in the Other. This shield provides the basis for international empathic firmness, in which love and the capacity to recognize the Other holds its ground in spite of accusations and threats. This firmness is actually reassuring to the Other that our capacity for recognition is real and unshakable, that we will not dissolve into counter-violence because of paranoid shocks leveled in our direction.

The second moment of Surrounding then requires the continuing manifestation of recognition of the other's innocent authenticity and constitutes an appeal to the other's longing for recognition and affirmation, seeking to “thaw” the other's paranoia through an insistence on the real existence of the deeper inter-human bond that connects us. We must show through the quality and content of our words and actions that we understand the wounds of the past that we have mostly inherited and partly inflicted on each

other—or to be more precise on our singular self-otherness or intersubjectivity—in our own lifetimes, that these wounds are mistakes, that beneath them is a longing for healing and mutual recognition, and that we no longer have any choice but to take the great opportunity forced upon us by the circumstances of modern weaponry and ecological emergency to evolve as a species and transcend the ontological immaturity that has characterized our collective existence up to the present time. This second moment of Surrounding is best understood as a manifestation of Presence that emanates outward toward the other and recognizes the other in his/her “singular universality” or unique sameness—our very selves in another form.

Surrounding, empathic firmness, thawing by manifesting Presence—these are new concepts to us. They can of course be dismissed as New-Age psychobabble by our fearful inherited self-consciousness. But they are qualitative concepts meant to evoke aspects of our social being that, as I have said, exist underneath the world’s noisy surface and “subtend” the entire nexus of our collective social reality. This sub-reality is both spiritual and political—spiritual in the sense that it exists pre-verbally in the interspace that irrevocably connects us as intersubjective social beings; political in the sense that as surely as the need for food and shelter, it drives the way we co-create and govern our collective existence. Everything in human experience is spiritual/political in this sense: A line of people waiting for a bus is spiritual in the sense that in modern society it *exists* itself as a cautious manifestation of rotating anonymity; and political in the sense that it is chosen by “the people” in the line as their way of being together as a collective “no one,” drawn from other infinite examples of bus lines and “lines” in general as we form them in a world of social alienation, or rather in a world where social alienation appears to have the upper hand.

But how might this international spiritual/political consciousness express itself? The first part of the answer is for us to realize that in spite of our lack of a vocabulary for it, it already has been expressing itself, in many forms, but especially through the institution of the United Nations. The United Nations is *not* only a collection of States impotently squabbling over this or that international issue without any genuine authority or power in the shadow of Real nation-states that command powerful and deadly militaries and are more or less free to act in their own self-interest. The United Nations is *also* an actual manifestation of the



The Charter of the United Nations does not begin with the words, “We, the permanently squabbling and self-interested sovereign States of the world ...”

effort of the voice that I here speak of to manifest itself as the Unity of all Being, and to insist that we exist as this Unity, and as the collective longing of our desire to affirm this Unity. The expression “the Unity of all Being,” which Michael Lerner appeals to so often, and which is so difficult to understand and act upon when we are constrained by our dominant secular mindset, expresses the beautiful and true Biblical metaphor that we are but shattered shards of light seeking to recover our awareness of our “singular universality”—that is, our ontological Truth that we exist as at once unique in our respective existences and yet manifestations of precisely the same spiritual essence, an essence that can recognize itself through love alone and that longs to recover the capacity for this recognition.

The Charter of the United Nations does not begin with the words, “We, the permanently squabbling and self-

interested sovereign States of the world, form ourselves into a sort of pseudo-communal but actually alienated confederation of world nations with no real power, to accomplish little or nothing by diplomatic means, leaving the fate of the earth to the Reality of hopelessly divided national self-interests.” It begins by affirming in secular language the aspiration of man and womankind toward the recovery of the Unity of all Being through the healing of our differences. And even granting cynical realism its due, it is important and helpful to understand that these high spiritual-political ideals of the Charter were at the time of their expression, following the utter catastrophes of World Wars I and II, genuinely intended by the Charter’s signatories to carry this high meaning. If our pre-verbal hopeful longing and even conviction that we are capable in our very nature of universal love and mutual recognition, our knowledge that we are all One, unique and yet the Same, if this longing for recognition did not exist, or if it were untrue, we would have annihilated ourselves long ago. Nations would have annihilated nations as surely as our neighbor would have annihilated his brother-in-law. But just as our knowledge of our interconnectedness and our longing to recognize and affirm it underlies the noise of every event, so also this sense of our co-presence, common desire, and longing partially constitutes our institutions, most nobly the United Nations.

What we might call our theoretical challenge at the present moment is to develop the language and intonation of thinking that can make this spiritual-political conception of an institution like the United Nations explicit and accessi-

ble to our common reflection. We must in a certain sense abandon or play down the internalized model that we have of the United Nations as a collection of nation-states—which reflects back to us a picture of a thing-like “entity” made up of various parts, each with its own constituency and interests—and conceive of the UN instead as the embodiment of a world-wide spiritual-political movement toward the mutual recognition of our unity. This new conception, if we are able to allow ourselves to imagine it, should grasp interventions as efforts at healing both the Other and ourselves. How, you may ask, can this possibly be relevant to a crisis like that in Iraq, in which—even assuming the totality of present circumstances are reflective of a historical distortion of Self-Other and inter-cultural relations—we are dealing with very dangerous nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons? It apparently is the case, for example, that Iraq has not accounted for large quantities of anthrax, nerve gas, and possibly significant quantities of pirated or purchased uranium that are in fact capable of killing large numbers of people. Putting aside all the other seemingly overwhelming issues shaping the present situation—including globalization and its impact on the region, the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, the presence of real economic interests that influence the material quality of life of millions of people, and the allegiances of each so-called “nationality” to its own interests and respective collective identity—putting all these and all other “realistic” matters aside, how can one hope by use of a spiritualized perspective to address the dangers of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the degree of real danger to millions of lives that these weapons pose?

The answer to this question is that pre-verbal and non-cognitive attempts to Surround even dictators like Saddam Hussein in the manner that I am suggesting will dramatically alter even his desire to use such weapons—in part by affecting him and those around him, in part by enabling the masses of the Muslim world to feel recognized sufficiently to not support his use of these weapons and instead to try to move toward greater understanding with the real people his actions would affect. Had this approach been taken prior to the current war, we would not be seeing the enraged demonstrations in Yemen now that make the proliferation and use of these weapons more likely, and that once again rotate the paranoid view of the Other that blocks and keeps blocking the Other’s instinctive movement toward connection. Surrounding, thawing, manifesting Presence, “leaning in” toward the other in a firm but affirming-of-the-other’s-humanity way, will *spontaneously* release the Other’s desire for mutual recognition. This is because the underlying desire of all living beings is for precisely this recognition, and thus this desire responds spontaneously and pre-verbally, like an invisible pre-cognitive force.

Indeed, the discourse of present-day diplomacy, which is not a spiritual discourse, nevertheless makes implicit

reference to this spontaneous capacity whenever it speaks of “easing tensions” or of instituting “confidence-building measures.” *That which is eased* is the separation from the Other, resulting from the legacy of paranoia which in each specific instance takes an historically specific form (Ireland/Britain is different from Israel/Palestine is different from US/Iraq—but not ontologically; rather only in terms of historical and cultural specificity of the respective “forms of life” that have shaped the historically specific identity of each conflict). The *confidence* that is built in “confidence-building measures” is the commitment to recognition of the Other as equal manifestation of the Self, achieved through inter-cultural symbolic actions through which mutual recognition is understood to have taken place.

Of course, to repeat what I said earlier, the capacity of healing interventions to produce the spontaneous realization of desire requires symbolic action sufficiently sustained to endure all manner of paranoid suspicion and counter-reaction. It must be firm enough to endure cynicism and mistrust of every gesture—firm enough to endure the cynicism of the noise at the surface (such as media cynicism) that, because of the legacy of distortion that has produced the conviction that the Other will reject the Self and vice-versa, and even attempt to exterminate the respective existence of the other, will bombard every act that manifests a healing and loving Presence. But our becoming able to “totalize” exactly these processes of mutuality in light of the distortions of our common history is what I mean by spiritualizing foreign policy.

Two recent examples in which this spiritualizing consciousness has had a dramatic effect, and that we use as models as we try to imagine ourselves lifting out of war-consciousness, are the 1993 Oslo Accords—the most optimistic moment in the history of Israel/Palestinian relations in which each “in principle” agreed to recognize the other; and South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission—in which the two nations of South Africa, one white and one black, sought to achieve this same mutual recognition in facing and beginning to heal an extraordinarily brutal history of domination of one by the other. From each example, we can learn how to begin to proceed down a new path, focusing our attention on methods of alleviating the stress of paranoia toward the other so that the desire for mutual recognition can emerge, *as it already wishes to do*. From each, we can develop our thought about how to make interventions in the present world situation in which the “we” that is our common humanity can Surround our terror and rage at each other, thaw the frozen rotating paranoia of our mutual antagonisms that have broken us apart, and manifest our Presence so as to move toward the peaceful existence to which all living beings aspire.

Prior to the extraordinary “breakfast diplomacy” of Oslo, the Israeli/Palestinian slice of our common humanity sat facing each other across various international tables for

four decades. Each having traumatized the other, periodically through physical violence, continually through the humiliation of non-recognition of the humanity of the other, each "side" approached the other as an agent of physical and psycho-spiritual terror. From within this wary and defensive stance, no progress could be made toward peace because true recognition of the other implied a vulnerability on the part of the self that, if not reciprocated, appeared to make the self vulnerable to psychic and perhaps physical annihilation. It is not possible to proceed toward peace in a fixed state of fracture, with the legacy of the Holocaust on one side and the imperialist

occupation of the Arab world on the other, from a stance of "you go first," accompanied by a list of demands that are degrading or threatening to the other side.

In the face of that and for a complex of other reasons, in 1993 some Israelis close to then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin contacted Palestinian leaders close to Yassir Arafat and through a series of miracles agreed to meet in secret in Oslo, Norway, a locale that symbolized a long history of neutrality and far from the spiritual battleground of the Middle East. Under the auspices of their Norwegian hosts, the two sides met not to "negotiate" from a position of mistrust, but to talk and to walk in the green woods of Norway. Relieved of paranoiac pressure in this symbolically neutral setting, the actual persons then engaged in conversations over breakfast in which each for the first time had the opportunity to safely tell the other their story as they experienced it. And precisely because of the locale, the unofficial nature of the dialogue, the fact that it took place while sharing food in a natural surrounding, and the fact that it involved not "goals" and demands to be achieved by rationalistic and strategic conversation, but stories that revealed each side's common humanity, an extraordinary breakthrough was achieved that led to the now famous Oslo Accords, the handshake between former General and hawk Rabin and PLO fighter Arafat in front of Bill Clinton in Washington, D.C., and the very brief outpouring of hope that culminated tragically in Rabin's assassination by a right-wing Jewish settler after a peace rally in which Rabin was seen singing "Give Peace a Chance" with thousands of hopeful young Jews.

I know perfectly well that the line I have drawn here, from the initiation of Oslo to the peace rally at which Rabin was assassinated, and marking the end of that hopeful period, was not in literal, temporal reality a straight line, and also that there is more than one cynical version of the story of Oslo and its meaning. But the so-called "actual facts" as



*Our humanity is not
inherently fractured but
common.*

understood by the realists' afterthought misses the actual fact that what I have drawn here was a spiritual straight line, and one that might have led in a very different direction from the present tragic situation. Hunkered down in the legacy of skepticism and pain, realism can never quite see the nonlinear and atemporal openings-up of desire that produce the straight lines of hope in history. Nevertheless, these lines of hope remain lodged, invisible, in our historical memory and silently move the human spirit forward in spite of itself, precisely because they hold the promise of fulfilling the most essential of longings that we universally share.

The key task for us now is to reflect upon these lines of hope as they emerge and gain the knowledge in our common conscious reflection of the elements that make the development of hope possible. From Oslo, we can learn elements about time and place, about the role of informality and breaking bread, and about the capacity to tell one's painful story in an environment in which those whom we fear can hear that pain and ultimately identify with it. In that moment of identification comes the possibility of recognition that we *are* the Other and that our humanity is not inherently fractured but common; that the Other, through mutual recognition, is the source of our own completion as inherently loving, social beings.

The example of South Africa provides a parallel lesson. When Nelson Mandela was in prison, he wrote that he survived his twenty-seven years there in significant part by realizing even in momentary interactions with his guards the essential goodness and humanity that resided within them. This confirmed his conviction that transcendence of even the most brutal history of domination was possible—that this transcendence in some way actually sought its own release from the compulsion to repeat its own repression through domination. When he was finally released and he and Archbishop Desmond Tutu led the overcoming of apartheid, it was this conviction that gave birth to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, one of the great leaps forward in legal consciousness that has occurred in the development of human history. As is now well-known, this process, in which some 22,000 acts of apartheid-inspired cruelty were acknowledged by the (mainly) white minority perpetrators in the presence of their black victims and their families, on a daily basis and on television for all to hear across the new democratic nation of South Africa, allowed the black majority to assume power essentially without violence and retribution. If one watches the recorded proceedings of this Commission, presided over by the extraordinary moral presence of Bishop Tutu himself, one sees the healing

power of the simple speaking of Truth to achieve reconciliation and break the cycle of brutality that repeats itself because the pain and suffering beneath it normally cannot be spoken without resulting in what we imagine will produce devastating guilt and humiliation.

Unlike the death penalty, which seeks to provide resolution to the suffering of victims by extermination of the dominating Other, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission provided a sufficient beginning toward the resolution of a history of suffering by the act mass acknowledgment, in which the particular perpetrators were in reality revealing the alienation of the entire white majority that had underlain the essence of apartheid domination and the entire legacy of imperialism and racism that had given rise to it. The blank statements made by this white landowner or that white policeman—blank because their confessions were often expressed without emotion as a kind of stark and factual representation of a collective truth—placed before the world its own madness, in a way that was simultaneously both monotonously repetitious and spellbinding. And instead of enacting a repetition of the cycle of violence resulting from a repetition of a denial of our common humanity, the processes of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission somehow allowed enactment to be transcended by the naming of the truth that was being denied, in which Tutu himself, as well as the victims and their families themselves, could liberate the nation by bearing witness to it.

Here again, there are many reservations one can raise about the Commission's work, but as in the case of Oslo, the reservations miss the spiritual lesson of how we must proceed to allow ourselves to evolve as an international common humanity, or "international community." On the other side of Truth, of course, is Forgiveness, which is different from freedom from accountability. Bishop Tutu's book *No Future Without Forgiveness* indicates this point in its title—that it is in mutual recognition of the truth of our history, and in forgiveness for this history, which is actually the history of what has been visited upon us as common social individuals in a social/historical common history of humanity, that *spontaneous* redemption becomes possible. I say "spontaneous" redemption because what subtends all of our historical distortions—then apartheid, today Iraq—is the desire for this mutual recognition, the desire to recognize the Other and be recognized by the Other in a precognitive relation of common Presence. That is what heals and what we mean by love.

So now we move to the present crisis. I have said that the UN should re-envision itself according to its original moment of creation, but do so before the catastrophe (that is, the next rotation of paranoia and fear that is already in the process of unfolding) rather than after it. This was the case in 1945 when the Charter was first written and its principles committed to through the act of signature. What follows is a possible spiritual-political path that the UN might

have taken prior to this war and could conceivably still take, with the cooperation of the United States, as of the time of this writing.

We must begin from the starting point that the UN exists as an embodiment of common humanity seeking to recognize and return to itself, to get back in touch with its original form and intention, and to redeem itself, through actions that heal the distortions of *itself* that come before it in one particular form after another.

First, the UN Security Council, as a group constituted to be expressive of the world's effort to recognize and affirm our common humanity, should explicitly pass a resolution that reassures the people of Iraq, and the peoples of the Middle East generally, that it does not wish to engage in further acts of violence toward them, but rather seeks to insure their safety and well-being. This resolution should include provisions for significant humanitarian assistance. But in addition, the resolution should make clear *humanity's* common fear of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons that Iraq and other nations may possess, and invite the existing Iraqi leadership to participate in a mediated dialogue about how systematically to reduce this level of fear. This must include a willingness to address the paranoiac or realistic fears that even Saddam Hussein may hold about the safety of Iraq in the face of Western weaponry, and begin a dialogue about what to do about this fear. Explicit in the design of this dialogue must be the paradox that neither side wishes to disarm in the face of the fear of the other.

One manner of conducting such a dialogue would be to have world leaders who are widely recognized to represent the highest of human ideals, such as Nelson Mandela, Mikail Gorbachev, Jimmy Carter, and Kofi Annan, along with an ecumenical group of leading religious figures, including the Pope, to convene and oversee its deliberations. These deliberations should be at least partially televised, just as the hearings of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission were, so that the process of dialogue and the emerging process of mutual recognition of one another's humanity that would be intended to emerge from it could be witnessed each day by people throughout the world.

Second, in the conduct of this dialogue, each participant should have an opportunity to state its past wounds, so that without blame, humanity as a whole, as symbolized by the United Nations convening body, could hear the suffering it has imposed upon itself. Here the entire historical legacy of the experience of each party's suffering and humiliation should be given expression—families of Americans who died on September 11 should speak to and be seen by the world via television as speaking to Iraqi families whose children have died as a result of war and economic sanctions. Here, the goal would be for our common humanity to elicit its own spontaneous compassion for the trauma and wounds we have inflicted on ourselves.

You might at first think that it makes little sense for Iraqi families to engage in such a dialogue with American families since Iraq was presumably not responsible for the destruction of the World Trade Center and the deaths of September 11. But understood through a spiritual-political lens, the impetus for war between America and Iraq emerges from the interrelationship of traumatic, paranoia-inducing events and histories that are expressive of each group's projection of the Other as a projected agent of terror and humiliation. Expression of the experience of suffering by members of each group in a publicly televised forum, heard with compassion by the symbol of the world community manifesting its presiding Presence, listening to the effects of its own distortions, is one of the most powerful ways of "thawing" the carapace of pseudo-identities that keep us locked in the rotating paranoia of the war paradigm. Through the presence of the suffering of the Other, we "hear" through the pain of identification how out of touch we are with ourselves, how split from the unity of our oneness and commonality.

Third, the UN should seek to "invite," perhaps within the circular arena of the Security Council, a mutual embrace or other expression of mutual recognition between families and across nationalistic pseudo-identities, taking care that this is done authentically. If we remember that the desire for mutual recognition of our common humanity—at the level of the people in our families or in the buildings in which we live as much as at the international level—always subtends the rotating paranoia that separates us, and that this desire for connection is capable of spontaneous emergence (think of the elevated local and world responses in the first two weeks following September 11), it is clear that a spiritual foreign policy must be one that utilizes mass communication technologies to permit the witnessing of such spontaneous emergence. Quiet the voice that might lead you to think this is a crazy idea, that it is inconceivable or otherwise "unrealistic": Israeli peace activist Yitzak Frankenthal's "Parent's Project" has already enabled such public acts of embrace and reconciliation to occur between victims of terror and occupation in Israel/Palestine, and there is no reason why the Security Council could not reimagine its work to emphasize public actions necessary for healing that take account of Frankenthal's proven spiritual wisdom.

If an embrace between families is not possible or capable of being realized with authentic spontaneity in the context of a public hearing, the presence of this hesitancy can be valuable in itself. Merely listening, through the medium of specific actors understood as injured and scattered shards



*Thaw traumatized
peoples with acts of
generosity.*

of light, to the pain we have inflicted on ourselves through being out-of-touch-with-ourselves, is sufficient to set on course our ethical direction; and if seen through this spiritual-political lens, the incapacity to embrace in response to an invitation to do so points both actor and witness toward the redemptive necessity of engaging in those acts of reconciliation, generosity, and kindness that can allow the desire for such an embrace to manifest itself eventually. It is this recognizing embrace, spontaneously pulled for in and through the suffering we have inflicted on ourselves, that we have withheld across generations because we have remained trapped in reciprocally perceiving and

responding to the Other as a threat.

Fourth, UN representatives should supplement ordinary humanitarian aid with rebuilding the material infrastructure of the Middle East as a whole where such manifestations of generosity can be carried out, including post-war Iraq, no matter what the swirl of emotions, no matter what the political complexity, that such efforts will encounter. This rebuilding should especially include homes, hospitals, schools, and facilities to ensure safe drinking water and provision of food supplies. But it should also include assistance to local communities in rebuilding mosques and other locations that symbolize the historical embodiment of the region's cultural integrity. The aim here as an expression of Surrounding is to freely link acts of generosity with the transmission of recognition, and to proceed to thaw traumatized areas manifesting resistance toward participation in the activity of our common humanity in recovering contact with, and shared knowledge of, itself.

Finally, all of these activities can and should be replicated by the redemptive movements of our common humanity that exist within an increasing singular and worldwide civil society—that is, redemptive actions outside existing institutions that are already being engaged in by the millions of us whom we know make up the new, worldwide peace (not merely anti-war) movement. We are ordinary people committed to the recovery of our capacity to release the desire to recognize each other as the source of each other's completion. In relation to the spiritual sickness of war-consciousness and the now-ancient paradigm that separates us, we are all doctors without borders. Common humanity can heal itself only by healing the Other through providing the Other with the grace of a recognition that every one of us longs for through the layer of pain and self-protection that causes us to distort Who the Other actually is, and withhold ourselves from the only source of our salvation. □

Israel, the United States, and the United Nations

Stephen Zunes

In attempting to justify its invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration claimed that the credibility of the United Nations Security Council and its resolutions would be at stake if the enforcement arm of the world body did not authorize the use of force against Saddam Hussein's regime. Critics, however, correctly pointed out that Iraq was not the only Middle Eastern state to defy such resolutions. Israel, it was noted, by even the most conservative interpretation, is in violation of no less than thirty-five UN Security Council resolutions, more than any other nation. These critics observed how the Bush administration was not only not threatening an invasion of Israel, but had pledged to block the imposition of sanctions and other measures to ensure Israeli compliance with these resolutions and to continue to provide Israel with large-scale military and economic assistance despite its ongoing violations.

How valid is such criticism? And is Israel indeed the world's number one international outlaw?

Israel owes its very existence to the United Nations, which partitioned the British Mandate of Palestine into a proposed Jewish and Arab state in 1947 through General Assembly Resolution 194. And yet the United Nations has been seen for at least three decades to be hostile to Israel.

The two main bodies of the United Nations are the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The General Assembly consists of all member states of the United Nations, which was made up of just 51 nations at the UN's founding in 1945 and now totals 191 countries. Each member has one vote and most decisions are made by a simple majority. Though the General Assembly's recommendations are an important indication of world opinion and can represent the moral authority of the community of nations, it does not have the power to enforce its resolutions

on other nations. As a result, most resolutions are largely symbolic in nature.

The Security Council is a fifteen-member body. This includes the five permanent members, which were the major victorious allies of World War II: the United States, Great Britain, France, Russia, and China. Each has the power to veto any Security Council resolution. There are ten nonpermanent members representing regional blocs that serve two-year terms and do not have the ability to veto. The Security Council, unlike the General Assembly, has the power to enforce its resolutions through sanctions, military force, and other measures if they deem there is a threat to international peace and

security. As a result, Security Council resolutions are taken far more seriously.

As decolonization led to a Third World majority in the General Assembly by the 1970s, these former colonies—in alliance with the Soviet Union and its Communist allies—passed a series of resolutions that focused upon the major grievances of the world's poor majority, particularly the maldistribution of global wealth and other legacies of colonialism. Also of concern was what was largely seen as contemporary manifestations of colonialism, particularly the apartheid system then in effect in South Africa and the ongoing Israeli occupation of Arab land since the 1967 war. A series of resolutions critical of Israel were pushed through the General Assembly, some of which were based on well-documented Israeli violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention and related international covenants on human rights, and others which were largely based on ideological opposition to Israel's very existence. The most notorious was a resolution passed in October 1975 as an amendment to a General Assembly resolution establishing the Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, which claimed that Zionism was a form of racism and racial discrimination. Other initiatives of the General Assembly included the 1974 decision to grant observer status to the Palestine Liberation Organization, (similar status was granted to the Southwest Africa People's Organization [SWAPO], which was fighting

Flagrant politicization of the Security Council by the United States on behalf of Israel undermines the legitimacy of the United Nations.

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for the independence of Namibia, then occupied by South Africa). The General Assembly at this time also established the Committee on the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to advance the Palestinian cause, and invited PLO leader Yasir Arafat to address the General Assembly.

While many of the concerns raised by the General Assembly regarding Israeli violations of international law and internationally recognized human rights were valid, the fact that Israel received far more attention than any other member of the United Nations, and that the majority of Israel's most vocal critics were among the world's more serious human rights violators, raised the specter of anti-Semitism. On the one hand, as an occupying power, Israel was legitimately subjected to more intense scrutiny by the United Nations than most human rights violators who are legally protected by their right of sovereignty from most criticisms of domestic repression. This does not mean, however, that there were not egregious double standards. I recall witnessing an impassioned speech on the subject of Palestine by one UN delegate stressing the fundamental right to self-determination and the deplorable human rights situation in the occupied territories. While there was nothing in the speech that was in itself unreasonable, the delegate happened to represent the government of Indonesia, which had invaded, annexed, and colonized the island nation of East Timor in violation of a series of UN Security Council resolutions, resulting in the deaths of 200,000 East Timorese civilians.

In more recent years, anti-Israel rhetoric in the General Assembly has dramatically decreased. The resolution equating Zionism with racism was overwhelmingly repealed in 1991. Still, the United Nations has yet to live down its anti-Israel reputation.

In contrast to the General Assembly, the Security Council—dominated by Western democracies and with a firmer commitment to international law and the United Nations Charter—has generally not displayed an anti-Israel bias. For example, the UN Charter is explicit in its recognition of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war. As a result, Iraq's 1990 invasion and occupation of Kuwait was not allowed to stand, with the Security Council authorizing the use of force to enforce its resolutions demanding Iraqi withdrawal. When Morocco invaded Western Sahara in 1975 and Indonesia invaded East Timor that same year, the UN demanded the withdrawal of the occupying armies and underscored the right to self-determination. Similar demands were made of Turkey when it seized the northern third of Cyprus the previous year. Though none of these resolutions were enforced—in part as a result of the United States' close strategic relationship

with the invaders—the Security Council did reiterate basic legal principles against such territorial expansion.

By contrast, UN Security Council resolution 242—passed after the 1967 war when Israel conquered the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt, the Golan Heights of Syria, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), and the Gaza Strip—did not include demands comparable to these other resolutions for the occupying army to withdraw unconditionally and grant the right of self-determination. Instead, Israeli withdrawal was made conditional on neighboring states recognizing Israel's right to

exist within secure and recognized borders, free from acts or threats of force. This principle—reiterated in UNSC resolution 338 passed after the October 1973 war—became known as “land for peace.”

Supporters of the Israeli Occupation sometimes claim that the resolution spoke of “territories” rather than “*the* territories,” implying that there is no obligation for a full withdrawal. By this interpretation, the return of the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt in 1981 thereby fulfilled Israel's obligations. However, the resolution's text in French (the other official language of the United Nations) does use the definite

article. Furthermore, the authors of the original resolution—the American and British ambassadors—explicitly stated that they were thinking only in terms of very minor and reciprocal adjustments of the jagged border that was based upon cease-fire lines in the 1949 armistice agreement.

The Arab states and the Palestine Liberation Organization initially rejected these resolutions, though there were indications that some of them were moderating this rejectionist stance as far back as the mid-1970s. By the early 1990s, it appeared that the PLO and virtually every Arab state was ready to accept the principle of land for peace. In March 2002, at the Beirut summit of the League of Arab States, a resolution endorsing a peace plan by Saudi Prince Abdullah that essentially reiterated 242 and 338 was adopted unanimously.

As the Arabs became more open to accepting the formula of land for peace, the Israelis and the United States became more intransigent. For example, the United States barred the PLO from participating in the U.S.-sponsored peace process for nearly twenty years in part because the PLO refused to accept UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis of negotiation. Since the resolutions did not recognize Palestinian national rights, however, the PLO initially rejected them. A proposed UN Security Council resolution quietly supported by the PLO and several prominent Arab governments that reiterated 242 and 338 with the proviso that a Palestinian state be established on the West Bank and Gaza Strip was vetoed by the United States in 1976. When the Palestinians formally accepted the resolutions without the proviso as the basis for peace talks in 1988

The resolution equating Zionism with racism was overwhelmingly repealed in 1991. Still, the United Nations has yet to live down its anti-Israel reputation.

and were finally allowed into the peace process five years later, the U.S. essentially dropped these resolutions as the basis of the peace talks. The U.S. has not formally rejected them, but has called on the Arab parties—after they accepted them—to be “flexible” and to be open to “new ideas.”

The security guarantees called for in the resolutions were generally interpreted to mean promises of non-aggression by neighboring states, presumably enforced by some kind of combination of arms control, demilitarized zones, early warning systems, and international peacekeeping forces. The United States and Israel have dramatically expanded this interpretation, however, now insisting that the resolution essentially requires that the physical safety of every Israeli citizen must be somehow guaranteed. In effect, the Israeli and U.S. governments argue that Israel is under no obligation to withdraw from the occupied territories unless there is a total halt of attacks by suicide bombers or other terrorists. Since most of these come from underground terrorist cells that are beyond the effective control of any government (particularly a disempowered Palestinian Authority under siege by Israeli occupation forces) and who explicitly want to sabotage the peace process through violence, this effectively means that the Israelis need not be obliged to withdraw. Ironically, it is the Occupation itself that is largely responsible for the suicide bombing campaign, as the failure of Israel to abide by Security Council resolutions and the failure of the United States to insist upon their enforcement has led many Palestinians to give up on peaceful means of resolving the conflict.

Indeed, there are other Security Council resolutions that the Israeli government is undeniably violating. These include resolutions 446, 452, and 465, which require Israel to cease its colonization of the occupied territories through the establishment of Jewish settlements, which are illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits an occupying power from transferring its civilian population onto lands seized by military force. Despite this, the Clinton and Bush administrations have declared that the fate of the settlements must be determined through negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. President Bill Clinton's December 2000 peace plan—like Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's plan presented at Camp David in July of that year—allowed Israel to annex huge swaths of occupied West Bank land so to incorporate 80% of the settlers, even though every one of them was living in these settlements in violation of a series of UN Security Council resolutions. Given the asymmetry in power between the Palestinians and their Israeli occupiers, it is not surprising that not only has Israel refused to withdraw from these illegal settlements but has nearly doubled them

since the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993. The attempt to annex these illegal settlements into Israel through the Clinton and Barak plans effectively divided up the West Bank into a series of non-contiguous cantons which made the prospective Palestinian “state” so unviable that Arafat was forced to reject it. The result has been the horrific violence that has been ongoing ever since.

Significantly, Article 7 of UN Security Council resolution 465 forbids all member states from facilitating Israel's colonization drive. Given that the United States has largely been

funding the construction of the so-called “bypass” roads and other infrastructure that reinforces Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories, one could make the case that the United States is also in violation of this resolution.

Another series of UN Security Council resolutions deal with another sticking point in the peace process: the status of Jerusalem. Israel is currently violating UN Security Council resolutions 262, 267, 476, and 478 which call upon Israel to rescind its annexation of Arab East Jerusalem

and surrounding areas seized in the early days of the 1967 war, and to cease other activities which attempt to change the city's status. Article 5 of Resolution 478 calls upon all member states of the UN to accept this decision, yet through a series of executive orders and Congressional resolutions over the past decade, the United States has effectively recognized Israeli sovereignty over all of greater East Jerusalem.

Other resolutions currently being violated by Israel include UNSC resolution 487, which calls upon Israel to place its nuclear facilities under the safeguard of the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency; UNSC resolution 497, which demands that Israel rescind its decision to impose its domestic laws in the occupied Syrian Golan region; UNSC resolution 573, which calls on Israel to pay compensation for human and material losses from its 1985 attack against Tunisia; and, resolutions 1402, 1403, and 1405 which require Israel to withdraw from occupied Palestinian cities on the West Bank. There are also well over a dozen resolutions currently being violated which insist that Israel abide by the Fourth Geneva Conventions regarding the occupied territories, including ceasing its deportations and assassinations of Palestinians, its demolitions of Palestinian homes, and other forms of collective punishment as well as controlling violence by settlers against the Palestinian population.

For twenty-two years, Israel remained in violation of UNSC resolution 425 and nine subsequent resolutions demanding its unconditional withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Even as a sizable majority of Israeli public opinion supported such a unilateral withdrawal by the late 1990s, U.S. ambassador to Israel

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Martin Indyk told the Israeli media that the United States supported Israel's continued occupation anyway. When the radical Lebanese Islamist group known as Hizbullah finally drove the Israelis out of Lebanon in a hasty retreat in May 2000, it demonstrated to many Palestinians that reliance on UN Security Council resolutions was fruitless. By contrast, the military victory by Hizbullah led many Palestinians to believe that the only way to free themselves from Israeli control is, like the Lebanese, to wage a sustained armed resistance led by an extremist Islamic movement. Indeed, there are few Palestinians engaged in the ongoing anti-Israeli violence who do not cite Lebanon as their model. For a number of reasons—particularly the great difference in Israeli perspectives regarding the significance of the occupied Palestinian territories as compared with southern Lebanon—it is a very inappropriate comparison. Still, the United States' effort to undermine UN Security Council resolutions regarding Israel and Lebanon is largely to blame for this radicalizing shift in Palestinian attitudes.

Having renounced armed struggle and unilaterally recognized Israeli control of most of Palestine in the 1993 Oslo Accords, the strongest tool left at the Palestinians' disposal was these outstanding UN Security Council resolutions dealing with settlements, Jerusalem, and other matters. The Palestinians assumed that, as guarantor of the Declaration of Principles, the United States would pressure Israel to make needed compromises later, based upon UN Security Council resolutions that the United States, as a Security Council member, was obliged to uphold. However, both the Clinton administration and the current Bush administration claim that the United Nations no longer has any standing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, arguing that the UN resolutions have been superseded by the Oslo Accords. According to Madeleine Albright, when she served as Clinton's ambassador to the United Nations, "resolution language referring to 'final status' issues should be dropped, since these issues are now under negotiations by the parties themselves. These include refugees, settlements, territorial sovereignty, and the status of Jerusalem."

This attempt to unilaterally negate the authority of the United Nations, however, has not been shared by the international community. No UN resolution can be rescinded without a vote of the body in question. Neither the UN Secretary General nor any other member of the Security Council agrees with the U.S. assessment, which discounts the relevance of the resolutions. Furthermore, no bilateral agreement between two parties can supersede the authority of the United Nations Security Council. This is especially true when one of the two parties (in this case, the Palestinians) has made it clear that such resolutions are still very relevant.

Non-enforcement of existing UN Security Council resolu-

tions is only one part of the perceived U.S. bias. Since the early 1970s, the United States has used its veto power in the Security Council forty times to block resolutions critical of Israeli policies in the occupied territories, more than all other countries have used their veto on all other issues during this period combined. Most recently, this has included vetoing a 2001 resolution calling for the stationing of unarmed human rights monitors in the occupied territories and a resolution this past December criticizing Israel's slaying of three United Nations workers. In addition, there have been scores of occa-

sions when threat of a U.S. veto has led to a weakening of a resolution's language or the withdrawal of the proposed resolution prior to the vote. For example, in March 2001, the United States scuttled a series of proposed resolutions by European nations by threatening to veto any resolution that used the term "siege" in reference to Israeli occupation forces surrounding Palestinian towns, or said anything in relation to Israel's illegal settlements, the

Geneva Conventions, international law, or the principle of land-for-peace.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the United States insistence that an invasion of Iraq is necessary to maintain the integrity of the United Nations and its resolutions comes across as hypocritical in the extreme.

Defenders of the Israeli and American position point out that the resolutions dealing with Israel fall under Chapter VI of the UN Charter regarding the "Pacific Settlement of Disputes" while most of those dealing with Iraq fall under Chapter VII, "Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression." While technically true, this ignores the fact that the choice of which resolutions fall into which category has nothing to do with the severity of a given nation's violations of international law or the human impact of the country's transgressions as much as it does with the violator's relationship with major powers on the Security Council. For example, resolutions dealing with Indonesia's invasion and massacres in East Timor were placed under Chapter VI while a resolution addressing an extradition dispute between the United States and Libya was placed under Chapter VII.

This flagrant politicization of the UN Security Council by the United States on behalf of Israel—as well as other allies such as Morocco and Turkey—has seriously undermined the legitimacy of the United Nations, the international legal system, and basic principles of multilateralism. Combined with the U.S. invasion of Iraq, it threatens the very legitimacy of twentieth century concepts of an international system based on agreed-upon legal principles and replaces it with a nineteenth century notion of power politics. Such an anarchic world that could result cannot be good for the Israel, the United States, or anyone else. □

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Beyond Iraq

Arthur Waskow

Bush is right: The world is now so dangerous (9/11 seems to have convinced him; some of us knew it long before) that it needs to be governed as a single community.

Bush is wrong: One piece of the world—the USA—cannot govern the rest without making it even MORE dangerous. To us and everyone else.

Now we must shape a planetary community that respects the diversity of cultures, economies, communities, and life-forms while interweaving them for the least possible destruction and violence. The deepest truth and greatest triumph of the February 15 anti-war demonstrations was that they looked beyond Iraq. They were the Birth-Day of “grassroots globalization.” The medium and the message cohered: A planetary community gathered through its grassroots interconnections to assert that planetary community, not imperial war, should be the way to deal with dangers like terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Bush comes from a politics and religious fervor that see governance as coming best from the top. His domestic politics serves that vision—the ultra-rich and the corporate powers will do far better for the rest of us than our clumsy efforts can do on our own—and his world politics carries that over. His own life experience has convinced him that when he was stumbling, uncertain, God buoyed him up and gave him power not with but over others. He expects that to continue happening, because he feels himself carrying out God’s Will—remaking the world in the image of Texas. Not democracy, but corporate oligarchy. He sees the use of violence and war as the means God has required in the past to establish that great vision.

There are times when carefully controlled violence—the police, the courts, a peacekeeping force—can serve the common good. Successful leaders use this partial truth without getting swallowed up in it, addicted to it. There is a great danger of becoming controlled by this practice, instead of using it as an occasional instrument. That danger is described in perhaps the greatest tale of all our literatures of the dangers inherent in becoming addicted to violence, arrogance, and empire: the biblical tale of Pharaoh.

Not the practice of power but the addiction to it brings

down plagues upon the Egyptian empire itself, and then even upon its emperor. But even when Pharaoh’s own advisers warn him of oncoming destruction, he cannot stop. The complex weave of society and biology and ecology and even geology rise up to shatter him—and his society.

Perhaps the reason that the Iraq War has become the basis for such an astonishing outpouring of planetary public will is that it has interwoven many specific issues: outright war, militarism, oil, religion, empire, corporate power, globalization. The specific issues themselves are important, because each of them translates into direct effects on people’s lives—so people can connect with one or more to act on. But the interweaving of these issues points toward something beyond them: a clash of civilizations indeed. Not the clash defined as “the West” versus “Islam,” but the one between a Modernized culture and emerging planetary community. On the one hand, Modernity is addicted to *doing*, not open to Being; addicted to *making*, not open to Celebrating; addicted to *producing*, not open to Communing. On the other hand, an emerging culture is trying, on a planetary level, not to abolish or stultify the productive energies of the human race, but to integrate the productive and the contemplative/com-munal/compassionate aspects of life.

The institutions that most bear the present reality and the future vision of this alternative culture are those committed neither to profit nor to military power—neither the corporations nor the state. They are rather the transnational “NGO” (non-governmental organizations) energies of religious, charitable relief-and-reconstruction, labor, environmental, human-rights, peace-oriented, and similar groups. There is an ancillary UN body made up of these groups. There are even moments when many of them gather—for instance, in the World Social Forum where tens of thousands of people from many of these organizations meet in a swirl of learning and connecting. But they have not projected themselves as an independent body onto the world stage.

Imagine a gathering that could represent these groups: Come to basic decisions about priorities for action. Support these priorities by collecting “voluntary taxes” from all the world’s citizens that were willing to pay them. Call forth worldwide protest actions like lobbying, mass demonstrations, nonviolent civil disobedience, strikes, etc.

That is what happened, for a moment, on February 15. Move beyond that moment—and we have the basis of a planetary community. □

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Questions of Peace and Genocide

Juan Cole

The hawks in the Bush administration justified the war on Iraq in so many different ways that they sometimes seemed in danger of confusing their own partisans. All along, one of their most effective arguments centered on Saddam Hussein's long history of atrocities, massacres, and virtual genocide against his own people and his neighbors. The anti-war movement never cogently replied to this argument, which detracted from its effectiveness in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Many peace activists probably had no real idea of the depth and seriousness of the crimes against humanity committed by the Baath regime. The most recent of these was the genocide against the marsh Arabs of southern Iraq, a Shiite people that numbered 500,000, who pursued their livelihoods as fishermen, farmers, and hunters in their swamps. Because they had proved hard to control, in the 1990s Saddam ordered pogroms against them. He accompanied this massacre with a propaganda campaign that ridiculed the marsh Arabs as monkey-faced and not true Iraqis, followed by the building of dams, canals, and other structures that drained the marshes where these people lived. Their way of life has been destroyed, making them into economic refugees. The marsh Arabs, human rights activists have argued, form a "subset of humanity" in accordance with the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide, so that Saddam's destruction of their way of life and massacre of them qualifies as a kind of genocide against them.

One reason for this genocide was that the marsh Arabs had joined in the uprising against Saddam in spring of 1991, which he put down with Stalinesque brutality. Kurds; urban Shiites in Najaf, Karbala, and Basra; and rural Shiites all rose against the Baath regime in the wake of its defeat in Kuwait. President George H. W. Bush had called on them to do so, but the United States provided no military help to them when they followed through on his suggestion. It is estimated that 60,000 Kurds and Shiites were killed by the Baath military at that time.

The horrors of Spring 1991 and after were perpetrated by conventional weaponry. In the 1980s, however, Saddam had used deadly chemical weaponry. The use of chemical weapons in warfare is strictly forbidden by the 1925 Geneva Protocol, to which Iraq is a signatory. The Iraqis invaded Iran in 1980, but by 1982 were on the defensive as

the Iranians counter-attacked. A CIA report concluded that Iraq began using chemical weapons against Iranian troops in August 1983. They adopted an effective dry, dusty form of mustard gas. Some Iranian survivors of these attacks say they wish they had died, since each breath they take now is torture. In 1984 the Baathists, ever more desperate, used the nerve agent tabun on the battlefield. By 1988, the Iraqi leadership resorted to extensive use of chemical warfare against Iranian "human wave" attacks, beating back offensives in the south. The battlefields were littered, in the aftermath with thousands of dead Iranian boys.

By 1988, the Kurdish people in the north of Iraq had increasingly allied with Iran, seeking independence from Saddam's murderous rule. Saddam's regime then launched the *Anfal* (spoils) campaign, which included at least thirty-nine separate gas attacks against the Kurds, often hitting militarily insignificant villages far from the Iranian border. On March 17, 1988, some twenty chemical and cluster bombs targeted the town of Halabja (population 70,000), killing 5,000 persons. The attacks also included conventional assaults and the kidnapping and murder of thousands of men. Some 50,000 were killed in the campaign. The Reagan administration had allied with Saddam against Iran and authorized purchase of some biological and chemical precursors, but this does not change Saddam's status as a war criminal.

The Baath regime has killed hundreds of thousands. The anti-war movement must find some practical way of addressing the genocides like those of Saddam and the use of weapons of mass destruction if it is to attain credibility. Simply halting a Great-Power war against regimes like the Baath—even if it could be done—simply ensures that they will survive to kill again. Non-military means such as boycotts failed to unseat the Iraqi government, in part because Iraq's petroleum was easily smuggled, and the regime's massive corps of secret police informers deterred coups.

Iraqi Kurds and Shiites are bitter that the volunteers who earlier went to Iraq serving as human shields to protect Baghdad against the United States had never done anything to stop the Baath from massacring them. It is not only imperialist wars that are wrong. Ironically, the best way to forestall further unilateral action by governments like that of George W. Bush might be to insist that the Security Council and NATO intervene earlier and more effectively to stop the war-mongering of regional dictators when they first inaugurate their killing fields. □

Juan Cole (www.juancole.com) is professor of Middle Eastern and South Asian history at the University of Michigan.

The Other War

Charles Derber

While he is attacking Iraq, George W. Bush is also waging a war at home on the American people. Launched with velvet economic and social weapons, this other war is already devastating American workers and communities. Yet Bush's war against ordinary Americans is largely invisible because the media are busy dutifully mesmerizing the public with the official propaganda entertainment on Iraq. It is high time to address this second front of the Bush war regime, since there is still time to stop it.

Over the past century, the American government has evolved into a marriage of global companies, the American political class, and the Pentagon, with corporations increasingly the dominant partner. This new Iron Triangle does not share a completely unified set of interests, but the three partners increasingly work together to maximize corporate profits and minimize popular dissent. The corporate state they are working to create is formally based on democratic rhetoric, constitutionalism, and free elections, but it is profoundly anti-democratic in practice. Its aim is to shovel public wealth into the coffers of private elites. Since the corporate state steals from ordinary workers to enrich the wealthy, it is plagued by a chronic crisis of legitimacy that requires the transformation of citizens into couch potatoes.

Bush's war at home seeks to tighten the grip of the corporate state by radically accelerating this money transfer from poor to rich, institutionalizing it in a reverse Robin Hood system for decades to come. His efforts in support of the corporate state take place in the wake of the dramatic new threats to its survival. The collapse of the financial markets after the 1990s speculative boom marked the beginning of a sustained crisis in corporate profitability, a long term unraveling of the current economic order that could spell the decline of American global hegemony. The Enron crisis created a follow-on crisis of faith in the American corporate order both at home and abroad. The Bush war plan

attacks the double crises of profitability and faith by 1) refocusing the American public on exaggerated foreign threats and 2) creating a "regime change" at home that dismantles the remnants of the New Deal social contract and enshrines a new brutal state capitalism never seen before. In the name of the "free market," the Bush regime is marshalling all resources of the state to bail the corporate order out of the mess that it has created for itself.

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Bush's war at home has gone through its first battles, preparing the ground for the domestic counterpart to the "battle of Baghdad," a pending legislative campaign for the most radical socio-economic transformation since the Civil War. The first stage of the war—launched with massive tax breaks for the rich, radical deregulation, vast corporate welfare, zero-budgeting for social programs, and new policies to facilitate corporate flight abroad—is familiar from

the Reagan years and relatively benign compared to what is to come. But it has created vast new casualties littered all over the home front. The most obvious are the millions of Americans who have lost their jobs; Bush is the first president in modern history to preside over a net loss of jobs, a staggering two million net jobs "disappeared." Not surprisingly, 50 percent of Americans tell pollsters that they fear for their own job in the next year.

The casualties on the home front are concentrated among the unemployed and the working poor, who together now constitute close to 40 percent of the population. Bush's giant tax cuts for the wealthy, totaling in the trillions of dollars up to 2010, are the largest hand-out to the rich ever. The combination of tax cuts (including a shrinking of corporate taxes from 50 percent in 1940 to about 14 percent of the entire tax burden now) and vast increases in corporate subsidies and defense outlays, with 50 percent of discretionary expenses going to the Pentagon, have already radically reduced the amount of money for social programs, especially for the most needy. In the House-approved Bush Budget for fiscal year 2004, cuts would eliminate health coverage for 13.6 million kids, end school lunches for 2.4 million low income children, end benefits for 65,000 neglected and abused children, and reduce food stamp benefits to an average 81 cents a meal from 91 cents.

Charles Derber, professor of sociology at Boston College, is author of The Wilding of America and the recently published People Before Profit: The New Globalization in an Age of Terror, Big Money and Economic Crisis.

To staunch the red ink of exploding fiscal and trade deficits, Bush is drawing blood by massively heaping burdens on states and localities that already are experiencing horrific deficits, forcing new, draconian cuts in education, health care, and social welfare on the state and local levels. The deficits in states from California to New York are so high that emergency services including police, fire, and "homeland security" are being radically cut, on top of the mass firing of teachers, health care and social workers, and the wholesale closing of schools, hospitals, and community shelters and services. Meanwhile, Bush's trade and labor policies have permitted big companies to eliminate defined benefit pensions, abolish corporate health insurance (or dramatically cut benefits and increase co-pays), and eliminate unions themselves. The percentage of private sector unionized workers has fallen to under 9 percent under Bush, drastically weakening workers' ability to defend minimal protections and benefits. Bush's gift of \$15 billion to the airlines after 9/11 while offering nothing to their laid off workers is an apt symbol of the Bush war at home.

This is all preparatory for the "mother battle" to come. The war plan for "regime change" at home—a total transformation in the nation's political economy beyond anything Reagan or the Gilded Age robber barons envisioned—is outlined in a series of legislative proposals that are buried from public view in the current carefully-nurtured obsession with terrorism and Iraq. Bush's plan exempts wealth from taxation and public accountability, privatizes the entire "commons," removes monopoly restraints on global companies, morphs the social welfare budget into a corporate welfare system, enshrines a permanent warfare state for global profits and domestic control, and builds a permanent government of CEOs and a regime of radical inequality that Jefferson believed would destroy democracy.

A leading edge of the domestic "battle for Baghdad" is a series of remarkably radical programs for restructuring the concept and taxation of wealth. Taxation of wealth had always been based on a view that wealth is produced from the commons and thus should be redistributed in some measure to all who contribute to its creation. Bush has reconceptualized wealth as the constitutionally protected fruit of private entrepreneurship, thus negating the basis for taxing or controlling it. In the most radical shift since the introduction of the income tax in 1913, Bush is proposing to end the dividend tax and the estate tax while creating astonishing tax shelters for upper income families. The abolition of the dividend and estate taxes will benefit overwhelmingly the top 1 percent who already control about 40 percent of the nation's wealth and 49 percent of taxable stocks and mutual funds. The various tax shelter proposals allow a family of four to remove \$60,000 each year from taxation over the entire lifetime of the owners; that is, once sheltered, *no taxes will ever be paid on these funds*. Rationalized as a vehicle for increasing savings and investment capital, it is a thinly disguised move to protect wealth from the reach of the state, a parallel to the constitutional shifts made during the Gilded Age that defined corporations as legal private persons and sheltered their resources from public control.

Closely related is the proposed legislation for privatizing social security, legislation that will destroy social security as a redistributive social contract across generations and turn it into an entrepreneurial scheme for private investment. This is a part of the privatization of the commons that involves not only dismantling all the social insurance programs of the New Deal but turning public wilderness forests over to the mining and timber companies; water resources over to global conglomerates such as Bechtel; the air waves over to media


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monopolies such as NewsCorp; educational, health, prison and social welfare services over to corporations such as Microsoft and General Electric; and even military services over to private military companies such as DynCorp and Military Professional Resources. Privatization of the commons is embedded in the constitutionalism of the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund, both controlled through Washington.

One of the generals leading the domestic Battle of Baghdad is Colin Powell's son, Michael, Bush's chair of the Federal Communications Commission. Powell is fighting for near total deregulation of media monopolies, removing the last restraints on concentration in radio, TV, newspapers, and other key information and entertainment companies. Ten corporations already control 11,000 radio stations, 2,000 television stations, and 1,800 newspapers in the United States. The Powell plan would allow Clear Channel, the largest radio empire in the States with over 1200 stations to go up to well above 1500 stations, a move from already astonishing market power to what media analysts such as Bernard Kalb regard as market domination. The consequences of monopoly in this sector are especially obvious and alarming, as Clear Channel already is allegedly restricting any negative reporting on Iraq and preventing the playing of popular anti-war songs on any of its channels.

While the new global monopolies lock in control of global markets, their size and political influence secures their control of government itself. They are developing the capacity to turn the entire federal government into a gigantic corporate patron, at whose ample breast they can suckle indefinitely. Shifting federal resources from social welfare to corporate welfare has been the key aim of both Democratic and Republican administrations since the 1960s, with even right-wing institutions such as the Cato institution agreeing with Ralph Nader that the cronyist annual corporate handouts total at least \$300 billion a year. The new corporate state delivers far more expansive forms of corporate welfare than agribusiness subsidies or pharmaceutical give-aways; Bush's plan will shift virtually the entire social arm of the government to corporate control while using foreign policy to secure global corporate profits. Bush's novel contribution here is a new Orwellian empire to increase profitability and repress dissent against the corporate state.

Military Keynesianism has always been the secret weapon of radical free marketeers to forestall the demand-side problem in the economy. Faced with a very serious economic crisis in the wake of the global glut and downturn, the slide in wages, and the collapse of consumer confidence, these so-called free marketeers turn to military conquest to

supply new demand for corporate products and services. Bush is projecting military spending approaching half a trillion in the next fiscal year; much of this spending, including the war on Iraq, homeland security, and Iraqi reconstruction, are bonanzas for some of Bush and Cheney's closest corporate cronies. One of the first and most lucrative reconstruction contracts for fire prevention and servicing Iraq's oil fields already has gone to Halliburton, Cheney's energy company. This initial multi-million dollar contract is just a down payment on the longer-term opportunity to exploit

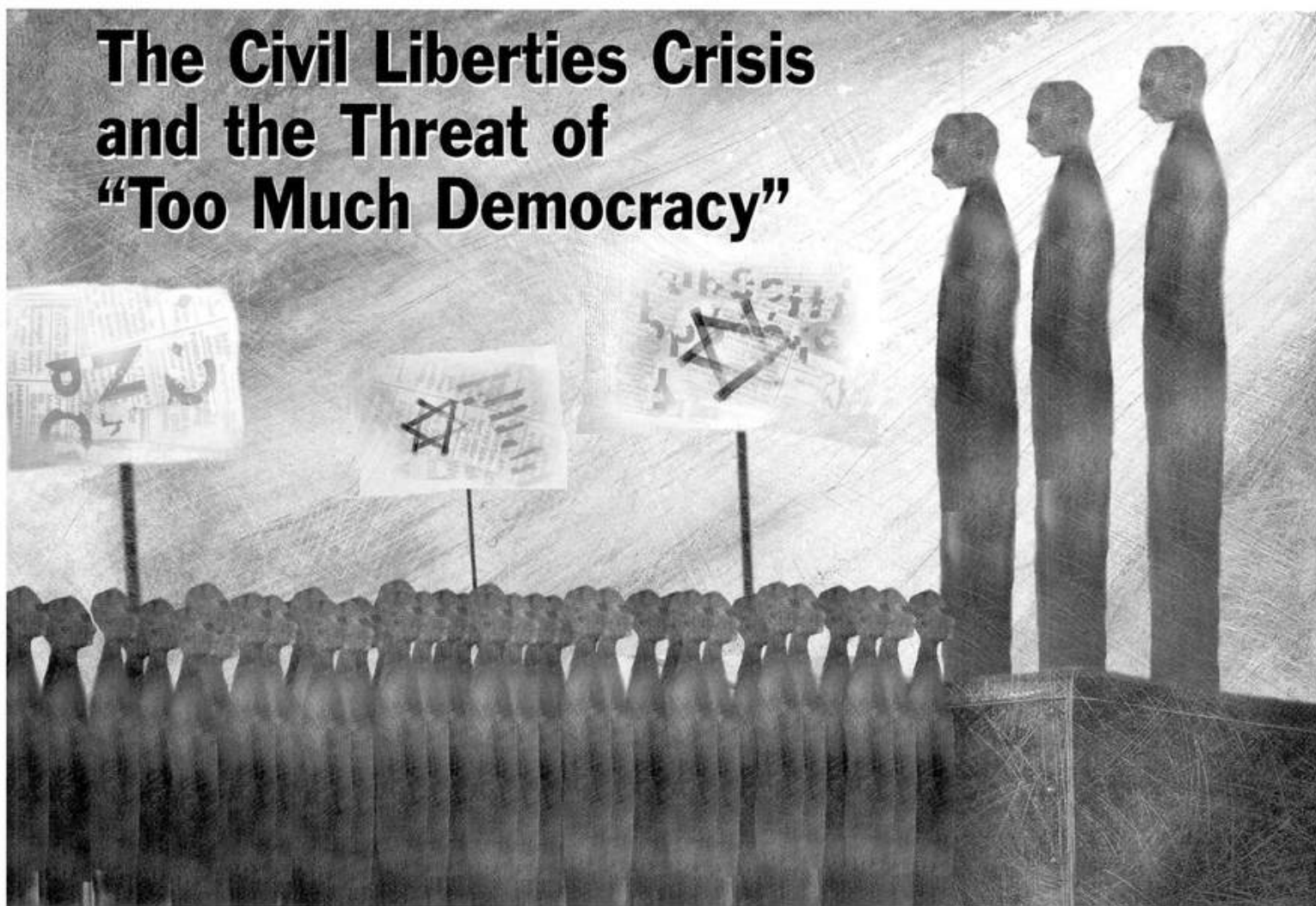
the endless riches buried in the Iraqi desert. The almost certain early reconstruction contracts that will be given to Bechtel, the world's largest contractor with close Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld links, make clear that intimate cronies will be at the head of the line at the Iraqi trough. Those of us not blinded by the power of the corporate state can see that the Iraq war will do far less than prior wars to solve the overall crisis in the economy and is more likely, through imperial over-reach, to hasten American

hegemonic decline at the expense of rivals such as Europe and China. Bush, however, is determined to go forward, blinded by his messianic militarism and his passion to feed and grow the military-industrial complex while in office.

Indeed, the Bush plan is for total militarization at home and abroad, since it enriches his cronies in the short term and represses dissent. Controlling populist movements was also a vital aim of the Cold War, which split labor from other popular movements and bound it to corporate power in a monolithic force arrayed against "the evil Empire." The war on terrorism is the successor to the Cold War, a vehicle for building American empire and suppressing dissent in the name of anti-terrorism. Like the Cold War, it shamelessly exploits fear and patriotism and splinters opponents of the corporate state. Homeland security is just one part of the "shock and awe" campaign at home that seeks to divide progressive groups—including labor, environmental groups, and others—who had allied so explosively under the banner of global justice in Seattle. Nonetheless, a pre-emptive peace movement has already struck back, not only against the war in Iraq but against the larger imperial and domestic aspirations of the corporate state. Bush's war at home is meeting unexpected resistance; polls show a majority of Americans believe Bush's domestic agenda is taking the country in the wrong direction. Fighting Bush's unannounced war at home is and must continue to be an integral part of the peace movement's agenda. There will be no peace anywhere until we have created the regime change Americans need and will increasingly demand as their own fortunes decline: our battle must be to replace the Bush corporate state and its Republican or Democratic successors with democracy. □

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The Civil Liberties Crisis and the Threat of "Too Much Democracy"



Paul Buble

The portents certainly are terrible.

Not even the happiest of possible scenarios can be expected to return us to the level of civil liberties we assumed normal before 9/11—not in the foreseeable future, and, if we believe the security services and the politicians of both parties, not ever.

When the University of Massachusetts assigns a liaison officer to work with the FBI in tracking potential campus subversives—a Cold War practice at Yale and Harvard among other places, abandoned in later years—the story gets close to many TIKKUN readers, because this cannot be a singular case. When thousands of Arab Americans are singled out to appear at immigration offices and threatened with the possibility of detention during (undeclared) wartime, when internment without charges and without

The “Jewish role” in the think-tanks around the White House cannot be dismissed—even if the topic is nearly forbidden from open discussion.

protections of citizenship are threatened even for the native-born, and when Democratic presidential hopefuls are warned in the media about signs of disloyalty—we’re all in real trouble.

And for progressive Jews in particular, it gets worse than that: among the visionaries of Washington’s global power-grab, a select group of American Jews are more influential than at any time in history—and in ways neither benign nor idealistic. The same recent (March 21) *New*

Paul Buble’s most recent book is *Insurgent Images: the Agitprop Murals of Mike Alewitz* (Monthly Review Press).

York Times edition that carried a full-page ad by Jews against the war (with no institutional leader from the millionaire mainstream of ADL, AJC, etc., and nearly no leaders at all except Rabbis Michael Lerner and Arthur Waskow), also carried the strictly business-news story that presidential advisor Richard Perle was to be paid \$725,000 if he could use his insider influence to broker the sale of a bankrupt, formerly major American corporation to foreign investors. The same wild hawk has meanwhile been described by the *Guardian* (UK) as furiously promoting the stock of the Autonomy Corporation, which specializes in eavesdropping equipment. Meanwhile, Perle has been attacking and threatening to sue famed *New Yorker* investigative journalist Seymour Hersh (as something approaching a “terrorist”) for having spilled the beans about the various other ways Perle has continually misused his White House status for personal gain.

Perle’s double-dipping in the good old-fashioned American tradition of advising presidents while selling rotten beef or paper-soled shoes to the military is the least of it. Behind Perle’s machinations can be found the Project for a New American Century, whose inner circle includes Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Reagan’s ferociously conservative Education Secretary William J. Bennett, Paul Wolfowitz and Perle. This group, whose origins date back years before 9/11, has argued for “total war” on a long series of nations, the forced reorganization of the Middle East, and the abrogation of existing treaties on advanced weaponry (indeed, they advocate the use of “bunker buster” nuclear shots and “Star Wars” space-based military technology). The “project” is to change all world affairs for the foreseeable future. For this group, “war is the health of the State,” as Randolph Bourne once put it, and if old bogeys are gone, new ones can readily be found.

Hawks would of course be flying without a single Jewish influential on the wing. And yet the “Jewish role” in the think-tanks around the White House cannot be dismissed—even if the topic is nearly forbidden from open discussion. When Perle told reporters years ago that “our children will sing great songs about us years from now,” he voiced a disturbing millenarianism as odd as that of a recent Chasidic sect claiming the reappearance of the Prophet in the voice of a carp, but armed with more influence than any Jewish fanatic (with the possible exception of Ariel Sharon) has ever possessed. No wonder that the Jewish role is increasingly subject to intensive private dialogues and progressively more anxious disclaimers. No wonder the Jewish



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Forward, long a strident critic of TIKKUN and its editor Michael Lerner, argued editorially in its March 14 issue for “circumspection” on the part of Jewish hawks, and fretted at the consequences likely from the stated eagerness of leaders of the ADL for military conquest in Iraq and (far) beyond.

Whence came these Jewish hawks? They were fledged during Vietnam. The Jewish establishment’s rage against (specifically Jewish) opponents of the War in Vietnam and that establishment’s determination to reverse the effects of the peace movement have now come home here again. From the viewpoint of nervous Jewish observers (not all of them liberals), the linking of global conquest to Jewish interests offered some of today’s key conspirators their first taste of real power, thirty-some years ago. There is a specific connection too. Perle, Wolfowitz, and Abrams got that taste when they worked for the Democrats’ top Vietnam hawk and

Congress’ most ambitious weapons procurer, Henry “the Senator from Boeing” Jackson. There, the future super-hawks likely envisioned their own roles in the triumph of the political Right that still lay ahead. It is almost as if the anti-Semitic *Protocols of Zion*, successfully fought for a century, have suddenly returned with an industrial sized grain of truth.

Take a deep breath, reader, because we need to take a hard look at history. More than at any time in the previous history of American crises, with the possible and partial exception of the later 1930s and during the anti-fascist war, the current situation has not only striking but essential Jewish connections, some positive, some terrifyingly negative.

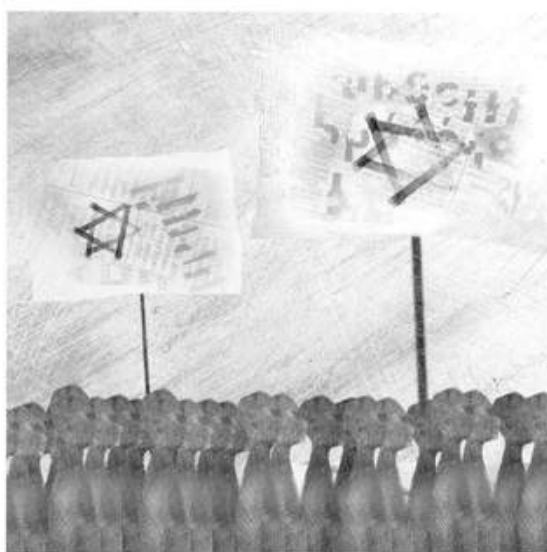
Let’s start with the positive. Civil liberties, we should say from the outset, is a “Jewish issue” in the United States and has been for more than a century. The reasons are pretty evident. Strangers in a land dominated by Protestants (at the local level, also Catholics) who were none too tolerant toward non-Christians, Jews had an understandable anxiety. Thanks in no small part to the virtually continuous process of being labeled “Christ-killers” by so many Protestant fundamentalists and so many Catholic demagogues in any number of languages, they had a sense that some version of Old World pogroms might happen here. Who could intelligently count on the WASP elite, still enjoying their exclusionary world of private clubs and restricted suburbs, to be defenders of Jews?

The worst didn’t happen. Immigrant Jews were far too valuable as workers and small entrepreneurs; perhaps most important, far from being “outsiders” in the European

sense, they quickly came to play a central role in the creation of American popular culture. Jews thus made an enormous contribution to democracy, nowhere more than during the Popular Front era, in redefining the very meaning of "Americanism" as inclusive and fully democratic.

Anti-Semitism meanwhile took its most virulent forms in class terms. Many an Irish cop, for at least four generations, has enjoyed nothing more than swatting a "Jewish Red," whether on strike or at a Union Square demonstration, and the practice continues at peace demonstrations today (the Jewish elite is just as embarrassed about it as ever). "Anarchists" were portrayed as Jews and then demonized long before the Russian Revolution, and J. Edgar Hoover began his determined persecution of Jewish left-wingers a half-century before he closed out his career by going after the high proportion of Jews (including one Michael Lerner) on Nixon's "Enemies List."

At the upper end of the Jewish working class and lower middle class were those notorious quotas, successful in slowing down generations of bright youngsters from becoming medical doctors, professors, or even home-owners until after the Second World War. But immigrant Jews could become lawyers, thanks to the profit basis of law schools and the (notably American) need for countless attorneys to handle mostly property issues. And they did, including some of the earliest, most talented radicals and civil libertarians, like 1890s Russian immigrant Moses Hilkowitz, who overnight became Morris Hillquit, took a degree, and rushed into defending labor cases en route to a distinguished career as a Socialist Party leader. After famed legal defender Clarence Darrow, for generations the idol of idealistic law students, it is a little difficult to think of many left-wing and civil liberties attorneys who were *not* Jewish, so numerous were those who tirelessly took on clients with no means to pay bills, worked long hours in and out of cramped offices and often ended up nearly as poor as they began. Not only the American Civil Liberties Union (with a somewhat shaky record of standing up to the government in tense times) but also the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, and countless other temporary associations or



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alliances, up to the present day, owe their existence to Jewish activists and patrons.

All this came with an increasingly scary down side. Those civil liberties, union, and social-cause lawyers were bitterly resented by Jewish slumlords, (most) rising merchants, and the class that *Forward* editor Abraham Cahan dubbed "alrightniks" and that we would now term "yuppies."

In the Yiddishe *gassen* (Jewish streets), among early generations of immigrants, it was a *shanda* or shameful thing to be on the side of the rich against the poor. Upward mobility and the Cold War largely changed that. Notorious Judge Irving Kaufman, who encourage so much prosecutorial misconduct and then pronounced the death sentence upon accused "atom spies" Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, was mirrored by Joe McCarthy's twin Jewish aides, Roy Cohen and David Shine, who did the dirty work in hearing rooms—even as Dixiecrats on the House Committee on UnAmerican Activities continued to "reveal" the foreign-sounding

Jewish birth names of the Hollywood writers and actors that the committee interrogated.

The further path of Jewish intellectuals is familiar to TIKKUN readers. As the 1950s turned into the 1960s, a new class of highly prestigious intellectual servants of authority, led their disproportionately Jewish troops in the academy and journalism more or less straight to neoconservatism, (think of Irving Kristol or the flagship journal *The Public Interest*, launched on CIA cash payments). By 1970, the Cold War veterans were getting older, and beginning to arrange slots for their spiritual and biological descendents in ways that curiously mirror the Bushes. Thus the younger Kristols, Muravchiks (Joshua, son of Jewish Labor Committee leader Emanuel Muravchik) and Podhoretzes, above all *Commentary* son-in-law Elliot Abrams, were on their way to great things and seemingly silly ones. But we're getting ahead of the story.

We need to take another look at Sen. Henry Jackson, a politician perhaps more single-mindedly devoted to the accelerated development and deployment of weapons, to the prospects of wars, real and potential, than any liberal

or conservative was likely to be again until the Cold War had yielded to another frame of global conflicts. A devotee of "Give 'em Hell" Harry Truman, he successfully built a political machine in his home state of Washington, outlasted Republican tides in several hard-fought congressional campaigns, and entered the Senate in 1952. There he became the single fiercest foe of President Dwight Eisenhower's efforts to slow down the arms race, earning a reputation as ardent advocate, in particular, of more nuclear weapons of more kinds, sea to air, regardless of either the expense or the possible provocation to global holocaust. Eisenhower's warning against the rapidly assembling "military-industrial complex" might as well have been directed personally against Jackson and Jackson's ceaseless support of precisely that vision of the American economy and American society for the future.

Jackson seems to have personally invented the "missile-gap" (later determined to have been non-existent) for John F. Kennedy to deploy in the 1960 campaign against Richard Nixon, and the Senator expected his reward as Secretary of the Defense. To his dismay, however, he wasn't asked—until 1968, when the same offer finally came from Nixon and was turned down as an obstacle to Jackson's own hope for the presidency.

If Jackson could be credited with as much influence on a second issue, it would clearly be UN-bashing. Nothing in the current attacks on the world body exceeds Jackson's insistence in 1962 that "the best hope for peace with justice does not lie in the United Nations. Indeed, the truth is almost exactly the opposite." Jackson, an unreconstructed imperialist at heart, wanted the world to rely on the armed might of the United States and its pliable allies. If not entirely irrelevant and troublesome, the UN was, in Jackson's eyes, at best overrated, the debate and passing of resolutions before the world body an interruption in US global aims.

Jackson's day seemed to be coming. Running for president in 1972, his main competition might have been Hubert Humphrey, who Labor leaders had most admired since the old days when the Hump simultaneously urged modest civil rights advances and the mass detention of suspected

subversives. But Humphrey lost his aura with that famous fat-faced smile on television during the riotous Chicago convention of 1968, turning both peaceniks (who saw him accurately as a fraud) and Democratic conservatives (who were outraged even at the candidate's promise of a secret peace plan for Vietnam) in other directions for the next round. Jackson, it is fair to say, mostly qualified as a possible candidate on the negatives.

He roused the Demo-hawks, railed at liberal critics of the war, and sought in Richard Nixon's increasing unpopularity (but also in the president's surprising willingness to quit Vietnam and deal with China) the long-awaited opening for himself. At his side were his old allies in weaponry, by this time making previously unthinkable profits amid war, but also the leaders of a labor movement deeply corrupted by decades of their own bureaucratic advance, their unprecedented salaries and perks, and their growing rage at young people, feminists (also gays and lesbians), and the peaceniks of the civil rights movement.

The historic "Jewish trades" (garment manufacturing) and other industrial sectors had begun declining sharply, thanks to a combination of imported goods and automation, and labor leaders showed little interest in unionizing minority populations or office workers. But white-collar unionism had advanced in various levels of government and in schools. Here, AFL-CIO president George Meany found his most ardent hawk ally in American Federation of Labor president Albert Shanker—an instinctive hawk, an intimate ally of a Jewish establishment that remained ambivalent about unions in general, but considered support of the Vietnam war as a test of loyalty to both American and Israeli interests.

The connecting thread between Shanker, Meany, Scoop Jackson, and young, right-wing Jewish intellectuals can be unraveled in what must be the strangest publication in all of American socialist history, *New America*. Conspiracy theorists will want to revisit the pages of this badly-laid out, erratically appearing newspaper for a full dose of the Jackson Faction, from 1970 more or less openly run from Shanker's outer circles. Even its editor was husband of future AFT president Sandra Feldman, groomed as Shanker's successor.

Nothing said about the weirdness of the Workers World Party in the last few months approaches the heroes and supporters of this tabloid publication. Official organ of a rapidly rightward-drifting group of almost entirely Jewish socialists (or former socialists), *New America* devoted much of its space to promoting the favorites of George Meany's inner circle, from Angola's mass murderer Joseph Savimbi (a special favorite of the AFL-CIO intelligence wing), to the Podhoretz family clan's intellectual chums like future Reagan UN harpy Jeane Kirkpatrick. Here, with fewer restraints and considerably less manicured prose than in the pages of *Commentary*, were essays advocating

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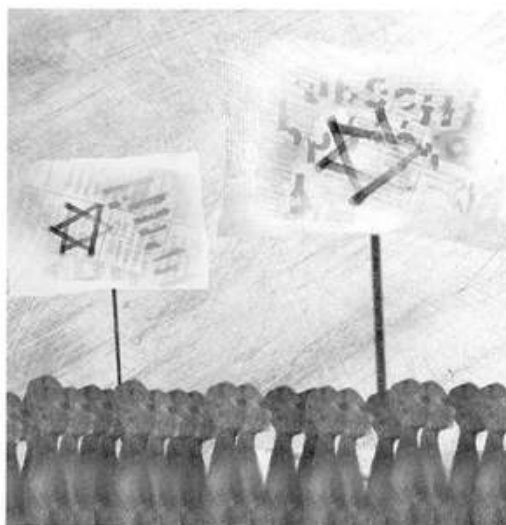
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thinly-disguised CIA projects against elected governments, along with a quiet complaisance for human rights violations and war crimes abundant from Asia and Africa to Latin America, all hailed in the name of social democracy and, frequently, Israeli security.

Decades later, Richard Perle would reflect back on this time when he and his friend Paul Wolfowitz arrived in Washington to set down with "Scoop," who promptly offered them jobs. They soon ran into a third Jewish intellectual and right-wing ideologue in the making: Elliott Abrams, the Special Counsel to the Senate's continuation of the abandoned House Committee on UnAmerican Activities, the Senate Committee On Intelligence. (Note to researchers: it would be good to know who and what Abrams happened to be investigating, and fascinating to know how many of those investigated were Jewish peaceniks—but these records were closed, in what would become proper Bush fashion, for fifty years.)

The three right-wing yeshiva boys were not destined to rise all the way to the top with this particular boss. Jackson, a little man who frequently grew hoarse from yelling, never gained a following among rank-and-file Democrats. In the peace enthusiasm of the 1972 Democratic convention and its aftermath, he was mainly one of the spoilers (like Meany) who essentially sabotaged the campaign of George McGovern, regarded by these men as little more than a supporter of the enemy.

It is fascinating to remember that, for the moment, Jackson and Meany were nevertheless McGovern's fellow Democrats. They continued to believe that the Vietnam War could have been won if the government had not been stabbed in the back by disloyal Americans, and that a continued post-Vietnam weapons build-up, along with fierce resistance to the modest build-down of troop strengths after the South-East Asian engagements, could return the guns-and-butter program to the center of Democratic Party gravity. Of course, this time, as Daniel Patrick Moynihan—another favorite politician of the emerging "New Democrats"—had articulated, more guns would be paired with less butter, since the welfare state had already gone "too far" in encouraging the misbehavior of the poor, women, and minorities.



Decades later, Richard Perle would reflect back on this time when he and his friend Paul Wolfowitz arrived in Washington to set down with "Scoop," who promptly offered them jobs.

Jackson, defeated on the Vietnam issue and personally repellant to the party's surging young idealists, would never be a serious presidential candidate again. But he nevertheless held a trump card: Soviet Jewry. In 1972, a faltering Russian regime sought to bolster its finances and simultaneously allow a limited emigration by taxing all departing citizens heavily. Around the same time, Richard Nixon had proposed expanded trade (urged among others by American farmers) with Russians, including awarding Russia Most Favored Nation trade status. To this, Jackson and his staff formulated a unique response, known as the Jackson-Vannik amendment. This amendment demanded Russia allow immigration under eased conditions in return for the trade status.

It was a perfect move for rightward leaning Democrats looking beyond Vietnam. For the first time in a generation, establishment American Jewish organizations were energized around a cause that did not seem (as Israel often did) to raise questions of dual loyalty, but

instead highlighted human rights. And unlike the peaceniks' efforts to stop the war in Vietnam, the cause of Soviet Jewry was ferociously anti-Communist. As Ben Wattenberg later reflected, it "made human rights a player" in global politics and not "just sort of a do-good cause" with its own humane purposes. Of course, human rights had always been a central issue for radicals and high-minded democrats. But only now and then—like Woodrow Wilson plunging Americans into a pointless World War I—had it been successfully used for imperial ends.

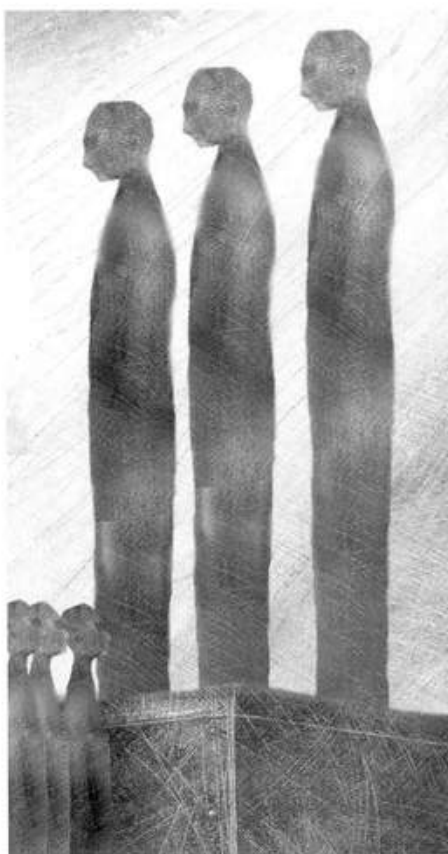
Thus, in using the cause of Soviet Jewry to renew his career-long campaign against détente and for a harder line against the staggering Soviet Union, Jackson found the issue that brought him a final burst of public attention and abundant funding from fresh sources. He also became rather suddenly the darling of *Commentary* and the neo-conservatives of *The Public Interest* and its foster-child, the *National Interest*.

Jackson's most severe critics admit that he had a real issue, even as he used it with the same exquisite cynicism that he exploited his labor credentials. After the passage of the Jackson-Vannik amendment, Russian Jews successfully emigrated by the tens of thousands to Israel and to the West

Bank. Even better for Jackson and his neocon Jewish cohorts, those new emigres then served as a veritable human barrier against Palestinian nationhood. We still ask ourselves, Did it have to happen this way? We ponder the significance of Natan Sharansky, a "Prisoner of Zion" in Soviet jails who became, practically upon arrival in Israel, a ferocious enemy of Palestinians, determined to drive resisters to the very fringes of their former homelands. Back at home, using his renewed credentials, Jackson himself meanwhile seized upon Soviet Jewry as proof of the presumed illusions of détente-style liberalism.

By the time Scoop Jackson died in 1983, a new era had opened. Reaganism and the consolidation of the hard right within the Republican Party offered youngish Jewish intellectuals more career opportunities than they could expect from the post-Vietnam Democrats. Scoop Jackson's office had actually provided, as it turns out, the transition jobs and political launching pads for future GOP savants of globalism and what might be called "First Strike" defense.

When the intelligence agency crowd of the Reagan Era faced congressional resistance to their moves in Central America and elsewhere, they shifted into the subversion of the most minimal democratic checks, using assorted governments and individuals (prominently including Israelis) in "off the books" operations. Then, suddenly, thanks to investigative journalists more than anyone else, they were caught in what was dubbed "Contragate," a vastly more pervasive violation of constitutional statutes than the "Watergate" break-in that brought down Richard Nixon a decade earlier. Elliot Abrams figured most prominently in the Contragate scandal, though Richard Perle also had a supporting role. But unlike the Nixon crew, the Contragate conspirators beat the rap, largely because Congress feared the revelation of too many secrets hidden on both sides of the aisles. Condemned for lying to Congress, attacked for involvement in serious human rights violations, these neocons never went to jail. Today, we find many of them (including John Poindexter, who was convicted and then pardoned by Bush Sr.) back in



That alternative world of freedom is what millions of today's youngsters, from San Francisco to London and Tokyo, not forgetting all those other global urban sites, have in mind.

power. They're bigger, less checked by any democratic restraints, than ever. They are, to listen to what their proud parents must be saying in private, practically the Jews Who Run The World.

We can imagine a different history. Imagine that the Vietnam peace movement stops Nixon in his tracks before the 1972 election. George McGovern comes to office. Or, Nixon is re-elected but Ronald Reagan is exposed and impeached. With either scenario, we would have been free of Bush senior, Bush junior, and possibly could have avoided a Business Democrat like Clinton. Even if Reagan had gained office, what if the Democrats had moved leftward in the late 1980s, around public demands for a cleaner environment and fairer global society. No Bill Clinton or maybe a totally different Clinton, the Clinton many of us voted for and supported in 1992. Now we may have entered a fantasy world where Al Gore sincerely believes what he wrote in *The Earth In Balance*, and would fight for it, rather than pumping iron for the newest corporate assault on the planet (most vividly, in his own case, with megatons of herbicides upon the Amazon Basin). In this exercise in wishful thinking, Jewish Americans play a heroic role in turning the nation around. Of course it didn't happen and we should probably go no further into this species of science fiction.

But wait a moment. That alternative world of freedom is what millions of today's youngsters, from San Francisco to London and Tokyo, not forgetting all those other global urban sites, have in mind. They are looking, without knowing it, to recover the vision that we held but seem to have lost in large part along the way. They won't be even a little surprised to have the machinations of Perle, Wolfowitz, Abrams and the others exposed. Perhaps there are not as proportionally many Jewish peace protesters as during the 1960s and 1980s (for which blame can be assigned in various directions), but look around, there are still plenty. Perhaps tomorrow's endless war and occupations will change that, too.

The portents are not so dim after all. □

Authoritarianism and Anti-Semitism in the Anti-War Movement?

A higher percentage of Jews oppose the war in Iraq than most other American ethnic groups, so it was distressing to us at TIKKUN to hear so many Jews report that they were encountering what they perceived to be anti-Semitism at anti-war demonstrations organized by International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War and End Violence)—a coalition of anti-war groups that seems to be led by the Worker's World Party. As a magazine that has long criticized Israeli policy toward Palestinians, we are all too aware of the tendency within the Jewish establishment to equate any criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism. For this reason, it was alarming to hear Jews in the Tikkun Community—Jews who share our intense criticisms of Israeli policy toward Palestinians, and who reject the notion that being critical of Israel is equivalent to anti-Semitism—report that the cultural climate at these anti-war demonstrations was making them feel very uncomfortable.

Here is what they reported:

- Israel was being singled out for criticism in anti-war demonstrations that were supposed to be about America's planned invasion of Iraq. In addition, A.N.S.W.E.R. avoided criticizing Saddam Hussein's far greater human rights violations, not to mention the systematic human rights violations in China, Cuba, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, etc.
- A.N.S.W.E.R. refuses to acknowledge or support the right of the Jewish people to national self-determination—though it supports that right for every other group with a history of oppression. When Jews are denied the rights of others, it is a tell-tale sign of anti-Semitism.

In response, TIKKUN's editor Michael Lerner and others in the Tikkun Community began to speak out publicly in critique of A.N.S.W.E.R.

Meanwhile, A.N.S.W.E.R. had entered into an agreement with other anti-war groups (United for Peace and Justice and Not In Our Name) sponsoring a San Francisco anti-war demonstration in February to ban any speakers who had publicly criticized any of the organizing groups. When someone in the United for Peace and Justice coalition (not from TIKKUN) raised Lerner's name for consideration, he was told that there was no point in even considering it, because doing

so would violate this agreement—and A.N.S.W.E.R. had already rejected Lerner as a possible speaker.

Lerner never asked to speak. He had turned down an invitation to speak at a previous rally on the grounds that a format of cramming in dozens of speakers for three minutes a piece generated and perpetuated superficial anti-war discourse at a moment when wisdom and complexity is what is needed to counter the war makers' obfuscations.

But what we at TIKKUN objected to was *the reason* he was excluded—his legitimate criticisms of A.N.S.W.E.R.'s misuse of the anti-war movement to single out Israel for attack. And secondly, we were troubled by the willingness of anti-war groups to enter into an agreement that barred dissenters and internal critics from speaking. How could this movement *made up of* dissenters fall so quickly into the pattern of repressing dissent within its own ranks?

The TIKKUN Community continued to support anti-war demonstrations, including the one at which Lerner had been excluded from speaking, and organized thousands of people to join these demonstrations. Yet, defenders of A.N.S.W.E.R. launched a fierce counter-assault, claiming that TIKKUN was now merely a front group for Ariel Sharon, calling us "traitors," and leveling personal attacks on both Lerner and the TIKKUN staff (frankly not unlike the attacks we receive from right wing fundamentalists). A popular host for a Pacifica radio station told Lerner that he would never be allowed to speak again on Pacifica.

Though Lerner remained excluded from speaking at that and subsequent anti-war rallies, there were other and far more encouraging responses on the Left. Marc Cooper and others who write for *The Nation* organized a petition to challenge A.N.S.W.E.R.'s decision to exclude Lerner. Others on the Left pointed out that just as raising criticisms of the anti-war movement's sexism had been painful, but had eventually led to a strengthening of the progressive movement, so, too, would the current progressive movement be strengthened by struggling to overcome its anti-Semitism. Will the outcome be positive? It will depend on whether the issue is taken seriously or, once again, marginalized.

Yet, the issue of authoritarianism in the anti-war movement, and the issue of the relationship between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, remain very much alive in our community. We present here a range of perspectives. □

Democracy and the Peace Movement

David Friedman

Like many people who support the peace movement, I have found the politics of the mass mobilizations disturbing. The rallies are cheerleading sessions; they do not even try to reach out to the American people with ideas that can challenge American foreign policy, morally or intellectually. Many of the speeches have a mindless quality that repels the listener. The speakers are loud in their denunciations of American and Israeli policy, but they lose moral force and political effectiveness by maintaining a tight-lipped silence about terrorism and dictatorship in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The reason for all this is clear to those who pay attention. The dominant force in the International ANSWER coalition is an obscure ideological sect, the Workers World Party, which leverages its mobilization skills to shape the message of the big demonstrations. I suggest interested parties go to their web site at www.internationalanswer.org and compare the long list of diverse endorsers with the short list of narrow-focus groups that make up the Steering Committee. A simple web search can tell you a lot about the politics of those who are running the show. Don't worry about the people who shout, like the Wizard of Oz, "Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain!"

WWP has been around since 1959. They represent a brand of totalitarian leftism that defends the monstrous Slobodan Milosevic, has not a word to say about Saddam Hussein, supported the slaughter of Chinese students in Tiananmen Square, and sided with hard-line Stalinists in the Soviet Union. Those of us who believe in peace and the reconciliation of peoples on a democratic basis cannot allow our voices to be muzzled by such as these. Their love affair with North Korea is as repugnant as our government's long-standing alliance with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its prior relationship with the Taliban and with Saddam Hussein and his regime of killers and torturers.

David Friedman is a mathematician, educator, and writer. He has been involved in the Berkeley Free Speech movement, the civil rights struggle, the anti-Vietnam war movement, and the labor movement.

*TIKKUN challenges
anti-democratic ideas when
they come from Bush or
Sharon; we must do the same
when they come from the
Peace movement.*

TIKKUN Editor Rabbi Michael Lerner has been excoriated by some on the Left for daring to speak of this in the mainstream press rather than keeping the embarrassing information within "the family" according to some unwritten Mafia-like code of silence. Defenders of International ANSWER have attacked Lerner rather than responding to the charges that the politics of the mass

mobilizations have been dumbed down and straitjacketed through ideological screening of the rally speakers. Their cry of "red-baiting" and McCarthyism is hypocritical since they are the ones suppressing dissent.

The coalition organizations attempted to defend themselves in a public statement declaring that Lerner was rejected as a speaker because he had criticized International ANSWER. They had an agreement, you see, to disallow rally speakers who criticized any of the organizing groups. For me, this "defense" was really a confession, exposing a complete lack of understanding of the need for diversity, debate, and criticism in the peace movement. It's not surprising that Lerner should be at the center of this uproar, since TIKKUN has always publicly raised issues that are considered taboo by most of the American Jewish establishment. TIKKUN readers know about the damage done to the political life of this country by those who seek to silence criticism of Israeli government policies and practices.

We challenge anti-democratic ideas when they come from George Bush and John Ashcroft. We must do the same when similar ideas emerge within the peace movement.

"Everyone Is for Democracy"

In the modern world, everyone rhetorically embraces democracy. The oil-man, George Bush, proclaims he will bring some phantasmagoric version of democracy to the Iraqis by bombing, invading and occupying their country. The same cynical use of words is displayed by anti-capitalist regimes like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, whose very name is a lie. It is because democracy is a high aspiration of the peoples of the world that the term is used demagogically to enlist support for false causes.

How can we distinguish real commitment to democracy from the demagogic versions? In the final analysis it comes down to being informed, to knowing who is who and where people stand on important issues. Agreements to suppress criticism make the peace movement just as vulnerable to demagoguery and manipulation as the controlled mass media's one-sided stories make our society vulnerable to militarist propaganda.

For demagogues, democracy is not a principle, but a tool to be used as a means toward power and abandoned when power is attained. Of course this is not a position anyone would proclaim openly. However, it has been a hallmark of the totalitarian left.

There have always been currents in the left that have embraced bureaucratic planning and the monolithic state, seeing themselves or their party as the embryo of a new ruling elite—ruling benevolently, of course, for who would dare to say otherwise in a police state? From this point of view, such leftists have opposed capitalism and its atrocities, thus putting on a “progressive” face, while defending authoritarian regimes and parties that are rivals of capitalism.

Pro-Soviet ideologues, including the founders of the WWP, are a classic example of this kind of totalitarian leftism.

They criticized Western capitalism while remaining silent about similar atrocities of their own patron states. It's a well-worn method: You don't defend the indefensible, you just keep quiet about it and attack the “other side.”

The totalitarians spoke a populist language in countries like the United States, but where they achieved power every vestige of democracy was wiped out. Their true political nature was obscured by anti-capitalist formulas. The internal life of their organizations was manipulated from the top and brooked no dissent. Doris Lessing's brilliant novel, *The Golden Notebook*, reveals some of the flavor of that internal life as seen through the eyes of a weary and disillusioned participant.

The totalitarians were against war, except when their patrons went to war. Civil rights did not exist in their countries. They were pro-environment here, but said nothing as the Stalinist states ravaged the environment. People are still dying from the Chernobyl disaster. They spoke abstractly of “the working class” while actual workers—denied the right to organize trade unions, to strike, to form political parties or vote in free elections—suffered the impoverishment and oppressive working conditions that go with powerlessness. In their ideology, nationalized property and the absence of capitalism were defined as progressive even though the benefits mostly went to a bureaucratic elite that ruled both the state and the economy through its one-party system and ruthless suppression of dissent.

Entire nations have suffered at the hands of authoritarian leftists. A heavy burden was placed on the human spirit.

The price for pursuing a career or avoiding reprisals against families was conformity in political ideas, in the arts and literature, in every aspect of life. Silence about injustice was required, as was spying on friends and neighbors. Remember this history when you feel pressured to remain silent about misleadership in the peace movement.

Only a decade ago, a massive popular upheaval cast out the bureaucratic regimes of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and discredited their ideology. American leftists must finally accept that they too face a choice between a genuine and consistent democratic perspective or the regimentation of the ant-hill or bee-hive society. This is a political and moral choice.

A Test of Politics

Politics are tested in a crisis. Consider, as one of many examples, an article titled “Three phases of U.S. policy toward China” written by the Workers World Party's founder and leading theorist, Sam Marcy, during the 1989 democracy movement centered at Tiananmen Square (available in full at: www.workers.org/marcy/cd/sam89/1989html/s890622.htm).

Marcy demands a crackdown on the students, but advises caution and the manipulative use of reforms until the Chinese government's actual repressive goals can be achieved. He baits the students for not being workers and peasants, even as he denounces actual workers supporting the democracy movement for “destroying the transportation systems” in several cities. It is standard practice for totalitarians to attack critics on spurious grounds, especially race and class.

Marcy rails against the reforms that were occurring in most of the “socialist” countries, except for the bastions of Cuba, North Korea, and East Germany. He remarks cynically that he wishes the Stalinist reformers were just faking it, “you know, a tactic agreed upon by the leadership that could change the next day ... as was possible in the Stalin Period.” Of course, the historical role of this Stalinist mode of operation has been to manipulate, disrupt, and destroy democratic movements.

We should take a moment to remember how unarmed demonstrators in Tiananmen Square were murdered—some crushed under the treads of armored personnel carriers, others beaten, arrested, and imprisoned.

For a New Movement and a New Politics

Today, we Americans on the Left face a time of crisis in our own country. The U.S. economy is in deep trouble, with massive bankruptcies and unemployment. Civil liberties are being undermined by the Patriot Act, arbitrary detentions, and a new, domestic security apparatus. American troops have been thrust into a dangerous and

(continued on page 76)

What's a Rally to Do?

Mimi Schwartz

"It is not anti-Semitic to be angry at those Jews who support Israeli policies that are oppressive. It is anti-Semitic when the anger gets directed at all Jews, or gets articulated in anti-Jewish language...."

—from *Healing Israel/Palestine*, Michael Lerner

As an American Jew—the child of German refugees—overt anti-Semitism was my parents' old world, not mine. There'd be an occasional remark maybe, but everyone gets that in multi-ethnic New Jersey. No big deal—until 500 anti-Semitic flyers were posted on the walls and kiosks of the college where I've taught for twenty-two years. That was a shock. Some had swastikas leaning on Jewish stars. Some had a picture of Hitler and of an Israeli soldier, both of equal size. That caption read: "How many millions must die?" Some had the Christ-like figure of crucifixion paintings, but instead of the expected cross, the arms were draped over a Jewish star, evoking the imagery of Jew as Christ killer. The caption read, "Stop the Murder. Free the Palestinians."

"Anti-Semitism like that is gone now!" students in my "Holocaust through Literature and Film" course had proclaimed a few months earlier while examining a Nazi flyer, circa 1934. It showed a black-haired, fat man with a long hooked nose handing candy to two blond children, and the translated caption read: "Jewish sex fiend passes out sweets with sinister intent." People don't believe such rubbish anymore! said the majority, who were white, Christian, early twentyish, first-generation college.

They repeated this conviction (although more tentatively) after watching *The Long Walk Home*, a film about the African American bus boycott in Montgomery, 1955. And again (although with even less conviction) after *School Ties*, a movie set in a rich New England prep school in the 1950s, where the kids turned against a newly imported football star once they found out (after a winning football season, their first) that he was Jewish.

I show these movies interspersed with Holocaust films to

Mimi Schwartz's book, Thoughts from a Queen-Sized Bed, has just come out in paperback (University of Nebraska Press). She is currently working on a memoir/history about her father's German village, tentatively called Good People, Bad Times.



connect past with present. Otherwise it is too easy to be self-righteous about what those Germans did way, way, back then. Gradually, their platitudes about tolerance give way to personal stories about bigotry: from not being served as a Black at Denny's after the prom, to picking on a Jewish roommate who hogged the refrigerator with Kosher food, to shrugging off Polish jokes from fraternity brothers when you are Polish.

The initial tellers are African American, Hispanic, or Jewish, but then everyone jumps in, sharing injustices they have observed, been victim of, took part in. The conversation becomes less guarded. We argue about harmless joking vs. ugly prejudice, moral responsibility vs. risking your life, and what would you do if it happens again. Some minds are changed, some not; but if I can keep honesty mixed with civility, everyone at least keeps listening to one another.

The 500 anti-Semitic flyers were taken down quickly (someone said they'd been posted "without going through school channels") and replaced by new flyers of Palestinian women weeping for their sons, daughters, and the lost land that was their birthright. Without knee-jerk images of hate, they made a strong case for justice for the



„Das, Herrner, heißt die kleine ganz Zücker.“ „Wieso heißt sie die kleine und nicht die große?“

THE JEWISH SEX FIEND PASSES OUT SWEETS WITH SINISTER INTENT.
FROM DER GIFFELZ, THE POISON MUSHROOM, 1936

Palestinians. That, to me, is what free speech on a college campus is all about: the right to argue your position, but without the crutch of hate speech that prevents real listening to anything but insult.

A rally was also organized—as a way of saying communally: “Hey! You can’t do that around here!!” Faculty received an email calling for a Rally for Harmony “to bring about a sense of unity between every member of the community,” and I planned to go. I expected good campus support from Jews and non-Jews, especially from my activist friends.

I received a second shock, however, when I discovered that my friends on the political left were boycotting the rally. The 500 flyers were, they said, a non-issue. The real issue was Israel as “The Occupier” with a totally unjustifiable policy. Citing the right of free speech, they were more upset with the college administrators, whom they accused of oppressing the students who posted the flyers, than with those students themselves. One colleague—and a friend of twenty years—said that taking the flyers down was an outrage, a conspiracy. (I suddenly hear “Jewish conspiracy.”) “All the flyers did was display Palestinian suffering,” she said, practically spitting the words out. “So what if they didn’t get official permission, a mere technicality, an excuse

meant to appease the Holocaust powers who were organizing the rally.” (I suddenly hear “Jewish power.”) She wasn’t going near the rally, which, she said, would be “totally controlled and scripted.”

“But this rally at least admits to a college problem,” I said, swallowing anger that felt dangerous. She shrugged. “You didn’t find the flyers offensive?” No response. “The Jew as Christ-killer, the ways the arms are out, as if nailed to a cross?”

“Gee, I didn’t get that!” she said, her eyes widening on an earnest face. “I saw it as the figure in ‘the Pieta,’ you know, a mother suffering for her dead son, like Palestinian mothers.”

This is a professor whose walls are lined with history books. *Are you really that naïve?* I wanted to yell. *And what about Israeli mothers who are suffering? And don’t the Israelis have the right to self-defense?* We were saved by the bell ringing for the next class. “Well, many people here feel the flyers are anti-Semitic” was all I said and backed away, feeling betrayed. *So this is why my Dad left Germany!* I thought, hurrying off, my heels echoing on the red floor tile. *People like her, angry and unpredictable. People like me, diplomatically silent.*

“Okay, okay, so maybe I’m over-reacting,” I conceded over lunch to another old friend, who dismissed my analogy to Nazi Germany as Jewish paranoia made worse by my parents’ narrow escape. They left in 1936 because my father saw the danger signs. The story of how he’d attended a Hitler rally in 1932 and told my mother that night, “If that man gets elected, we leave!” had been repeated, over and over, as a survival guide. And here were 500 “danger signs”—posted!!—so why weren’t my friends seeing them?

“You can be against Israeli policy and not be an anti-Semite,” said this colleague evenly as we ate tuna sandwiches, his bushy beard catching a few crumbs. Weaned on anti-war rallies of the Sixties, he has been re-energized by what he sees as another version of the injustice of Vietnam: the same military/industrial complex, the same First World capitalism vs. Third World poverty—only now, Israel is the colonial oppressor. “Sharon and his gang have no credibility, not when they keep building Jewish settlements on Arab land,” he said quietly.

“No argument about that!” I replied. My belief in the security and safety of Israel doesn’t make me pro-settlements, a distinction that keeps getting lost in the for-or-against polarization. Nor am I against saying that out loud, as if all criticism of Israel were subversive. The dangers of Jewish PC are as real as Palestinian PC. “So are you coming to the rally?” I offered him my bag of chips as extra enticement, now that we’d found common ground.

“No, it’s a fraud.”

“But not having a rally is worse.”

“The flyers weren’t anti-Semitic in intent, you know. One of the two kids who posted them was in Jewish studies.”

ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT

So what? Would you say that if one of the people who hung the Willie Horton signs was black!" I wanted to say, annoyed with his flyer justifications. But I was still hoping he'd come. "Well, if we don't support a harmony rally, the extremists rule—whatever their stand," I said. "You can't let hate control the political agenda." He shook his head. "No one will say what he really thinks!" and he stood up to go. "Besides," he said, turning to walk away, "I have a class, a review session." He waved.

"So bring them!" I called. His was a social history course, after all.

I headed for the rally, thinking about Saul Friedlander's book, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*. One of its main premises is that the early silence of the universities as moral guardians of society helped to make Hitler feel he had "a green light to proceed." I would send my colleague the quote that struck me most:

When Jewish colleagues were dismissed, no German professor publicly protested; when the number of Jewish students was drastically reduced, no university committee or faculty member expressed any opposition; when books were burned throughout the Reich, no intellectual in Germany, or for that matter anyone else within the country, openly expressed any shame.

I always wondered what those German professors told themselves in order *not* to act. Was it some rationalized sense of justice that let them ignore the images of Jew as sex fiend, and is that the same impulse that lets my colleagues pass 500 flyers of Jew as Christ killer, unconcerned?

Only sixty or so (out of 5,000) gathered for harmony in the D-Wing Circle on a blue-sky day before finals week. Students representing fourteen groups were there (including the Jewish Student Union, The Women's Coalition, the Asian Society, and the Muslim Association), as well as some administrators and a dozen or so faculty. Everyone else was either too busy with exams, didn't know about it, didn't care, or was boycotting—like my friends. (The president didn't show, someone said, because of a delayed board meeting.)

A Muslim student in t-shirt and jeans came to the open mic, saying, "We need to think of ourselves as human beings first, not as Jews, Christians, or Muslims first." Vigorous applause. A Jewish student with a yarmulke stood up to proclaim, "We are all God's children." More applause. An African-American sorority president said, "We must overcome our differences and treat each other with respect." More applause. Then a man with a turban said, "We are all Americans who seek peace." More applause. No one cared that the words sounded like Hallmark cards, for we knew the alternative from other campuses: shouting, pushing, even fistfights. And how quickly, 7,000 miles away, the lack of commitment to these words of harmony had turned into the tragic spiral of Israeli/Palestinian violence.

A concrete wall surrounded the circle and on it were colored flyers—Civility, Freedom, Communication, Dignity, Respect—the kind we hang in kindergarten classrooms to teach young children about how to behave. For six-year-olds, they are new, vigorous words to be taken seriously, executed daily. For adults, their worn, tired repetitions make us impatient—Yes, yes, yes, but....

But within the walled circle these words seemed to frame what might explode. A colleague who loves Plato and Aristotle came up to me and whispered, her face red with anger: "I'm here to support anyone who tells Israel to get the hell out of Palestine!"

"Hey, this is a harmony rally," I reminded her, managing to swallow *jerk!*

"A waste of time," she said, and left. I thought how her anger, like mine, would, at the open mic, turn the Rally for Harmony into a CNN Crossfire, where only yelling counts and people end up slinging slogans and epithets—"Sharon is a Hitler!" "Palestinians are all terrorists!"—so that the only thing to do is cheer or boo or change channels in disgust.

At least platitudes like "We must treat each other with respect" keep people connected, as do pop song lyrics or the bonds of communal prayer—or saying "I love you" in a marriage on days when you feel the opposite. By themselves these words do little, except to ward off permanent damage; but without them, there is little chance to lay a foundation that might turn self-righteousness into something better, worth working on.

I was about to leave when my lunch friend, the activist, showed up. He was "only passing by," but wanted me to know that he was planning a series of *real* forums next semester to discuss the Middle East and its repercussions. He and another faculty member were already drawing up a list of speakers to lead discussions on the history of the region, American policy options, religious and cultural differences, Zionism vs. racism, first amendment issues.

"Great!" I said, feeling more optimistic. For in the right atmosphere, I might try to convince my colleagues of their blindness to those anti-Semitic flyers. And Muslim students might be more open about bigotry against them on campus. And we could debate free speech vs. hate speech, and invite Palestinians and Israelis to tell personal stories, putting a human face on ideology. And if that happened on other campuses all over, maybe governments might....

I was on a roll of optimism, imagining a take-over of people becoming reasonable. But then the harmony rally (oxymoron that it is) ended, and someone began ripping down the bright pink, green, and yellow signs. Stop! I'll take them! I started to yell, knowing that wherever we meet, we'll need to hang Civility, Freedom, Respect, Dignity, and Reason—and to keep looking at them.

Postscript: I sent this essay to my lunch friend, who asked me to use it as a springboard for discussion at a forum. I said yes. □

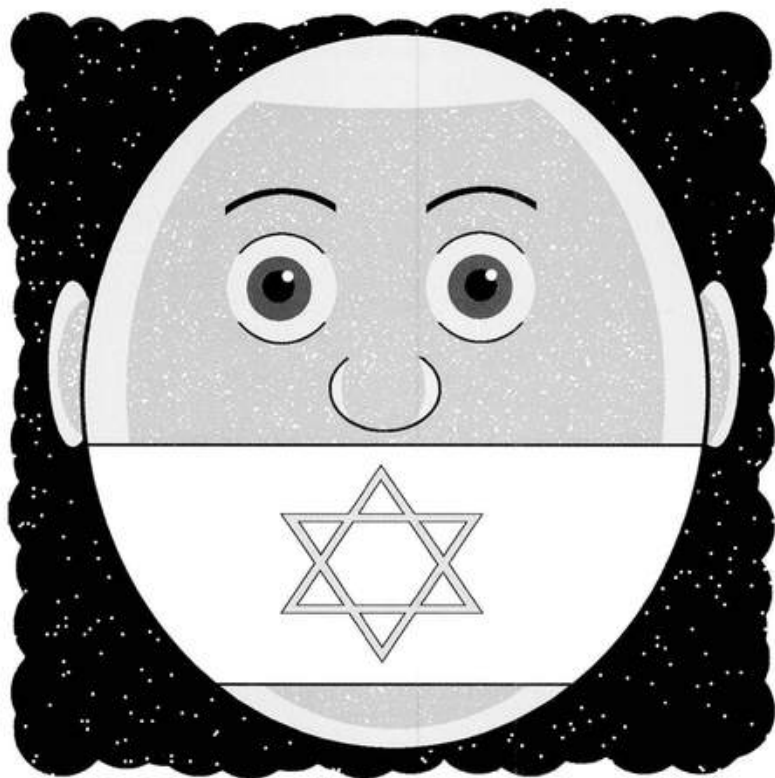
Anti-Semitism on the Left and the Special Status of Israel

Joel Kovel

The tangled question of anti-Semitism within the United States Left was highlighted this past February in a heated controversy between Rabbi Michael Lerner, editor and founder of TIKKUN, and the Marxist-Leninist anti-war group, A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism). In what follows, I take no position on who was right or wrong in this particular case, nor about the behavior of A.N.S.W.E.R., though I might add that my own experience with the group in local antiwar activity does not support Lerner's characterization. My concern, rather, is with the definition of left anti-Semitism offered by Lerner in his email communications and in an op-ed article he wrote that appeared in *The Wall Street Journal* during the course of the controversy. I do not question Lerner's sincere and passionate desire to end the ravages of violence committed by both sides, nor his use of spiritual healing toward this goal. (In fact, I write a regular column for TIKKUN and have worked with Lerner over the years on many of these issues.) I do have a problem, however, with his political analysis, revealed here by his use of the notion of anti-Semitism, and with the means by which he proposes to identify this issue with the Left.

The notion of Left anti-Semitism is necessarily tied to the question of Israel and the logic of Zionism that animates it. Therefore the issues examined here cut to the very core of the choices we need to make about Israel/Palestine—choices that enter into the ambitious proposals recently launched as guidelines for the forthcoming Tikkun Community teach-in in Washington—and extend also widely beyond. We understand that anti-Semitism obscures the reality of what it is to be a Jew, and has enabled atrocities great and small to be committed upon the Jewish people. The question before us now is this: can a faulty critique of anti-Semitism obscure the reality of Israel, and thereby weaken the struggle against its violations of human rights?

For Lerner, anti-Semitism of the Left variety exists when: a) criticism of Israel's human rights violations is not



evenly balanced with equivalent criticism of other human rights violators, whether they be Palestinian terrorists or other state terrorists; and b), when Israel's right to exist is denied. Here is a sample of his remarks on the subject, culled from his op-ed and listserv emails:

- The position "... the Tikkun Community have put forward is that the mobilizations have been run by a group called A.N.S.W.E.R., itself dominated by a communist sect group which is filled with hate toward Israel and wishes to see it dismantled. It has used anti-war demonstrations to demean Israel and to picture the war in Iraq as a war for Israeli interests."
- "context is everything. It's not the fact of criticizing Israel, but the one-sidedness and the selecting out of Israel for special focus. We in the Tikkun Community have been outspoken critics of Israeli repression of Palestinian rights. But we've also been outspoken in our criticism of acts of terror against Israeli civilians. We've called for Palestinians to reject all forms of violence and follow the lead of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Gandhi, whose struggles against oppression were successful in part because they conveyed to the oppressor that the oppressed still recognized their humanity and hence would not take acts of cruel revenge the moment they

could. It was that same spirit that made possible the transformation of South Africa under the leadership of Nelson Mandela. Acts of terror, on the other hand, drive the Israeli population into the hands of the most right-wing forces in Israeli society. So if one attends a rally in which Israel is being critiqued without this larger context, the feeling of bashing Israel becomes predominant."

- "And then, if Israel's human rights abuses are selected out as the major focus, only reserving more abuse for the U.S. government, then we have to ask: Why is there such silence at these demonstrations about the far greater human rights abuses of Saddam Hussein? Or of China in Tibet? or of Russia in Chechnya? or of the regimes in Saudi Arabia and Syria and Egypt and dozens of other states?"

I am sure that Lerner would agree that anti-Semitism, like all species of racism, is logically a fallacy of misplaced concreteness. That is, where one should see the rich interplay of real determinations, the anti-Semite inserts an essentialist abstraction, a thing-like phantom taken out of history. Thus we hear of "Jewish conspiracies," or "Jewish control of Hollywood," or "Jewish money"—or, as Lerner would have us see here, "Israeli human rights abuses" taken out of context and one-sidedly singled out. To avoid an anti-Semitic reaction to Israel, Lerner would have us do the following: first, to denounce Palestinian abuses (along with those of other offenders) equivalently to those of Israel (while urging Palestinians to adopt Gandhian ways or to follow in the "spirit" of Nelson Mandela, for which, see below); and second, to do this in the spirit of affirming the basic worthiness of Israel and its right to exist.

The difficulties with this approach begin with the fact that by requiring equivalence and balance in the treatment of Israel, Lerner is weakening the very context that he calls "everything." What is unique about Israel is lost, even as an *a priori* requirement is imposed that Israel be seen both as a state like any other, and also as having intrinsic worth. Thus we approach the subject with a large set of blinders. Instead of examining each actor in the Mideast conflict concretely, we are forced to compare these actors and their human rights abuses according to what is common between them, for example, body counts, rather than what specifically causes them. Quantity replaces quality, and real determinations fade out. To faithfully follow Lerner's prescription, one tallies up human rights abuses and gives the booby prize to the contestant with the greatest number of maimed, tortured, or dead victims. In the process, history is erased and a deeper understanding of the causes and remedies of things denied. The critique of anti-Semitism thereby becomes a

kind of censorship. And if rational criticism is stifled, then irrational criticism supervenes and the dogs of anti-Semitism are indeed let loose.

If we remove these restrictions and look at the history of this problem, we find that *special* criticism of Israel is indeed warranted, in fact, mandatory, simply because Israel is *special*, haunted by the grotesque metamorphosis of Jewish exceptionalism into a logic of empire in which the "Chosen People" have become chosen once again. This time, however, chosen-ness has not been granted by God,

as the spiritual tradition demands, but by the behemoth known as Uncle Sam.

The United States and Israel are both instances of messianic settler-colonialism and its accompanying exceptionalism. Recall the conscious identification of the Puritan settlers with the tribes of Israel, a linkage that remains very much alive in the affection of the Christian Right (G.W. Bush included) for the Zionist state. This species of Western expansionism has had the gravest impact upon

indigenous peoples, whether in North America, Southern Africa, or Palestine. Along with a common root, the presence within the United States of the largest and most powerful Jewish community within the Diaspora made it highly likely that the two countries would develop a powerful bond. The relationship did not develop overnight, however. The United States was virtually absent from the founding of the Zionist movement; and though it was active in the struggles leading to the formation of the Israeli state, was a lukewarm ally (even at times an adversary) through the 1950s. In part, initial U.S. reticence toward Israel was due to concerns about aggravating oil sheiks, in part it was the result of anti-Semitism in U.S. ruling groups, and in part it stemmed from queasiness about the socialist leanings of Jews in general and Israel in particular.

By the end of the 1950s, however, much had changed. A substantial Jewish American bourgeoisie had become deeply embedded in powerful institutions, and had moved rightward under the influence of the Red Scare, in particular, the Rosenberg atomic espionage case, which was virtually a show trial of Jewish loyalty to the national security state. At the same time, America, flush with its post-Suez muscling aside of the British and French and deeply mistrustful of the radical Arab nationalism of Egypt's Nasser, was gearing up for full-scale involvement in the all-important Middle East. And Israel was by now ready to prove its *bona fides* as an imperial sidekick. The 1967 war, from which the Occupation sprang, proved the catalyst bringing the two countries together. American policy planners now realized that they

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had an inestimable ally capable of ruthlessly suppressing any national liberation movements that might challenge U.S. hegemony in the center of the oil-bearing world—or indeed elsewhere.

U.S.-Israeli ties have only deepened with time, cemented by the roughly \$130 billion (the true figure is essentially unknowable, given the military's deviousness and lack of accountability) in military aid given to Israel over the years. Links between the two countries have been underwritten and enforced by powerful Zionist lobbies, justified by a press that slavishly follows the party line, rationalized by the liberal intelligentsia, and institutionalized by robotic congressional approval. The relationship has extended to new levels of cordiality in the regime of G.W. Bush, for whom Ariel Sharon "is a man of peace." And it is strategically vital for both partners. America aids and arms Israel and defends it in the UN and against world opinion. Meanwhile Israel is America's pit bull in the crucial zone of the Middle East, while performing for the master such tasks as his delicate sensitivity to world opinion has found unacceptable. Israel, for example, helped apartheid South Africa evade an arms blockade, armed and trained death squads for El Salvador's and Guatemala's counter-revolutionary forces, and assisted the arming of Indonesia for its genocide in East Timor—this last, it should be noted, during the peace-minded administration of Jimmy Carter. These are all matters of record, and by no means aberrations of Israeli state policy. Nevertheless, they perennially slip down the memory hole that obliterates those difficult facts as would compromise basic support of Israel.

Lerner's search for equivalence downplays these ties. He writes, for example, of how "Israel's human rights abuses are selected out as the major focus, only reserving more abuse for the U.S. government," as though these were independent variables and not clear indications of the special relationship between the two states. And a chief indication, for him, of A.N.S.W.E.R.'s anti-Semitism is the fact that it "has used anti-war demonstrations to demean Israel and to picture the war in Iraq as a war for Israeli interests."

The notion of "demeaning" Israel seems a bit obscure—though it implies a certain innate dignity to the Zionist state which can be traduced. When, however, said "demeaning" is linked to the suggestion that Israel may have "interests" in an Iraqi war, the critique of left anti-Semitism becomes repressive and has the effect of suppressing rational criticism of the Zionist state. Such smear tactics have been used extensively over the years by groups like the Anti-Defamation League to suppress criticism, and have played a definite role in fostering Israel's disregard of human rights.

The assertion that it is anti-Semitic to say that the invasion of Iraq serves Israeli interests is especially problematic. That



this war would serve Israeli interests has been widely discussed in the Israeli press and by innumerable others elsewhere, including the Lord Mayor of London at the February 15 rally before two million cheering protestors. Are all these voices anti-Semitic? Is Zalman Shoval, former Israeli ambassador to the United States, who has said that "postponement of the Iraqi war goes against Israeli interests"? Indeed, the U.S. intelligentsia seem to be the only people on earth unable to comprehend that America's invasion and obliteration of Iraq will eliminate such deterrence as Saddam Hussein may offer to the real bearer of "Weapons of Mass Destruction" in the region. It will also bring the troops of Israel's imperial benefactor that much closer to the scene of struggle, while aiding U.S.-Israeli acquisition of oil and water rights. And to the extent that the internal logic of Zionism points toward the expulsion, i.e., "ethnic cleansing," of the Palestinian people, so, too, is the war welcomed, as it facilitates this dreadful outcome—to which we return below.

On the American side the trail of collaboration is posted with key functionaries in Bush's foreign policy team who are ardent right-wing Zionists as well as architects of war with Iraq—men such as Paul Wolfowitz (Deputy Defense Secretary), Douglas Feith (Under Secretary for Policy in the Dept. of Defense), Lewis Libby (Chief of Staff for Vice President Cheney), Eric Edelman (Libby's top assistant), Richard Perle (ex-chairman of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board), and Elliot Abrams (who runs Mideast policy for the

National Security Council). Abrams, known for his supervision of counterrevolution in Central America under Reagan, and also for his perjury conviction by Congress (overturned by Bush *pere*) during the Iran-Contra scandals, brings to his new post the qualification of having written a book advising that intermarriage means the death of the Jewish people. He has also championed Ariel Sharon's righteousness while strenuously opposing the peace process in Palestine.

Perle and Feith were advisers to the Netanyahu government, for whom they were among the principle authors of a report, "A New Strategy for Securing the Realm." Among its recommendations are the following: that Israel needs a "clean break from the slogan, 'comprehensive peace' [i.e., the hopes of the Oslo Accords] to a traditional concept of strategy based on balance of power." To this end, Israel must "[c]hange the nature of its relations with the Palestinians, including upholding the right of hot pursuit for self defense into all Palestinian areas and nurturing alternatives to Arafat's exclusive grip on Palestinian society." Observe that these gentlemen, now among the chief architects of Bush's Iraq policy, are here laying out Sharon's policy for systematically destroying Palestinian society, the chief means for ethnic cleansing.

The essentials of U.S. and Israeli policy have been consistent since at least 1967, during which period the real behavior and indeed the existence of the Zionist state has depended upon the support of the superpower. Moreover, both internal logic and external pressures have substantially worsened the behavior of both partners, while deepening the ties between them. For the United States, writhing in the grip of a persistent crisis in capital accumulation, anticipating flattened extraction of oil resources (in the context of ever-expanding demand), and given the opportunity afforded by al Qaeda's terror attacks, it has been a mutation into pre-emptive militarism and a bid to exert total world domination by force—all of which strengthens the strategic importance of Israel. (Note the ability of the latter to recently wring out an additional \$10 billion in U.S. aid—at a time when everything else is being cut back—by claiming that its economic crisis threatens its military dominance.) As for Israel itself, we see an incremental tightening of the screws against Palestine to genocidal proportions. The causes for this have been the threat of a post-Oslo peace, and, I would argue, the internal evolution of the basic assumptions of the Zionist state, suitably legitimated by acts of Palestinian rage, in particular, the evil, futile, and desperate suicide bombings.

Lerner calls the intensified ethnic cleansing of Palestinians the working of the "most right-wing forces in Israeli society." This, however, is to look at the surface and overlook the structures beneath the surface: the reliable, state-terroristic atrocity machine serviced and warranted by the Godfather. What in general is known as the "right-wing" is the political agency of those who exploit the foundational

power relationships of a society. The Right is therefore produced by structures and the movement of events even as it becomes the agent of these events. For the United States, this foundation is primarily one of aggressive capital accumulation; thus the "right" acts so as to maximize accumulation, moving one way or another according to the ebb and flow of events. For Israel, the foundation is provided by the logic of a state whose democratic façade masks, even as the persecution suffered by Jews has been used to justify, an unrelenting drive toward territorial control of Palestine by one, Jewish, people. This is the core assumption of Zionism. It contains the seeds of Palestinian expulsion and an ever more rightward political direction insofar as the subjugated people resist, that is, act as human beings whose basic existence is being destroyed. Moreover, the more America moves toward domination of the Middle East, the more powerful Israel's drive toward ethnic cleansing. Its pace may be retarded temporarily by tactical considerations of not offending the Arab states, but once imperial extension into the region is secured, we can be certain that the destruction of Palestinian society will proceed.

The conclusion to which we are drawn is that the Zionist state is both ruthless and incorrigible within the present configuration of forces. Unless these are fundamentally changed, we look forward to an endless series of disasters.

Beyond the Two-State solution

The claim that it is anti-Semitic to go too far in one's critique of Israel stymies a deeper structural analysis. But it also leaves us in the dark as to just what is far enough in the critique of Israel. The above line of reasoning may be deemed as going too far by many who hold to the view that there is an essential core of virtue to Israel, rooted in the great ethical traditions of Judaism, in Israel's many cultural and technological achievements, and in the fact that it has offered a homeland to a persecuted people. This view, which may be characterized, using Lerner's phrase, as the *fundamental legitimacy* conception of Israel, is undoubtedly held by the great majority of American Jews, and accounts for the fact that they cannot bring themselves to believe that Israel would have a drive to transfer, ethnically cleanse, and expel Palestinians.

This notion also presupposes the horizon of the acceptable defined by the "two-state" proposal, a solution in which Israel stays essentially the same with some territorial adjustments, and a Palestinian state is hewn out of the occupied territories or some fraction thereof. Two-state logic is what allows Lerner to say that he is "pro-Israel [and] pro-Palestine." It enables him to lay out his political program, confident that there is something in Israel on the basis of which a decent two-state solution can be developed. For it is Israel, holding the cards of military power, that will have to be petitioned, reasoned with, and won over, if there is to be a Palestinian state worthy of human beings.

The facts of the case indicate, however, that Israel as it exists cannot be petitioned, reasoned with, or won over to a just solution to the crisis. The reader may study the particulars, with copious references to Israeli commentators, in Tanya Reinhart's superb *Israel/Palestine: Ending the 1948 War* (Seven Stories, 2003), and learn about the endless chicanery and manipulation carried out by successive administrations from Center Left to Far Right in order to thwart Palestinian statehood. Israel's behavior during the Second Intifada (which it almost certainly deliberately provoked to accelerate its occupation according to the rules laid down by Perle and Feith) makes clear that it merely toys with the idea of Palestinian statehood to throw occasional sops to world opinion. In the meanwhile, Sharon and company—with the certain approval of Bush, Perle, Wolfowitz, et al.—have been busy annihilating the miserable conditions of occupied Palestine, with a tripling of the poverty rate in the past two years, utter devastation of civil society, and a toll in malnutrition, injury, and disease that greatly exceeds the killings directly carried out by the Israeli army. This process, played out against a backdrop of screaming F16s and the roar of monster bulldozers destroying homes and burying people (including Rachel Corrie) alive, only makes sense if viewed as part of the process of ethnic cleansing, i.e. "transfer."

Even if this were not the case, the proposed Palestinian state is frankly unworthy of self-respecting human beings. How can there be any pretence to justice when one side is asked to settle for a fragmented domain completely surrounded by its oppressor, utterly dominated by the oppressor's economy, laced with roadways reserved for its troops, where vital resources like water remain under the oppressor's control, and where there are no real guarantees for the withdrawal of the fanatical settlements cynically augmented during the "peace process?"

What, then, is the real character of the Israeli state and the Zionism of which it is the fruit? What are we to call a project which, though it boasts of being a "democracy," reserves 92 percent of its land for Jewish people? Where one who converts to Judaism or has a Jewish great-grandmother is automatically given full rights to the land while those others whose families merely happened to have lived there for centuries are at best second-class and landless? Where Jews have full legal rights and Palestinian rights have been "temporarily" suspended—since 1948? Where people have to carry identity cards, specifying ethnicity (a category which may not include the identity of "Israeli"), and that determine how one is treated by the state? Where the territories are laced with "Jews only" roads? Where political parties that question the fundamentally Jewish nature of the

"democracy" are outlawed? And that is afraid to draft a constitution because it knows it would have to declare itself defunct once it did.

Is there any word for this except *racism*, institutionalized at the most fundamental level of the state? Is not this the guiding logic of Israel's militarization, and its mechanism of ruthless expansion and repression—and yes, the prospect of expulsion? Does it not devolve onto society and through the Diaspora, corrupting the emancipatory legacy of Judaism and sowing chauvinism and blind prejudice?

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The racist character of the Zionist state is the truth so hard to bear by those who believe in Israel's fundamental legitimacy. It is not hard to see why—because racism at this level, where a whole people is destroyed so that another people might thrive, epitomizes the meaning of a crime against humanity. All claims of being "the only democracy in the Middle East," or of saving Jews from anti-Semitic oppression, or having fine symphony orchestras and universities, fade in its glare.

What is to be done? We can begin with what is not to be done, and reject a two-state solution that solves nothing, is impossible in any humanly desirable sense within the current configuration, and serves chiefly as an illusion lying like a giant stone over the imagination. Beyond this illusion lies confrontation with the racist state and rejection of the idea that Zionism expresses the authentic calling of the Jewish people. We need, in a word, to envision a non-racist Israel, beyond tribalism and open to all. This is an old road, suffering from disuse; it is overgrown with weeds and long thought impassable: the "one state" dream of a fully democratic society where all can live together. But it has a noble history, going back to Martin Buber; and the ruin of alternatives demands that it be re-opened, as a direction if not an immediately attainable destination.

The first portion of this path resembles the demands already made by people of good will, including Michael Lerner: cease the annihilation of Palestinian society, end the Occupation, now and unilaterally. These measures clear the way to go beyond, where the need is to envision an Israel beyond Zionism. The prospect is already immanent in these immediate demands. But its realization requires engaging the principle that a racist state, because it automatically generates crimes against humanity and lacks the internal means of correcting them, cannot have that legitimacy which gives it the right to exist. In a word, the Zionist state should be radically transformed, and if need be, brought down.

The mere mention of this possibility sends shudders of horror through a collective imagination shaped by the Holocaust; this now translates the idea of overcoming Zionism into the image of "being driven into the sea,"

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as though the vengeful Arabs would pick up Israel by its eastern borders and dump the whole thing into the Mediterranean.

Here we need to remind ourselves that we are talking about changing the Israeli *state*. A state is not a society, a nation or a territory, but a mode of regulation and control, and the disposition of official violence. States control and direct society, contain nations, and command territories. The racist state aggrandizes one group by annihilating others, who essentially stand helpless before it. The Holocaust happened to state-less Jews, Gypsies, etc, who became the victims of the nihilism of a racist, Nazi state; similarly, state-less Palestinians have become victims of the nihilism of the racist, Zionist state. Given the nihilistic violence built into the Zionist state, it is reasonable to say that its transformation is in the interests of both the bodily and spiritual survival of the Jewish people.

Being "thrown into the sea" is a fantasy of projected vengeance. It is predicated on sustaining a racist state-organization into the future, forever surrounded by those it has dispossessed and humiliated. Therefore the chief condition to strive for is creation of a society in which the wheel of vengeance is put out of commission. And if this seems completely off the scale, especially so given the extreme violence built into the Israeli state, it is most important to recall the bringing down of the murderous apartheid state of South Africa—and to realize that if so great an accomplishment could be done there, then an equally great accomplishment can take place in Israel/Palestine.

There are of course important differences between Israel and apartheid South Africa. The latter was only a secondary (though not insignificant) client of the United States, inasmuch as it lacked strong domestic constituencies in America, and more importantly, was not a factor in controlling an area so strategic as the Middle East. Because South Africa is a wealthy and largely self-sufficient powerhouse, while Israel would collapse like a house of cards without the support of its patron, a much greater role would be given to organizing within the United States in the struggle against Zionism compared to the struggle against apartheid. At the same time, the depth of the American-Israeli tie makes that organizing much more arduous, even as the present state of war and looming expulsion of the Palestinian people (ethnic cleansing was not a factor for South Africa) gives it an immediate urgency. Prevention of the latter catastrophe necessarily provides the entry point into the struggle against Zionism, without altering the long term goal. And this is defined by the deep structural similarities between the two racist states.

Like Israel, the apartheid state was a settler-colonialist venture with messianic ambitions. And like the Zionists, the Afrikaners saw themselves as persecuted wanderers to whom God had promised a homeland, inconveniently occupied by lesser people. Like Israel, they defined their self-determination as being at the cost of the self-determi-

nation of the indigenous people. Driven by a sense of divine license for the terrible injustice that grew from this basic contradiction, they also proceeded to construct and justify the Bantustan system, their own "two-state" (to be exact, multiple-state) solution to the basic contradictions of their imperial project. And they responded, like Israel, with increasing degrees of force and cruelty as the oppressed people asserted their rights as human beings.

And they were eventually brought down, notably, without a bloodbath. Though nobody should suffer the illusion that South Africa has conquered its problems, these now chiefly come under the heading of the "normal" exploitation of a country by global capital rather than that of a murderous racism combined with imperial expansion. Squeezed by the IMF, with deep class divisions, terrible crime and sexual violence, not to mention the wrenching AIDS crisis, South Africa faces a difficult future. But at least a stable democratic polity, black and white living together, is on the ground. South Africa (which I have visited four times) today is full of struggle and vitality, and only a madman would exchange its governance for the version under apartheid.

The movement that freed South Africa under the leadership of Nelson Mandela continues to inspire hope for change in Israel/Palestine. As Lerner states, we need to appropriate the "spirit that made possible the transformation of South Africa under the leadership of Nelson Mandela." Lerner would use the example of Mandela to lecture "the Palestinians to reject all forms of violence ...", as these "[a]cts of terror ... drive the Israeli population into the hands of the most right-wing forces in Israeli society."

The clear implication is that Mandela and the African National Congress abjured all forms of violence and acts of terror. But such was not at all the "spirit" which transformed South Africa under the leadership of Nelson Mandela. Early in the history of the ANC, Gandhian principles held sway (Gandhi developed the notion of Satyagraha during a lengthy stay in South Africa), nor did they ever disappear. But Mandela and his cohort, realizing the murderous implacability of the apartheid regime, introduced in 1961 a two-pronged strategy, with nonviolent resistance in some settings to be accompanied by armed struggle and acts that would have to be called terroristic in others. He assumed the command of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the ANC, and was sentenced to life imprisonment on Robben Island largely because of this. Thus nonviolence was, however important, no more than a component of the South African freedom struggle, the victory of which was finally assured on the battlefields of Angola, when the racist regime, having met its match in the army of Cuba, made the decision to liquidate apartheid and free Mandela (as a result, Fidel Castro is the most beloved Western leader in South Africa).

Lerner's sermon to the Palestinians is a reprise of a similar event in 1991. After Mandela had been freed he came to the United States and met with, among other luminaries,

President Bush-*pere*, who similarly lectured him on the need to renounce violence in the struggle. A man of unsurpassable dignity, Mandela responded by publicly scolding the Leader of the Free World for this cynical attempt to tell a people struggling for its freedom and life what to do. The reasons for doing so still apply.

First, one does not presume to call upon another people to change their ways unless one has earned the authority to do so. Respecting the “fundamental legitimacy” of their oppressor, indeed, calling for Israel to be granted membership in NATO as a consolation prize for abandoning the Occupation does not entitle one to the right to issue a ukase on nonviolence to the Palestinians—any more than G. H. W. Bush’s coziness with the apartheid state endeared him to Mandela.

Nor can rhetoric about “love and healing” obscure the painful and complicated choices we face in this hard world. Nobody, certainly not the Palestinians, is above the need for criticism. But the critic, too, needs to be held before the bar. His or her obligation is to be faithful to both the historical complexity of choice and the need to choose, even if such choice means an option for armed struggle. The question is of the spiritual and political context within which this is carried forth. The source for the magnificence of Mandela’s leadership was not the renunciation of armed struggle. It lay, rather, in the scope of his historical vision, and it is here that the lesson for the liberation of Israel/Palestine lies.

Mandela’s greatness derived, it seems to me, from his rejection of South Africa’s version of the two-state solution—the Bantustan system. The Bantustans represented an imposed tribalism, with indigenous Africans forcibly displaced onto reservations carved out of the country’s poorest land. The whole arrangement was wrapped with racist-utopian rhetoric and secured by the development of parallel institutions of education, judiciary, etc., between the Bantustans and white South Africa. Needless to add, military force remained a monopoly of the apartheid regime, while the territories provided a pool of ultra-cheap labor for exploitation in the factories and mines across the border, much like the situation in the occupied territories.

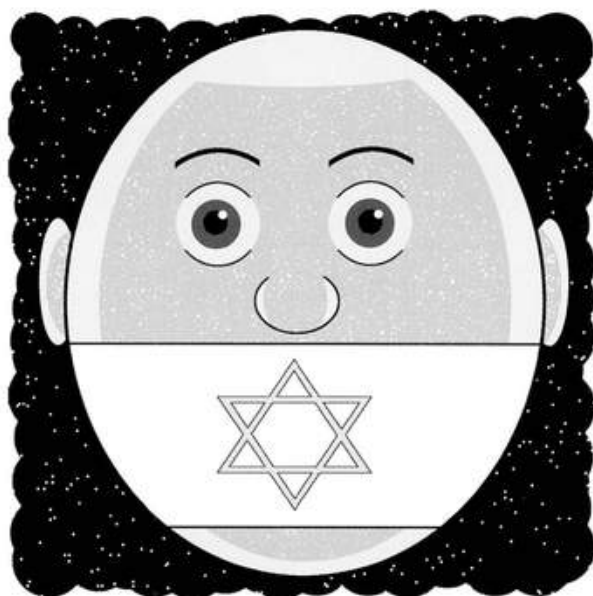
Mandela would have none of it. He concluded, as his official web-site puts it, “very early on that the Bantustan policy was a political swindle and an economic absurdity. He predicted, with dismal prescience, that ahead there lay a

grim programme of mass evictions, political persecutions, and police terror”—results familiar to the observer of developments in Israel/Palestine, as are the opportunism and corruption built-into those who would settle for these paltry goals. Indeed, it is here that we can account for the different levels of leadership provided by Arafat and Mandela—the one hemmed in by an acceptance, the other expanded by his refusal, of a Bantustan-type system. (In fact, Mandela rejected an offer of freedom by the apartheid government if he would assume leadership, Arafat-style, of Transkei, one of the Bantustans.)

Mandela’s greatness was prepared by the negation of the Bantustan system, and realized by going beyond that negation; one might say, in “negating the negation.” For Mandela, the essential point was to posit a society beyond racism, which means, beyond vengeance as well. He opposed this vision to all forms of tribalism and exceptionalism, and faithfully held fast to it. It is this vision that humanizes such aggression as may be necessary to break loose from the death-grip of a racist state. It infused the South African liberation struggle with a spirit of anticipated

reconciliation that steadily gathered more people from the white as well as the black community, and from all across the world. The abjuring of vengeance proved morally more important, therefore, than a strict renunciation of armed struggle. It became the germ of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the guarantee that no one would get pushed into the sea.

Michael Lerner has called for a similar commission in a peaceful post-occupation Israel/Palestine. The idea is excellent, but it cannot take place within the framework of a two-state resolution presided over by the Zionist state, for the simple reason that such a resolution in any humanly worthwhile form will never take place under these conditions. The implication is starkly clear. It is futile to build a movement for peace and justice in Israel/Palestine that does not radically challenge the racist state: the goal is simply not worthy enough. In a vision of a post-racist society we find, however, the moral force capable of inspiring and drawing in people of good will from all sides of the conflict. If such people were able to demand the downfall of apartheid, why should they not do the same for Zionism, and unify themselves under this banner? It will be a long and hard struggle, and only a vision worthy of its sacrifices will suffice for the path ahead. □



Beyond Redemption?

A Response to Joel Kovel

Milton Viorst

Joel Kovel tells us that Israel, as a Jewish state, is beyond redemption. His observation is ironic, since the segment of the Jewish people called religious Zionists, who have dominated Israeli politics since 1967, returned from Europe to the Holy Land precisely because they were convinced they would find redemption there.

What the religious Zionists meant, of course, was quite different from what Kovel means. They intended, in returning, to establish conditions that would hasten the arrival of the Messiah, who would restore to the Jews the holiness that God intended for them at Sinai. What Kovel finds, instead, is that the Jews have become irredeemable, having established a racist state, with their only vision of the future to expel the Palestinians, thus assuring a more deeply entrenched racism than they practice today.

That the Messiah has not appeared does not discourage the religious Zionists; in the fashion of true believers they are content to go on waiting. They continue to promote policies—most notably refusal to withdraw from any of the occupied territory—which they believe lay the groundwork for his welcome. In promoting these policies, they have acquired enough allies since 1967 to maintain a majority, in Israel and probably in the Diaspora as well. If Kovel were more pious, he would say that, as a consequence of their racism, no less than their territorialism, Jews have forfeited their claim to redemption—messianic or otherwise—for all time.

The flaw in Kovel's critique lies in his painting a rigid, highly ideological, totally unforgiving picture of Israel today, its future predetermined by fate, unaffected by human choice. He compares Israel to apartheid South Africa, contemplating a Bantustan-style arrangement as a fallback position should expulsion fail. He sees the original sin as dating from Israel's roots in Zionism, a doctrine

which he sees as illegitimized by its own racism, and thus the progenitor of an illegitimate state.

Kovel regards Israel even more harshly than apartheid South Africa, however, chiefly because he sees it as a willing instrument of American imperialism, which more than Israel itself is the target of his critique. Kovel acknowledges

that Israel's dependence on the United States began only in 1967, but he argues incongruously that Israel will collapse "like a house of cards" if this dependence comes to an end. One could just as easily make the case that Israel would be more secure if it freed itself of dependence on the United States and turned to integrating itself as a good neighbor into the region. Waiving the disposition to dominate, it could surely count on Europe—as it did prior to 1967—to provide for its security needs.

In his critique, Kovel despairs of any prospect that Israel may change. He dismisses the claim by well-meaning Jews that the Palestinians would be more effective in laying the foundation of their own state by following the nonviolent path forged by South Africa's Nelson Mandela. Mandela, Kovel says, was not consistently nonviolent at all. More significantly, he says, Israel has forfeited the right to call on the Palestinians to follow such a course, on the grounds that it has not earned the moral authority to do so. Whatever it takes to earn moral authority, he would certainly be correct to point out that Israel, with myriad helicopters and tanks that it is all too ready to use, would be suspect in urging on the Palestinians a non-violent course for ending the Occupation.

Mandela's great contribution, according to Kovel, was not nonviolence, however, but the recognition that the Bantustan system—the South African counterpart to Israel's "two-state" solution—was itself racist. Mandela's demand for a single, egalitarian state, says Kovel, set the stage for the reconciliation toward which blacks and whites have since been steadily moving. Kovel dismisses two states in the Palestinian context as not even worth striving for, holding that by leaving Israel in charge—not just of territory but of roads, water, border crossings, commerce, electricity—racism would be unconquered.

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Milton Viorst has covered Israel and the Middle East for thirty years. His latest book is *What Shall I Do With This People? Jews and the Fractious Politics of Judaism*.

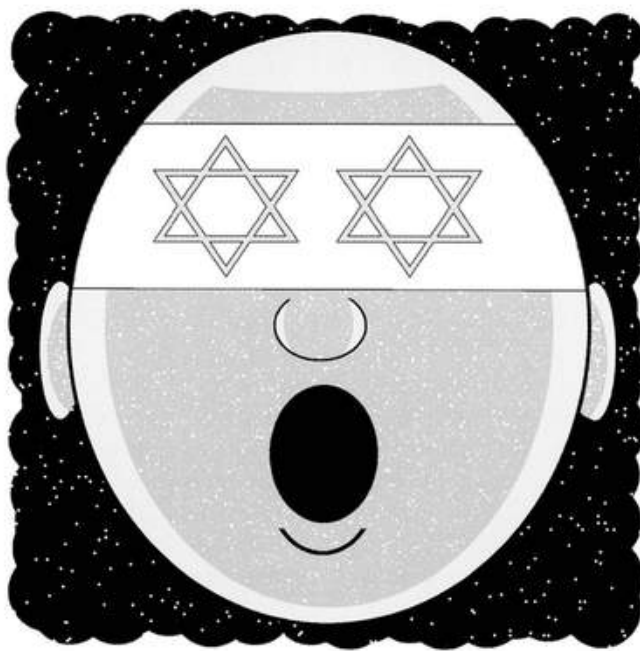
Kovel's concern with racism leads him to the conclusion that the Jewish state itself was a terrible mistake. He is unwilling to consider the evidence that Jews and Arabs alike have given clear indication over many decades that they do not want a single state. Whatever the disposition of black South Africans, the contenders in the Middle East both have a strong preference for their own culture and show no disposition to assimilate into the other's. However justified by his horror of racism, Kovel's fix contains no openness to what has been known since Wilson's era as the principle of self-determination.

Should not we ask, notwithstanding Kovel, whether there is anything to be said in favor of the original Zionist vision of a Jewish state? Herzl had a concept of Israel as a refuge, which is not irrelevant, even today. With Jews

in jeopardy and no other body prepared to help them, he and his colleagues founded a mission of rescue. It was not unreasonable for the Zionists to envisage a *Jewish* society as the salvation of the Jews. Such an idea corresponded with the times. The contemporary idea of nationhood, as a synthesis of diverse peoples or cultures, had yet to emerge. Can it not be possible that Israel today is not so much evil as culturally retarded?

The explanation for the lag might well be the long exposure of the Jews to anti-Semitism. Kovel does not deny that without anti-Semitism there would have been no Zionism, but he is too ready to dismiss it as a historical relic, of no current relevance. He chooses not to recognize the wounds that anti-Semitism inflicted on the collective Jewish psyche. It is true that many Jews today pretend that any criticism of Israel, no matter how justified, is anti-Semitism. But that does not make anti-Semitism less real as a plague from which the Jewish people have yet to recover.

To be sure, Zionism, with deliberate blinders, ignored the cost that a Jewish state imposed upon the Arabs already living on the land. But history responds to its own imperatives. Zionism is not the first movement—nor will it be the last—to achieve in a morally dubious manner ends that are morally defensible. This history leaves Israel with a pro-



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found obligation toward the Palestinians; it does not make Israel illegitimate.

Zionism began veering from morality when its secular commitment to Jewish refuge was superseded by a sense of divine mission. This mission was imparted by the ideology of the Mizrahi faction, later to be called religious Zionism. Mainstream Zionism's concept of a secular Jewish state had left room for the admission of outsiders, for a constitution guaranteeing human rights, for the creation of a modern democracy. Religious Zionism saw the Jewish state as an expression of piety, leaving no room for outsiders at all. It envisaged recreating a ghetto on the medieval model, ultimately encompassing all the land from the Jordan River to the sea. A secular Jewish state can be egalitarian and democratic; a religious state, as a manifesta-

tion of the divine, must be governed by Jewish law, religiously pure, and inevitably racist.

Kovel's analysis dismisses the relevance of the values of secular Zionism. One might argue that the pioneer Zionists, a century ago, should not have allowed Mizrahi into their bosom and that Ben-Gurion, in declaring a state in 1948, should not have conceded to religion a place at the political table. But both perceived traditional Judaism as a marginal force. They thought they were serving the cohesion of the Jewish people by granting innocent concessions to piety. But the concessions turned out to be far from marginal. In opening the door to religious power, they fractured the Jewish people and created a semi-theocratic state of which racism was an inevitable part.

At the moment, religion is on the rise throughout much of the world, and secular Zionism is correspondingly in retreat. Perceiving this retreat, Kovel considers Israel to be doomed. He forgets that the United States was once a slave state; now he says it is not even a racist state, though it took a civil war to achieve the transformation. The Jews are now engaged in their own war, and the outcome is far from clear. Kovel is correct in being fearful for Israel's future, but he errs in contending that the struggle for its character and allegiance are over. □

The Question of Rationality

A Response to Joel Kovel

Richard Landes

It seems difficult to discuss the past with Joel Kovel, since he invokes it as part of a prophetic discourse in which his vision of the past addresses the present with a call to future action. Part of what is so disconcerting in reading this “take” on the past, moreover, is its tunnel vision. The author has a firm sense of right and wrong. Non-imperialistic *interaction* with other cultures is right; settler-colonial destruction of subaltern peoples, to put it in academic lingo, is wrong. I have no objection to such value judgments. But Kovel seems to live in a world where imperialism is the *only* sin, and further seems obsessed with Jewish sins in this area to the exclusion, indeed the exoneration, of all other peoples (except, of course, the United States), and all other sins.

The penalty for transgression? No right to sovereignty, self-determination as a people, or statehood. No right to wield the machinery of a “state that is both ruthless and incorrigible.” High standards, no doubt. Would that we lived in a world where such standards did indeed deserve realistic discussion.

But we most decidedly do not. It seems bizarre, then, that Kovel would level accusations against Israel based on standards no nation has ever achieved, against a nation which openly embraces such values—in fact whose progressives agonize over every failure to live up to them—and yet says nothing about the Israelis’ neighbors who have never shown in word or deed that they adhere to any of the values he proposes.

On the logic Kovel gives here, one would presume he would oppose any statehood for the Palestinians as well, since their entire past and political culture display a ruthless and incorrigible power structure. But no. Kovel pushes on with a startling version of the past, one that is outstanding for its narcissistic intensity, its exclusively self-centered tale of irreparable Occidental and Israeli sin. The narrative seems constructed in order to highlight the sins of the

“invaders” without any attention to the responses of the “invaded.” This necessitates, of course, a systematic gloss, constructed with hindsight, about the intentionally ruthless, imperialistic strategies that put this settler-state in place, and a similarly constructed victim narrative in which the indigenous people played no role in the emergence of a state of permanent war. Thus any peaceable desires among Zionists and any belligerence among the Arabs both retro-

spectively disappear. As a result, Israel joins earlier colonial efforts, the Western European ones of the nineteenth century which produced those horrifying Victorian Holocausts, and therefore deserves no legitimacy.

Now this seems wondrous strange reasoning indeed. What nation in the Arab world deserves statehood by the standards to which Kovel holds Israel and the United States? What tolerance, by his standards, can we show for a messianic settler religion like Islam,

whose world-conquering apocalyptic fervor in its early centuries had them conquer the entire Middle East and colonize it in such a way that, after a few centuries, all native tongues had been either extinguished or marginalized? What do we do with a messianic settler religion that, where it does not force conversion, creates a religious apartheid which systematically and legally discriminates against resistant religious minorities, its *dhimmi*?

One might, of course, argue that these ancient issues no longer apply. But Arab political behavior shows exceptional continuity over those fifteen centuries, and ranks high, certainly for longevity, among the incorrigibly ruthless. And that has predictably dire consequences for the populations they dominate: the economic failure of the Arab world, despite the trillions of petro-dollars it might have used to develop a humane economy, constitutes one of the most horrifying developments of the twentieth century. When one removes the oil income, Arab economies produce less than Finland! Why? Because their elites are *so* greedy that they gorged on oil money, and so intent on dominating a “pacified” population that they shared little with their commoners, keeping both their own populations (the peoples of

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Lybia, Algeria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia) in poverty and ignorance—and those of their fellow Arab states (Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Yemen), in classic peasant misery.

I assume that in addition to our distaste for colonial settler states that oppress indigenous people, we are also against indigenous political elites who oppress their own people. So why does Kovel single out Israel? Does he, therefore, grant legitimacy to all the other nations in the region including the Palestinians? Does he think thereby to encourage the emergence of elites who do treat their commoners well? If not, then we stand before one of the more startling examples of the “Human Rights Complex,” which holds that if you wish to find out what drives the current human rights community to loud indignation, look not to the victims (e.g., black Sudanese Christians and animists), nor how badly they suffer (over a million killed *so far* in Sudan’s genocidal war, while their children and wives are sold into slavery), but to the perpetrator. If the perpetrator is “white” (Israel, US), then judgment upon them is severe; if the perpetrator is a person or a people of color (Sudanese Arab Muslims, Palestinians), the less said the better.

The way that the Palestinian leadership has treated its own people, its neighbors, its allies, its enemies, and its environment, stands out even in the vicious political culture of the region. (If you’ve heard of Sabra and Shatilla and not of Damour, where the PLO, under Arafat’s leadership, surrounded the Christian Maronite town and savagely massacred hundreds of the inhabitants at the outset of the “civil war” that killed tens of thousands of civilians from 1975–82, then you have been badly informed.) And unfortunately, the Palestinians are merely applying the lessons learned from their tutors in the Arab League, the “allies” who decided for the Palestinians in 1948 not to accept any deal with the Zionists, who play by “Hama rules.” This ruthless and incorrigible political culture of the Arab world has stifled growth and the economic well-being of over 350 million of the world’s people despite almost limitless access to funds. And the Palestinians stand not as the exception, but as the exceptional illustration.

But, Kovel insists that is *our* fault, the fault of the West, of Israel, of messianic settler religions that should not exist—not the fault of the former messianic settler religion that has and continues to keep its people in misery even when the Jews are not involved. This kind of excessive self-criticism illustrates masochistic omnipotence syndrome. We are guilty for *everything* wrong, and if we could only make *ourselves* perfect, then *everything* would be alright. Or, as one psychologist commented, noting the devastating effect not only of suicide bombings on its victims (the families of the dead, the permanently wounded), but the tendency of some “progressives” to present the mass murderers as the real “victims”—this self-blaming is a form of “battered wife syndrome.” Here we find a narcissistic focus on the self, to the exclusion of the other. Indeed, in



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this world, the “other” disappears, shrinks from being a conscious agent, and becomes a cipher, a blank “victim,” forced like a robot to (vicious but predictable) action by our (inexcusable) behavior.

To show such exceptional severity towards the Jews (what Freud would call a tyrannical super-ego) for a flaw that everyone has (the tendency to dominate where one can), and to show unsurpassed obtuseness in granting free license to the worst expressions of this *libido dominandi* among those attacking the Jews, strikes me as both unfair and, still worse, self-defeating. Assuming that we are trying to bring about peace and decent interactions between people of all faiths (and not just stick it to the Israelis), then this approach seems guaranteed to produce the opposite result. By demanding virtually inhuman levels of self-criticism and renunciation from the Jews and none from the Palestinians and other Arabs, one ends up encouraging the worst kind of demonizing narratives among the Arabs and suicidal submission from the Israelis.

Although some might consider this self-blaming to be itself anti-Semitic, it does have some relationship to the rabbinic and prophetic responses to the first two exiles—"on account of our sins You exiled us"—and could stem from genuine moral passion. But *prophetic* self-criticism was aimed at strengthening the people of Israel, for improving our learning curve, focusing our minds and hearts on constructive feats of social creativity—the ones that permitted us to survive the long winter of late antique and medieval power structures, incorrigibly ruthless, which strangled their populations with their greed and blamed us for that suffering, very much as the Arab Muslim world does with Zionism today. Kovel's self-criticism, if that it is, seems destined for a far different cause. How can one delegitimize Israel and militate for a twenty-third Arab Muslim state when none of the current twenty-two stand up to the most basic moral demands for treating their own people decently? Nor does this twenty-third candidate, with an active population of some of the most violent religious extremists on the planet, look like it will break the pattern. Rather than encouraging Jewish survival over the long winter dominated by oppressive societies, this logic contributes to another winter, one in which Jews return to their *dhimmi* status, and the Palestinian and Arab people remain in the grip of a ruthless and incorrigible power elite.

How can such an outcome contribute to a decent world?

Only in masochistic fantasy can one say all fault falls on the Jews. Only in masochistic fantasy can one imagine that if only the Jews would cease to oppress the Palestinians, then all the wars and oppression which have marked this region for long before the Jews got uppity would cease. Only when one believes that Israeli oppression alone causes Palestinian violence, can one ignore the factories of hatred that poison the minds of the youngest children with visions of conspiracy and genocidal thirst for revenge. Indeed, one must imagine that by this logic, suicide bombings, no matter how regrettable, are the perfectly understandable, possibly even justifiable, responses of a resisting population.

Beneath this view lies a radical, unconscious racism: Anyone who can blame Israel for everything must have the same moral expectations for the Palestinians as they have for animal predators—it's their nature to respond this way. The failure to criticize the Palestinians, to ask of them that they *also* engage in self-criticism and empathy for the Israelis, reflects a hidden belief that they are as incapable of moral reasoning as animals.

Such a perspective, however, does permit Kovel to attack Michael Lerner's plea for some moral balance in judging the situation. His immense aggressiveness in deny-

ing legitimacy to a voice for Israel because of its imperialist-colonialist pedigree permits him to make extraordinary statements such as:

The notion of "demeaning" Israel seems a bit obscure—though it implies a certain innate dignity to the Zionist state which can be traduced. When, however, said "demeaning" is linked to the suggestion that Israel may have "interests" in an Iraqi war, the critique of left anti-Semitism becomes repressive and has the effect of suppressing rational criticism of the Zionist state.

*It is disrespectful to
hold Arabs to a
lower standard than
Kovel holds Israelis.*

Here Kovel plunges ahead with his obsession with the US-Israel connection, precisely where Lerner has attempted to place this critique in the larger framework of everyone's "tainted" behavior. Do Iraq and the PA have a "certain innate dignity" which he apparently doubts Israel has? Do the Palestinian voices given such prominence at anti-war rallies by groups like A.N.S.W.E.R. (to the exclusion of voices like Lerner's),

have "interests" in protecting Saddam Hussein, with whom Palestinians have a "special relationship" precisely where both partners behave most viciously (suicide mass murder and the ruthless oppression of their own people)? Are we to take pointing to such disturbing matters as a "suppression of rational criticism"? Or is this precisely the "truth so hard to bear by those who believe in the [Palestinian's] fundamental legitimacy" that Kovel will stop at nothing to suppress it, including accusing Lerner of his own tactics? Apparently yes, for Kovel then continues:

Such smear tactics have been used extensively over the years by groups like the Anti-Defamation League to suppress criticism, and have played a definite role in fostering Israel's disregard of human rights.

Note that such accusations apply a thousand-fold to the world of Palestinian human rights violations, where the suppression of criticism is constant and far more violent, fostered by the negligence of progressive voices in the West to hold the Palestinians to any standards.

The critique of anti-Semitism thereby becomes a kind of censorship. And if rational criticism is stifled, then irrational criticism supervenes and the dogs of anti-Semitism are indeed let loose.

Have not such smear tactics been used by anti-Semites throughout history, telling the Jews that they had better turn against themselves or it will go badly for them? And has not this voice often come precisely from fascists who do not like to be contradicted, and are willing, when it suits them, to unleash the dogs of violent intimidation? Is this not precisely what Southern Baptists tell us about our resistance to their friendly efforts to convert us? Is this not what a French politician did when he warned French

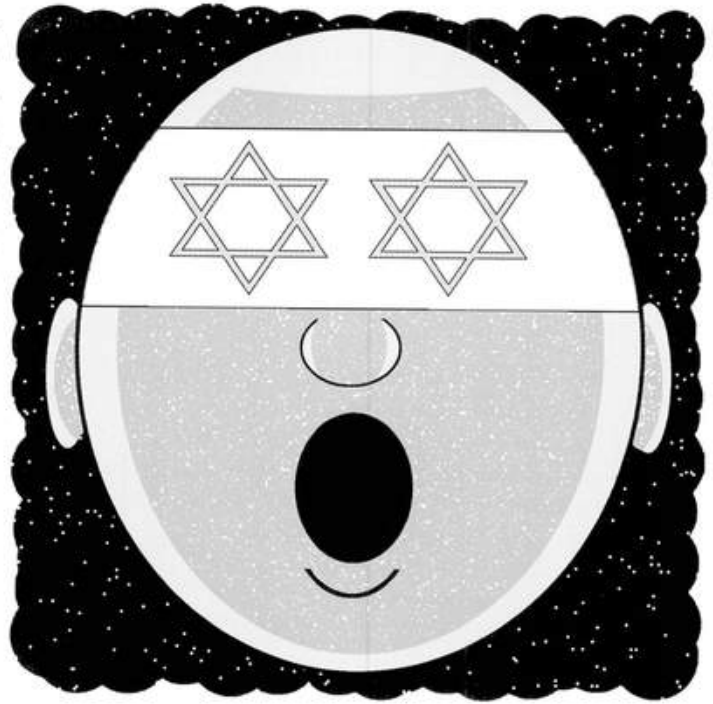
Jews not to try to defend Israel at the beginning of the second round of the intifada, and that against a backdrop of synagogue fires and physical attacks on Jews? Indeed, on March 22, 2003, French Arabs brandishing Palestinian flags at a peace demonstration in Paris, beat up a group of Jewish peace marchers and threatened the media filming it. Who is threatening whom? Who is repressing whom? Who is marching for peace? (It turns out, they didn't have to intimidate the French crews; the networks refused to run it.)

Kovel's radar is acute in picking up evil American intentions and blind in picking up the imperialist, fascist, and malevolent intentions on the other side. As a result, he contributes nothing to breaking the cruel grip that has held the Palestinian people for over half a century, a leadership that has willingly sacrificed them on the altar of its wounded pride and theological hatreds, and will surely continue to make them suffer long after Israel has taken his advice and disappeared. To take responsibility for one's sins makes courageous sense; to take responsibility for the depravity of others only increases their depravity and ruins any chance of a real meeting of people who, as William Blake would say, "all impose upon each other."

What has happened here?

At some level, Kovel seems driven by deep anger at his own culture. And yet the very values he embraces are only conceivable—certainly publicly espoused—within the framework of modern democratic societies, no matter how flawed they are. In his revulsion, again born of the culture that repels him, he imagines that all evil comes from us, including whatever comes from others. But in so doing, he fails to appreciate the immense opportunities that our culture offers—this exchange, for example—and the immense threats to his dream that other cultures not only produce today, but have produced for the long millennia, that technology has transformed human existence and been monopolized by incorrigibly ruthless elites. However frustrated members of the anti-war movement in the United States may feel, their right to dissent, their ability to get coverage in an independent media and to vigorously express their opinions largely unimpeded, represents a high-water mark in the history of political tolerance. If your standards are so high that even these accomplishments need significant improvement (mine are), please don't imagine that other cultures do, or even, without extensive effort, *can* play by anything resembling these rules. The whiff of grapeshot would long ago have dispersed such crowds in the Arab world.

I have never met, nor heard, any Palestinian take a position one-hundredth as critical of the Palestinians as Kovel's is of the Zionists. Is this for lack of things to criticize? Is this because these people are such moral midgets that they can't see anything wrong? Or is it because of the incredibly intimidating and violent peer pressure that operates in a



By demanding moral disarmament in a world where no extant nation shares his moral values, he demands suicide—Israel first, the West next.

culture where "the street" rejoices in the massacre of its enemies. Fail to appreciate this difference, and you fail all those who hope for the victory of decency. The problems are not genetic; they are cultural. And they won't go away because we ignore them.

Kovel's approach, however, fails to acknowledge any decency at home, and fails to notice any ruthlessness abroad. By demanding moral disarmament in a world where no extant nation shares his moral values, he demands suicide—Israel first, the West next. And the path that he opens up thereby does not welcome the forces of enlightenment and decency nearly so much as it does the forces of what Nietzsche identified as *ressentiment*, the base hatred of those stronger than oneself—not because one hates oppression but because one would rather oppress than be oppressed. One can understand that some very smart and caring people might be driven to distraction by the agony of acknowledging how cruel we all can be to each other—even, *chas ve-chalilah*, Jews! But I tremble to think that such self-destructive thinking might appear to any significant audience as "clear-eyed" or "rational." □

Whither the Zionist Dream?

A Response to Joel Kovel

Susannah Heschel

The uprooting of olive trees on Arab land last fall may have been prompted by Israeli security concerns. The prevention by Israelis of many Palestinians trying to harvest their olives in their fields may have been the work of lawless settlers. Whatever the case, those olive trees hit a personal chord for many of us. Something cracked, and old explanations of Israeli policies no longer work.

I am frankly becoming more and more sympathetic to Joel Kovel and others on the Left, particularly after the horrible death of Rachel Corrie by an Israeli army bulldozer while she took part in nonviolent protest of home demolitions in Gaza this past March. Her death is another crack, a recognition that there is ruthlessness in Israeli actions that leaves no room for radical nonviolence.

For years, Michael Lerner has called on Palestinians to reject violence and follow the examples of Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Nelson Mandela. That used to make sense to me. But it is time to rethink that option: Do conditions in the Israeli and Jewish communities make nonviolent Palestinian protest meaningful? Given the radicalization within the Jewish community in recent years, there is barely any possibility left for a peaceful, nonviolent protest on the part of Palestinians—not only because of their own political issues or physical conditions—but because nonviolent protest is predicated on the existence of a conscience within the hearts of the oppressors, and I fear we are losing ours.

Conscience is left no breathing room when racism takes over a society, and support for Israel has become rooted in a horrific Jewish racism toward Palestinians, just as so many Palestinian leaders have paralyzed their political interests with hatred of Israelis.

If I were to defend Lerner's claim that criticisms of Israeli occupation policies have to be contextualized, compared to China in Tibet, Russian in Chechnya, I would also have to insist that criticisms of Palestinian hatred of Israel

should also take notice of Jewish hatred of Palestinians.

But Kovel and Lerner are talking about two different spheres of analysis and action. Kovel focuses on the politics of self-criticism. He argues that for a Jew to criticize Israel should be as radical as a criticism of oneself, and Kovel is

right about that. All of us should be ruthless with our own conscience, demanding more than the utmost, never being complacent with our motives, never satisfied with our accomplishments.

Lerner, however, examines the politics of political criticism, rightly noting the hypocrisies that permeate the Left in focusing so much criticism on Israel while paying little attention to states committing far worse human rights abuses.

Because Kovel and Lerner are talking past each other in this way, both are right in principle, but potentially misleading as well.

Kovel is right: I don't have to say that my personal moral faults have to be viewed in the context of the moral failings of all human beings. I have to be ruthless in my own self-criticism, dissatisfied with myself, and not forgive myself or become complacent because others are equally flawed. The same applies to criticisms of my community and my country. I also agree with Kovel that Lerner should not require us to balance criticism of Israel with criticism of Palestinians—a focus on Israel alone is not necessarily anti-Semitic.

Lerner is also right in calling attention to the hypocrisy of certain elements on the political Left: Why is the Left so obsessed with Israel? The dividing line between criticism of Israeli policies and anti-Semitism comes when actions are confused with nature—when the barbaric assaults on Palestinians by the Likud government are equated with Zionism or Judaism, or when the actions of Palestinian suicide murderers are equated with Palestinian human nature. Anti-Semitism enters when criticisms of Israel are expressed by invoking classic anti-Semitic stereotypes—for example, when *The Guardian* newspaper printed a cartoon depicting Sharon eating a Palestinian child, invoking the old European myth that Jews murder Christian children.

In adopting a tone toward Israel that is so belligerent, the radical Left loses credibility and ends up talking only to

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itself. That anti-Semitism is so much more tenacious in the political rhetoric of the Left than the Right is also troubling.

Like so many others on the radical Left, Kovel loses perspective in labeling Israel a racist state. It reminds me of the feminist argument formulated a generation ago by Andrea Dworkin that any act of heterosexual intercourse was an act of rape. The argument was based on a radical politics that was Puritan in its moral purity. It translated human life into a political narrative that ignored emotion, passion, and the irrational.

The State of Israel cannot be held to a political moral purity, nor can any other state, including Palestine. Kovel's standards might exist in the world of angels, but, as Reinhold Niebuhr reminded us, we become absurd if we hold a society to the same moral standards as individual human beings.

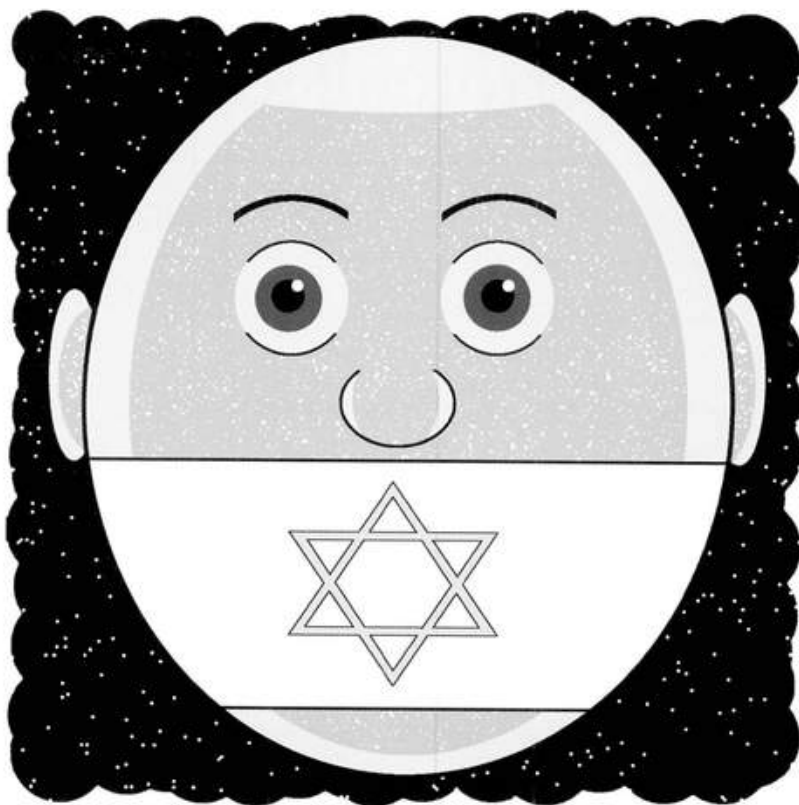
Kovel argues that a racist state loses its fundamental right to exist. Yet that seems to me to skirt the issue and achieve nothing. What would it accomplish to declare that the United States has lost its "right to exist" in waging a preemptive war against Iraq? Rather, its government has lost its legitimacy and ought to be defeated in the next election.

Nazi Germany was a profoundly racist state, yet our goal was to defeat its racism, not its existence. Indeed, no-one ever called for an end to Germany, even after it started two world wars and carried out the genocide of six million Jews. Instead, we challenged its aggressive militarism and the racism embedded in its culture. We did not dismantle Germany after WWII, but we did dismantle its racist institutions, and Germans began the long, thoughtful process of recognizing and overcoming the racism within their culture.

The Jewish state is an experiment, an attempted act of righteous affirmative action on the part of the world, a tiny corner of the earth where we can try to develop a Jewish national culture. Whether it can succeed will depend entirely on a radical shift in its politics: the dismantling of its military occupation and the beginning of a long process of eradicating racism from its culture. Yet just as Germans required the transformation of world attitudes toward them from hostility to the generosity of rebuilding their country, Israel requires an end of hostility toward it in order to reconstruct itself. Calling it a racist state is a self-serving act of political posturing that undermines efforts to end the occupation and enter meaningful (not Oslo-like) negotiations with Palestinians.

The reality is that the State of Israel exists. The issue is changing its policies, immediately and fundamentally. The Left abdicates its role in effecting change by transferring the language of private moral self-examination to political states.

The danger of Jews' current legitimate, though overweening, concern with anti-Semitism, however, is that it



deflects our attention from the racism taking root in large segments of the Jewish community. Many Palestinians are our enemy, to be sure, and wish our death and destruction—all of us, diaspora Jews as well as Israelis. Only a fool would fail to recognize that. Yet in Israel and elsewhere we also hear about Palestinians as *Amalek*—the incorrigible enemy whom we are obligated to wipe off the face of the earth. Pamphlets are sold in religious neighborhoods in Israel that define Palestinians as having a demonic physical and spiritual nature.

Is this to be the basis of Jewish identity? Has Zionism deteriorated into hatred of Palestinians? Has our conscience become a fossil? Now is the time to recover the ideals of Zionism—cultural and political—that inspired our pride as Jews and the respect of the world. Zionism promised us a new kind of state and a new kind of Jewishness. Jewish ideals of justice and compassion were to guide the politics of the Jewish state, and Jewish identity was to have a revitalization of secular and religious identities, coexisting and fertilizing each other. Zionists planned an exodus from Europe and its stultifying racism, and many looked forward eagerly to Arab cultural influences and coexistence. We were to be as olive trees: old in the wisdom of Diaspora travails, yet abounding in the constantly renewed production of new fruits and oils. With each aged olive tree ripped from its moorings in the soil of Palestine, the Israeli army destroys the lives of Palestinians and eviscerates the Zionist dreams. If it does not stop now, the State of Israel will destroy itself. □

kindertotenlieder

or, daycare among the paste-eaters

Joseph Skibell

Something about small children tends to make me sad.

I can barely drop Franny off at her day care without coming away from it mildly depressed. It has something to do, I think, with seeing them, these children, sitting in their little knee-dimpling circles, their little hands manipulating their little tools: their miniature scissors, their cigar-fat markers, their squat jars of clumpy paste—the kind unhappy children used to eat (at least they did when I was little), running the paste-clotted stick, like a Thai hors d'oeuvre, across their bumpy tongues.

Isabelle loses all patience with me when I speak of it, but we tend to treat our children as though we were preparing them for a life in an Aborigine village, with songs and papercrafts, little circle dances, and storytellers arriving on odd schedules. We allow and even encourage them to mark up their bodies, their faces, their hands with free and colorful designs.

It's no wonder so many of them will fail in later life.

And Franny must feel the same way I do, because I have to struggle with her each day I drive her in, forcing her from my arms and into the little play group. She clings to my neck, strangling me on the days I wear a tie, screaming, "Daddy, Daddy, please, not yet!"

With her thick glasses and the little blank diary she carries, in lieu of a blanket, for reassurance, she resembles a nervous, a reluctant, anthropologist, afraid to have to fend for herself on this strange island of wild and happy primitives: Glue-Eaters' Island!

I can't help shuddering, even thinking of it. And it's my own fault, really. I allow her to sleep in. Neither Isabelle nor I have the heart to rouse her so early from her bed, as though she were a milkman! She's barely three, after all, and this way I can get a little work done before she wakes up and begins issuing her tiny, frazzling demands, standing in her crib like Mussolini on the balustrade.

(Who knew such a small child could be so imperious, so shrill?)

And invariably we are the last ones to arrive at her day

care because of it, arriving literally hours after the tiny group has formally cohered, so that Franny's entry into it each day is uncertain, causing her, each day, to cling to my neck and scream.

Her caregivers, summoned by this shrieking, approach us from all sides. Smiling knowingly, indulgently, not unsympathetically, they attempt to sever her from my arms.

"No!—Daddy!—please!" Franny yowls or screams or rather in actual fact whispers. She whispers this plea, albeit shrilly and directly into my ear, her small teeth pressed hard against it, her forehead banging wildly into my temple; wanting above all not to be embarrassed, she whispers in an attempt to remind me privately of the bond we share, a blood tie that by rights must supercede the desires of these grasping others with their paltry claims to a pallid civic authority.

And what can I do, torn as I am between an instinctual need to protect her and a very real desire to immediately surrender her up to them? After all, I have oceans of work yet to swim through this morning. Long since promised to its publishers, my monograph on Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* remains hopelessly unfinished, my notes and drafts gnawing at me, like a rat trapped in my briefcase, suffocating for want of air.

I do nothing, nothing. Or little.

Very little.

I smile back at them, these smiling teachers, the harried, embarrassed father, self-humiliating and ineffectual, clichés clinging to me like mussels to a pier, while Franny, oblivious to our adult complicities, continues to struggle between us, locked as if in a death grip, kicking and clawing, pinching at my shirt, trying to save herself. And from what? *From what?* From a carefree day of play with this merry, mucousy band of rascals, these parasitic blobs of protoplasm, these refugees from Glue-Eaters' Island!

I can barely think of them without growing despondent, the penitential prayers my fellow Jews and I send up to Heaven every year on the Day of Atonement ringing like a death knell in my ear: *Who by water? Who by fire? Who because he wore glasses or glanced at his nails like a girl? Who because, laughing, she slobbered milk through her nose?*

(It's their innocence, I realize, that depresses me most, their small and happy ignorance of their own abysmal fragility.)

Joseph Skibell is the author of A Blessing on the Moon and the forthcoming The English Disease. He teaches at Emory University.

Working now as a great gaggle, Franny's teachers are able, finally, to snatch her from my arms. We're adults, after all; we're stronger; we outnumber her and, besides, we're working against her from all sides, with me merely pretending to offer her my aid.

Tears stream down her cheeks from behind her boxy black rims. Red-faced, she wails like a heretic being dragged down the corridors of the Inquisitor's Palace. Her little fingers curled, her pudgy arms flailing, she reaches out but is unable to grasp at me, her betraying father: whether for further assistance or to slap me in the face, I cannot tell.

In the silence that follows her deportation from the room, the remaining teachers turn to me, presenting concerned and considerate faces. Possessing the bland equanimity of government-sponsored torturers, they offer me their reassurances.

"She'll stop crying," they say. "She always does."

"Just as soon as you leave."

But I don't wait, not even long enough to wonder if I believe them or to see if what they say is true.

Instead, I make a quick and embarrassed dash past the rat in the aquarium, past the twenty or so noodle-and-yarn-constructed portraits of the smiling sun, out the purple-and-yellow door, into the morning-drenched playground with its tire swings and its climbing ropes and its multileveled wooden platforms, through the thigh-high picket gate, its little tin bell tinkling as a warning against the (possible) intrusion of kidnappers, pederasts, child pornographers, arriving at my car where I sit, gripping the steering wheel and staring at my hands, a plastic grin of gratitude plastered to my face, as though I myself had been eating glue and the silly grin had somehow gotten itself stuck there.

Which is why Isabelle drives Franny into day care the following day, and it's just as well. Franny is more disciplined around Isabelle, it's true. Isabelle has only to say, "Franny: One! ... Two! ..." (she doesn't even have to say "Three!") and Franny snaps to, instantly, a little soldier.



It's their innocence, I realize, that depresses me most, their small and happy ignorance of their own abysmal fragility.

It breaks my heart to see it, this numbers-induced obedience with its terror arrived at as if by mathematical formulae, when even Isabelle admits she has no idea what she is threatening to do if she ever reaches *three* and Franny has never even thought to inquire into the consequences of arriving there.

And yet, for some reason, *three* is terrifying and black.

(I would imagine it has something to do with Isabelle's Catholic upbringing, with dark-cowled nuns and a punitive misuse of the Holy Trinity, had I not seen it work cross-culturally, on many different children and always with a similar result.)

According to Isabelle, carrying Franny in is my first mistake. No, not even my first, probably my twenty-first by that hour.

"You have to walk her in beside you, Charles." Which is what she did this morning.

"And then because she's already on her feet, transferring her from my skirt into Suncetha's wasn't such a problem."

Isabelle lifts the lid off the wok and a bouquet of steam blooms, rising from inside it. Bending at the waist, she peers beneath the pot, adjusting the burner's blue flame.

"I simply said, 'Now, Francesca, Mommy is very busy today and she can't stay and have a fight with you, okay?'"

(By referring to herself in the third person and by addressing Franny by her legal name, Isabelle had hoped to impress upon our small daughter the full weight of her remarks, as though she were reading from, or even issuing, a legal decree.)

"When Mommy drops you off, Francesca, she needs you to help her by simply saying goodbye—okay?—and without a fuss."

(Here, an explicit request is made, expectations are openly addressed. No longer its unwilling object, the child is made a partner to the bargain, called in for her assistance, as though she were a consultant, a specialist, say, in childhood separation-anxiety disorders, which, in many ways, I suppose, she actually is.)

"Mommy has to get to work early and so you and she

have to have a quick goodbye, okay?"

"Kay, Mommy," Franny is reported to have said, and pleasantly enough, sucking on her thumb in the car seat in back, clutching her little diary against the side of her chest with her elbow, holding on to her ear with the other hand, the black stems of her glasses raised slightly and tilted, the frames falling crookedly across her face.

Isabelle tosses a quarter cup of curry into the wok and our kitchen fills with its muscular yellow pungency.

Her hair, cut short now, is as spiky as a military cadet's, and she is trim again. Her abdomen flat beneath the fabric of her flannel dress, she slides the head of the spatula beneath the rice like a shovel into sand and turns it.

"We exchanged a calm and, I might add, highly rational kiss, Charles." With Franny neither hugging nor clinging nor pleading. "In fact, she'd forgotten all about me before I'd even left."

Isabelle smacks the neck of the spatula against the metal rim of the wok, dislodging an aggregate of rice.

"At that moment, I had no more importance to her than the threshold she had to cross to get into the room."

Listening to Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* in my office, following along with the score, I can think of little besides the glue-eaters I myself have known, glue-eaters from my own childhood.

It's only now that I realize how unhappy these children must have been.

Teddy Ollinger, whose mother stabbed herself eleven times in the kitchen with a kitchen knife when we were in the fifth grade, was a glue-eater. Also Cherise Skaggs who (or so rumor had it) had sex with her brother Kim in the family attic, three doors down from our house, more or less around the same time.

Teddy used to nibble the plastic stick inserted through the paste jar's circular lid, while Cherise dribbled squiggly white lines of the viscous liquid up and down the arc of her extended tongue, which she'd then retract and undulate, smacking it against the roof of her mouth, her eyes moist with pleasure at the other children's gagging yucks and oohs.

"Do you know what that's made of?" we cried, as it turned out, quite uselessly.

"Horse bones!" we cried.

"You're eating horse bones, Cherise! Or don't you know that?"

But either she didn't know or, knowing, didn't care. She was too hungry, I see now: more for the attention than for the glue.

The music fills my office, the contralto swelling in brightening darkening colors—*von keinem Sturm erschreckt, von Gottes Hand bedeckt, sie ruh'n, sie ruh'n wie in der Mutter Haus, wie in der Mutter Haus*—its sadness discernible even through the tinny speakers I keep upon my desk.

Kindertotenlieder. Songs of Dead Children.

Mahler began the cycle shortly before the birth of his second daughter. A pregnant Alma, fearing superstitiously for the lives of her children, begged him to abandon the work. Swept up in its creation, Mahler refused to consider her irrational fears, and in 1907, three years after the piece's completion, when their younger daughter Maria died of scarlet fever and diphtheria at the age of only four-and-a-half, Alma couldn't help blaming him, despite his obvious devastation.

The music is somber, stirring, eloquent, although the lyric (by the poet Rückert) is slightly overripe in places, a little sentimental or precious, seemingly suggesting that mourning a death can be a beautiful, an ennobling, thing made even more beautiful or noble when the object of one's grief is an innocent child.

In death, it's true, children are, at least, finally quiet.

They don't jump with their shoes on the sofas, bullying one another and prattling their nonsensical chatter, getting everything they touch (including the insides of their own mouths) sticky as they devour their small portions of adhesive substances, although I'm certain that's not what Mahler or Rückert had in mind.

"Enough, Charles! You're terrifying Franny!" Isabelle shrills, dishing out the curried rice from a large ceramic bowl that she holds, by one arm, against her hip.

"No he's not, Mommy. I mean, he is, he is, but just a little ... just a little bit."

Franny drags a greasy fish stick through the rainpuddle of ketchup she's daubed onto her plate. She's outgrown her highchair and refuses to use a booster, and must stand up on the chair to reach, balancing with one hand against the tabletop as she manipulates her food with the other, her diary, that inexplicable source of comfort, lying unopened beside her on the table.

Generally, I can't stomach ketchup. The smell and even the sight of it make me queasy, as do the other major American condiments, mustard and mayonnaise. I have no idea from where this sense of delicacy derives, but it seems to have something to do with the viscosity of these foods, and tonight, it's even worse. The ketchup, gathered in its typical half-dry-half-moist residue along the rings of the bottle's corkscrew neck, reminds me of glue and of glue-eating and I find I can't help thinking of Cherise Skaggs in various positions in her family's attic with her brother Kim, a notorious bully who terrorized our neighborhood, who once killed a cat with his bare hands before burying it at the side of their house and who forced me once, on my hands and knees, to eat grass from my own lawn during a late-afternoon kickball game, the members of both teams looking on from all sides as the setting sun drained its light from the sky.

"He killed it?" Franny's eyes are even more enormous than they normally are simply magnified by her thick lenses.

"He said it'd been hit by a car, Franny. It was shivering and scraggly."

"He probably thought he was putting it out of its misery," Isabelle says.

"But was he, Daddy? Was he putting it out of its misery?"

"I don't think so, Franny."

"Charles..."

"That wasn't very nice of him, was it, Daddy?"

"No, Franny, it wasn't."

"He could have taken it to the doctor's."

"He could have," I agree.

"But some children have unhappy homes, Franny," Isabelle explains, "and so they do bad things."

"But was he bad, Daddy? He was bad, wasn't he?" Franny says, looking in her pink overalls and her boxy rectangular frames, like a miniature Shostakovich visiting a workers' agricultural collective in the Ukraine.

"Very bad, Franny."

Isabelle scolds us both: "I don't think Franny needs to be hearing this, Charles."

"It's okay, Mommy, I'm old enough. What else did he do, Daddy?"

"Well, Franny, for one thing, the whole Skaggs family claimed they could ride their bicycles on our driveway because our driveway wasn't concrete like the other driveways on our street."

"It wasn't, Daddy?"

"No, it was paved, you see, and covered in tar, *like* the street, and so they said it *was* the street and that they could ride their bicycles on it anytime they wished."

"But could they?" she asks.

"No, of course not! It was still private property!" I say, and the oddly emotional note, trembling in my voice, surprises even me.

"Oh, for God's sake, Charles. How long are you going to grieve over this?" Isabelle asks with a degree of (I suppose) justifiable exasperation.

The Skaggs house was only three doors down from ours, and so my sisters and I were forced to carpool into school with them. Both Juanita and Elwin had children from previous marriages, Cherise being, I believe, their only child in common. (So perhaps it was only half-incest, if incest at all, when she and Kim had sex in the attic. If indeed they did. I have no idea, actually. I merely heard these rumors then and repeat them now, unverified, although, I have to say, it wouldn't surprise me because the entire family was strange.) For example, the children were allowed to drink sodas for breakfast and this seemed as exotic to me as Elwin's silver flat-top and the red bow ties he customarily wore.

It was also quite strange meeting Kim in his own house after having been terrorized by him in the street. In front of



his parents, he was an entirely different person. It was as though the scorched earth policy he conducted outside the house belonged to an entirely different life, and every morning, we seemed to suffer from a form of collective amnesia, all of us forgetting who Kim really was and what he had done to us, so that we could, instead, exchange pleasant good mornings with his stepmother Juanita, who, to my profound confusion, and despite her jet-black bouffant with its Spanish side curls, appeared not to have a single ounce of Hispanic blood in her veins.

Every morning, she fried their toast and bacon, and the children tipped

from their green bottles of Coca-Cola for the last energizing sips of the day. It was all I could do to breathe in their kitchen with Kim slouched over his breakfast, his greasy hair parted on one side, his heavy black horn rims sliding down the bridge of his nose, his cheeks and chin aggravated by the red pustules of his acne. Lingered over his food like a strange animal that is savage, but only when encountered in the bush, never in its own lair, he taunted me silently, smirking as though at a joke only he and I understood.

"You know, Charles," Isabelle says flatly, "the only reason people find children's cruelty so disturbing is that, unlike adults, children are cruel without having an ideology."

"What's an ideology?" Franny says.

Of course, I know perfectly well what Isabelle means. I've heard her often enough on this subject. Roughly paraphrased, her argument precedes along these lines: In submission to various ideologies, adults build gas chambers in Europe and drop bombs on civilian Japan and slaughter millions in Cambodia and rape scores of women in Bosnia and starve them to death in Ethiopia, all the while effecting coups against popularly elected governments in Chile and El Salvador, destroying the natural resources of the rain forests, and wiping out species at a rate of one a day, so that anybody who manages to survive this industrialized reign of terror and greed will have only a fragment of a tattered planet left to live on, and you're upset because *for no reason at all!* the neighborhood bully rode his bicycle on your driveway without asking your family's permission?

"Could *somebody* please move that disgusting bottle of ketchup off the table!" I say, but no one listens to me and I have to pick it up myself with my napkin, holding my breath and moving it away.

"Well, was anybody ever mean to you, Mommy?" Franny asks, sucking her thumb.

"To me?" Isabelle says, as though startled by the idea.

"When you were my age"—Franny removes her thumb from her mouth—"was anybody ever mean to you?"

"No, no ... well..." Isabelle's face darkens. "I mean, I

don't ... think so..." she says, and then she sighs and her chest deflates and her shoulders drop and for a moment she simply stares at the grain of wood in the table, rubbing it absently with her thumb.

"Well. Once, I guess ... there *was* this girl named Janie McCoy. This was in the sixth grade and she was new to our school and we became friends very quickly, Franny, much too quickly, as a matter of fact. We spent almost every afternoon together at first."

"Doing what, Mommy?"

"Doing what? Well, you know, just silly things."

"Like what, Mommy?"

"Like what? Well. For instance: once, I remember, we ate ice cream in the shower."

"In the shower!"

"Was it on?"

"No, of course not, Charles."

"And you weren't undressed or anything?"

"Of course not!"

"And then what happened?" Franny says.

"And then what happened, Franny? And then, well, I guess, the groovy-dooey kids asked Janie to be their friend and they told her she couldn't be their friend unless she stopped being mine."

"Well, no wonder if you used words like *groovy-dooey*," I say.

"Oh, for God's sake, Charles, just shut up!" Isabelle says, looking immediately and repentantly at Franny, who has brought her little hands to her mouth, shocked by the use of this forbidden phrase.

"Anyway, I mean, she wasn't even that cool, you know, but one day, she just told me she couldn't be my friend anymore." Isabelle looks helplessly at me. "Isn't that horrible?" she says.

Because Isabelle is too depressed over Janie McCoy to do it, I put Franny to bed, placing her feet-first into her crib. Immediately, she begins jumping up and down inside it, the mattress springs squeaking and wheezing and the little plastic beads inside her Playstation mirror rattling like a crazed maracaist.

"Stop it, Franny!" I say, wearied by this extravagant display of pointless enthusiasm, but my words only make her legs pump even harder. She raises her knees to her chest, the nubbed feet of her Dr. Denton's supplying all the traction she needs.

"I've asked you to stop nicely now," I say, as she turns her back on me, jumping even more frenetically, gripping the railing with one diminutive hand, allowing the other to wave free, as though she were dancing a Charleston, oblivious to my commands, so that I have no choice but to shout, "Franny. One! ... two! ..."

And to my amazement, she drops to her knees, panicking and scurrying for cover.

"Okay, okay, o-kaaay!" she says pleadingly.

It's as though a bomb had gone off near a marionette factory and all her strings have snapped.

I raise the covers quickly, before she can reverse herself, and straighten them out, folding a triangular flap over her in one enormous arc: comforter-blanket-sheet rolling over her like a giant tsunami. She scrunches up beneath them, a drowner resisting their warmth and their weight, and I can't help thinking: If numbers are so frightening to her, what possible chance does she stand against less abstract concepts? Nouns, for instance: people, places, things. These are what should properly be terrifying her, not numbers! And yet, so far, I've been incapable of inculcating any kind of self-protective fear into her. She still smiles and waves brightly at strangers, sending out her cheerful greetings indiscriminately, even to the most dangerous-looking hoodlums lurking in our neighborhood, shouting up at me, loudly enough for all to hear, "But, Daddy, why are you crossing the street? I want to say hello to my friends," whenever I turn her stroller (self-defensively) away.

("Because the Number Three is slouching against the wall of that liquor store, Franny, that's why!" I'll say the next time the situation recurs, although now that I have the perfect reply, of course it never will.)

She gathers herself into a tighter ball and rolls beneath the blankets until the corners are untucked and her legs exposed.

"I can't sleep. I'm too wiggly," she complains.

"Try," I say.

Her clunky glasses—for some reason, she'd insisted on getting the ugliest frames available—are on the nightstand next to a plastic cup of water and her diary, and she squints at me without them, holding up a tiny, insistent finger.

"One song Daddy one song one song Daddy just one song Daddy one song Daddy please!"

She's a bit of an insomniac, I'm afraid. Even as an infant, she struggled against sleep, her eyes blackening with half-moons, the wheel of her mind unable to stop itself. Waiting for her to drop off at the end of the day can be a tedious experience for everyone involved, and with Isabelle driving her in the mornings, she no longer has the luxury of sleeping late.

It never worked because Franny only forced herself to stay awake to hear the songs through to their ends, requesting one and then another of her favorites, but it was Isabelle's idea to sing her to sleep in the hope that music would somehow force her into becoming drowsy.

Isabelle is not much of a singer; nor does she come from an overly musical family, but for reasons that remain obscure to me, she chose "Goodnight, Irene" as her principal bedtime tune.

A relic from her own childhood, a treasure she wished to pass on to her daughter, the song was so familiar to her that she had never actually heard it. This is not an uncommon

experience. In fact, it wasn't until almost a year later, with the words tumbling out of her mouth like malevolent acrobats, that Isabelle realized that this creaky old lament, this quaint hillbilly yodel, the droning choruses of which she'd been crooning faithfully into our daughter's tender and unformed psyche, was nothing less than a sentimental suicide note, its themes concerned principally with madness, depression, infidelity, pedophilia, suicide, drug addiction, compulsive gambling, drunkenness, and homicide.

(I refer you to the lyric, if you don't believe me.)

Unable to sustain his jealous hatred for his child-bride Irene, the song's narrator finally confesses his love for her after either murdering her or attempting to. It isn't clear, but what *is* clear is that the narrator loves Irene, God knows he does, he will, and he always will, at least until the seas run dry: "If Irene turns her back on me, I'm gonna take morphine and die."

It was this line, I believe, that alerted Isabelle finally to the song's darker themes. She felt terrible, of course, distraught that she had somehow poisoned our daughter's weltanschauung at its root.

How could she have never heard the lyric before?

"I just didn't, Charles. Now leave me alone. Okay!"

Imagine singing a song like that every night of her life to a ten-month-old baby!

"Shut up! Just shut up, okay? I feel bad enough as it is!"

Worse: by this time, Franny had grown attached to the melody and refused to hear anything else before falling asleep.

So undaunted (although guiltily) desperate for a solution and with no other choice, Isabelle revised the lyric, turning its heart-embittered stanzas into a nice little ditty about magical space travel:

*Last Saturday night, I met Franny,
a girl most honest and true,
I said I'd take her on a trip.
We're gonna travel to the moon.*

*Franny and I went to the moon,
the night was wondrous and bright.
We met a lady living there
who was filled with wonder and light.*

*The lady was a magic queen.
She sprinkled us with star dust.
She said to rest our weary eyes,
To sleep and to give her our trust.*

*Goodnight, Franny-y-y.
Goodnight, Franny.
Goodnight, Franny; goodnight, Franny.
I'll see you in my dreams.*



It's this song that I sing to Franny tonight.

We sing it together, actually; she in a light, quavering line; I, deeper and almost in a whisper, waiting for her to drop out of our duo, but of course, she never does. At the end of it, she's still awake, staring at the ceiling like a traveling salesman in a cheap motel fretting about the day's paltry sales.

I bend down to give her a kiss, pulling back the tangled mesh of her black hair.

Her breath reeks of the stale scent of sucked thumb. Mobiles dangle above her, turning in their gyres. Her face is serious

and concerned.

"Daddy," she says, squinting up at me.

"What is it now, Franny?" I say.

"There's just one thing I don't understand."

It's evident she's given the matter a great deal of thought.

"If you don't sing them to your children," she says, "then what are songs *for*?"

"What are songs for?" I say.

"Yeah, if you don't sing them to your children."

I admit I'm unprepared for the question and I ramble on unconvincingly, or so it seems to me, about beauty, self-expression, commemoration, celebration, and the blues.

I recall that Teddy Ollinger sang "One Tin Soldier" once in front of our entire sixth-grade class. I can't now recall the occasion, a talent show or a music report of some kind. It may even have been earlier, in the fourth or fifth grade.

Teddy wore two bright pink snowballs of rouge on his cheeks and a tall, furry Nutcracker-style hat with three yellow circles running up it vertically. The yellow circles and the pink snowballs, a motif, were exactly the same size. (Did he say that his sisters had helped him with the costume or am I now only imagining it?)

He had memorized the song, but not securely, and he had to stare at a fixed point in the back of the room, near where the ceiling joined the wall, concentrating furiously as though the words were written there, while droning them out in a kind of hypnotized trance. He wore colorful suspenders, three inches wide, in style at the time, and his performance, I remember thinking even then, was atrocious, absolute kitsch.

(What I had missed, I realize now, was the overall sadness of the thing.)

Still, his performance went over fairly well—better in fact than anything I'd ever presented to the class, my (I'm certain) tedious reports on the lives of Schubert and Brahms—the class responding to Teddy's comatose, dirge-like singing style with a round of sturdy applause, although this may have been after his mother stabbed herself with a kitchen knife, so that I'm not certain it wasn't out of sympathy. □

Who is Hurting the Children?

The Political Psychology of Pedophilia in American Society

Michael J. Bader

As a psychotherapist who has treated dozens of victims of child sexual abuse, I understand how traumatic it is when an adult molests a child. The child usually feels invaded, exploited, confused, and frightened, and the psychological damage can be even greater if, during the abuse, the child is even the slightest bit aroused. When someone who is supposed to protect you instead hurts you, or hurts you in the guise of loving you, your very sense of reality can become compromised. Victims of sexual abuse often blame themselves for their own victimization, and even come to feel that love, itself, is dangerous. The psychoanalyst Leonard Shengold has described traumas like this as “soul murders.”

And, yet, as a psychotherapist I find myself disturbed by what seems to me to be our society’s fixation on pedophilia, not because such abuse doesn’t deserve attention, but because the intensity of this attention dwarfs that paid to nearly every other type of damage done to children today, damage that is often much greater than that incurred by at least some children who have been molested. Nothing, however, stirs up more passionate outrage than sexual abuse. Witness the media coverage of the current scandals in the Catholic Church. When defrocked priest John Geoghan of Boston was sentenced to ten years hard labor for one incident of fondling a ten-year-old boy at a public swimming pool, the punishment was generally viewed as perfectly fitting the crime (Geoghan is alleged to have committed far more heinous acts with many other children, but at the time of sentencing, these had not been proven). Death itself is often considered the only appropriate punishment for child molesters, who are viewed as so despicable that they draw the violent contempt of even the most sociopathic criminals while in prison.

When it comes to the sexual abuse of children, something seems out of balance in our collective scales of crime and punishment. The California judge who heard the case of accused

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child molester Jerome Wilhoit told his courtroom during Wilhoit’s arraignment that if someone had molested his own daughter, his attitude would be, “you touch her, you die.” The trial was on the front page. The fact that Wilhoit was not only acquitted on all charges but later judged to be “factually innocent” didn’t quite make it to page one. We all remember the infamous case from the 1980s involving the McMartin Pre-School, a case lasting six years, costing the State of California fifteen million dollars, and in which over 400 children were interviewed by so-called “experts.” The defendants were acquitted on all counts. And who is not aware of the danger posed by satanic cults that kidnap and use children for dark sexual purposes? No one, except perhaps for the FBI who has yet to find hard evidence of the existence of even one of them.

I realize that for every instance of a false accusation based on false memory, there are dozens of cases of unreported abuse, and that the advent of child abuse reporting laws in the 1970s and 1980s were an important victory for child protection advocates and for feminists seeking to bring domestic violence of all kinds out of the patriarchal closet in which it had always been hidden. Nevertheless, I think that the pendulum has swung too far the other way. Obviously, child molesters need to be apprehended and punished—and treated whenever possible—in order to protect their current and future victims. But our collective outrage at sexual abuse so dwarfs our recognition of other forms of childhood trauma that such outrage begins to look like more than a simple concern for the real victims of the pedophile.

For example, if you ask most psychotherapists to describe the most common and devastating traumas they

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see in the lives of the children they treat or in the childhoods of their adult patients, sexual molestation would not usually be at the top of their lists. In statistics released by the Department of Health and Human Services in 2002, over 60 percent of the officially reported cases of maltreatment of children involved neglect, while barely 10 percent involved sexual abuse. In my own practice, I see the damage done by neglect and other forms of emotional deprivation much more than I do the trauma of sexual abuse.

"Neglect" is a simple label for a complicated situation. It doesn't only refer to the absence of a parent but to the presence of a disturbed attachment as well. At the least, children require consistency and empathy. By virtue of either psychological or social pathology, many parents can't provide a secure and protective connection to their children, systematically ignore their children's emotional cues, resort to violence or shaming as forms of discipline, or use their children to mirror and remedy their own attachment needs. This results in a situation every bit as neglectful of the child's needs as one in which the parents are simply absent. Such children grow up with terribly low self-esteem, lack the ability to comfort themselves, and feel guilty and responsible for their own suffering. They have a hard time feeling real empathy for others, including their own children, and can't create and sustain a loving relationship. They feel disconnected and undeserving of the good things in life, develop depressions and severe anxiety disorders, and may often turn to drugs or violence in order to numb these feelings. These handicaps usually last a lifetime and are inevitably passed on to the next generation. The human devastation created by these sorts of dysfunctional families is profound.

Further, social and economic hardship in a culture that only celebrates financial success surely worsens the harm done to children by unhealthy attachments. While emotional neglect and abuse definitely span all social classes, the strains of economic insecurity, poverty, and racism, along with the absence of social support and services—including those aimed directly at children—for poor and working families inevitably leads children unprotected and psychologically vulnerable. Twenty-seven million children—37 percent of all children in America today—are categorized by the Census Bureau as "near-poor" or poor, defined here as a family of three earning \$27,000/year or less. Nine million children are without any health insurance. Many of these children are being psychologically damaged each and every day by an environment that cannot see them, cannot hear them, cannot take care of them, and isn't interested in trying.

I'm not necessarily equating the psychological harm of poverty and illness to that of sexual abuse, but I am pointing out that when pathological caretaking meets a social environment filled with hardship and devoid of support, the psychological damage that befalls such children is accentuated.

*The children
imperiled by
neglect don't
appear on milk
cartons.*

And, yet, the children imperiled by neglect, indifference, and poverty don't appear on milk cartons, they aren't plastered on the front pages of our newspapers, or appear as the lead story at CNN. Typically, no one goes to jail for the crime of "narcissistically using your child as an extension of yourself," or "demeaning your children because you feel demeaned," or "being so drunk and depressed that your children had to raise themselves."

Why does the act of sexually molesting a child seem to command our collective outrage and desire for vengeance while acts of ignoring, humiliating, or starving that same child do not? Why is the sexual innocence of children passionately defended while their innocent victimization by abusive or neglectful families and an insensitive social order evokes only an arms-length sympathy?

Some social critics like James Kincaid have suggested that we romanticize the sexual innocence of childhood in order to deny our awareness of the nuances of erotic desire that do exist between adults and children. Since the time of

Freud, the sexuality of children has been hotly debated. Most experts—and many parents—would agree that children are sexual beings, that they have the capacity for sexual pleasure, even if they don't always understand how to regulate it. And there is equally no doubt that adults sometimes have sexual feelings for children. Any parent who has watched a son or daughter come of age is aware of how powerful this pull can be and to what lengths both parties go to avoid this embarrassing tension. Certainly there can be no doubt about the sexual energy inherent in adolescence, since it is constantly exploited by advertisers who use images of nubile girls and boys to sell everything from jeans to Pepsi.

Since our consciences are especially intolerant of incestuous forms of sexuality, the scene is set for us to externalize the conflict and direct our punitive judgments at the pedophile rather than our own impulses. We defensively sanitize and desexualize ourselves and our children in order to reassure ourselves and others that we are free of any desires even remotely connected to childhood sexuality.

Nevertheless, I don't think that this theory of guilt and projection adequately explains the vituperative intensity of our society's hatred of the pedophile. Instead, I think that our defense of childhood virtue and innocence is so extreme because it bundles with it all of the ways that we, ourselves, feel—but cannot acknowledge feeling—afraid, rejected, unfairly taken advantage of, betrayed, subordinated to the self-interests of others, and helpless. At the deepest level of our psyches, we cannot compassionately face our own innocent victimization and, instead, project it onto the picture we create of the sexually virtuous and naïve child.

Both our innocence and its denial began in our childhoods and continue throughout our lives. We were innocent as children in the sense that our familial environment

impacted us more than we impacted it. In spite of the fact that children bring temperamental and genetic givens to the family, the power relationships between parents and children are unequal. Parents have an awesome power to define what is real, what is moral, and what is possible. They help us acquire strengths but they also inflict, wittingly or unwittingly, psychological injuries.

And yet, as children, we take responsibility for what befalls us. If our parents are volatile, we come to feel like we're responsible for managing their moods. If we're rejected, we comply and feel undeserving. If we're abandoned, we come to believe that we're difficult to love. If our parents are weak and needy, we automatically come to feel responsible for them and guilty about our own legitimate interests. We resist acknowledging our own innocence. It is said that people would, by and large, prefer to be "sinners in heaven than saints in hell." For this reason, abused children often report that they provoked their parents' violence and adults often qualify accounts of their own early beatings with the caveat that they were "difficult" children.

Thus, even as children we can't let ourselves feel innocent because then our caregivers would have to be guilty, and that recognition is intolerable. It would mean that we are not protected, that the attachment necessary to our psychological survival is absent or even dangerous, and that the beings upon whom we helplessly depend might, at times, mean to harm us. It is not even necessary that these perceptions be objectively true—children often think ego-centrally and assume that their parents' behavior is always provoked by or in response to them—because it is the subjective experience of parental failures and pathology that is frightening and leads to self-blaming.

Children, therefore, are highly motivated to deny their own innocence in order to retain some semblance of parental virtue, protection, and love, and they continue to exhibit this tendency as adults. In fact, in my clinical experience, even those patients who appear to blame their parents for everything under the sun feel secretly and irrationally guilty, a feeling that they then try to drown out by their externalizations and repetitive demands that the world indemnify them for their injuries. These patients are desperately trying to fight against their self-blaming, regain the moral high road, and salvage a drop of virtue by pointing the finger outward rather than inward.

In adult life, we continue our self-blaming and denial of innocence in many ways. Though we may become "independent," we never lose our need to feel protection and love. We look to our society to provide that loving connection, and succeed in finding it mainly in our circles of families and friends. In relation to the larger culture, however, we suffer from the American meritocratic assumption that everyone is responsible for his or her own social position and that, therefore, those who feel discontented, marginalized, devalued, or thwarted have only themselves to blame—and they do so.

And yet American society is not actually a meritocracy in which limitations on our social and economic standing reflects a personal failure any more than our suffering as children resulted from being "bad." Our society has a class structure, as well as racial and gender biases, and thus our self blame is as misplaced in public life as it was in our early familial life.

While we may not be able to view ourselves as victims deserving of protection, we have no trouble affording this status to sexually innocent children. The child molester, after all, is doing something so unnatural, so forbidden, that even the most harshly zealous advocate of personal responsibility has to admit that these particular little victims didn't deserve what they got. We can identify more easily with the sexually innocent child and feel the correspondingly appropriate protectiveness because, unlike our own victimization, there is no doubt whatsoever that sexual abuse of a child by an adult is undeserved. In other words, we develop an enchanted view of the sexual innocence of childhood in order to locate a part of ourselves in a place that is finally above reproach.

As opposed to the intimate violation of trust and betrayal inherent in the sexual victimization of a child by an adult, the corrosive effects of rejection and neglect, as well as the traumas of social deprivation, seem to be more general and abstract. As a result, it is easier to distance ourselves and mute our awareness of the equally horrible suffering and truncation of psychological growth attendant on these non-sexual violations. Instead, we can deny and minimize it by thinking such things as "well, I had it tough, too, but managed to survive," or by cynically dismissing problems of attachment as the type of issues about which 90 percent of New Yorkers talk with their psychoanalysts.

Ideals about "personal responsibility" are often promoted nowadays as antidotes to the ethos of the Sixties and Seventies in which people allegedly looked for handouts, expected government to take care of them, blamed the dominant culture for every injury, slight, or disadvantage that befell them, and, if they could afford it, leapt onto the couches of their therapists blaming Mommy and Daddy for everything. However, my experience as a psychologist teaches me that people usually shift into a blaming and complaining mode when they're trying to feel less guilty, less responsible, and less self-blaming. People complain about and attack institutions that discriminated against them, not in order to absolve themselves of personal responsibility, but to counteract the corrosive effects of self blame. Most people have such an ingrained sense that they are responsible for their own suffering, such skepticism about their own legitimate claims of innocence and victimization, that blaming "the system" and demanding restitution of some kind is a progressive and liberatory step—even if sometimes hyperbolic—toward a more balanced view of the causes of their condition. Unfortunately, the ideology of self-blame and meritocracy still haunts us.

The hyperbolic responses that we see toward sex with children are important to understand and modulate in order

to develop a clearer and more socially-critical picture of the damage done to children today. While these exaggerated responses are not universal but only a tendency (after all, if we all suffer from self-blaming and if the demonization of the pedophile represents, in part, a displacement of our own disavowed innocence, then why doesn't everyone join in vengeful drum-beating around this issue?), they are crucial for the Left to confront because inflammatory rhetoric about sexual predators is increasingly part of a more general attack on sexuality by the religious Right.

Judith Levine's recent book *Harmful to Minors: The Perils of Protecting Children From Sex*, brilliantly analyzes this movement in all of its incarnations: Attacks on sex education of all kinds, efforts to censor child pornography by criminalizing art that has sexual overtones, witch hunts of teachers who touch their children, bans on abortion and access to contraception, a kind of puritanical surveillance of the Internet leading to the effort to ban even virtual computer-constructed sexual images of children, and McCarthyite attacks on researchers who are attempting to study childhood sexual abuse from any point of view other than one that a priori demonizes it. Levine, herself, was demonized by the Right, as was her publisher, the University of Minnesota Press, before the book had even hit the stands. Robert Knight, director of Concerned Women for America's Culture and Family Institute in Washington, D.C., condemned it as "very evil." Tim Pawlenty, majority leader of the Minnesota House of Representatives, labeled it "trash" and demanded that the press halt publication. Nationally syndicated conservative talk shows including *The Dr. Laura Schlessinger Program* and Michael Savage's *Savage Nation* railed against it, despite the admission by Dr. Laura that she only skimmed the book. The editorial board of the Lancaster New Era in Pennsylvania declared, "This is a sick book and the University of Minnesota is sick for publishing it."

The attack on Levine is only one of many attacks on writers and researchers trying to openly discuss youth and sexuality. The religious Right is creating a panic about children's sexuality and an insistence that women and children need special protection because they are "naturally" averse to sex of any kind. In the guise of protecting children, programs are advanced that attempt to re-impose a conservative puritanical morality that views sex as dangerous, and only valid in the context of a heterosexual marriage.

The propensity in the general population to panic about the vulnerability of children, and to be receptive to the Right's repressive solutions, is not a result of stupidity or even sexual intolerance. It has to do with our own collective attempt to organize and give meaning to feelings of anxiety and helplessness that result from living in a world in which we have little power, feel disconnected from others, and resigned to our fates. The threat of sexual promiscuity among our youth and

the danger of sexual predators lurking around our children's playgrounds gives us a focus for our fear and an outlet for our outrage. The Right capitalizes on this wish and says that the fault lies with the sexual liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s, including the women's movement, the gay rights movement, and the sex-education movement. It promotes the myth that if we could only go back to the days when everything was safe, predictable, and under control (including women, gays, and rebellious teenagers), all would be well.

We have to counter this ideology by addressing the sources of the popular panic over the sexuality of youth. Children are being abused in this society every day, but not primarily by pedophiles. Children do deserve our protection and empathy, but adults deserve it too. Exploitation in any form is morally unacceptable and we can't privilege its sexual forms in decrying it. Pedophiles do need to be incarcerated and treated, but so do the white collar criminals who are causing far more harm to far more people, children included. Children—and particularly adolescents—are sexual beings and they need to be taught how to protect themselves and enjoy themselves. We have to stop demonizing sexual pleasure and start embracing its healthier forms and helping our kids learn how to do so as well.

On a deeper level, of course, we have to begin a conversation about the underlying anxieties that continually lead us to find scapegoats for our own pain and suffering, whether it is the pedophile, Saddam Hussein, communists, "bra-burners," or homosexuals. We have to ask ourselves: What do we hate or fear so much in ourselves and in our culture that we have to project it onto others and then demonize or attack those others? Is it our sexuality? Our need for connectedness? Is it our experience of vulnerability and shame about feeling weak and needing love? Is it our pain over feeling disconnected and exploited? Is it our longing for feelings of spiritual awe and surrender?

A progressive movement has to answer these questions in order to fight against the inevitable tendency in our society to scapegoat people and groups who deviate from the norms of the dominant culture. Such a movement has to articulate the centrality of connectedness in human psychology in order to critique its absence in our families and culture. We have to learn to talk without embarrassment about the importance of creating an ethic of caring before we can argue that neglect and indifference are evils that need to be confronted in our personal and well as our public lives. We need to counteract self-blaming and broaden the concept of innocence to include all of us—not just our children—before we can help people see that the most common forms of exploitation today are not to be found in child sexual abuse but in the social inequities, insecurities, alienation, and bureaucratic indifference that stem from the dominance of the market in our society. □



Poles, Jews, and Post-Communist Insecurities

David Ost

The difficult and fascinating debate going on in Poland recently about a 1941 massacre of Jews, and more generally about the Polish role in the destruction of Polish Jewry, fits into a more general climate of uncertainty currently racking the country. Uncertainty, of course, was supposed to be passé. The country experienced it a decade ago, after its old system collapsed, but now things were supposed to be becoming "normal." Economic growth, NATO, soon the EU: the old demons were supposed to have been tamed, and the future was supposed to look like it does elsewhere in Europe.

As it happens, however, the last few years have seen a number of things puncturing holes in this idyllic picture. First, after several years of economic growth and reduced unemployment, the past three years have seen a major slump, with unemployment jumping nearly by half in a single year (from 10.6 percent in 1998 to 15.3 percent in 1999), by 2002 reaching a post-1989 high of 18 percent. According to national surveys, every fourth family has at least one person out of work. Forty percent of all residents of small cities say they fear losing their jobs (*Polityka*, May 26, 2001). And while similar fears were prevalent a decade ago, those were always mollified by a belief that jobs lost in the public sector would lead to better ones in the private sector. Today, as private firms contract, few believe that anymore. Forty percent of all the country's skilled workers say they fear unemployment, which, if you subtract those in the big cities, where unemployment is still low, translates into perhaps two-thirds of skilled workers in the heartland. The much larger recession in the early 1990s at least made sense as the price to be paid for the collapse of Communism, and could safely be blamed on the past. Making sense of this one, however, is a lot harder for most citizens, and the political fallout is not pretty.

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For along with this economic slide, the domestic political scene has fallen apart. The governing party from 1997-2001, Solidarity Electoral Action (SEA), has disintegrated into several smaller groups, with the main rump organization failing to gain enough votes to enter parliament. Voters in 2001 made the ex-communist Democratic Left Alliance (DLA) the new dominant party, while nearly 20 percent of the vote went to parties that explicitly reject the post-1989

democratic consensus, including one, the League of Polish Families, with a prominent anti-Semitic profile.

With the DLA unable to stem the economic downturn, a new mainstream is coalescing around right wing "law and order" former Solidarity activist Lech Kaczynski, dubbed "the Polish Giuliani" for overseeing a 40 percent rise in the prison population while Minister of Justice from 1999-2001.

With his newly-formed "Law and Justice" party, Kaczynski won a crushing victory in the 2002 Warsaw mayoral election and is now the front-runner for the 2005 presidential race.

Meanwhile, the international scene doesn't promise much better for Poland's poor. Entry into NATO gave the country a certain prestige, but has not produced the boon to the ailing but still large defense industries, situated in the poorer regions, that many had hoped would follow. Nor is there now much hope connected with the EU. Tough conditions imposed by West Europe mean that Poland's scheduled accession in 2004 will only increase unemployment. And the EU's announcement that it will maintain work restrictions on East Europeans even afterwards makes the situation worse.

One bright spot in the national picture is the reemergence of the trade unions, whose love affair with the imaginary free market is finally coming to a close. The reality of a recession that cannot be blamed on Communism has begun to create among workers an awareness of their own interests. Thus, unions have recently spoken out with unusual force against proposed revisions in the labor code that would lower mandatory overtime pay and make it easier to fire employees. What employers present as measures to facilitate more hiring, workers fear as provisions to facilitate

What exactly did Polish Catholics do to Polish Jews in the small northeast town of Jedwabne in July 1941?

easier firing. If this environment of economic uncertainty has one good effect, it is that a language of class is beginning to enter the unions' repertoire.

So while the *New York Times* and the *Economist* regularly single out Poland as the beacon of light in a sea of trouble, things look a bit differently inside. This first recession caused not by Communism but by capitalism has injected an aura of insecurity. Not surprising, then, that all the themes of the day are about repression.

A Revealing Encounter with an Enemy

For those who don't, can't, or won't challenge this insecurity by getting involved in democratic civic activity like trade unions, anti-Semitism continues to be available as an alternate narrative explaining why things have gone wrong. Reactions to the story of Jedwabne stem in part from that same general sense of insecurity driving penal code revision, union growth, and demands for law-and-order. It is certainly Jedwabne, more than prisons or retail mega-markets (site of new union organization), that has been the topic of debate in the Polish press since 2000. And Jedwabne means Jews. More precisely, Poles and Jews. Or even more precisely, what exactly did Polish Catholics do to Polish Jews in the small northeast town of Jedwabne in July 1941?

The story came to light recently in Jan Gross's book *Neighbors* (Princeton University Press, 2001), published to great fanfare in 2000 in Poland, and much lesser fanfare one year later in America. Based chiefly on eyewitness accounts of both survivors and perpetrators (the latter taken from trial testimony in 1949 and 1953), Gross tells how the usual story of the slaughter of the Jews by the Nazis is wrong here in one crucial regard: it was not the Germans that did it but Poles. Ordinary Poles, he says, regular townfolk.

The reaction to these revelations conveys a rather mixed picture of contemporary Poland. On the one hand, the ability of the country to tackle one of its national taboos in a wide-ranging and ongoing national debate signals a maturity and self-confidence that has been lacking in the past. On the other hand, the debate reveals so many of the insecurities of more marginalized Polish citizens, who treat Gross's account as victimization of the downtrodden.

I first got a sense of the relationship between anti-Semitism and insecurity during a visit to Krakow in 1999. In a

building adjacent to the new hotel where I was staying, I saw a new bookstore in a basement apartment, its titles visible only through a small window hugging the sidewalk. Intrigued by the location in a residential building and the odd small-press pamphlets I saw displayed, I pressed the buzzer and was buzzed inside. Expecting a funky anarchist bookstore, I found instead a dour anti-Semitic one: two double-sided rows of books reviling Jews for alleged anti-Polish activities, corners filled with pamphlets from obscure nationalist organizations, walls covered with posters exhorting listeners to tune in to the fundamentalist "Radio Maria" radio station and to help free General Pinochet from house arrest, all watched over by three grim-faced middle-aged Poles. The anarchist look of the place was an indication of the store's social marginalization, not the life-style of its proprietors. I looked around and felt such revulsion that I quickly left, only to return ten minutes later with the conviction that I had to talk with these people and find out why they did what they did.

"You saw something interesting here?" asked the manager when he saw me re-enter. "The exact opposite actually," I replied. "I don't like these books at all." Here I stammered, but continued. "I am a Jew, and I find it unbelievable you have a bookstore like this. So tell me, because this I can't figure out, what exactly have Jews done to you? Why do you hate Jews so much?" My interlocutor began to sweat almost



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARIO ZUCCA

at once, but he didn't lose a beat in replying: "But why do Jews hate *us* so much?" Here *he* stammered, but continued. "It's not we who hate them, but they who hate us! They plot against us, tried to take our land, and then sold us to the Russians." He ran to the shelf to grab a book listing the Jewish names of dozens of Stalinist secret policemen, and put it in my face with the simple command, "Look." But then he said, surprised and even hurt, "Why do they always say we're so anti-Semitic?"

"Looking at this, isn't it obvious why?"

"But *whatever* we say, you say this," and here he had a point. He went over an old litany of complaints, the kind you don't hear verbalized much any more, about Jews pulling all the strings behind the scenes, being bankers and Bolsheviks but not nationalists. I protested that Jews were kept out of the gentry elite that used to dominate Poland, and so no wonder so many saw internationalism, whether liberal or socialist, as their only refuge. But though he didn't get the point, he also did: "So you agree, they weren't for the nation. So why do they say they hate us?"

What struck me most in this diatribe was not his rage but his panic, his fear. He said the most nasty things about Jews, but his anger flowed from a sense of having lost out and not knowing why. It was the theme of being tricked that kept reappearing in his words, and those of his mates who soon joined in. They spoke of bad things always happening to them, and to Poland, and of no one ever taking responsibility. They talked of the chaos and corruption around them, and said no one owned up to it. They talked of people losing their jobs, "and no one says why." For people like this, everything is done "behind the scenes." Just like for their grandparents in towns like Jedwabne, where indeed most of the stores were owned by Jews, right at the time when stores and a trading, monetary economy were becoming more prominent. And things happening "behind the scenes" is a very good definition of capitalism, too, at least in contrast to Soviet-type socialism, when a very identifiable Party First Secretary was there to take, or bear, all responsibility for everything.

When they started methodically listing the names of the leading national figures and telling me they were all Jews, it became clear that in their world, "Jew" does not really mean a Jew—a person of Mosaic faith or Semitic origin. It means someone who runs things behind the scenes. When they oppose Jews, they think they're only opposing people who run things behind the scenes. "So why do Jews hate us?"

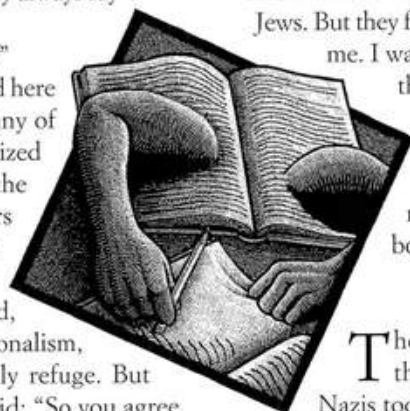
I myself, however, quickly became a good Jew. Minutes into this animated discussion with me—their first encounter ever with a "real Jew"—they treat me as their best of friends. They want to take me to lunch, invite me for coffee, have me over to their flats. Why am I OK but not the others, I asked? "You came in here and said you were a Jew. With you we know who we're dealing with!" I, in other words,

was finally someone not doing anything behind the scenes. I was right there out in the open.

I have to admit that I couldn't help liking them a bit either. These weren't skinheads or violent folks. They were lost. Downsized socialist factory workers, they didn't know how to make it in the new Poland. Like Dylan's Mr. Jones, they knew something was happening here but they didn't know what it was. Some blamed criminals. They blamed Jews. But they feared me far more than they tried to frighten me. I was, after all, one of the omnipotent. This was

their first contact with that enigmatic power.

Oddly, they seemed to feel validated by my spending the time there: a representative of what they believed to be the master race, standing in their crummy basement bookstore and taking them seriously.



Jedwabne

The basic outline of the story of Jedwabne is that on July 10, 1941, only days after the Nazis took the town from the Red Army, which had occupied it since the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, gangs of Poles—exactly how many is still unclear—herded Jedwabne's Jews into the main square, torturing and killing many en route before packing the rest into a barn which they set on fire. Only a few Germans were nearby, taking pictures.

Gross's book came out in Poland in May 2000. Except for those like my bookstore anti-Semites, initial public reaction was not to deny the atrocity, but to ask how it was possible. For a nation that still feels, justifiably, that its own suffering under the Nazis has been underplayed, this was a big deal. It contrasts favorably, for example, with the American reaction to the news of Bob Kerrey's massacre of Vietnamese, and the willingness, even eagerness, of most commentators to accept Kerrey's account that he did not know whom he was shooting, rather than his platoon comrade's account that Kerrey had the villagers shot at close range. But while the American discussion ended as suddenly as it began, the Polish discussion took about six months after the book's publication before it really began. And then it hinged on the question of responsibility.

What bothered many commentators, even liberals, was Gross's claim that Polish "society" bears responsibility. Much discussion has concerned a passage at the very end of the book, before the postscript, where Gross compares two Jedwabne monuments to the war years. One (which was replaced in 2001) blamed "Nazis" for killing the town's Jews, while the other salutes, in the name of "society," the memory of the "180 people including two priests" killed by Nazis, Soviets, and Polish Stalinists between 1939 and 1956. It is the second monument, says Gross, that raises the more troubling questions. To say that "society" honors the memory only of "180 people including two priests" who

were killed is to say that Jedwabne's Jews were not part of society. In the end, he says, Jedwabne's Jews were killed not by Nazis, Soviets, or Polish Stalinists, but by that same "society." The sentence blaming "society" for killing Jedwabne's Jews has been a lightning rod ever since.

The first one to call attention to this was in fact one of Poland's most liberal journalists, Jacek Zakowski, who has himself been accused countless times by the right of insulting the Polish nation. "Can society kill?" asks Zakowski (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, November 18, 2000). Society provides a context, he says, but for a concrete crime it is only concrete people who bear responsibility. In a subsequent interview (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, November 25), Gross said he wishes he put the word "society" in quotes. (Indeed, he omitted the word entirely in the English-language version, which reads "it was their neighbors" who killed Jedwabne's Jews.) His point, however, is clearer without them. Because what he is arguing is that Poland's operative notion of society—the one that functions *without quotes* in Polish consciousness—is one that does not include Jews. Jews lived on Polish land but were not part of Polish society. (He might have noted that many Jews liked it that way, but that's a different point.) He notes that in the vast Polish historiography of the war years, very little attention is given *in those publications* to the murder of the Jews. (In an unintentionally comic confirmation of this point, when one commentator, echoing Gross, criticized the historian Tomasz Strzembosz for writing an entire book on the war in the Jedwabne region and hardly mentioning the Jews, Strzembosz's son responded indignantly that someone must have ripped out pages 93–94 [*Gazeta Wyborcza*, June 5, 2001].) The two monuments illustrate the ways that the murder of the Jews and the repression of Poles, though carried out on the same soil and perpetrated chiefly by the same culprit, are treated as two distinct phenomena, and a key point of Gross's whole book was to show, through the example of Jedwabne, that this is decidedly not the case.

Gross levels a host of charges against Polish historiography. He blames historians for not previously writing about Jedwabne, for treating the topic of Polish collaboration with the Nazis as taboo, for treating the history of Polish Jews as a separate topic from the history of Poland. Take survivors' accounts of wartime Polish-Jewish relations literally, he admonishes them, and follow up the damning accusations. He then indicts society for the anti-Semitism that made Jedwabne possible. He suggests that Communism succeeded perhaps not because it was imposed from without (such as by Stalinist Jews, to cite the lingering view held by many more than my bookstore anti-Semites), but because Poland during the war had morally rotted from within, due

to collaboration with Nazis against Jews on a far wider scale than previously imagined. Altogether, Gross's indictment of Polish society and historiography is a sweeping one.

Gross's prose sometimes seems to get carried away. In one much-quoted line, with a sound-bite quality that got it onto the dust jacket and into many reviews, Gross writes, a bit too glibly, that "the centerpiece of the story" is that "one day, in July 1941, half of the population of a small East European town murdered the other half." But while Gross does not mean this literally, as if each Pole in town

killed one Jew and everyone is implicated personally as a murderer, he clearly does not mind the provocative prose. Indeed, as the response to the book makes clear, Gross *had* to be provocative, *had* to be polemical, *had* to pen sometimes an all too glib prose. Because what Gross tried to do, and fully succeeded at doing, was provoke a controversy, elicit discussions. He took a

page from Daniel Goldhagen, whose book became an international sensation, and caused intense soul-searching among Germans, not because he showed that regular German folks had willingly killed Jews—Christopher Browning showed that a couple of years earlier in *Ordinary Men*—but because he argued this passionately, polemically, personally, and repeatedly. Gross, like Goldhagen, must occasionally step out of the story and toss the indictment in the reader's face, precisely in order to get the attention of the broader public. Gross wrote as he did because he wanted to force a wide-ranging Polish discussion, not just among historians but particularly among "society," on the whole question of Polish-Jewish relations and the lived experiences of the holocaust.

That he succeeded in this is evident from the wide-ranging discussion in the Polish media. For about a year after Zakowski's polemic, scarcely a day went by without some new angle taken up. What really happened in Jedwabne? What about the claims of a heavier German presence in Jedwabne (which Gross cites but rejects), which would suggest that Poles were coerced into participation rather than the chief organizers? Is Gross right in his sweeping accusations? But what then about the criticisms of Gross? Are they merely "points" in a historical debate, or are they themselves, with their emphasis on "context" (the role of the Germans, or alleged Jewish sympathy for the Soviets), indicative of the biases and taboos to which Gross preemptively calls attention? To which critics respond, why do Gross's questions frame the entire debate? To which *their* critics respond, why was there no debate like this before Gross? A phenomenal cacophony of voices, exploring the past and present in the kind of sustained discussion unimaginable in multicultural, forward-looking America.

*Gross wrote as he did
because he wanted to
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Polish discussion.*

On Responsibility

In his successful attempt to be provocative, Gross, I think, goes both too far and not far enough, and he can't help falling into a familiar trap. That his broadside against historiography gets professional historians upset is as it should be. How else to promote a paradigm shift than with a bold frontal assault? But the assault on Polish society is, I think, too broad-brushed. Changing public opinion requires engaging it with sensitivity. For many Poles today, the past seems to be all they've got. These *are* tough times. If the liberal Zakowski could be so sensitive to the charges against "Polish society," imagine the reaction of others. For some, they've heard about Polish anti-Semitism many times before, have personally acknowledged and regretted it many times before, and don't know what more they're to do. As one friend told me, "Gross may be right that Polish Jewish history is written differently than Polish history, but can't he at least mention that our bookstores are filled with Judaica sections?" Gross's point, of course, concerns something else, but if the reality is that your audience responds defensively to charges of anti-Semitism, you've got to speak to that defensiveness in order to get beyond it. If the reality is that your audience has a visceral need to defend its past—because foreign domination made a mythical past the only thing to hold onto to keep a national spirit alive—you've got to speak to that too to get beyond it.

A way out, I think, is to think in terms of complicity rather than responsibility. Complicity calls attention to context and limitations, and thus places responsibility in a fuller and truer context. The promise of this theme is that it would have allowed Gross to consider himself as well. If it sometimes seems that only those of ill will can be reluctant to embrace Gross's account, it is useful to look at Gross himself. For Gross, who was born in Poland, has been one of the premier historians of wartime Poland for over two decades, yet only recently began writing about Jews. As he told David Remnick of the *New Yorker* (reprinted in New School University's *TCDS Bulletin*, May 2001), he too was a faithful follower of the dominant historiographical paradigm, writing about the Nazi occupation of Poland, the Soviet occupation of Poland, and only peripherally about what happened to Poland's Jews. Indeed, much of the tone of his book, I think, is a result of Gross's own sense of guilt for having ignored all the evidence *himself*. Gross says that he didn't write about Jedwabne earlier because it took him four years to understand what eyewitness Shmuel Wasersztajn had written. *But why?* Wasersztajn's short statement about the massacre, with which Gross opens the book, is quite clear. That Gross could not fully comprehend it means only that he was predisposed not to accept it. And if it was so difficult for this professional Polish Jewish historian to accept it, how much harder it must be for others. Gross could have won more supporters for his call for a radical rethinking of the past if he made clearer his own complicity in the problem.

Unfortunately, much of the criticisms of Gross dwells on the notion of context, such as the issue of alleged Jewish collaboration with the Soviets (without, however, ever putting *this* into context). This is like saying that Jewish bankers and shopkeepers provide a context to understanding anti-Dreyfusard French anti-Semitism, or that the use of black strikebreakers provide a context for understanding American working class racism. It's not wrong. Such things do provide a certain context. What is wrong, however, is this compulsive need to bring up context when discussing one's crimes. Because this can serve no other purpose than to minimize those crimes, and hoist blame elsewhere. As critics of such "contextualization" pointed out, it was not collaborators who were killed in Jedwabne, but Jews. Moreover, the widespread public knowledge that Jews are charged with collaboration with the Soviets contrasts diametrically with the lack of public awareness on the extent of Polish collaboration with the Nazis. Why not, then, take this moment to explore *this* theme rather than repeat tired charges of Jewish collaboration with the Soviets? It is the reluctance of critics to do this, and their eagerness to rehearse the old charges, that leads critics of the critics to see much of the historical discussion as a continuing enactment not just of anti-Semitism but of lyrical Polish nationalism. All of which politicizes the discussion even more. The result of all this is that people who like the book often come to see Poles as terrible anti-Semites, and people who don't want to say Poles are terrible anti-Semites say they don't like Gross.

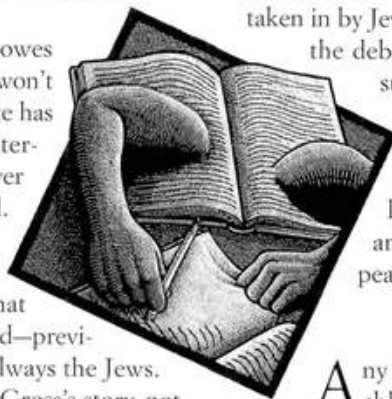
Unfortunately, "context" has been brought up even by the head of Poland's Catholic Church. "That Poles also took part in the Stalinist repression does not change the fact that the leading role was played by those of Jewish origin," asserts Primate Jozef Glemp, known for his right-wing nationalist predilections. Jews, he continues, "are guilty for their actions against Poles, especially for collaborating with the Bolsheviks [and] aiding in the exile of Poles to Siberia and packing them off to prison" (*Wprost*, May 27, 2001). That the head of the Church can say this without reprimand shows the scale of the problem. Protestations that Jews took part in Stalinist repressions not as Jews but as Stalinists, or that Soviet leaders fearing nationalism always tried to make use of minorities for the dirty work, or that previous anti-Semitism helped make many Jews justifiably suspicious of Polish nationalism, or that, as Gross notes, the fact that Stalinism was consolidated in Poland only after Poland's Jews were killed suggests that it had to have a social base different from Jews—all this does nothing to make these charges go away. That they don't go away, however, means they must somehow be addressed.

Stanislaw Krajewski, the chief spokesman of Polish Jewry for the past decade, is one of the few to have addressed the issue repeatedly. (Another is the Hungarian Istvan Szabo, in his recent film *Sunshine*.) As the grandson of one of the founders of the Polish Communist Party, murdered by Stalin in the purges of the 1930s, Krajewski

knows his subject well. So while he acknowledges that Communists were precisely those who rejected Jewishness, he's also aware that Jewishness itself made one wary of Polish nationalism. As he points out, though, in masterly understatement, "to say this constitutes some Jewish guilt at the same level as the murder of practically every Jew in Jedwabne is, I think, very much out of line" (*Zycie*, June 5, 2001).

If even Gross's telling of Jedwabne owes much to other factors in Polish society, it won't be surprising to hear that the entire debate has tended to be conducted, and often interpreted, in terms having nothing whatsoever to do with Jews or Jedwabne at all. Nationalist newspapers treat every bit of evidence suggesting Gross's story is not 100 percent air-tight as further proof that Poles are unjustly persecuted by the world—previously the Russians, now the West, and always the Jews. Liberals thus feel compelled to maintain Gross's story, not because they think it's perfect but because they see how demonstrations of its imperfection are politically used. And so it's no accident that those papers that raise questions about Jedwabne are those that believe Poland should impose tough conditions on entry into the EU and restrict sales to foreigners of Polish land and property, to take two topics of recent debate. Poland, they say, in the language of the European right, should join a "Europe of independent nations," each country with its own traditions intact, not a Europe based on the common denominator of the market. Liberals, meanwhile, want Poland to cease this endless focus on identity and recognize itself for what it is: a medium-sized poorer but legitimate European country that can claim no special privileges for itself. The debate over Gross is thus not so much a debate about the past as a debate about the future, just as was the Dreyfus debate a century ago. Will Poland take up its part as a bit player in a globalized world, or will it reject its lot and continue to claim some special glory? Such issues played a big role in the 2001 parliamentary elections. While the social democratic (and pro-globalist) Democratic Left Alliance won a strong victory, with 41 percent of the total vote, nearly one in five votes went to national-chauvinist anti-EU parties, such as the League of Polish Families, which explicitly presented the Jedwabne charges as part of ongoing western and Jewish attempts to subjugate Poland.

In light of these passions, it is a good sign that the debate has gone as far as it has, and that almost everyone accepts the claim that Poles participated and probably orchestrated a terrible crime against local Jews. Even the Church accepted this position, and in May 2001, conducted a moving service in a Warsaw cathedral where bishops, on their knees, begged forgiveness for crimes perpetrated by Poles on their Jewish brethren. It was not quite an apology;



the Episcopate expressed "pain and contrition ... for the crimes whose victims were Jews and among whose perpetrators were Poles and Catholics" (*Gazeta Wyborcza*, May 28, 2001), and asked forgiveness from God, not Jews. Nevertheless, the entire Episcopate on its knees in remorse is not a common sight. (It proved too much for some extreme nationalists who said even the Church had been taken in by Jews.) As such, it is likely that the real effect of

the debate will come in the future, when passions subside. As the debate gets other historians to examine collaboration with Nazis against Jews, awareness of this past can become less emotionally charged. This could then lead western Jews to question their own gut anti-Polishness, and help lead to a genuine peace on this senseless front.

Why Isn't It Shocking?

Any discussion of Polish-Jewish relations invariably affects America as well, where so many Poles and Jews live, and where global political decisions will be made affecting the lives and chances of Poland today. Poles know this acutely, and one of the main topics in the Polish discussion concerned how the book would be received in America. The answer is that it did get a good deal of publicity, but produced a striking lack of controversy. There were many reviews, generally quite favorable, and several articles about the book's reception in Poland. What was disturbing about the coverage, however, was the lack of sense that the book says something new, or is relevant to a rethinking of the Holocaust. This is in sharp contrast to the reception given Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners*. On the face of it, Gross's allegations should be *more* shocking than Goldhagen's. Poland was an ally in the war against Hitler, its internal resistance so strong that it remained one of the few occupied countries not to produce, or be allowed, its own Quisling government. That people so anti-Nazi should themselves work with the Nazis against the Jews would seem to be more surprising than to learn that regular Germans hated Jews, which is Goldhagen's central point. That it is obviously *not* more surprising speaks volumes about the reflexive anti-Polishness so common in the West, particularly among Jews. The fact is that too many western Jews actually do believe that Poles were worse than the Germans, despite knowing that Germans carried out the Holocaust.

When my anti-Semitic bookstore "friend" rebuffed my anger about his hating Jews irrationally with his own about Jews hating Poles irrationally, I had to concede him the point. I certainly find more anti-Polish sentiment among Jews I know than anti-Semitism among Poles I know. And the former view too often includes an indictment of Poles for the Holocaust, as if Hitler could have chosen to wipe out European Jewry in some country other than Poland,

which is where the Jews were. German Jews had the luxury of being urban in an urban country and relatively small in numbers, allowing them to fit in well in pre-Nazi Germany. And though even this couldn't save them, it did make survivors, most of whom fled early, remember the old days as good ones. Thus, Goldhagen was so shocking.

Polish Jews, however, were urban in a rural country, modern in a traditional society, and relatively large in numbers, particularly in cities and towns. In small towns like Jedwabne, they dominated the retail sector, and their economic power in cities like Warsaw, where they constituted about a third of the population, ended up posing problems for Polish Jews that German Jews didn't have to face. As a new nation-state, Poland tried to build its "own" industry, as all new nation-states have done. But with Jews understandably not feeling fully Polish, this often meant promoting non-Jewish industry. Thus, pre-war Poland was marked by the kind of ethnic-national economic rivalries that were absent in Germany. And thus Gross has *not* been shocking. For since what we know of the Holocaust comes chiefly from survivors, as Gross and others have noted, it is no surprise that we've always heard a better story from German Jews than Polish ones. For unlike German Jews, Polish Jews had no halcyon days to remember. (They had such days in previous centuries, when Poland alone allowed Jews to settle its lands, but these are not, obviously, remembered by survivors.) Even though more Jews were saved by Poles than by Germans (where are the stories of German Jews hidden in barns and basements like so many were in Poland?), *survivors* remember Poland as a *worse* place than Germany.

My anti-Semite's fears are thus confirmed by the minor western reaction to Gross: it is all too common to blame

Poles for the Holocaust. In this context, it is not hard to understand why even some liberal Poles were wary of the book's publication in the West, fearing that it would only confirm wrong assumptions. Insecurity, in other words, has driven much of the reception to this book, just as it is shaping so much else in Poland today.

At least the trade unions are beginning to direct the anger and frustrations caused by such insecurity to the appropriate place—that is, not against "Jews," but to the fight for a better economic deal, which is the source of the insecurity. The more success they have, the greater the likelihood that lingering anti-Semitism will dissipate.

While American Jews cannot do much to aid the unions' effort, they can help deprive anti-Semites of support by examining their own entrenched anti-Polish attitudes. When my bookstore interlocutor blurted out "why do Jews hate *us* so much?", he could have been speaking for many liberal Poles as well. If we learn to treat Polish anti-Semitism as the abnormality it is, and not the norm too many think it is, we would help promote that dialogue that Poles themselves have been having these past years. Poland's Jews who are rebuilding their community today would certainly appreciate it.

FINAL NOTE: In July 2002, following a long investigation that included an exhumation of the site of the massacre in Jedwabne, the Institute of National Memory in Warsaw issued its official report (available online at www.ipn.gov.pl). It states categorically that "Polish citizens carried out the massacre." The report identifies 40–50 Poles who actually tortured and killed Jews, and says that the majority of townspeople watched passively. "It cannot be determined whether this passivity was due to their approval of the crime or to their horror at the brutality of the perpetrators." □

DEMOCRACY AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT (from page 41)

deeply unpopular war in Iraq while still fighting against guerrillas in Afghanistan. The Bush administration appears intent on an imperial Pax Americana based on U.S. military supremacy.

This crisis facing America has called forth the beginnings of a countervailing force—as yet unorganized and without a program or political voice of its own. Over the past several months the Iraq war and the Bush administration's assault on democracy have been widely debated throughout the country, and tens of millions of Americans have come to oppose the war. This is the true base of the peace movement. It is the reason hundreds of thousands of people have poured into the streets in demonstrations.

The central task of the peace movement is the organization of this mass base as a cohesive, democratic force with a positive social vision.

As major church groups, city councils, and the labor movement come out against the war, it becomes possible to initiate a truly democratic national network of peace orga-

nizations with local membership bases. The most immediate goal of this peace movement must be to put unrelenting pressure on the nation's political leaders, pledging to break with all politicians and parties that pursue war and abandon our democracy. At the same time, we must work towards and urge our leaders to embrace a new, democratic, foreign policy that can challenge the empire-builders and redefine the role of the United States as a genuine advocate of democracy and cooperation among nations. Nuclear disarmament must be demanded of all countries including the United States and its allies. The Campaign for Peace and Democracy has gathered thousands of signatures for a statement along these lines. You can find it at www.cpdweb.org.

This new foreign policy would be one element of a new politics based on the reconciliation of peoples in place of ethnic conflicts and economic rivalries. Such a political vision of global peace and democracy has long been advocated by TIKKUN. It is anathema to the totalitarian Left, which is all the more reason the rest of us should embrace it. □

The Great Divide

Animals and the Holocaust

Charles Patterson

In the course of his development towards culture man acquired a dominating position over his fellow-creatures in the animal kingdom. Not content with this supremacy, however, he began to place a gulf between his nature and theirs. He denied the possession of reason to them, and to himself he attributed an immortal soul, and made claims to a divine descent which permitted him to annihilate the bond of community between him and the animal kingdom.

—Sigmund Freud

Where does all the war, racism, genocide, terrorism, violence, and cruelty so endemic to human civilization come from? Why do humans exploit and massacre each other so regularly? Why is our species so violence-prone? Could it be that we oppress and kill each other so readily because our abuse and slaughter of animals has desensitized us to the suffering and death of others?

The “domestication” of animals—the exploitation of goats, sheep, cattle, and other animals for their meat, milk, hides, and labor that began in the Near East about eleven thousand years ago—changed human history. In earlier hunter-gatherer societies there had been some sense of kinship between humans and animals, reflected in totemism and myths which portrayed animals, or part-animal/part-human creatures, as creators and progenitors of the human race. However, mankind crossed the Rubicon when Near Eastern herdsmen and farmers started castrating, hobbling, and branding captive animals to control their mobility, diet, growth, and reproductive lives. In the first civilizations that emerged in the river valleys of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China, the exploitation of animals for food, milk, hides, and labor was so firmly established that these civilizations sanctified the notion that animals existed solely for their benefit. This allowed humans to use, abuse, and kill them with total impunity.

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This domination, control, and manipulation of animals served as the model for the enslavement/domestication of people. It led humans to place other humans—captives, enemies, strangers, and those who were different or disliked—on the other side of the great divide where they were vilified as “beasts,” “pigs,” “dogs,” and “rats.” Calling people animals has always been an ominous sign because it sets them up for humiliation, exploitation, and murder. As Leo Kuper writes in *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century*, “The animal world has been a particularly fertile source of metaphors of dehumanization.”

From Slaughterhouse to Death Camp

In his autobiography, *My Life and Work* (1922), Henry Ford revealed that his inspiration for assembly-line production came from a visit he made as a young man to a Chicago slaughterhouse. “I believe that this was the first moving line ever installed. The idea [of the assembly line] came in a general way from the overhead trolley that the Chicago packers use in dressing beef.” A Swift and Company publication from that time described the division-of-labor principle that so impressed Ford: “The slaughtered animals, suspended head downward from a moving chain, or conveyor, pass from workman to workman, each of whom performs some particular step in the process.”

In the early 1920s Ford’s weekly newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*, published a series of articles based on the text of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, an anti-Semitic tract that had been circulating in Europe. Ford published a book-length compilation of the articles entitled *The International Jew*, which was translated into most European languages and widely disseminated by anti-Semites, chief among them the German publisher Theodor Fritsch, an early supporter of Hitler. Thanks to a well-financed publicity campaign and the prestige of the Ford name, *The International Jew* was hugely successful both domestically and internationally.

The International Jew, or *The Eternal Jew* as it became known in Germany, quickly became the country's number one bestseller in the 1920s. After it came to the attention of Hitler in Munich, he used a shortened version of it in the Nazi propaganda war against the Jews. Baldur von Schirach, the leader of the Hitler Youth movement, said at the postwar Nuremberg war crimes trial that he became a convinced anti-Semite at age seventeen after reading *The Eternal Jew*. "You have no idea what a great influence this book had on the thinking of German youth. The younger generation looked with envy to symbols of success and prosperity like Henry Ford, and if he said the Jews were to blame, why naturally we believed him."

Ford, who based his automobile assembly line on the model of the American slaughterhouse, exported to Germany both his anti-Semitism that helped make the Holocaust happen and the method the Germans used to kill Jews. Although Ford stopped publishing the *Dearborn Independent* in late 1927 and agreed to withdraw *The International Jew* from the book market, copies of it continued to circulate in large numbers throughout Europe and Latin America into the late 1930s.

On January 7, 1942—exactly one month after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that brought the United States into the war—Ford wrote a letter to Sigmund Livingston, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League, expressing his disapproval of hatred "against the Jew or any other racial or religious group." But by that time, *Einsatzgruppen* (German mobile killing squads) in the East had already murdered hundreds of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children, and the first German extermination camp at Kulmhof (Chelmno) was already operational.

From Animal Breeding to Genocide

The desire to improve the hereditary qualities of the human population had its beginnings in the 1860s when Francis Galton, an English scientist and cousin of Charles Darwin, turned from meteorology to the study of heredity (he coined the term "Eugenics" in 1881). By the end of the nineteenth century, genetic theories, founded on the assumption that heredity was based on rigid genetic patterns little influenced by social environment, dominated scientific thought.

The Eugenics movement in America began with the creation of the American Breeders' Association (ABA) in 1903. At the second meeting of the ABA in 1905, a series

of reports about the great success achieved in the selective breeding of animals and plants prompted delegates to ask why such techniques could not be applied to human beings. The creation of a Committee on Human Heredity (Eugenics) at the third ABA meeting in 1906 launched the American Eugenics movement.

Its leader was poultry researcher Charles B. Davenport, who served as the director of the Eugenics Record Office and described Eugenics as "the science of the improvement of the human race by better breeding." He looked forward to the time when a woman would no more accept a man "without knowing his biological-genealogical history" than a stock-breeder would take "a sire for his colts or calves who was without pedigree."

Sterilization began in America in 1887, when the superintendent of the Cincinnati Sanitarium published the first public recommendation for the sterilization of criminals, both as a punishment and a way to prevent further crime. Authorities used the same method to sterilize male criminals that farmers used on their male animals not selected for breeding—castration. Castration was the preferred method used to sterilize male criminal offenders until 1899, when vasectomy was adopted because it was more practical.

By 1930 more than half of the American states passed laws that authorized the sterilization of criminals and mentally ill people. By then compulsory

sterilization had widespread support in the United States, with college presidents, clergymen, mental health workers, and school principals among its strongest supporters. The United States quickly became the model for other countries that wanted to sterilize their "defectives." Denmark was the first European country to pass such a law in 1929, followed in rapid succession by other European nations.

In Germany Eugenics established deep roots in medical and scientific circles after World War I. In 1920 two respected academics—Karl Binding, a widely published legal scholar, and Alfred Hoche, a professor of psychiatry with a specialty in neuropathology—published *Die Freigabe der Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens* (*Authorization for the Destruction of Life Unworthy of Life*). In it they argued that German law should permit the mercy killing of institutionalized patients who were *lebensunwert* ("unworthy of life") because their lives were "without purpose" and a burden to their relatives and society. Beginning in the 1920s, the Rockefeller Foundation and other American foundations provided extensive financial support for eugenics



The selective breeding of animals and plants prompted delegates to ask why such techniques could not be applied to human beings.

research in Germany. By the time the Nazis came to power, more than twenty institutes for "racial hygiene" had already been established at German universities.

The Law on Preventing Hereditarily Ill Progeny, which the Nazi government issued on July 14, 1933, required the sterilization of patients suffering from mental and physical disorders in state hospitals and nursing homes. By then, the United States had already sterilized more than fifteen thousand people, most of them while they were incarcerated in prisons or homes for the mentally ill. America's sterilization laws made such a favorable impression on Hitler that he looked to the United States for racial leadership. "I have studied with great interest the laws of several American states concerning prevention of reproduction by people whose progeny would, in all probability, be of no value or be injurious to the racial stock." Nazi Germany's sterilization efforts quickly surpassed those of the United States, reaching between 300,000 to 400,000 people.

Germany's eugenics campaign entered a new, deadly phase in 1939 when Hitler issued a secret order for the systematic murder of mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, and physically infirm Germans who were an embarrassment to the myth of Aryan supremacy.

Once "defective" children were identified and institutionalized, doctors and nurses either starved them to death, or gave them lethal doses of luminal (a sedative), veronal (sleeping pills), morphine, or scopolamine. The "euthanasia" program—named Operation T4, or simply T4—transported adults to special killing centers outfitted with gas chambers. T4 killed between seventy and ninety thousand Germans before it was officially stopped in August 1941. In 1942, not long after German psychiatrists had sent the last of their patients to the gas chambers, the *Journal of the American Psychiatric Association* published an article that called for the killing of retarded children ("nature's mistakes").

Like the American Charles Davenport, Heinrich Himmler, head of the Nazi S.S. and a main architect of the Final Solution, began his Eugenics education with animal breeding. His agricultural studies and experience breeding chickens convinced him that since all behavioral characteristics are hereditary, the most effective way to shape the future of a population—human or otherwise—was to institute breeding projects that favored the desirable and eliminated the undesirable.

Rudolf Höss, the commandant of Auschwitz who also had a farming background, wrote in his autobiography after the war that the original plan for Auschwitz had been to

make it into a major agricultural research station. "All kinds of stockbreeding was to be pursued there." However, in the summer of 1941 Himmler summoned him to Berlin to inform him of the fateful order for the mass extermination of the Jews of Europe, an order that soon turned Auschwitz into "the largest human slaughterhouse that history had ever known." By the summer of 1942, Auschwitz was a vast, full-service Eugenics center for the improvement of animal and human populations, complete with stockbreeding centers

and the Birkenau extermination camp for the culling of Jews, Gypsies, and other "sub-humans."

The breeding and killing of animals that was the centerpiece of American and German eugenics produced a number of key T4 personnel, including those sent to Poland to operate the death camps. Victor Brack, T4's chief manager, received a diploma in agriculture from the Technical University in Munich, while Hans Hefelmann, who headed the office that coordinated the killing of handicapped children, had a doctorate in agricultural economics. Before spending more than two years at the Hartheim euthanasia center in Austria, Bruno Bruckner had worked as a porter in a Linz slaughterhouse. Willi Mentz, an especially sadistic guard at Treblinka, had been in charge of cows and pigs at two



*What we do to
animals, we sooner or
later do to members of
our own species.*

T4 killing centers, Grafeneck and Hadamar. Treblinka's last commandant, Kurt Franz, trained with a master butcher before joining the S.S. Karl Frenzel, who worked as a stoker at Hadamar before being posted to the Sobibor death camp, had also been a butcher. For German personnel sent to Poland to exterminate Jews, experience in the exploitation and slaughter of animals proved to be excellent training.

The German Jewish philosopher Theodor Adorno once said: "Auschwitz begins whenever someone looks at a slaughterhouse and thinks: they're only animals." The exploitation and slaughter of animals instills in us the habit of withholding our compassion from those we define as Other and hardens our hearts to their suffering and death. Our detachment and indifference toward their fate makes us more inclined to commit atrocities against each other. What we do to animals, we sooner or later do to members of our own species. As the Yiddish writer Isaac Bashevis Singer observed, "There is only one little step from killing animals to creating gas chambers a la Hitler."

We need to eradicate the notion that there exist in the world groups of sentient beings not entitled to our empathy and protection. Extending the circle of our compassion to include all living beings will make the world a safer and more humane place. It's the only thing that will. □

18 Reasons Jews Shouldn't Be Vegetarians (And Why They're Wrong)

Richard H. Schwartz

1 *The Torah teaches that humans are granted dominion over animals (Gen. 1:26), giving us a warrant to treat animals in any way we wish.*

RESPONSE: Jewish tradition interprets “dominion” as guardianship, or stewardship: we are called upon to be co-workers with God in improving the world. Dominion does not mean that people have the right to wantonly exploit animals, and it certainly does not permit us to breed animals and treat them as machines designed solely to meet human needs. In *A Vision of Vegetarianism and Peace*, Rav Kook states: “There can be no doubt in the mind of any intelligent person that [the Divine empowerment of humanity to derive benefit from nature] does not mean the domination of a harsh ruler, who afflicts his people and servants merely to satisfy his whim and desire, according to the crookedness of his heart. It is unthinkable that the Divine Law would impose such a decree of servitude, sealed for all eternity, upon the world of God, Who is ‘good to all, and His mercy is upon all His works’ (Ps. 145:9).” This view is reinforced by the fact that immediately after God gave humankind dominion over animals (Gen. 1:26), He prescribed vegetarian foods as the diet for humans (Gen. 1:29).

2 *The Torah teaches that only people are created in the Divine Image, meaning that God places far less value on animals.*

RESPONSE: While the Torah states that only human beings are created “in the Divine Image” (Gen. 5:1), animals are also God’s creatures, possessing sensitivity and the capacity for feeling pain. God is concerned that they are protected and treated with compassion and justice. In fact, the Jewish sages state that to be “created in the Divine Image,” means that people have the capacity to emulate the Divine compassion for all creatures. “As God is compassionate,” they teach, “so you should be compassionate.”

3 *Inconsistent with Judaism, vegetarians elevate animals to a level equal to or greater than that of people.*

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RESPONSE: Vegetarians’ concern for animals and their refusal to treat animals cruelly does not mean that they regard animals as equals. There are many reasons to be vegetarian besides consideration for animals—concerns about human health, ecological threats, and the plight of hungry people, to name a few. Because humans are capable of imagination, rationality, empathy, compassion, and moral choice, we should strive to end the unbelievably cruel conditions under which farm animals are currently raised. This is an issue of sensitivity, not an assertion of equality with the animal kingdom.

4 *Vegetarianism places greater priority on animal rights than on the many problems related to human welfare.*

RESPONSE: Vegetarian diets are not beneficial only to animals. They improve human health, help conserve food and other resources, and put less strain on endangered ecosystems. In view of the many threats related to today’s livestock agriculture (such as deforestation and global climate change), working to promote vegetarianism may be the most important action that one can take for global sustainability.

5 *By putting vegetarian values ahead of Jewish teachings, vegetarians are, in effect, creating a new religion with values contrary to Jewish teachings.*

RESPONSE: Jewish vegetarians are not placing so-called “vegetarian values” above Torah principles but are challenging the Jewish community to apply Judaism’s teachings at every level of our daily lives. Jewish teachings that we treat animals with compassion, guard our health, share with the hungry, protect the environment, conserve resources, and seek peace, are best applied through vegetarian diets.

6 *Jews must eat meat on Shabbat and Yom Tov (Jewish holidays).*

RESPONSE: According to the Talmud (T. B. Pesachim 109a), since the destruction of the Temple, Jews are not required to eat meat in order to rejoice on sacred occasions. This view is reinforced in the works *Reshit Chochmah* and *Kerem Shlomo* and Rabbi Chizkiah Medini’s *Sdei Chemed*, which cites many classical sources on the subject. Several Israeli chief rabbis, including Shlomo Goren, late Ashkenazic



Chief Rabbi of Israel, and Shear Yashuv Cohen, Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Haifa, have been or are strict vegetarians.

7 *The Torah mandated that Jews eat korban Pesach and other korbanot (sacrifices).*

RESPONSE: The great Jewish philosopher Maimonides believed that God permitted sacrifices as a concession to the common mode of worship in Biblical times. It was felt that had Moses not instituted the sacrifices, his mission would have failed and Judaism might have disappeared. The Jewish philosopher Abarbanel reinforced Maimonides' position by citing a *midrash* (Rabbinic teaching) that indicates God tolerated the sacrifices because the Israelites had become accustomed to sacrifices in Egypt, but that He commanded they be offered only in one central sanctuary in order to wean the Jews from idolatrous practices.

8 *Jews historically have had many problems with some animal rights groups, which have often opposed she-*

chita (ritual slaughter) and advocated its abolishment.

RESPONSE: Jews should consider switching to vegetarianism not because of the views of animal rights groups (whether they are hostile to Judaism or not), but because it is the diet most consistent with Jewish teachings. It is the Torah, not animal rights groups, which is the basis for observing how far current animal treatment has strayed from fundamental Jewish values. As Samson Raphael Hirsch stated: "Here you are faced with God's teaching, which obliges you not only to refrain from inflicting unnecessary pain on any animal, but to help and, when you can, to lessen the pain whenever you see an animal suffering, even through no fault of yours."

9 *The restrictions of shechita minimize the pain to animals in the slaughtering process, and thus fulfill Jewish laws on proper treatment of animals.*

RESPONSE: This ignores the cruel treatment of animals on "factory farms" in the many months prior to slaughter.

POLITICS OF EATING

Can we ignore the force-feeding of huge amounts of grain to ducks and geese to produce *foie gras*, the removal of calves from their mothers shortly after birth to raise them for veal, the killing of over 250 million male chicks immediately after birth at egg-laying hatcheries in the U.S. annually, the placing of hens in cages so small that they can't raise even one wing, and the many other horrors of modern factory farming?

10 *If Jews do not eat meat, they will be deprived of the opportunity to fulfill many mitzvot (commandments).*

RESPONSE: By not eating meat, Jews are actually fulfilling many mitzvot: showing compassion to animals, preserving health, conserving resources, helping to feed the hungry, and preserving the earth. And by abstaining from meat, Jews reduce the chance of accidentally violating several prohibitions of the Torah, such as mixing meat and milk, eating nonkosher animals, and eating forbidden fats or blood. There are other cases where Torah laws regulate things that God would prefer people not do at all. For example, God wishes people to live in peace, but He provides commandments relating to war, knowing that human beings will quarrel and seek victories over others. Similarly, the Torah laws that restrict taking female captives in wartime are a concession to human weakness. Indeed, the sages go to great lengths to deter people from taking advantage of such dispensations.

11 *Judaism teaches that it is wrong not to take advantage of the pleasurable things that God has put on the earth. Since He put animals on the earth, and it is pleasurable to eat them, is it not wrong to refrain from eating meat?*

RESPONSE: Can eating meat be pleasurable to a sensitive person when he or she knows that, as a result, their health is endangered, grain is wasted, the environment is damaged, and animals are being cruelly treated? One can indulge in pleasure without doing harm to living creatures. There are many other cases in Judaism where actions that people may consider pleasurable are forbidden or discouraged—such as the use of tobacco, drinking liquor to excess, having sexual relations out of wedlock, and hunting.

12 *A movement by Jews toward vegetarianism would lead to less emphasis on kashrut (dietary laws) and eventually a disregard of these laws.*

RESPONSE: Quite the contrary. In many ways, becoming a vegetarian makes it easier and less expensive to observe the laws of kashrut. This might attract many new adherents to keeping kosher, and eventually to other important Jewish practices. As a vegetarian, one need not be concerned with mixing *milchigs* (dairy products) with *fleishigs*

(meat products), waiting three or six hours after eating meat before being allowed to eat dairy products, storing four complete sets of dishes (two for regular use and two for Passover use), extra silverware, pots, pans, etc., and many other considerations incumbent upon the nonvegetarian who wishes to observe kashrut.

13 *If everyone became vegetarian, butchers, shochtim (slaughterers), and others dependent for a living on the consumption of meat would lack work.*

RESPONSE: There could be a shift from the production of animal products to that of nutritious vegetarian dishes. In England during World War II, when there was a shortage of meat, butchers relied mainly on the sale of fruits and vegetables. Today, new businesses could sell tofu, miso, feta, soy burgers, and vegetarian *cholent* (Sabbath hot dish). Besides, the shift toward vegetarianism will be gradual, providing time for a transition to other jobs. The same kind of question can be asked about other moral issues. What would happen to arms merchants if we had universal peace? What would happen to some doctors and nurses if people took better care of themselves, stopped smoking, improved their diets, and so on? Immoral or inefficient practices should not be supported because some people earn a living in the process.

14 *If everyone became vegetarian, animals would overrun the earth.*

RESPONSE: This concern is based on an insufficient understanding of animal behavior. For example, there are millions of turkeys around at Thanksgiving not because they want to help celebrate the holiday, but because farmers breed them for the dinner table. Dairy cows are artificially inseminated annually so that they will constantly produce milk. Before the establishment of modern intensive livestock agriculture, food supply and demand kept animal populations relatively steady. An end to the manipulation of animals' reproductive tendencies to suit our needs would lead to a decrease, rather than an increase, in the number of animals. We are not overrun by animals that we do not eat, such as lions, elephants, and crocodiles.

15 *Instead of advocating vegetarianism, we should alleviate the evils of factory farming so that animals are treated better, less grain is wasted, and less health-harming chemicals are used.*

RESPONSE: The breeding of animals is "big business." Animals are raised the way they are today because it is very profitable. Improving conditions, as suggested by this

(continued on page 84)



Why I Am Vegan

Jeffrey M. Freedman

Being vegan is about more than what I do or do not eat. For me, it is a prayer, a petition asking why animals and people suffer greatly in a Universe created by a benevolent and loving G-d. This question led me to a lifestyle that is focused primarily on abstaining from the consumption or use of anything that comes from or contains animals or animal products.

Veganism is a corollary of *ahimsa*, the universal principle of compassionate, nonviolent living, the a priori maxim of Judeo-Christian ethics and Eastern spiritual philosophies. Mohandas Gandhi said "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be measured by the way its animals are treated."

Veganism, for me, is not so much about dietary abstinence as it is about spiritual sustenance; spiritual sustenance that fills the dark and empty spaces I feel lost in when I witness animal and human suffering, or anything that is an affront to what is Holy or good in the world. It is a lifestyle imperative that flows from my love of animals and reverence for life.

It wasn't until I got to university, on my own for the first time, that I realized there was a disconnect between what I felt in my heart (love for animals) and what I was putting in my body (corpses of animals), and that my spiritual life would have to mediate between and reconcile the two. It did. I stopped eating meat and chicken and—after I realized fish are not plants with gills—seafood went too. Becoming vegetarian made me feel I was doing something to lessen the suffering of animals (or that at least I wasn't contributing to it). I was making a statement about what my conscience could not live with and what my body could live without, but it also felt like an inadequate-human response to a spiritual dilemma.

Why G-d's creation suffers, and how and when this suffering will cease is a question that has always tormented me—a mystery only G-d has the answer to. But I couldn't even bring myself to ask this question knowing that what I ate, what I wore, what I did, contributed to suffering in this world. For me, to be able to fully explore the question of suffering, I had to give up the products and by-products that can't be produced without causing suffering to animals—including meat, eggs, milk, fur, leather, wool, down,



and cosmetics or chemical products tested on animals. (I include circuses, zoos, and all other institutions that confine or exploit animals in this list). To the extent they don't cause suffering, in any way, I consider consuming, wearing or watching them acceptable.

This ethical standard I try to live by is predicated on Albert Schweitzer's "Reverence for Life," my desire to decrease, or at least not contribute to, the suffering of any sentient being; and the interrelatedness and common origin of all life on Earth. If she, he, or it suffers, I suffer. What constitutes suffering, as far as I understand it and the way most Buddhists define it, is that everything/everyone wants to live and nothing/no one wants to feel pain. Anything that causes pain or death causes suffering. But eradicating all animal products from my diet, my clothes, and every aspect of my life is also, ironically, a statement about my powerlessness in the face of the world's suffering. I have had to admit that what I don't eat isn't going to have a major impact on the violence and the suffering of the innocents in the world; that it would take more than my abstinence from eating animals to bring about a state of *ahimsa* to the world. Veganism, for me, is asking G-d to do what I am incapable of doing myself.

I read something in the news recently about the ongoing abduction and breaking of baby elephants in Thailand. They are taken from their mothers, tied by their feet so they can't move, beaten with sharp instruments on their head till they bleed, and kept awake by loud noise, sometimes for days. This torture goes on until they either go mad or become docile enough to perform in circuses and tourist attractions.

Two blocks from where I live and work an injured pigeon has been cowering under a store ledge trying to avoid the prowling cats, blinding snow, wind, and other urban predators. Hundreds of people have passed by and ignored him the way they ignored the mangled pigeon I found during one of last summer's most unbearably hot and humid days. He was attacked by a cat, couldn't fly, hobbled on one leg, looked unbearably sad and worn out. When I take these ani-

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imals to the local wildlife rehabilitation center I am as much pained by the broken-hearted indifference of the other people who saw their suffering and did nothing as I am by the suffering itself.

For anyone sensitive to the suffering of animals and people who cannot defend or fend for themselves, these are the things that rend the heart and are a call to action and prayer. They are a call to action because to do nothing is to court helplessness and depression and defeat. They are a call to prayer because in an imperfect world, suffering, which is a symptom of separation from the Divine or the whole of creation, must exist. Prayer then becomes the last refuge of those who suffer greatly as a result of bearing witness to great suffering.

I realize this is somewhat of a spiritual-evolutionary leap; that I am, to a certain extent, intervening in the process of natural selection and survival of the fittest in my desire to pre-empt or lessen the severity of suffering in the 'animal kingdom.' People are always reminding me that, in nature, the big fish eat the little fish, we all prey on and consume some thing or someone, that it's a dog-eat-dog world. I know all that. I know it. But a fundamental principle of evolution is that those who adapt to the environment most efficiently increase their odds of survival. The predatory, polluting, war-mongering behavior of humanity has pushed us—and unfortunately most other life forms—perilously close to extinction. So is it too much of a stretch to posit that reverence for life, eating as low down on the food chain as possible and a desire to preserve that which sustains life (e.g. lakes, rivers, streams, forests, the ozone), may be a last-ditch attempt by the evolutionary, self-preserving wiring in us, if not the entire life-force of the planet, to move us further from the precipice of extinction?

We have polluted, consumed, caged, corrupted, deracinated, tortured, and tormented just about every form of creation on Earth. I think ahimsa and veganism are both a symbolic and a very real way to reverse this trend. Disregarding the sanctity of life and the planet with impunity has given us a world that is rife with violence, war, pestilence, starvation and poison in our air, water, and food. Being vegan is a way of becoming conscious of our actions and their consequences. It is a way of giving thought to the pain, suffering, and terror that occurs as a result of turning a living, breathing, feeling animal into the meat we put inside ourselves or in front of our children; a way of considering the global consequences of deracinating another forest, poisoning another river, depleting more of the ozone, feeding cattle on arable land that could be used to eradicate world hunger.

Like a fast at Yom Kippur or Christian Lent, I am trying to make myself ready to petition G-d to rid the world of suffering and violence that I can't personally eradicate or change in any lasting or globally significant way. I am asking Him to do something about the baby elephants and the wounded pigeons and the broken hearts of the world. □

18 REASONS *(continued from page 82)*

assertion, would certainly be a step in the right direction, but it has been strongly resisted by the meat industry since it would greatly increase already high prices. Why not abstain from eating meat as a protest against present policies while trying to improve them? Even under the best of conditions, why take the life of a creature of God, "whose tender mercies are over all His creatures" (Ps. 145:9), when it is not necessary for proper nutrition?

16 *One can work to improve conditions for animals without being a vegetarian.*

RESPONSE: Animal abuse is a widespread problem and there are many ways to improve conditions for animals. However, one should keep in mind that factory farming is the primary source of animal abuse in this country. According to FARM (Farm Animal Reform Movement), "The number of warm-blooded animals brutalized and slaughtered each year is approximately 70 times the number of animals killed in laboratories, 30 times the number killed by hunters and trappers, and 500 times the number killed in pounds." They also reported that almost 10 billion farm animals are killed annually to produce food. A typical meat-eating animal welfare advocate is personally responsible for the slaughter of twenty-two warm-blooded animals per year, 1,500 in an average lifetime.

17 *If vegetarian diets were best for health, doctors would recommend them.*

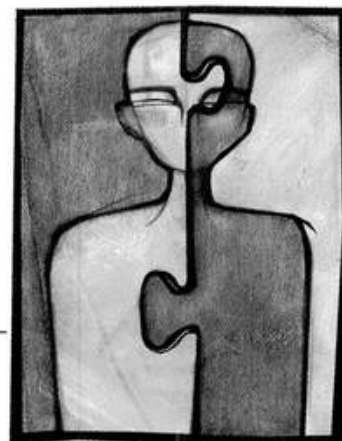
RESPONSE: Unfortunately, while doctors are devoted to the well-being of their patients, many lack information about the basic relationship between food and health because nutrition is not sufficiently taught at most medical schools. Also, many patients are resistant to making dietary changes. The accepted approach today seems to be to prescribe medications first and, perhaps, recommend a diet change as an afterthought. However, there now seems to be increasing awareness on the part of doctors about the importance of proper nutrition, but the financial power of the beef and dairy lobbies and other groups who gain from the status quo prevents rapid changes.

18 *I enjoy eating meat. Why should I give it up?*

RESPONSE: If one is solely motivated by what will bring pleasure, perhaps no answer to this question would be acceptable. But Judaism wishes us to be motivated by far more: doing mitzvot, performing good deeds and acts of charity, sanctifying ourselves in the realm of the permissible, helping to feed the hungry, pursuing justice and peace, etc. Even if one is primarily motivated by considerations of pleasure and convenience, the negative health effects of animal-centered diets should be taken into account. One cannot enjoy life when one is not in good health. □

Emancipatory Spirituality for Everyone

Leonard Yehudah Angel



TIKKUN has long upheld a vision of spirituality, known as “emancipatory spirituality,” which recognizes the need for meaning as well as money, the interdependence of all on the planet, the need for spiritual, ecological, and humanistic values in the workplace and political life, the proliferation and protection of human rights, the alleviation of poverty around the world, an emphasis on Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation, and the ongoing cultivation of our highest values, however conceived, in community and as individuals. People who subscribe to this vision of spirituality practice it in different ways. For some, their spirituality finds expression in loving relationships and their passion for peace and justice, while for others, the quest for deeper engagement with life leads them also into the realm of Spirit and mysticism.

The cultivation of a full spirituality is often a stumbling block for people who would otherwise subscribe to this vision of “healing and transforming the planet.” Why? Because, TIKKUN and other spiritual magazines, have a tendency to print articles on spirituality like David and Lee Leffler’s “Consciousness Based Defense” (TIKKUN May/June 2000) which claims that meditation causes healing by mind-wave effects in other parts of the world, and Zalman Schachter Shalomi’s “Renewing God” (TIKKUN Sept./Oct. 2001), which celebrates channeling, afterlife survival, and psychic deliverances. Yet these claims also reject “the completeness-of-physical-processes-principle” now thoroughly accepted by mainstream science. The Principle is astoundingly simple. It says that every physical change is governed only by physical causes. Yet its implications are complex for critically thinking people who are trying to embrace a spiritual vision like that offered by TIKKUN and the Tikkun Community.

What I want to show is that the gap between the scientific world and the spiritual world can be bridged. We can cultivate a truly deep spirituality, we can fully embrace traditional mysticism, and we can also fully accept the principle of physical completeness. Whereas in the past many people have been put off deep spirituality for the rejection of physical completeness that accompanied it, now it will be

possible for all the secularists, mainstream, or conservative scientists, and critically minded folk of whatever persuasion to embrace Emancipatory Spirituality.

The Core Elements of Spirituality

Deep spirituality promotes the cultivation of love, joy, and bliss—individually and in community—and also informs us that there’s no limit to the consistency and stability of the joy, love, and bliss that a person can attain. In other words, it’s possible for people, in normal circumstances, to attain an ongoing stable state of bliss and joy in their everyday lives.

The core elements of a full spirituality also include the release from typical ego-identification, a “liberation” from the prison of ego. A typical ego-identified person says, “The world has so many things, and exactly one of them is me. Everything else is Other, or Not Me.” The person liberated from the prison of ego identification sees the world in such a different way! Being freed from the ego, the person might say: “There are many things, but none of them is a self. There is no self,” or, “There are many things, and I am the sum of all of them. All the many things are parts of Me,” or, “There is only the One, and it has no parts!”

This release from typical ego-identification produces the capacity for stable ongoing joy and bliss. It is an awakening to the experience of inner light, a bodily sensation that feels like waves of energy from the toe tips to the top of the head. It is also accompanied by deep, yet readily available, feelings of gratitude and mystery that many associate with healing and being healed.

Standard Science

How do we reconcile these states of spiritual liberation with standard science? It’s not an intuitive connection, so we must lay some groundwork before making the leap.

As I stated earlier, the vast majority of physicists and other natural scientists, through careful investigation over the last several hundred years, have come to the conclusion that all physical changes are governed by the equations developed through physics. For example, the laws of mass-energy conservation and momentum conservation are self-contained within physics. And quantum physicists, too, conclude that even if there is a disembodied mind or spirit,

the probabilities don't provide enough room for that mind or spirit to influence physical events so as to make significant changes in momentum or energy outcomes.

Think of it this way: your brain consists of atoms moving around. No physical action you take can happen unless it happens through the atoms moving around in your brain, setting nerves in motion, getting the muscles to contract and expand, which creates physical action. Physics tells us that even if there is a disembodied mind, there would be no way for it to change the overall functional effects of the atoms' motions. So, it's only the physical processes that are causing one's actions.

Among philosophers who accept the laws of standard science, there is debate about whether separate, irreducible mental properties exist. There are many philosophers, like Paul Churchland, Daniel Dennett, and Davis Lewis, who postulate that everything that exists, including the mind, is purely physical. Philosophers like David Chalmers, Thomas Nagel, and Colin McGinn, on the other hand, postulate that the physical and the mental have their own distinct properties, but there is no causal relationship between the mental and physical realms. The irreducible mind and the body are more like parallel or independent properties that don't causally influence each other.

Many TIKKUN readers will immediately think about Ken Wilber in this context. Wilber presents his view as a scientific worldview—and he certainly is following his intuitions about where science should lead us—but he never advocates the completeness of physical governance. On the contrary, he advocates a multiplicity of fundamental dimensions, his “four quadrants,” which separates the mental and the physical into different quadrants, and he maintains a causal relationship between them. (See *A Brief History of Everything*.) This causal relationship between independent mental and physical properties is what separates him from other philosophers who accept physical completeness. And it is also what separates much of the spiritual community from the scientific and philosophical communities. It is almost impossible to find a proponent of deep spirituality who explicitly accepts the principle that the physical world is physically complete, i.e., self-governing. How can we bridge the gap?

The Power of Mainstream Science

Standard science yields elegant, powerful, and deeply insightful explanations of *why* the core experiences of deep spirituality exist and it is through these explanations that we can begin to open the doors of spiritual experience to people who might otherwise reject it.

For example, why, within standard science, is it possible for us to cultivate stable and ongoing experiences of joy, love, and bliss in everyday life? Because, in motivating appetite, sex, and rearing of children, evolution has given us this capacity for *temporary* joy, bliss, and love, and has also

given us a flexible organ, the brain. We can use the flexibility inherent in brain organization to greatly broaden the specific circumstances in which joy, bliss, and love manifest.

And why, within standard science, is it possible to be released from ordinary forms of ego-identification? There are evolutionary reasons for humans to *acquire* a sense of ordinary ego-identification during childhood—a sense that says, “I’m this person—the tables, chairs, all other people are not me.” Without a sense of ordinary ego-identification of this type, children would have a difficult time avoiding danger, and social life would be greatly hindered. Morality and social connections hinge on children having had a sense of a boundary between self and other.

On the other hand, evolution has also given adults the capacity to release from ordinary ego-identification. According to standard science, the “I” referred to in ego-identification is a fictional unit. Fundamentally, any set of functionally organized physical particles cannot be naturally separated from the functionally organized particles in its environment. And the functionally organized physical particles around a person eventually include all the physical particles of planet earth and the sun! Furthermore, standard science does not reject the possibility that an adult can retain the habits of moral awareness and social relations, yet train for release, and succeed in releasing, from typical ego-identification. Standard science, then, has no difficulty explaining why release from typical ego-identification is possible.

Why, according to standard science, would awakening to inner light, also called *ch'i*, or *prana*, or *Or Ganuz* (hidden light) be possible? We already know that the brain has the ability to generate states of bliss. If we examine properties of orgasmic experience and of the state of deep peace and energy circulation that occurs while we fall asleep, we find that there is something by no means identical to, but highly similar to, the experiences of inner light circulation. It is entirely possible, and confirmed through biographical reports, that through meditation training one can summon up features akin to orgasm states and the bliss of slipping into or awakening from deep sleep, at least during normal non-traumatic times.

There is, similarly, no difficulty for standard science to explain how and why it is possible for humans to carry their ongoing stable states of joy, bliss, love, inner light, and freedom from everyday ego-identification into activities for social, economic, environmental, and political well-being. Indeed, it is when we meditate with focus on the well-being of others, and do so in a deep state of relaxation and with feelings of benevolence and openness to the world, that the fruits of joy, love, bliss, and release from ego-identification arrive.

All of the core elements of emancipatory spirituality are deeply interconnected, and in such a way that we don't have to postulate any causal connections between any irreducible mental states and purely physical states. This means that those who accept standard science, and that all physical

changes are governed only by physical laws and physical factors, also have all the joys and freedoms of the deepest forms of spirituality and perennial wisdom waiting for them to explore.

A New Path for TIKKUN

What follows are two different ways of looking at the universe and deep spirituality. The first way is presented in the A column and represents many views of deep

spirituality found in TIKKUN magazine. Each of these views requires the rejection of physical completeness. Of course, not everyone who writes articles on spirituality for TIKKUN subscribes to all of these beliefs, but these are frequently found views held by people practicing deep spirituality. On the other hand, the B column offers alternative ways of enjoying corresponding spiritual benefits, and yet these approaches fall within the realm of standard science and physical completeness.

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| <p>1. A) Consciousness <i>is</i> the very nature of the universe and, in an important way, transcends the physical universe. Deep spirituality connects with this universal consciousness. "The mystic" (the psychic, the witch, the guru, in some cases the priest or rabbi) reports to us about the non-physical universal consciousness that exists in and beyond the physical world. This supreme consciousness, then, causally influences the physical world.</p> | <p>B) Consciousness is a property of highly sophisticated organisms like mammals, and the more sophisticated the organism, the more sophisticated the consciousness. However, the universe, without mammals and humans, does not constitute a self-aware being. Upon realizing that there is no natural definition of the boundary of a mammal, but only an artificial or conventional definition, a human being can give up ordinary ego identification. Identification with All doesn't depend on giving up physical completeness.</p> |
| <p>2. A) Even before the evolution of the higher animals occurred, there was a Consciousness guiding that process. The Divine Self or the pervasive Consciousness animated the evolutionary process throughout the billions of years since the Big Bang, giving it a "purposive pull."</p> | <p>B) There was no purposive intervention in the way the events evolved in the cosmos prior to the development of animal forms. The physical processes did not need to be guided by any form of conscious being. Nonetheless, the conceptually sophisticated purposive creatures—human beings—are capable of releasing from typical ego-identity. This gives them a mystical identification with the entirety, and deep forms of bliss.</p> |
| <p>3. A) There is an organismic life-Being, a vitalism in all of the molecules of the universe, wherever they happen to be. This Being is like a membrane interconnecting All according to a logic of love, or through a kind of hidden light or <i>ch'i</i> energy field that interconnects everything.</p> | <p>B) There is no good evidence for any physical force other than the well known four forces: gravity, electromagnetism, and the sub-atomic strong and weak forces. However, meditation and other practices enable people to discover a blissful inner light—and this is brain and bodily cultivation in the ordinary sense of the body.</p> |
| <p>4. A) Souls exist in innumerable worlds—worlds we may call "spiritual, astral, intuitive, and divine realms"—and these realms interact with each other. Whatever they are called, there are non-physical levels of Being that effect changes at physical levels of being, and, perhaps, vice versa.</p> | <p>B) All physical changes are caused only by physical factors. There is a great holism in the world. The realization of the holism of mind-body relations gives rise to deep spirituality.</p> |
| <p>5. A) Death is not the end of the journey of a soul. After death the disembodied soul can pick another vehicle, or decide not to walk the earth for awhile. There is either reincarnation or rebirth, or some other form of after life akin to a more diffuse "heaven."</p> | <p>B) Physical completeness means that when the body dies, the mind dies with it. However, the liberated person has already realized the artificiality of the idea "I am this person; I am nothing else," and instead identifies with the All. What she has contributed remains in the lives and memories of others. Although the locus of consciousness is gone, the only naturally identifiable Being continues.</p> |
| <p>6. A) There is Divine Design manifest in the cosmos and this Ultimate Designing Being that produced the cosmos sometimes responds to human needs. Spirituality consists in connecting with the Designer.</p> | <p>B) All that exists arose through natural processes. There is real tragedy and suffering in the world, and it is up to our collective abilities to prevent as much of it from occurring as we can. Spirituality, in part, consists in recognizing that this is how the world works, and endeavoring to overcome all suffering that can be overcome.</p> |

(continued on next page)

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|---|--|
| <p>7. A) There are angels who aid those who have hope. Discussions among angels parallel the discussions down below. Spirituality can be brought about by tuning in to the angelic dimension.</p> | <p>B) There are no angels. The mystery of the world is in its natural being. Awareness of the natural world, together with awareness of the artificiality of some of our key concepts of boundaries (e.g., the artificiality of the boundary between self and other), while preserving conventional notions of an individual human being, helps give rise to deep forms of spirituality.</p> |
| <p>8. A) Sometimes prayers are mysteriously answered. There have been controlled experiments in which patients who didn't know they were being prayed for had a better healing rate than patients who weren't being prayed for. Spirituality uses both ordinary and highly unordinary forms of communication.</p> | <p>B) The controlled experiments have not shown such results. Of course prayer and expressions of love that are expressed <i>and</i> heard might have beneficial effects. Our spirituality consists in finding ways within the ordinary natural world to express love, affection and compassion, and to act so as to improve the world.</p> |
| <p>9. A) Psychics with special talents are vital spiritual resources.</p> | <p>B) People who call themselves psychics are, at best, good guessers and natural healers. The absence of psychic powers does not prohibit the release from ego-identification, the discovery of joy, of inner light, and the blissful transformation of goodness.</p> |
| <p>10. A) Meditation has a powerful effect, even at a distance, on social events. For example, a sufficient base of meditators produces mysterious violence reduction at a distance.</p> | <p>B) Meditation is wonderful for the meditators and their immediate surroundings; it is indeed a powerful tool, awakening joy, love, bliss, release from ego identity, and the inner light. But it doesn't act at a distance.</p> |
| <p>11. A) There are experiments showing the significance of the mind over matter potentialities of human beings. Spirituality can ally with such experiments.</p> | <p>B) Experiments have not produced good evidence of the paranormal. When the experiments are properly conducted, they don't produce paranormal results.</p> |

A Mainstream Science Deep Spirituality

What are the advantages to this new, pro-standard-science vision of deep spirituality?

First, the holism of the new vision of Emancipatory Spirituality is more complete than that of a vision that turns away from standard science and splits off active mind from the body.

Second, the new emancipatory spirituality vision is independent from the direction science will go. Evolution and basic science already provide full explanations for core spiritual experiences. Future scientific discoveries can only further improve our understanding of them.

Third, this new vision can provide a broad vocabulary for human fulfillment that will, in time, transform secular life. Secular humanists can retain their belief in mainstream science, but can also transcend their current narrow vision of the nature of human potential.

Skeptical lefties can at last overcome their distrust of the word Spirit, because deep spiritualists no longer have to base their beliefs on paranormal events, active disembodied mind, psychic revelations, or angels.



Another advantage of the new standard science vision of deep spirituality is that it teaches a deep form of humility. We had to reject the idea that the earth is at the center of the universe, and we were humbled then. We had to reject the idea that the human species was separately and specially created, and we were humbled then. Now, too, we're learning to reject dualistic conscious Being(s) influencing our physical universe. In this process, too, we are humbled.

Finally, we can now have adequate grounds to introduce a deeply spiritual vision of individual and collective human fulfillment into the public arena—including schools, colleges, universities, and political settings. When properly understood, articulated, and freed from controversial scientific claims, the potential for spiritual fulfillment on a grand scale can take root. This gives us a whole new basis for the development of a TIKKUN vision that can integrate with public life.

May we all be blessed with ongoing healing, joy, love, bliss, understanding, and all the gifts we can offer to the world. □

A Visit with Samuel Bak

Fran Bartkowski

It was mid-November and I was saying goodbye to Samuel Bak outside his house in Weston, Massachusetts. In parting we admired the sturdiness of the old New England wall that encircles his home, and he mused about how one might fold prayers into such a high wall. In Israel, he told me, there are individuals whose job is to remove the prayers in the Western Wall—to make room for ever renewed prayers. I responded with a joke—uncharacteristically. The one about the reporter who observes a religious man making multiple daily visits to the Wall. When she asks what he prays for he replies, “I have come here to pray every day for 25 years. In the morning I pray for world peace and for the brotherhood of man. I go home have a cup of tea, and I come back and pray for the eradication of illness and disease from the earth. And very, very important, I pray for peace and understanding between the Israelis and Palestinians.” The journalist is impressed. “How does it make you feel to come here every day for 25 years and pray for these wonderful things?” she asks. The old man replies, calmly, “Like I’m talking to a . . . wall.” It is the end of our visit, and I take the risk that Samuel Bak and I will find similar pleasure in the joke. We do.

Though I knew of his reputation as an extraordinary artist, I came to meet Samuel Bak because we share deeply-felt connection to the town where I was born, Landsberg am Lech in Germany.

Though Bak was born in Vilna, now Vilnius, and was one of the small number of survivors of the Vilna ghetto, he spent the immediate post-war years living in the Landsberg displaced persons camp, from 1945 to 1948, from the age of twelve to fifteen. He then left for the newly founded state of Israel with his mother and stepfather. I was born in the ‘DP’ camp in 1948 and left for the US in 1950. In 2002 we each returned for more significant stays. Samuel Bak was awarded the Herkomer Prize, given every few years to creative artists connected to the town, and his paintings were exhibited in the town’s art museum in the summer of 2002. I came to spend three days at the end of September because I had begun writing a novel set in Landsberg, and felt compelled to walk its streets, breathe its air, hear its sounds, and see what I might bring back to my work.

After four days in Berlin, a city where the skyline is being remade daily, I took the night train to this Bavarian small town that retains the topography of a stop on the late medieval salt trade routes. I planned to look for a book recently published about Landsberg that I had first heard about in Berlin. My mission more than accomplished, I left Landsberg overflowing with materials about the post-war period.

Among the published and unpublished materials I collected was the catalog of Samuel Bak’s exhibit in the Neues

Stadtmuseum. On the train to Zurich I read Bak’s essay about his experience in Landsberg after the war. The force of Bak’s words and images impelled me into his orbit. For the next month one image in particular came to dominate my work space: his *Portrait with a Star*, the head and shoulders of a beautiful European woman wearing a pumpkin-colored suit with a scarf around her neck in a silky yellow fabric tied so as to display her six-pointed star. I felt called to hear more of the stories he had alluded to in the text to the museum catalog essay. Besides, I tell him, “I am haunted by the *Portrait with a Star*,” and ask whether she is on exhibit in a gallery or museum anywhere.

“She’s in my home,” he says. And I ask boldly whether I might come to see her and meet him.

One of the features of the shared history of the Shoah, the Holocaust, the Khurbn, the catastrophe of the mid-twentieth century, was that strangers readily became intimates in those unparalleled circumstances. And I am finding that this repeats itself in the next generation. The DP camp experience was our connection—mine and Bak’s—across time, distance, and generations. Like the rest of my experience of going to, being in, and returning from Landsberg, I feel as if I am



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doing research, but unclear about what I am searching for. I know it constitutes an effort to summon up a sense of everyday life in a small town that is not *precisely* like every other in Germany.

After all, not every small town hosted Hitler as prisoner after his failed beer hall putsch in 1923. Only this town was the setting for Hitler's dictation of *Mein Kampf* to Rudolf Hess. And not every town experienced the massive death marches of prisoners toward Dachau in the last days of the war, or was immediately flooded with refugees and displaced persons who were housed in barracks on a military base built in pre-World War I days. No, this was a town where, after the war, Germans and Jews faced each other daily in encounters woven from the tatters of shame and degradation.

Bak is a man whose paintings tell this terrible history but whose being exudes a serenity I have never encountered in a survivor, and I grew up among them. It is an engaged and bemused serenity, making him appear both youthful and wise. In his recently published memoir, *Painted in Words* (Indiana University Press and Pucker Art Publications, 2001), we watch the young artist in him repeatedly take a last look around before the next flight from persecution—as he visually registers life interrupted and ruptured. He and I talk of resilience in the face of unspeakable loss, and I wonder if his own capacities are inflected by his having been a more resilient age than most of those who lived on.

In *Between Worlds* (Pucker Art Publications, 2002), the first comprehensive book about Bak's paintings that includes several essays by critics and by Bak himself, he names himself a "God-fearing atheist." Bak's experience encompasses epic narratives—most of which are recounted in his paintings, but he is a remarkable storyteller in words, too, as I knew when I first read him on the train between Landsberg and Lindau. From *Painted in Words*, with its stories and photos, and from *Between Worlds*, with its magnificent

reproductions, I've become more acquainted with a representational post-Holocaust landscape that I have only ever seen remotely captured in words, not images. But Bak's iconography draws on strong and well-known European pictorial traditions; from Breugel and Bosch through Magritte and Tanguy we find the real refigured as the surreal, and in Bak's work it is suffused with the unmistakable nightmarish smoldering of the historical moment after Auschwitz. There is a certain silence in all Bak's paintings that is akin to the serenity in his demeanor. It gives his subjects and objects the quality of still-life. In his writing, Bak explores the dead nature (*nature morte*) tradition in painting on which he draws to represent the bare life he lived during the war and post-war years.

In words and in images, Samuel Bak's work is a repair of the broken through the exercise of the beautiful. His surrealist repertoire suggests just how fitting this artistic style is to the sights and scenes Bak witnessed and imagined during the years in which he was an artist-in-the-making—scenes which have filled his canvases since. He takes viewers into a universe made of the unmistakable death machinery of the Nazi era and allows them to wander in awe among its ruins. Similarly, Bak's memoir asks that we also listen to his words, and hear some of the heart-stopping stories that are his legacy.

At his house, Bak expands on his brief passage through Landsberg in 1962, which seems to have left few traces in his memory, except for the wonderful tale about his needing to spend the night there. It was late. There were no more trains, he tells me, and the Hotel Goggl was full. But he pressed his case and was offered the only room left, the *Fuerstenzimmer*, the princely suite. In this enormous room there were two enormous beds pushed together. Bak comments that this night alone in Landsberg was a form of tikkun—a reparation for his first night there in 1945 when he and his mother slept in a small room with twenty people.

The story of his own and his mother's survival is recounted in his memoir with stunning visual detail. Before German-occupied Vilna was liberated by the Soviet army, he and his mother were hidden in a Benedictine convent where they knew the nuns well because an aunt had converted to Christianity and studied there. The structure had been appropriated as a dumping ground for countless confiscated books. In a grotto made of books, three Jewish families were in hiding, and they made room for the two new arrivals. People were sleeping on piles of books, sitting on chairs and at tables made of books; most memorably, they walk in slippers made of book bindings so as not to be heard by the soldiers bivouacked on the floors below.

I tell Bak I am writing a post-war love story set in Landsberg, and he wishes me luck, sighing over some of the terrible relationships and marriages made in this period of unimaginable urgency to meet, mate, and reproduce. He then recalls one of the first babies born in 1946—an infant born with *progeria*, a genetic hormonal disease that leads to premature and accelerated aging. I can still sense the uncanny awe experienced by Bak, then a teenage boy, at the sight of this infant with an oddly grown up face and strange voice. But that's not what motivates his telling. No, it's the surprise that one day the parents and their child were flown out of Germany to the United States because word had spread about this baby, and a doctor somewhere in America was doing research on this disease. The curse of fate that brought this young couple a child who would certainly die too soon also made them the envy of those who watched as they left for the paradise that America was imagined to be at that time.

As if to balance this tale of dreadfully mixed fortune, Bak reminisces about another couple. The woman about 40 and the man about 60, they were old for survivors. But they paired off, and soon the woman found herself pregnant. Their peers were perturbed.

(continued on page 92)

A Language of Languages

The Music of Savina Yannatou

Nick Bromell

I like to be quiet," says Savina Yannatou, the virtuosic Greek singer whose recent CDs have garnered her a world-wide audience since 1995. In *Spring in Salonika*, she recovers and interprets with meticulous and reverent love the music of Thessalonika's once-thriving Sephardic Jewish community—wiped out by the Nazis in 1944. In *Mediterranea*, she brings together folk songs from Greece, Lebanon, Israel, Sicily, Spain, and other countries bordering the Mediterranean, giving us a world of haunting songs beneath the maps and national boundaries that have cut apart the peoples of that region. And in her most recent work, the live recording *Terra Nostra*, she gives us a chance to sit in on the jazz-influenced musical conversation she has with the extraordinarily talented musicians who comprise her band, Primavera en Salonika.

But quietness is not the quality you'd first ascribe to Yannatou's work. Using her voice as an instrument of seemingly limitless range, she can croon a heartbreaking Scottish melody on one track of *Terra Nostra* and break into a fury of yelps and ullulations on the next—a traditional dance from central Sardinia whose lyrics warn:

Be careful, barons, to moderate
your tyranny,
Otherwise I swear to you that you
will lose your power...

Indeed, there are moments when Yannatou's voice sounds like some pri-

mal power distilled from the entire spectrum of women's vocalizations: not just a traditional feminine sweetness but shouts, moans, chatter, nagging, screams, laughter, coos, and cries. Her voice has incredible intricacies of expression, myriad details of delivery that would sound rococo if they weren't grounded on the very simple structures of the songs she sings. There is something birdlike in her quickness and precision and also in the overflowing generosity of her sound. When I heard her in concert I thought at once of Keats's famous line: her "voice pours forth her soul abroad in such an ecstasy." Part Bessie Smith, part Edith Piaf, part Ornette Coleman, and part Janis Joplin, she is anything but "quiet."

And yet, I know what she means about the quietness in her music. Like Billie Holiday (of whom Savina remarks, "I think she is the best of us all"), she is a *listening* singer. Her voice is called into different musical spaces and different musical cultures, inhabiting and interpreting them with the utmost respect. Her voice is always doubled back on itself, haunted and self-reflective—as though it were listening for something that is just around the corner, just out of reach, in the shadows at the edge of her sound.

Listening for what? If Billie Holiday tends to root us to one spot,

(the place from which her painful joy issues forth into the world), Yannatou carries us on a voyage into different musical dialects with varied textures and inscapes. In each song we hear her voice carefully feeling its way into a new idiom—be it a Lebanese lullaby ("let's go walking under the plum tree under the apple tree"), a Greek and Sephardic love song ("I've been around the world, have seen beautiful girls, but you, my Jewish beauty, have stolen my heart"), or a Berberine "Song of the Mother in Law" in which the old-aged mother moans like a goat in the village street. Yannatou does not simply appropriate these different worlds into her own or wander through them like an aimless tourist. When I ask her about her relationship to so many musical cultures, she says, "I try to stand in the atmosphere of those different voices." Then she thinks for a moment and smiles, "A language of languages—this is what I am trying to create."

Marshall McLuhan, Susan Sontag, Jean Baudrillard, and others have called attention to the close links between the visual image and the spread of global capitalism. Ripped



Nick Bromell is the author of *Tomorrow Never Knows: Rock and Psychedelics in the 1960s*. He teaches American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

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MUSIC REVIEW

from the dense fabric of life and vibrant with apparent significance, the image accords perfectly with the version of globality promoted by Benetton and Microsoft—a globality of information instead of knowledge, of surface instead of depth, of snap-shot multiculturalism instead of challenging cross-cultural encounters, of banality and repetition instead of insight and singularity.

Although music too can be used to move products off the shelf, when music insinuates itself into the modern, it has the ability to transform it instead of merely smoothing its path. (Think of the effect of Ravi Shankar's sitar in the pop sound of the Beatles.) Music can carry the expressive wisdom of rhythm and sound, a wisdom that lies beneath or behind words, and

thus a wisdom that always reminds us of the shadow of the unknown and the unmanageable—what cannot be rationalized, managed, spoken, calculated.

The mystery that Yannatou's voice reminds us of is precisely the one we most need to acknowledge as we negotiate the challenges of a global culture. That is the unfathomable mystery of the Other—he or she who stands within a different culture and yet stands with us in a global world as well. Listening to Yannatou, we hear her listening into a silence for the vanished voice of that Other. And in her recognition of the Other's presence in every moment and detail of each song, we too can hear that silent voice singing just behind hers. We hear the voice she is listening for even as we listen to hers.

We learn to listen. □

SAMUEL BAK (continued from page 90)

This was old to be having a child. Yet babies were the lifeblood of the survivors made flesh, and many were amazed at her fertility. Abortion was unthinkable after so much loss; she and her partner saw the pregnancy through, and she gave birth to a healthy baby.

He remembers the visits by young Zionists working to recruit children in the DP camps to come to Palestine and make a new country for Jews. And he recalls American visitors who came as if "to the zoo." As Jews themselves, both groups were curious about the experience of the survivors, were moved by the youngsters' vitality, and yet distanced themselves from the imprints of experience they perceived as frightening.

A few years ago, Rimantas Stankevicius, a senior advisor to the Lithuanian Senate, sought Bak out because he knew he was a child survivor of the Vilna ghetto, and because he admired his paintings. When he asked Bak what might make him consider a return to Vilnius, Bak replied, "a good reason, like a show of my paintings." So in Spring of 2001 Samuel Bak was honored as a guest in the town where he was born. He remarks on how well he

remembered the time before the war, during the ghetto and after—how easily he found his way around this ancient city, nearly 60 years later. And he recounts how the director of the Landsberg city museum made a trip to meet him at the opening in Vilnius and asked to exhibit his work in Germany. By May of 2002, history had come—if not full circle—then certainly spiraling around to connect some of the scattered pieces of his life.

And here I had come prevailing upon him to tell me stories—to feed my imagination with his memories—of these early places he had lived that began his worldly citizenship. When I asked whether any place felt like home, he pointed, comically, with two index fingers to either side of his head. During our visit I am struck by his wit, his ease with memory that is unlike my personal and scholarly experience of survivors' narratives. We talk about this and about the profusion of published and unpublished narratives that emerged either just after the war or not until much later, and we speculate on the silence in between and how the world wasn't ready to listen for long. And how fragile that listening remains. □

Art After Auschwitz?

Karin Badt

■ *The Pianist*. Directed by Roman Polanski. Focus Films, 2002.

Roman Polanski's forte is evil; he has treated this theme for the last fifty years. His latest film, *The Pianist* (winner of the Palme D'Or and three Academy Awards) gives the context to his vision: the Holocaust. Using the memoir of Wladyslaw Szpilman, a Jewish pianist who survived the Warsaw ghetto, Polanski tells his own story. His parents deported, his mother murdered, Polanski emerged from the war a twelve-year-old boy on his own, determined to make it in cinema. Like Szpilman, he became a world-renowned artist.

Szpilman's and Polanski's stories coincide, it seems, to give the same message of the triumph of art. The film begins with Szpilman playing Chopin in 1939 and ends in 1945 with him finishing his piece—a victory of survival. We are elevated by the chords of Chopin, the celebration of the human spirit, the power of Polanski's film. And yet Polanski's own art, this film, does not really offer this redemption. Instead, it offers us a cruel mirror to ourselves, our own curious relationship to art, our own complicity in evil.

Polanski forces us to watch, just as he did, the painful, progressive,

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build-up of evil. We are slotted into the same position of passivity and impotence. He tells his story in a cold

Once a man who carried ammunition for the uprising, he ends a pessimist, saying "What difference did it make?"

Szpilman empties into a shell, disconnected from the events he watches. Once a man who carried ammunition for the uprising, he ends a pessimist

way, choosing as his lead Adrien Brody, a none-too charismatic non-hero. With the pianist, we watch the walls of the ghetto go up, in five close-up shots of bricks. Images of massacre are cropped so that the victims' heads are close to ours. Off-camera sounds of trams, coughs, and dogs barking put us in the action, now.

Polanski's film gives witness, yet it also calls into question the witness. To scenes that in Szpilman's autobiography took place with two characters, Polanski adds an onlooking crowd. When a man licks up soup from the street, a darkened face in a window watches—and we too are forced to watch. In the second half of the movie, even our stand-in—the pianist—is reduced to watching the Holocaust happen through the window of his hiding place, as if evil itself were a movie.

Szpilman empties into a shell, disconnected from the events he watches.

As in most of Polanski's films, the world is so dauntingly evil the protagonist grows incapable of imagining an alternative future. Rosemary cannot escape the witches, so she accepts the devil's son. *Death and the Maiden* concludes with torturer and victim in a concert hall, listening together to the very music that accompanied the torture. It's a gesture of resignation. "Forget it Jack. It's Chinatown."

Polanski wants us to feel the reality of "Chinatown." He does not want to lure us into the complacency of believing in heroes—or the redemption of art. A conspicuous change from Szpilman's autobiography shows this decision. In the autobiography, we learn that the Nazi who saved Szpilman was a schoolteacher motivated by religious and humanitarian beliefs. He saved six Jews. As Szpilman describes him, Holzerlein asks the pianist to play for him not as a test of musical prowess, but, to give the

Inspiration in action



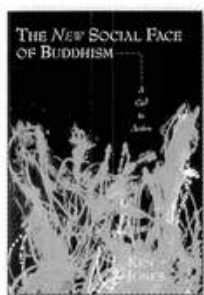
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FILM REVIEW

pianist a chance to express his humanity. The pianist plays so badly—his hands ruined—that the men bond in shame for what the war has done.

Polanski's *Hosenfeld* is a German who appreciates art, period. As Szpilman plays in the bombed-out basement, a blue halo glows. The two men nod in a stoic appreciation of the finer arts. This is hardly the moving moment of Szpilman's testimony. Rather, Polanski draws attention to the ethical limitations of bourgeois art appreciation, its hypocrisy. The piano playing maintains the hierarchy of the German voyeur over his pianist. His chest predominates. His Nazi badge, cap and ring shine in the blue light. He calls his pianist, "Jew."

The film ends with clapping. The hands of the pianist fly over the keyboard in mastery; the audience in the concert hall applauds.

Again the victory of art.

Or so we may think at first. As in at least six of Polanski's other films, including *Macbeth* and *The Tenant*, we cannot shake the notion that the spectators here are also applauding the violence they have just enjoyed. As the credits roll, the backs of the audience rise—and become our own. That audience facing the pianist is us, watching,

applauding this film of horrors. We are the crowd who watches an alienated figure return to an alienating world, nothing changed. For Polanski, the audience is always suspect: ready to accept totalitarian regimes, ready to accept that Chopin and a good film are enough. How different are we from the Japanese tourist who reaches out to shoot a picture of Rosemary with her devil? When the movie began, a watch was prominent on the pianist's wrist. The last shot reverses this image. Now the pianist faces right, with no watch, no history. The movie has circled back, creating a cul-de-sac of dead time. The pianist is now a set of disembodied hands, all his connections to emotions and humanity lie in his art. Is this an unmitigated triumph? Is the only hope to be alone with one's craft and earn the awe of others? The alienating universe continues.

Or, is there one final twist? As we rise from our seats, are we not provoked to resist identification with the alienating gaze? Challenged by our complicity in passive spectatorship, we may end by refuting the film's claims, by insisting on our necessary interactions with this world. If so, the film has succeeded and shows the real power of art. □

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Tomasz Mirkowicz

- *Journey through the Wilderness* by Moris Farhi. Saqi Books (distributed by St. Martin's Press/Palgrave), 1989.
- *Children of the Rainbow* by Moris Farhi. Saqi Books (distributed by St. Martin's Press/Palgrave), 1999.

If a friend asked me what Latin American writers he should read I would name Carlos Fuentes, José Donoso, Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, Augusto Roa Bastos, Julio Cortázar, Miguel Ángel Asturias, and, of course, Jorge Luis Borges. But if he told me he had time to read only one Latin American novel, I would recommend Moris Farhi's *Journey Through the Wilderness*, now available for the first time in the United States together with his *Children of the Rainbow*. *Journey Through the Wilderness* is the epitome Latin American novel, even though it is written by a British novelist, Moris Farhi, born in Ankara, Turkey, of Sephardi parents.

Unlike Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano*, which uses Mexico only as the backdrop for a plot involving Europeans, Farhi's tale of despair and hope conjures the people, history, myths, dreams, and landscapes of half of the South American continent. Set in an unnamed country inhabited by the descendants of the Incas and reminiscent of Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Chile, and Argentina, *Journey Through the Wilderness* is a powerful indictment of the dictators, oligarchs, military juntas, and old wealth who, between them, own 90

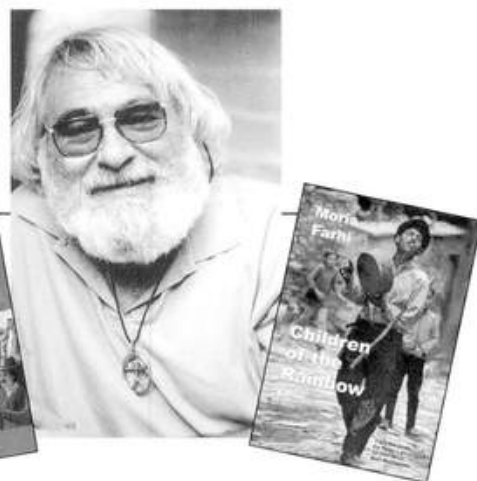
percent of their countries' resources and are the main cause of Latin America's political woes.

It is an equally powerful indictment of the American political and religious right and the multinational corporations which not only eagerly support this privileged minority, but also aid and abet it to stay in power.

Daniel Brac arrives in South America to restore a newly discovered religious masterpiece, rumored to portray—among the faces of the saints—the face of the legendary hero Manku Yupanqui. Locals claim that Yupanqui has conquered death and is due to reappear in order to lead the persecuted Indians to victory. Is it the face of Yupanqui or some other? Perhaps that of Daniel himself, an anguished, self-hating man who, unable to forgive, years ago, a momentary display of fear by his father—a partisan hero executed by the Nazis—renounced his Jewishness and became a Christian?

Some writers go for the mind, some for the heart—Farhi does both, and he pulls no punches. To attain wholeness and redemption Daniel must finally take his life into his own hands. He must find the sun's missing ray, feel on his face God's breath, even if God turns out to be not the stern masculine God of his forefathers but a feminine Deity who smiles at him with Her million eyes and touches him with Her million breasts. And if he can achieve this by putting on the chasuble of a martyred priest, and leading the Indians on their peaceful march to freedom, so be it.

Farhi, for many years chairperson of the English and International PEN's



Writers in Prison Committee, knows how to weave a wrenching, gripping tale. But his writing also offers compassion and a spiritual dimension rarely found in novels. His most recent book, *Children of the Rainbow*, champions the forgotten victims of the Holocaust, the Roma, who suffered as severe an extermination process as the Jews at the hands of the Nazis in World War II.

The theme of *Children of the Rainbow* is similar to that of *Journey Through the Wilderness*; again we have a persecuted people in need of a leader, and again such a leader materializes. He is Branko—born in the Gypsy compound of the Auschwitz concentration camp, smuggled out by a Red Cross worker, and adopted by a caring Swiss couple. He discovers his real roots as a grown and married man. His return to his native fold, the rituals of passage—which include ten years in the wilderness—he must undergo before he gains full acceptance, blend seamlessly into a single narrative in the best tradition of magical realism. But the biggest triumph of Farhi's novel is the Gypsy Bible which counterpoints each chapter. This holy book, said to have been lost in the mists of time but rewritten by an inmate in Auschwitz from the collective consciousness of the Gypsies, is a tour de force. Imaginatively recreated by the author from Romany lore, Old and New Testament accounts, the Koran and Greek and Hindu myths, it is a Bible of universal peace—the right message for our times. □

Tomasz Mirkowicz is a Polish writer, translator, and critic of American fiction.

Poetry Sikkum:

BOOKS BY OUR AUTHORS ...

Cascadia

Brenda Hillman
Wesleyan University Press

In her best book yet, Brenda Hillman finds herself "in search of a poem that 'floats inside its margins': the poem is 'Cascadia,' a landmass west of a California submerged beneath the ocean circa 130 million years ago. Under the pressure of an analogous emotional and perceptual condition, the poet here invents an idiom and stakes new ground by pushing at conventional formal boundaries and forms of identity both fluid and layered: 'You want to or you don't / Want to change but you'll change.'



Rib Cage

Greg Miller
University of Chicago Press

In his second book of poems, Greg Miller finds a stance towards the world very much in tune with the ambitions of *Tikkun*: with an eye for representing social reality, he listens for the sound of a spiritual movement. Miller's wide-ranging empathy finds expression in short-line lyrics and long, traditional meters and free verse, all supple and strong, and with an edge for breaking the bitter shell of experience to find sweet pith underneath.



Song & Dance

Alan Shapiro
Houghton Mifflin

The ever-extending, replenishing syntax which has become one of Alan Shapiro's signature embodiments of feeling and thinking here breaks open under the agonizing encounter with his brother's terminal illness, an encounter that leads through recognition to a new-found joy, "what never comes when called. // What hides when held." This is a searing elegiac sequence all the more concentrated for discovering shapes capacious enough for a grimly defiant humor, and thus a validating, authentic speech for love.

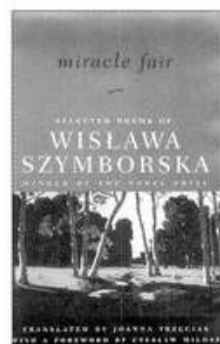


Miracle Fair

Selected Poems

Wisawa Szymborska
Translated by Joanna Trzeciak
with a foreword by Czeslaw Milosz
W.W. Norton and Co.

There is no better time to pick up this volume by one of the most beguiling and subtle ironists of contemporary world poetry, one who seems to write the lines that speak most directly to the conditions of breakdown. On the one hand: "They say hatred is blind. Blind? / With eyes sharp as a sniper's, / it looks bravely into the future / —alone." On the other: "Reality demands / we also state the following: / life goes on." With classical cool, she looks directly and with a dis-abused eye on a common reality riddled with comedy, tragedy, and the life we live behind the curtains drawn on history's stage.

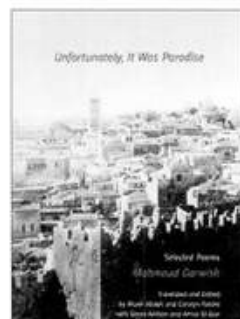


Unfortunately, It Was Paradise

Selected Poems

Malmoud Darwish
Translated and edited by Munir Akash and Carolyn Forché
with Sinan Antoon and Amira El-Zein
University of California Press, 2002

A recent recipient of the Lannan Foundation's Prize for Cultural Freedom, Darwish is considered the poet laureate of Palestine. While his voice rises from the historical and psychological condition of his people, like Yehuda Amichai he speaks to the conditions of the entire Middle East. Out of an impulse for praise as well as mourning, Darwish hears the contemporary poem of Palestine, and the poem of exile from Palestine, interwoven with cadences of sacred works and spiritual epics, from the *Qu'ran* to *Gilgamesh*. This translation presents the most indelibly consistent voice of a visionary poet still unheard in the United States and much of the world, a poet who sings for his people with an eloquence and warmth that refuses the ideological simplifications by which politicians hope to demonize the Other.

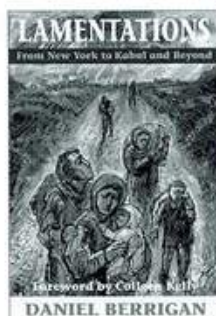


Sikkum: TIKKUN RECOMMENDS ...

Lamentations

Daniel Berrigan
Roman and Littlefield, 2002

Daniel Berrigan is a Jesuit priest who has been an inspiration to peace activists of all faiths. In this provocative and exciting commentary on the Biblical book of Lamentations, Berrigan brings us into the center of peace consciousness and how it could heal the contemporary world. Understanding the role of grief is central to building a world of love.



Resilience and Courage

Nechama Tec
Yale University Press, 2003

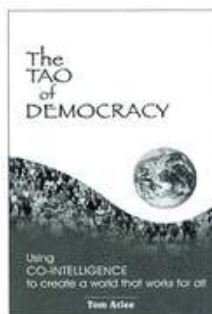
The ideology of male supremacy played an important role in the way Germans executed the Holocaust and in the ways that Jewish men and women resisted the Nazis. By focusing on these differences, Nechama Tec is able to paint a more nuanced picture of the realities of Jewish resistance than previous historians, and to highlight the ways that sexism can mix with racism in the development of an oppressive and genocidal social reality. Jewish efforts to retain a semblance of humanity in the face of murderous assault are featured in this remarkable and important book.



The Tao of Democracy

Tom Atlee
The Writers' Collective, 2003

Co-intelligence, the ability to generate or evoke creative responses and initiatives that integrate the diverse gifts of all for the benefit of all, is the path to building a world that will work. Intelligence of this sort operates on many different levels, and in this easy to understand and very important book Atlee shows us how to apply it to building a holistic politics that has striking similarities with the Emancipatory Spirituality that we've advocated in TIKKUN. A useful guidebook for world-transformers.



The Real Environmental Crisis

Jack M. Hollander
U. of California Press, 2003

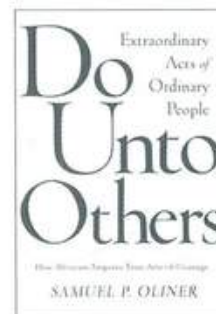
It's poverty! There is no way to eliminate environmental destruction without simultaneously eliminating global poverty. And eliminating poverty will require freedom and democracy, gender equality, universal education, widely available public-health services, quality medical care, investment in and global diffusion of new environmentally friendly technologies, elimination of diseases like HIV/AIDS, global economic arrangements to protect the weak from the strong, and development assistance focused directly on the needs of the poor. If the affluent countries become real partners with the poor in eliminating global poverty, the poor countries will become willing partners in the quest for a better global environment. The road to ecological sanity lies through global social and economic justice.



Do Unto Others Extraordinary Acts of Ordinary People

Samuel P. Oliner
Westview Press, 2003

"Throughout history ordinary people have exhibited heroic behavior." Thus begins a thrilling account of the ways that altruism inspires true acts of courage in people. Oliner presents a powerful challenge to the cynicism that is the "common sense" of modern American life by highlighting the ways that people have frequently been willing to risk their careers and their lives in order to act in accord with their own highest values. He shows that putting the welfare of others alongside our own is not some unique characteristic of saints, but a present reality for many people in the world. Oliner explores those who saved Jews in Nazi-Occupied Europe, military heroes, moral leaders, acts of philanthropy, and even the outpouring of generosity that accompanied 9/11. Anyone who thinks that TIKKUN's call for a politics of meaning and "a new bottom line" is based on "wishful thinking" must read Oliner's carefully documented empirical account of the pervasive power of altruism in human history and contemporary reality.



*Tikkun (te-kün) ... to heal, repair and
transform the world.
All the rest is commentary*

תיקון

**Bring the Troops Home ... from Iraq!
Bring the Settlers Home ...
from the West Bank and Gaza!**

Teach-In To Congress AND THE ANNUAL TIKKUN COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

JUNE 1-4, 2003

CAPITOL HILL HYATT, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Speakers include

- CONGRESSMAN DENNIS KUCINICH •
- YITZHAK FRANKENTHAL (chair of the Bereaved Family Forum—Israeli/Palestinian parents whose children were killed by terrorists or occupiers) • ZIAD ASALI (national chair, Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee) •
- PETER GABEL (read his article in this issue of TIKKUN) • RABBI MICHAEL LERNER • SUSANNAH HESCHEL •
- CORNEL WEST • REV. JIM WALLIS (*Sojourners*) • JEROME SEGAL • STEVE ZUNES •
- MARK LEVINE • J. J. GOLDBERG • MIRIAM GREENSPAN •

AND MANY SPIRITUAL VISIONARIES INCLUDING

DEEPAK CHOPRA • MARIANNE WILLIAMSON • RABBI ARTHUR WASKOW • NEALE DONALD WALSCH

IN PLACE OF WAR AND DOMINATION, WE WILL BE PROPOSING A

**New path to security—
for the U.S. & for Israel/Palestine**

This is a unique moment for advancing peace. Outrage at the war in Iraq is pushing the Bush Administration to show that it can create some progress toward Israel/Palestine peace. Peace is impossible without strongly pushing Ariel Sharon to BRING THE SETTLERS HOME. The pro-Sharon forces in the Jewish and Christian fundamentalist world are mobilizing thousands of lobbyists to block Bush. We are the real pro-Israel force—because we recognize that Israel's best interests are served by reconciliation with the Palestinian people. But that message will only be heard if you come to D.C. and make your views known.

It may be difficult for you to come, but this is a moment to make the sacrifice—your presence can actually make a difference. If you can't come, then please set up a meeting with your local Congressional representative and U.S. Senator, and ask them to come to our Teach-In to Congress to be exposed to the perspective of Americans who care about peace. This is one time when being there, presenting a rational argument, and showing that it is backed by real voters could actually change political dynamics.

Please come! And please become a dues-paying member of The Tikkun Community.

TO REGISTER: GO TO www.tikkun.org OR CALL 510-644-1200