

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

TIKKUN

Healing from War

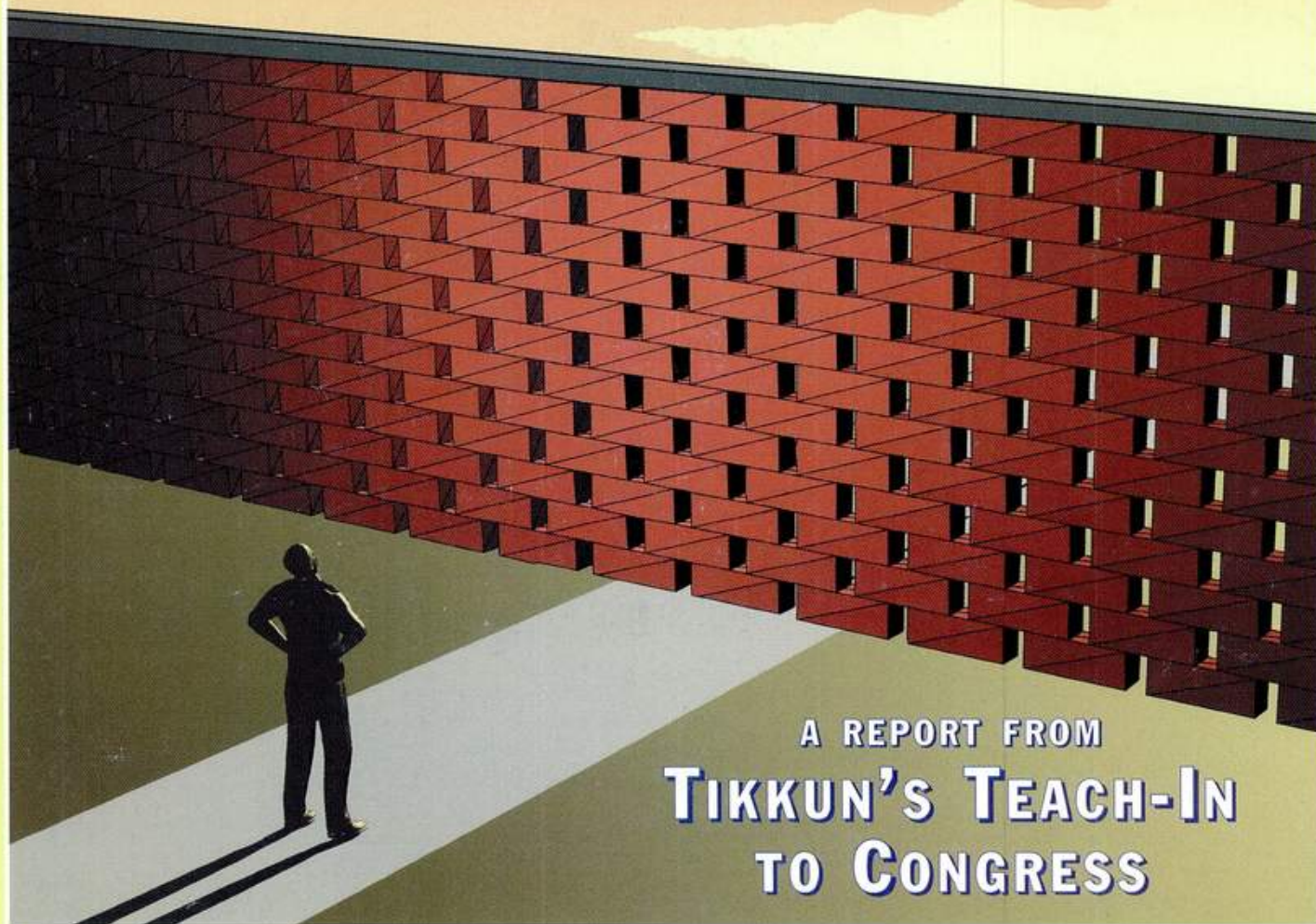
Deepak Chopra • Neale Donald Walsch
Jim Wallis • Marianne Williamson

A BIMONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY

JULY/AUGUST 2003

BEYOND THE ROAD MAP

Cornel West • Dennis Kucinich • Ziad Asali
Susannah Heschel • Yitzhak Frankenthal
Tony Klug • Everett Gendler • A. Lawrence Chickering



A REPORT FROM
**TIKKUN'S TEACH-IN
TO CONGRESS**

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PLUS:

Kim Chernin on Transcending Alzheimer's •
Jeff Gates & Patrick Mulcahey on Fighting America's War on the Poor •
Peter Gabel on Being Sick • and essays by Rami M. Shapiro, Margaret M. Gullette,
Michael Bérubé, Leonard Felder, Kirk J. Schneider, and more

For Jacob Four Months In The Womb

Now that you can stretch, distinguish
sweet from bitter, now that
your eyes are sensitive
to light and you are able
to move and shield yourself
from too much bright,
be watchful of the gleaming

angel. Fugitive, wanderer, peddler—
*we are all with our little star
to pander for a flicker.*
But, forever he
has come along, he who lasts
and laughs and burns
out our hearts, our pitiful
right. So remember to keep

climbing, climbing up the rungs
of the ladder made of rope,
made of wood, made of metal—
whatever the material you make
of it in your womb dreams.
Angels are circling
around you. And when the boldest
appears and says *I have hold of you,*

wrestle him with your clean foot.
Fight all night as the stunned
moon stares down, gives
you its timid glow and the wind
moves the branches to song.
*Ask For The Blessing. Ask
For It Now. Before*

you enter the burnt-out garden.
Hold it tight in your right
hand as you pass through
the flooded gate into
the land that lies fallow.
*Remind us again and again
how you fought off the angel.*

—Susan Hahn

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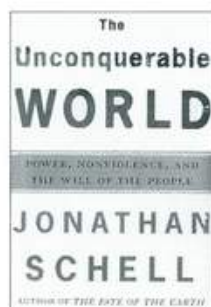
The Unconquerable World

Power, Nonviolence and the Will of the People

Jonathan Schell

Metropolitan Books, 2003

The Right seems to produce innumerable books by serious intellectuals insisting that war and empire are the only solutions to world terror. It is thus welcome to read Jonathan Schell's new treatise arguing for nonviolence. Schell's call for a "cooperative world" provides an important framework for all of us involved in *tikkun olam*.



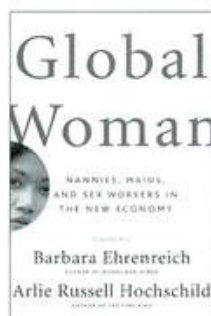
Global Woman

Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy

Edited by Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild

Metropolitan Books, 2003

This book takes globalization into our homes, where immigrant women clean, cook, and care for our kids in order to improve life for their own families. What could be a feminist success story—after all, these are mainly women who choose to leave their countries to earn better wages—is undermined by their loss of their own families and the harsh economic discrepancies they experience. This book is not a guilt trip but an attempt to understand—and mitigate—the gendered effects of the global economy.

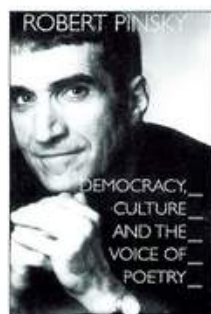


Democracy, Culture, and the Voice of Poetry

Robert Pinsky

Princeton University Press, 2002

Originally delivered as the Princeton Tanner lectures, these essays present fresh, important, and timely ideas about the relationship between poetry as a private act and poetry as a social presence. In elegant and forceful prose, Pinsky subtly and directly argues for poetry's place in a society steeped in mass culture.



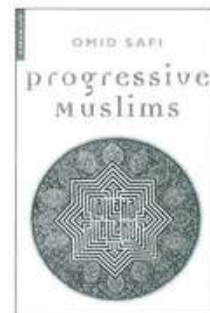
Progressive Muslims

On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism

Edited by Omid Safi

One World, 2003

In this much needed collection, Omid Safi has gathered a number of Islamic intellectuals to address traditional Islamic views on gender and religious pluralism. Coming from a deep engagement with the Islamic tradition, these progressives are attempting to renew Islamic thought from within; the result is a kind of Muslim *tikkun*.



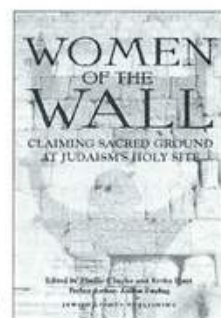
Women of the Wall

Claiming Sacred Ground at Judaism's Holy Site

Edited by Phyllis Chesler and Rivka Haut

Jewish Lights, 2002

Halachah, even as interpreted by most of the Orthodox, allows women to pray and read Torah in women-only groups. Yet, Israeli law prohibits women to pray aloud as a group at Judaism's most sacred spot, the Kotel or Western Wall. In 1998 a group of women, calling themselves Women of the Wall, began direct action to challenge this ruling. This book documents their protests and legal case, bringing us some of Jewish feminism's most important voices writing on women's Halachah, Israeli law, and feminist activism.



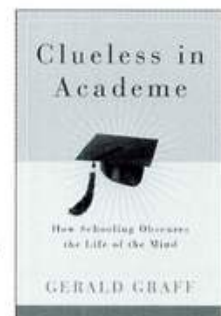
Clueless in Academe

How Schooling Obscures the Life of the Mind

Gerald Graff

Yale, 2003

Gerald Graff has spent much of his forty-year long career documenting the ways of the academy. But what started out as typically academic historical research has become, for Graff, a crusade to change the way professors profess. Graff's aim is to free critical thought from the academic tower that imprisons it, making the intellectual life once again accessible to those of us in the public sphere.



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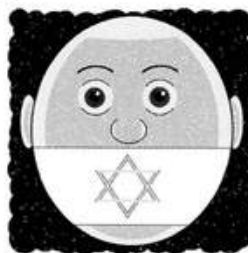
Letters to the Editor

Anti-Semitism Redux

To the Editor:

Three responses—by Milton Viorst, Richard Landes, and Susannah Heschel—accompanied my article, "Anti-Semitism on the Left" in your May/June 2003 issue. What follows is my reply.

Milton Viorst should be more careful in representing the ideas of those with whom he takes issue. Thus he states that "Kovel finds ... that the Jews have become irredeemable, having established a racist state," when the idea underlying my essay is that the Jewish people can redeem themselves by transforming the Israeli state. If I did not believe in redemptive potentialities within Judaism, why would I have taken the trouble to write this essay? Viorst is imputing to me an ubiquitous error, namely, that all Jews are Zionist, and that Zionism is permanently lodged in the



Jewish soul. By essentializing the connection between Israel and the fate of the Jews, this plays directly into the hands of anti-Semitism in a world justifiably outraged by the abuses of Israel and all too prone to sink into irrational hatred.

As Viorst sees it, Zionism's moral

downfall results from being taken over by religious fanatics. However, while religious extremism shapes Israeli abuses of one kind or another, it is less the cause than the result of Zionist failings. Bizarre ideologies are inherent in a society that would proclaim itself a

democracy, but only for one people—a society, in other words, whose emancipatory impulses are corrupted at the root. Religious Zionism is a fungus growing out of the decay of high secular ideals.

Richard Landes, the harshest of my critics, displays the bad conscience of those who would defend the indefensible.

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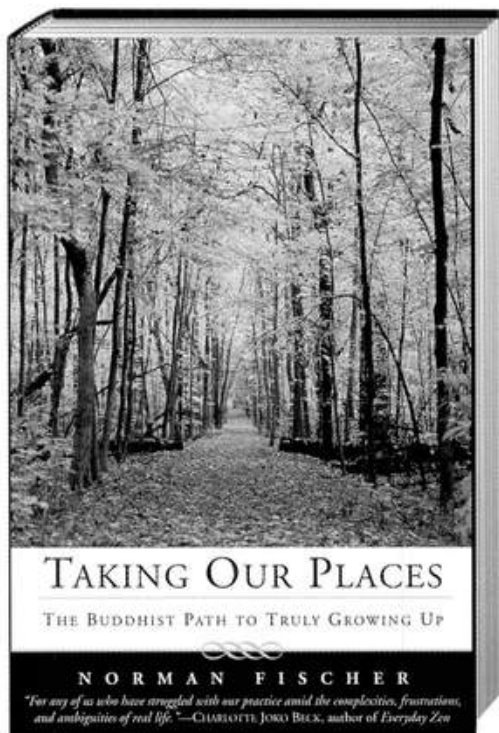
He shrieks where he should argue, and hurls vulgar epithets in my direction. I suffer from "masochistic omnipotence syndrome" (which seems to be a fancy way of calling me a "self-hating Jew"); or I am the victim of "a radical unconscious racism"—all this because I refuse to see how much worse, how incorrigibly evil, the Arabs are in comparison to Israel.

Thus Landes, a historian, overwrites history with diabolism. This kind of moral splitting perpetuates the cycle of retribution, violence, tribalism and revenge that has scarred our world for thousands of years. It is, literally, a hopeless position, at the core of which is a refusal to take responsibility. The Jewish people are currently going through a terrible moral crisis as a result of their association with Zionist oppression. This is the result of a compact with empire, as any decent historian will aver, although the compact is mystified as the fulfillment of an ancient dream to have a national homeland. Landes faults me for considering imperialism "the *only* sin" [his italics]. That is certainly not so, but I do regard imperialism to be the historically relevant force, and the effective source of that domination which, as it devolves through the various layers of society, corrupts a nation.

Empire also carved up the Arab lands and has seen to it that a corrupt set of satraps stifle their potentialities. Do the oppressed and invaded tend to behave badly? Without a doubt; being brutalized and humiliated is hardly ever a morally corrective experience. Are they to be held responsible for their acts? Most definitely; not doing so is to take away their humanity and to deny them the capacity to make a change. But Landes' error, which is paradigmatic for defenders of Zionism, is to remove these assessments from the historical frame within which they have occurred—the relentless march of the West and its capitalism over the globe and in particular, Southwest Asia, with its stupendous prize of oil.

Contrary to another of Landes' accusations, I do acknowledge "decency at home." Since having begun to speak out on this subject, I have met all kinds of ordinary citizens—including Jews and Palestinians—who are sick and tired of the cycle of hate. Their decency includes, however, recognition of the prime responsibility of Israel and its American

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LETTERS

master by virtue of conquest and occupation. That is the real point of advancing—or rather, reviving—the idea widely considered unthinkable, that of a “One State” solution: a secular, non-racist, non-retributive and authentic democracy. The political imagination needs to be fired with a worthy goal if it is to kindle transformative action. This *telos* is meant to define a direction of becoming—a way that all peoples can come together to devise the society that is not-yet but must be if we are to step off the wheel.

Susannah Heschel has taken a major step toward responsibility by recognizing the mounting barbarism of the Israeli state and the associated distortion of conscience among those who try to defend the indefensible. I salute her courage in taking this step. But I also feel obliged to repeat the condition noted above, that taking responsibility entails a hard look at the realities of a society as well as changing personal attitudes.

The problem remains Zionist racism. Heschel feels that I lose “perspective in labeling Israel a racist state,” this being to her a “self-serving act of political posturing....” Yet Heschel affirms that to heal itself, Israel will have to begin “a long process of eradicating racism from its culture.” Racism is not primarily a cultural process. To speak plainly, if you want to eradicate racism from Israel, then for starters you must abolish the Jewish monopoly over land, get rid of racist identity cards, and repeal the prohibition against political parties that question the Jewish character of the Israeli state. For it is not the “values,” or the “culture,” or the agonizing that matters here, but what Israel has done and how it is constructed.

Israel is a racist state because it contains statutes institutionalizing discrimination against non-Jews and especially Palestinians, and lacks the means of correcting these. It is striking in this regard how my three respondents, each with distinct perspectives on the problem, all fail to consider its material foundation. Instead they blame the bad religious Jews, or the worse Arabs, or opine for a strictly cultural change. I do not think it

far-fetched to wonder if this absence has to do with the terrible burden posed by Zionist racism, namely, that to sustain it runs against the most basic civilized values, while to overcome it means renouncing the dream of the “Jewish State.” But it is in such choices that our soul is forged.

ERRATUM: I would also like to correct an erroneous impression in my essay, where I characterized A.N.S.W.E.R., the group with which Rabbi Lerner was at

odds, as “Marxist-Leninist.” The organization is much too heterogeneous and complex to justify any such reduction, being composed of ten groups united only in their opposition to imperialism and racism. It is worth pointing out that pursuing the implications of this label, and Lerner’s reaction to the group, would take us into another problem provisionally set aside in these pages—that

of red-baiting and anti-Communism amongst the liberals. That is, however, for another day.

JOEL KOVEL
Willow, NY

Richard Landes responds:

“Masochistic omnipotence syndrome” is not the equivalent of “self-bating.” On the contrary, it underlines both the extraordinary moral passion and excessive self-esteem of those who have it. Synonym? Messiah complex.

I believe neither the Arabs, nor anyone, are incorrigible. My work focuses specifically on what helps cultures escape the “cycle of violence that has scarred human history.” But Kovel targets Western sin and excuses its victims, as if imperialism were not the dominant trope of Arab politics for over a millennium, and their violent rage did not come from a frustrated urge to dominate. He can dissect with laser sharpness the “moral rot” of religious fanaticism hiding at the roots of Zionism but cannot see it screaming from imams preaching “death to Jews” on PA television. In order to even contemplate a “one-state” solution, he must assume the Palestinians’ basic desire to play by the rules of civil society. He has no trouble accusing me of writing diabolic history, and yet his only comment on the fanatic and paranoid “history” written by

Palestinians is to accuse me of demonizing them for pointing it out.

Kovel does the moral splitting here: immense severity towards Israel and the West; immense moral indulgence for the Palestinians and more generally the Arabs. He has met Palestinians who are sick of the violence, yet still insist on Israel’s primary blame. In other words, they have yet to begin examining the faults in their own culture, the treatment of women—honor slayings of raped women!—homosexuals, religious minorities, and refugees, that permeate not only Palestinian culture but even Arab cultures not victims of Zionist “indignities and brutalities.” Rather than say to these people what he says to the Jews—look candidly to your own rot—he affirms their narrative in which Israel is the cause of their suffering, and dismantling it will bring relief.

I believe the Palestinians can change and grow, just as I believe that many Israelis would love that opportunity. But I submit to your consideration the following: if you engage in a kind of therapeutic counterbalance, trying to spare the Palestinians further humiliation by giving them a moral pass and heaping moral indignation on Israel, if you valorize their scapegoating rather than demand that they revisit their foundational narratives as we expect from the Israelis, you do not contribute to peace and understanding. Rather you strengthen the voices of demonization and weaken the voices of civil society. If we would put an end to “apartheid democracy,” we must not only criticize the Israelis for only treating their own people decently, we must criticize the Arabs for not even treating their own decently.

To the Editor:

There are some important gaps in Joel Kovel’s analysis.

Kovel calls Israel a “pit bull for the United States.” It is certainly clear that the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem benefits from the U.S. military machine. But that a beneficiary is also a tool is not automatically so. The difficulty the United States obviously feels in actually deploying Israeli power is a hint that “beneficiary” and “tool” are not necessarily the same.

Even the benefit that Israel derives from U.S. military aid is more ambiguous than it might seem. If all U.S. military



aid were cut off, the Israeli military machine would still be quite capable in the short run of making life even more miserable for Palestinians, or making it impossible for them to keep living on the West Bank/Gaza.

Such a withdrawal of U.S. aid might turn some Israelis against the Sharonista policy. Or it might play to their deepest fears that they must depend on themselves alone, and drive a majority even further to the right.

I suggest that if we actually want change, not merely the emotional rush of self-righteousness, we explore a number of ways of opening Israeli society to political change.

Imagine a policy that would end those aspects of U.S. aid that sustain Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, and instead transfer those funds to redress past U.S. misdeeds. Such a policy would put much more emphasis on carrots than on sticks. Peoples, as well as individuals, that are suffering from traumatic abuse, do not react well to even more abuse. Both the Palestinian people and the Israeli people are in that place. Carrots are likely to move them both far more effectively than sticks alone.

RABBI ARTHUR WASKOW
Director, The Shalom Center

To the Editor:

I appreciate your effort to grapple with authoritarianism and anti-Semitism in the anti-war movement.

There is, however, one issue which all your writers neglected to mention—the censorious bias of the mainstream media in America, which astoundingly squelches information and debate that is acceptable in Israel itself. When the peace movement emphasizes Israel's crimes to the exclusion of others, in particular those of Palestinians, it is not being unbalanced, but rather it is redressing the imbalance that exists in the wider society. It is hard to argue that the peace movement would be doing its job if it did not lean pro-Palestinian.

Finally, A.N.S.W.E.R. stands for Act Now to Stop War and End Racism. The R does not stand for Violence. (Duh!)

JOEL FRANGQUIST
San Francisco, CA

TIKKUN responds:
O.M. Our Mistake.

Spirit of Hope

To the Editor:

I long ago gave up on the idea that a "Western" faith might find a useful way to marry authentic spiritualism with real-world cultural dynamics. A friend and fellow peace advocate handed me Peter Gabel's "Spiritualizing Foreign Policy" (May/June 2003). This is easily the most comprehensive vision of the way to a more harmonious world community that I've ever seen.

All I can say is thank you!

STEVE BARTELT
Almond, WI



War on People

To the Editor:

George Vradenburg presents a compelling argument in his piece, "Love in the Time of War" (May/June 2003). Basically his argument is humanitarian, to the effect that the Americans and British have done a very good thing in removing a brutal dictator who has killed hundreds of thousands of his own people.

But Vradenburg seems to have missed the moral and political implications of the attack on Iraq. In attacking unilaterally, this "coalition" has declared that their moral vision is so perfect that it requires no world political backing. The obvious implication of this moral high ground is that any nation can attack another nation as long as it feels morally justified. Is this democracy? Is this freedom? Of course it isn't!

It may be wonderful to feel good that we Americans have "liberated" the Iraqi people, but we have done it at a horrible price. We have given the world a model of a bullying nation, unwilling to compromise with others, which preaches a superior morality in order to justify war. This is certainly not the way to peace.

DR. JULIAN BLAIR
Santa Rosa, CA

To the Editor:

During my UN human rights work in the 1980s, Saddam Hussein's atrocities were well known and documented. I worked with Kurds, Marsh Arabs, and Iraqi Communists who were in forced exile and whose families had been tortured and killed. The nadir was 1988,

when Hussein used chemical weapons against Kurdish villages and Iranian soldiers in the north. At every step of the way, the Reagan, then Bush administrations blocked every resolution.

I resent the accusation in Juan Cole's essay in your May/June 2003 issue that "the anti-war movement" did not properly address Saddam Hussein's human rights abuses.

Had the United States not blocked all diplomatic measures in the 1980s, Hussein would have been toppled, just as the apartheid regime in South Africa was. The problem is the United States, and that's what we need to deal with.

DR. ROXANNE DUNBAR-ORTIZ
San Francisco, CA

War on Animals

To the Editor:

Charles Patterson's excellent article on animals and the Holocaust (May/June 2003) does a fine job of making people aware of the massive suffering of animals caused by our meat centered diet, especially factory farming.

We Jews rightly consider the Holocaust to be a uniquely tragic incident in the history of our people and of mankind. But it is also true that cruelty to animals is strictly forbidden under Jewish law, and there is an entire code of laws ("Tsa'ar ba'alei bayim," the commandment to prevent the suffering of living creatures) mandating that other creatures be treated with compassion.

Thus, we Jews, especially, should understand that the massive suffering of animals that is depicted by Patterson and PETA cannot be allowed to go unnoticed or unopposed, especially the certification as kosher of many of these animals that spend their lives in misery but are killed in the prescribed manner.

Because we are so well acquainted with suffering, we Jews should be (and indeed often are) in the forefront of those trying to speak for those who cannot. There is no tradition of our faith that is older or more revered.

LEWIS REGENSTEIN
President, Interfaith Council for the Protection of Animals and Nature, Atlanta, GA

Bush Deserves the Support of the Jewish Community

George Vradenburg

Although I take great pride in my association with TIKKUN and its rich and diverse intellectual life, I have a political orientation quite different from most writers for this magazine (see, for example, my pieces supporting the war in Iraq).

So, for those of you who read this Publisher's Page, it may come as no surprise that I recently joined the Republican Jewish Coalition and attended its Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C.

At the RJC meeting, one quite passionate and articulate woman asked, "What should we do about this new Jewish organization, TIKKUN, which is organizing to advocate on Middle East issues?" The RJC's executive director appropriately responded that it was not the RJC's role to "do" anything about other Jewish organizations with different perspectives. I spoke up to say that TIKKUN supported President Bush's aggressive effort to bring about an equitable and secure two-state solution in the Middle East, and that Bush's policies had the potential to change domestic Jewish political alignments. My response was met with opposition ("Israel should not pursue the road map until terrorist networks are dismantled, claims to a right of return are abandoned, and there is full recognition of Israel as a Jewish State"), cynicism ("the day that Rabbi Michael Lerner supports President Bush will be the day that Al Franken supports him"), and some hopeful curiosity ("I'd like to subscribe to TIKKUN to learn more").

The RJC meeting highlighted what I see as a major challenge as we seek Middle East peace. Many of us feel secure in a conservative, "no compromise" posture and fear taking risks for peace. As a result, we are focused on the reasons why peace *can't* happen rather than on why it *should* happen.

The Tikkun Community is taking a more hopeful approach. In its Resolution for Middle East Peace, for example, TIKKUN focuses on the benefits of an equitable two-state solution. By enumerating what each party will gain as a result of peace, we hope each party will feel an increased incentive to pursue the incremental steps of the road map.

The benefit to Israel is clear: security. The vision of "a Jewish state, living side-by-side in peace with its neighbors" has been the Zionist dream since Israel's founding. At the Aqaba Summit, Prime Minister Sharon embraced that vision

as central to Israel's national security and identity. To achieve that vision, however, three difficult issues must be resolved.

Jewish settlement activity. Using settlements as a means of extending the Jewish State into Palestinian-populated areas is futile and dangerous to Israeli security and identity. And using IDF-protected settlements as an advanced line of defense inside Palestinian territory is fundamentally inconsistent with Palestinian self-determination and sovereignty. Hard as it may be, the conservative elements of the Diaspora must support efforts to subject Jewish settlements to Palestinian sovereignty, or, if necessary, to convert the residents of those settlements from Jewish settlers to Palestinian refugees.

Palestinian terrorist networks. Terrorist networks must be disarmed and dismantled, not just quieted. This will occur only as Israel takes steps to address its settlement policy. But even a willing Palestinian leadership will be incapable of dealing with these networks itself, so Arab states and the United States must help. The Bush administration has obtained positive commitments to do so from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt. But a more muscular Bush Administration policy aimed at Syrian and Iranian support for those networks is needed as well, whatever objections the progressive elements in the Diaspora may have for the Bush administration's anti-terrorism policies more generally.

Palestinian right of return. A literal implementation of a right of return for Palestinians who abandoned or were forced out of their homes in 1948 would be a demographic time bomb within a Jewish state. Yet it is important, particularly for Jews, to respect the yearning of a displaced people for its ancestral home. A creative means of addressing this issue through refugee compensation, relocation, and visitation must be found without making such terms a precondition for the road map.

This is a dangerous, but hopeful, point in history for Israel. Failure of the Bush initiative risks yet another escalation of violence. Success promises peace and security. Given those stakes, all elements of the Diaspora, whether conservative or progressive, should be cheering President Bush on and finding ways to help him succeed—rather than nit-picking the road map, pointing out why failure is inevitable, or attacking each other because of differing agendas on other issues. For our own well-being, we must join together to aspire towards a more hopeful future. □

George Vradenburg is co-publisher of TIKKUN.

Tikkuning the Road Map

A Report from the Tikkun Conference

Michael Lerner

The goal of the June Tikkun Teach-In to Congress—in which Tikkun Community members met with over 200 Congressional offices—was to take Members of Congress beyond the road map. We predicted the escalated violence that has occurred following the road map's signing by Mahmoud Abbas, Ariel Sharon, and George W. Bush. We argued there, and continue to argue in this issue, that the road map can be tikkuned (healed, transformed), but only if we first can get the administration, Congress, the media, and the U.S. public to understand exactly why the road map as currently constructed is destined to fail.

The road map has two fatal flaws. First, it disempowers the moderates, particularly Palestinian moderates. Second, it empowers the extremists.

Imagine that you are the Palestinian Authority today. Your police forces and military capacities have been virtually wiped out by two years of Israel's systematic efforts to decimate every aspect of your security arrangements. You are now told by the road map that your first obligation, preceding everything else, is to wipe out or at least imprison or disable those elements in your own population who don't want peace at any price (Hamas, Hezbollah) because they are religious ideologues who want to see the total elimination of Israel. How in the world are you going to accomplish that? You have virtually nothing in the way of military or police capacity.

So you turn to your population and say, "If you, ordinary Palestinian citizens, can help us isolate Hamas instead of offering them emotional and political and logistical support, we can, after three years of proving how well we do at this, guarantee you what the road map offers ... namely, a negotiation that might produce some variant of a Palestinian state."

Now Palestinians have been through negotiations of this sort before. Remember Oslo? It promised them the West Bank and Gaza in five years if they recognized Israel. This



amounted to 22 percent of pre-1948 Palestine under the British Mandate, while Israel would get the right to hold 78 percent of pre-1948 Palestine. Palestinians accepted this. They recognized the State of Israel (President Clinton actually attended the ceremony at which this was done). Israel's response? Israel increased the number of settlers in the West Bank from 120,000 to over 200,000 and then Ehud Barak at Camp David offered them a "great deal" in which they were told that the negotiations at Oslo were no longer relevant and all they would get would be 85 percent (some say 92 percent—there was never a written offer, but the insult factor was just as strong no matter what the percentage) of what Israel had promised seven years earlier.

After proclaiming that “occupation had to end,” a statement that encouraged those of us who have been calling it an occupation for the past thirty-six years, Ariel Sharon went on to promise the settlers that “your great grandchildren will still be living in these settlements.” Now how could he be telling the truth, if he was signing the road map and yet promising that the settlements would stay in place?

Easy. Sharon has frequently explained to the people who bother to listen that he intends to agree to a Palestinian state that would be confined to the major Palestinian cities, with a sliver of land between them to make them “contiguous,” while retaining Israeli control of over 50 percent of the West Bank in order to preserve the major Israeli settlements. He is willing to dismantle all of the tiny “illegal” settlements set up in the last two years, plus possibly a few of the smaller settlements of previous years located in positions that might be militarily more difficult.

As Israeli peace movement people point out, the state Sharon is willing to offer Palestinians would be less than half of what was promised at Oslo (less than 11 percent of pre-1948 Palestine), would have no economic or political viability, and could not be accepted by even the most moderate of Palestinian leaders (thus guaranteeing that at the end of the road map the Palestinians would once again be pictured as the irrational group that had rejected another generous offer because of their “extremism,” while Israel would be pictured as the “always ready for compromise” society that had made the “painful compromise” of withdrawing from some of its conquered territories).

Is it any surprise that this plan has not given the moderates very much to offer the population to energize them to take the steps necessary to isolate the extremists?

With this as the supposed “great result” of following the road map, the moderates look like fools to many Palestinians, and for that reason Abbas will be unlikely to be able to deliver the support of the Palestinian population that would be necessary to isolate the extremists.

There are, of course, some people who will never be won over, no matter what the road map looks like. But there are many Palestinians who respond to Hamas today who did not similarly respond ten years ago. One central reason why people get attracted to fundamentalist worldviews is that they have given up hope in achieving a reasonably fulfilling life in this world. That hope remained alive for many at the time of Oslo, but the growth of new settlements and the particularly vicious forms of Israeli occupation in the past decade (including 24-hour curfews in the cities, road-blocks with humiliating body searches, house demolitions, torture and imprisonment of tens of thousands of young men,

reduction of employment to the point at which hundreds of thousands of people face severe malnutrition) has created a great openness to visions of salvation in heaven achieved by violence against the occupiers. It will not be easy to break through to people who have lost their hope, but one way to do so would be for Israel to act in a new spirit of generosity and kindness by ending the Occupation and starting to provide economic assistance to the Palestinian people. Instead, the road map promises only to consolidate rather than to end the Occupation. The Palestinian moderates, then, are disempowered by the process.

That’s problem number one.

Problem number two: the road map totally empowers the extremists. It says to Hamas, Hezbollah, and break-away factions of Fatah: “You don’t want to see this peace process continue? Oh. Well in that case, let us tell you what to do: engage in acts of violence against Israeli civilians. We will then use that as proof that the

Palestinians have not fulfilled their obligations under the terms of the road map, and so we promise you that we will do just what you want—end the process or indefinitely postpone it. Ariel Sharon will say that the Palestinians are proving themselves incapable of running a state, the Israeli population will agree, and the United States will say that it made its best possible effort.”

Solutions

Of course, there is a way to solve the road map’s problems, and that way is precisely what the Tikkun Community proposed to Congress. First, reverse the order of the road map. Instead of leaving negotiations for the end of the process, three years from now, conduct them at the beginning of the process, right now. Use the power and, from the standpoint of Israel, the “moral authority” President Bush gained by destroying the Saddam Hussein regime (the only even vaguely credible military threat to Israel, though, as it turned out, it was never very credible), to push Israel to end the Occupation and the Palestinians to renounce the “right” of return.

Lest the administration not know what terms would seem fair and just to moderate majorities on both sides, Tikkun’s Resolution for Middle East Peace specifies that precisely. It calls first for the creation of an international force to act as a buffer between the two sides, to separate them, and to provide protection for each against the other. Then it calls for terms that include:

1. A return of Israel to the pre-1967 borders with “minor border changes mutually agreed upon” (this is the language that both sides agreed to at Taba in 2001 just before Ariel Sharon was elected, and it means that Israel would retain



control over the Wall and sections of Jerusalem that had a Jewish majority at the time of the signing of Oslo).

2. Creation of an economically and politically viable Palestinian state in all of Gaza and the West Bank (with minor border modifications specified in point one).

3. An international fund to provide compensation for Palestinian refugees (sufficient for them to be able to live at a standard comparable to the average standard of living of Israelis), compensation for Jews who fled Arab lands between 1948-1967 (because we are even-handed and recognize that the Arab Israeli war has caused suffering to both sides), and funding to help resettle Israeli settlers within the pre-1967 borders of Israel. Israeli settlers should be allowed to stay in their settlements if they agree to become fully law-abiding citizens of the Palestinian state, understanding that they are no longer citizens of Israel and that Israel will not intervene on their behalf should their future actions be found to be in violation of the laws of the new Palestinian state. No place in the world should be *judenrein*—Jews should be able to live in Palestine just as Palestinians live in Israel.

4. Recognition of Israel by all surrounding Arab states, through peace treaties and normalization of relations in all respects.

5. Sharing water and joint cooperation on ecological issues.

6. Joint cooperation in fighting the extremists on both sides who will inevitably continue violence after this agreement is implemented, possibly for decades to come.

7. Decisive steps to end the indoctrination of hatred of the other side in the media and school systems of both peoples, plus creation of institutions to foster reconciliation and a new attitude of generosity, trust, and mutual respect.

If this settlement were agreed upon by both sides now, as the first step of the process, then the moderates would be able to offer their own populations something real and tangible if they would cooperate in isolating their extremists. Now, add one other ingredient: Let Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the United States jointly proclaim that no matter what acts of violence are done between now and the end of the road map, the terms of this settlement will in fact be implemented in three years and a Palestinian state living in peace with Israel and occupying all of the West Bank and Gaza will come into existence. That would disempower the extremists further. At that point, the rest of the road map could be implemented and would actually work.

Teach-In Testimony

Because our critique and solution make so much sense, the 500 people who came from every corner of the United States to the Tikkun Teach-In to Congress found ourselves facing an amazing experience: the Congresspeople and staffers with whom we met were frequently much more receptive to what we were saying than we had imagined possible. Tikkun Community members often were told, "What

you are saying makes so much sense, we only wish it would happen." Many of them told us that they wished there was some way that the administration would listen to our message. Staffers frequently told us that their own bosses would be happy with our message except for one problem: the continuing fear that they would put themselves in danger if they dared challenge AIPAC and the pro-Ariel Sharon lobbies that are associated with AIPAC.

There is the problem. As one Congressman told me directly, "What you are saying is so obvious that it's surprising no one else is saying it besides TIKKUN. But if I say it, look

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Maxine Waters

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE (D-LOS ANGELES, CA)

“I am very pleased to be here for a lot of reasons.... I want you to know that when I heard about what was going on, and I heard about TIKKUN's role, and I heard about Michael Lerner's role, I said to myself, here's someone who I have known for many years, who has had so much integrity on this very difficult issue, who has tried to be a voice above the confrontation and the accusations. If for nothing else, I owe it to him to be here, to say thank you so much.”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

at the costs. On the one hand, a percentage of people in my Congressional district will label me 'anti-Israel' because I'm not following AIPAC's line, and that will cost me votes. Moreover, AIPAC might target me, the way they did Cynthia McKinney, and manage to get monies from all over the country to pour in to my next opponent. And meanwhile, what will the progressives do? If I have to judge from their past behavior, when it comes down to election time they'll be filled with self-righteousness about the dirtiness of politics, so they won't organize to support me, but instead will find other issues in which I haven't been pure enough, and then put their energies somewhere else, so that I can't count on their active support to offset all that I lose. So it's just a lose/lose situation for me to take a stand. Until there are a serious group of voters in my district who are going to be 'single issue' voters on this question, and who won't vote for me unless I support the TIKKUN perspective, it makes no political sense for me to publicly identify with your position. Until you have organized people with the same dedication to peace as they in AIPAC have to maintaining the Occupation, I can't afford to go with you publicly, even though privately I really do hope the president listens to you, because what you say makes 100 percent sense.”

EDITORIAL

Well, we in the Tikkun Community are not a lobby, and we are not an electoral organization. But we can undertake a massive education effort, using the Resolution for Middle East Peace as the vehicle for this process. As a result of the feedback we've gotten in D.C., we are making some minor adjustments to the language of the Resolution—you will find it in revised form at our website, www.tikkun.org. You can sign it on line, download it and send it to everyone you know (along with this editorial, if you think that might help), and get people to sign it on line. If you are one of those who doesn't like to work with computers and emails, you can contact us at (510) 644-1200, and we will send you copies. Then work with us to create a local Tikkun Community in your area, create a house party to show a TIKKUN video we will provide to jump start the discussion, and get your local city council, your professional organization or union, your church or synagogue, and local branches of your political party to publicly endorse the Resolution. Come to the TIKKUN Summer Institute and get training so that you can do a better job of explaining these issues to others.

Until we become as powerful as AIPAC, expect more and more violence in the Middle East.

The U.S. Role

Given the logic of our position, how can we make sense of why Bush has chosen the road map? The more cynical explanation is that he embraced the road map to appease Tony Blair and the Arab states as their payoff for their support for the war in Iraq, believing that Blair's problem with the left-wing of the Labor party and the Arab leaders' problems with their own population could be dealt with by creating a process that would actually put off any need to confront Israel about ending the Occupation, and would meanwhile give them the ability to say that something positive had come out of the Iraq war and was now being tried. We then get a charade of toughness: Bush will push Sharon to close down the token settlements (there are about thirty hillsides on which Jewish extremists have brought a few trailers and claimed that these are new settlements: dismantling these "illegal settlements" will be used as proof by Ariel Sharon that he is taking the "difficult steps" that will then be hailed by the *New York Times* and

others as proof that Israel is really trying to comply with the road map). Sharon will accede to this "show of courage" by Bush. Meanwhile, the Occupation will continue and the suffering of the Palestinian people will continue. Palestinian anger will boil over into coordinated strikes by Hamas, Hezbollah and factions of Fatah, and these will then be used as proof by the Right that the Palestinians are incapable of running their own society or preventing terrorism. And in case the Palestinians don't get inflamed enough, Sharon then will strike out against purely civilian targets (as Israel did once again on June 9, with no pretense of a military target, simply sending rockets into Gaza and targeting the non-military, civilian leadership of Hamas, meanwhile killing innocent bystanders and wounding dozens more—forcing Abbas to side with Hamas and undermining the moderates all the more).

But what if it's not a charade? What if Bush and Powell are sincerely interested in finding a way to peace, but they don't know how to get the parties to change their ways?

The United States has immense power which it could bring to bear on Israel and Palestine, should it choose to do so. In three months it was able to overthrow the regime of Saddam Hussein. When the first George Bush refused loan guarantees to Israel in 1992, facing down the opposition of AIPAC and others, he created the circumstances for overturning the government of Yitzhak Shamir and the ascendancy of Yitzhak Rabin. A decision by the United States to order Israel to end the Occupation immediately and to allow a buffer force to come and separate the two sides while a Palestinian state was being put into place could be enforced by threats of an economic boycott, though we doubt if even that much would be necessary. Similar pressure should be put on Palestinians to unequivocally give up the Right of Return (though in fact after a Palestinian state had been living in peace with Israel for some length of time it is virtually certain that Israelis would soften their attitude and allow a reasonable number of Palestinians per year to return to Israel—in previous editorials we've suggested 15,000–25,000 a year—but only when Israel felt secure enough to be able to make that offer freely and not as a result of outside demands).

We'd much prefer if Israel ended the Occupation on its own. But our friends in the Israeli peace movement tell us that the only way this will happen is if the United States makes it happen. Inside the Beltway, however, the use of U.S. power in this way is ruled out as "unrealistic" for one and only one reason: because of the power of AIPAC and the pro-Ariel Sharon lobby to convince politicians that they dare not go this path. Yet using America's power to impose a settlement along the lines we've specified above would be a real pro-Israel path, because it would achieve the only security that Israel will ever have: peace and reconciliation with its neighbors. That's why it is so important to continue to build the Tikkun Community and spread our analysis and our Resolution. And that depends on you. □

Work for TIKKUN!

Are you super organized, enthusiastic, committed to *tikkun olam*, and good with people? If so, apply to be the personal assistant to Rabbi Michael Lerner. Duties include: scheduling, event planning, office organizing, financial management, reception, and acting as Rabbi Lerner's liaison to Beyt Tikkun synagogue, the Tikkun Community, and the public. Work with a fun, warm and supportive staff. Competitive salary commensurate with experience and excellent benefits.

TO APPLY: Please send a self-revealing letter to TIKKUN, 2342 Shattuck Ave., #1200, Berkeley, CA 94704 or fax to 510-644-1255, or email to magazine@tikkun.org and put "Assistant to Editor position" in the subject heading.

“Not a Minute to Hate”

Cornel West

This moment is a very crucial one. When we talk about the State of the Spirit 2003, we are talking in part about the underdeveloped status of three particular forms of spirituality: Socratic spirituality, prophetic spirituality, and democratic spirituality.

Socratic Spirituality

One of the reasons that we are dealing with such dark and bleak times is because we don't have enough Socratic spirituality—we don't have enough courage to think critically. Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.” You have to examine those tacit assumptions and unacknowledged presuppositions that the dominant paradigm wants to hide and conceal. It takes courage to think critically in a business civilization that is anti-intellectual, that believes that citizens are primarily consumers rather than active agents shaping their destiny.

Socratic spirituality begins, not with the self-righteousness of attacking others, but with examining ourselves. To be Socratic is to ask the most painful questions about one's self, one's society, and the world. We must be willing to make that leap. This is not just about fighting bigotry, though it is that too. We must be willing to pierce through the mendacity and hypocrisy, the prevailing assumptions and presuppositions, of mainstream opinion. So, by the time we get to George Bush, we have already worked through ourselves, and we can be filled with righteous indignation!

Prophetic Spirituality

All of us can do that work of critical thinking; all of us can be filled with that righteous indignation. But given all our talk about the ecumenical and the universal, which I also affirm, I want to acknowledge our specificity as well. I am a blues person. I come from a particular tradition and people and heritage that has had to engage in a sad but sweet indictment of misery by being Socratic. That's what the blues is.

My tradition raised questions, like those about white supremacy, that most of the larger society didn't want to interrogate. That's the whence that I flow from. We all have our particular contexts and whences.

Cornel West is co-chair of the Tikkun Community, University Professor of Religion at Princeton University, and author of sixteen books, including Beyond Eurocentrism and Multiculturalism (Common Courage Press, 1993) and Jews and Blacks.

The prophets of my blues tradition are Tennessee Williams, Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, William Faulkner. There are other prophetic traditions: the Jewish tradition of Amos, Micah, Isaiah, Abraham Joshua Heschel, rich and deep. The Irish tradition, Eugene O'Neill, with blues shot through, raising fundamental questions. The Islamic tradition of Ali Shari'at and Abdolkarim Soroush—Socratizing Islam.

This nation needs Socratic prophets, because it suffers from the belief that it can possess its soul by possessing commodities. Our nation is on its way to becoming the greatest tragedy of human history, precisely because it believes it can conquer the world and not in the process lose its soul.

Prophetic spirituality is the condition of truth, and it is the condition of truth to allow suffering to speak, to allow misery to become visible and pain to be heard. Prophetic spirituality talks about the courage to love and be hurt, and then goes on to enact that love.

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Maxine Waters

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE (D—LOS ANGELES, CA)

“I signed the Resolution. More than that, I have a responsibility to circulate this and get lots more signatures. I have this responsibility because I've been absent from the debate because I just gave up. Now I'm back in.”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

In my own particular tradition, one of the greatest moments in American culture occurred in August 1985 when Emmett Till's body was brought back to Chicago at Pilgrim Baptist Church. The Reverend Julius Caesar Austin stepped to the lectern and introduced a beautiful black woman, named Moms Till Mobley, who was Emmett Till's mother. Emmett Till was the victim of American terrorism called Jim Crow. Lynchings, murder, mayhem—terrorism is not new to America. What did his mother do when she stepped to that lectern? She looked out and saw her baby lying in his pine box, his head four times its normal size, then she looked out at the audience and said, “I don't have a minute to hate; I'm gonna pursue justice for the rest of my life.”

That's a level of spiritual maturity and moral maturity that's connected to Socratic and prophetic spirituality. What a response to terrorism, to misery, to oppression! “I



Participants at the Tikkun Conference, Washington, D.C., June 2003.

don't have a minute to hate; I'm gonna pursue justice for the rest of my life."

What a courage to love, a courage to think critically, from a particular people who have been so hated! That ability to summon courage from our own tradition is the ground that constitutes the launching pad for our universality. Like Sister Till Mobley, we must learn to dig deep enough in our own traditions, knowing that there are ugly things, but also something precious enough that we can connect with our common humanity.

Democratic Spirituality

Common humanity. You see this democratic spirituality in old Walt Whitman's *Democratic Vistas*, in Ralph Waldo Emerson at his best, in Louis Armstrong, Aaron Copeland, Leonard Bernstein, Billy Wilder, in all who say that the condition of the good society is to lift every voice, as the Negro national anthem says. Lift every voice, such that we each can play a role in shaping our destiny. Allow every voice, no matter what color, gender, sexual orientation, class, or region, to play a role in the decision-making within those institutions that guard and regulate our lives. What a grand vision!

We are living in the age of the American empire—and there has been nothing like it in human history. This empire has more scope, depth, and breadth than the British empire at its height, than the Roman empire at its zenith. We have troops in over a hundred nations, bases in over seventy nations, a defense budget larger than that of the next twenty countries following us put together.

This is new. This empire is, as Brother Noam Chomsky notes, not just engaging in a new doctrine of preemptive strike, but preventive war. We don't even need the ominous possibility of attack. If our imperial leaders decide someone has the potential to even think about challenging them, they have given themselves permission to invade. This is unprecedented in national relations. Their arrogance is not only a sign of imperial hubris, but a sign that they think they can actually shape the whole world in their own image. It's an attitude unprecedented in modern international relations.

We've had imperialism before—Cuba, Philippines, Hawaii. Texas and California used to be Mexico. We've had imperialism before—ask our indigenous brothers and sisters.

But this is new. Today it's hard to discern any counter-vailing forces. The vicious Soviet empire is gone. The three

pillars of the American empire—free-market fundamentalism, aggressive militarism, and escalating authoritarianism—remain uninterrogated.

Three pillars

We spend a lot of time talking about Islamic fundamentalism, Christian fundamentalism, Judaic fundamentalism, but there is also free-market fundamentalism. The market is an idol. We worship this human construction. The result? One percent of the population owns 48 percent of the net financial wealth, 5 percent own 70 percent, and that's before the tax cut! Children are taking the hit. The poor are taking the hit. Working people become commodities to be bought and sold, "downsized," as if they are simply units rather than human beings. Healthcare, arts, education are pushed to the margins—what kind of Socratic, prophetic, and democratic spirituality can be sustained when there are not enough citizens to question free-market fundamentalism?

The current administration has become quite clear that they are unwilling to even legitimate what they are doing. It's just an act of raw power, crony capitalism. We hear, "They are my friends—no need to bid." Or, "I know we lied about the weapons of mass destruction—sorry, about that, but we were gonna follow through no matter what the evidence said." Such disrespect for citizenship! Such disrespect for democratic processes!

They link their free-market fundamentalism with aggressive militarism. The army is not a study in democratic process either—it's a working class army, for the most part. I'm concerned about their lives, just as precious as any other life.

This aggressive militarism is inseparable from the escalating authoritarianism of our empire. We already have Patriot Act number one. Now we are seeing Patriot Act number two, the "Domestic Security Enhancement Act" that tightens up the first act. Under these acts, you don't even find out why you are accused. Our leaders see no need to release that information, because, "We are the government." Could any statement be more anti-democratic?

This is the moment in which we come together. Facing the greatest empire on earth, we must use Socratic spirituality to interrogate our own complicity in its making. We must use prophetic spirituality to call out this empire's wrongs. And we must dig deep into our democratic spirituality to remember those who Franz Fanon called the wretched of the earth, our brothers and sisters in the Middle East, be they Palestinian, Israeli, Iraqi, Syrian, Egyptian; and in Asia, be they in Pakistan or India, Japan or China; and in Latin America, be they in Guatemala or Chile. Their lives has the same value as our lives. We affirm that explicitly.

We are looking down right now on the writhing corpse of our common humanity. Now is the time to draw on our own deepest traditions. We must say, "I do not have a moment to hate." We must follow those deep words with some others, "I'm gonna pursue justice the rest of my life." □

Against Indifference

Susannah Heschel

When I hear political analysts speak about the Middle East, their sober analyses sometimes leave me in a state of depression and despair. I feel hopeless about ending the violence and creating peace.

Then I tell myself, if Moses had been a political analyst, we'd still be making bricks under Pharaoh. We need hope. We need to dream. We need to imagine the peace that will come after the treaty.

Michael Lerner and I grew up in an era when Zionism filled our hearts with inspiration. The State of Israel was a miracle. We were inspired by Zionism—it gave us something to live for after the devastation that our parents' generation had gone through.

For the younger generation, born long after the Six Day War, after the Occupation had begun, there seems to be either disillusion or fanaticism. I worry about the generation of my students. They have not experienced Zionism as a dream, and the nightmare of Jewish political dependency and statelessness is remote to them. I worry about their disengagement and indifference toward Israel. Their experience of Israel is more about military strikes than about the future of Jewish life. Yet we are not going to make any political change in Israel if they remain indifferent and disengaged. When it is time for us to turn over responsibility for Israel to them, how will they cope?

My father, Abraham Joshua Heschel, used to say that the opposite of good is not evil, the opposite of good is indifference. The indifference toward Israel pervasive among many American Jews is our responsibility. How do we conquer the evil that is their indifference?

We have to prepare for peace, and peace is more than a treaty. On the deepest level, we must dream about what peace will be like when the Tikkun resolution on the Middle East becomes reality. And it will come to pass. This resolution is sensible, it is sober, it is realistic. Eventually, it will be the reality.

The only question that remains is how long will it take us to attain that reality? How long do we have to wait, how many people have to die, before we achieve peace?

We need to give both sides a vision so that they will rush

toward that dream of peace, so that they will want to implement this resolution as quickly as possible.

There are many obstacles we face. I am disgusted by some of the rhetoric coming out of the so-called Left that demonizes Israel and by so doing strengthens the hand of Sharon and the forces of the Israeli right-wing. They are being destructive of the peace process and had better start taking responsibility for the consequences of their actions. It is politically unconscionable to equate Zionism with racism and to create a demonizing discourse that is so far removed from the reality of political life that it accomplishes nothing constructive.

In addition, however, we Jews have to acknowledge the racism that pervades our own community. We are not only

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Darrell Issa

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE (R-SAN DIEGO, CA)

“I congratulate you for representing a side in America that has not been well-represented. Sharon broke Israeli law by continuing the settlements. The road map offers hard choices, but it is not a hard choice to obey the law of a coalition government that you have agreed to.”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

the great victims of Western civilization's pervasive anti-Semitism, but also the purveyors, even unintentionally, even out of self-defense, of hatred. We have spent many years talking with our Christian peers about their anti-Semitism, and most of them have responded with a remarkable degree of openness and self-criticism, repentance and reconciliation. Perhaps we can turn to them for wisdom in overcoming the racism that endangers our ability to address political issues regarding peace with Palestinians dispassionately.

Finally, we have to realize that Jewish identity is bound up with Palestinian identity, and vice-versa. The past hundred years of our political lives have intersected with an extraordinary intimacy that will no doubt continue for generations to come. Much of our future political viability, and certainly the peace we long for, will depend upon arriving at

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Prof. Susannah Heschel is co-chair of the Tikkun Community, holder of the Eli Black Chair in Jewish Studies at Dartmouth College, and author of many books including Insider/Outsider.

BEYOND THE ROAD MAP

IN PURSUIT OF PEACE *(continued from page 16)*

issue. Without a sense of full security, Israel cannot be made to move. Without a sense of full independence, the Palestinians will not yield. With a force of international peacekeepers, it is entirely possible to accommodate both.

A non-belligerent, viable, Palestinian State, with the substance and trappings of independence, would be the single most stabilizing source of security in the Middle East. Peace, genuine peace in the hearts and minds of people, like the one that has existed between the French and Germans in Europe after the Second World War, will not be far behind the establishment of such a state. To achieve this outcome, however, we must plan for that peace and prevent others from derailing it. The enterprising Israeli people will need to work to erase the memory of occupation from the Palestinians. The resilient Palestinians will have to re-earn the trust of the Israelis who suffered from suicide bombing. Time, and good will on the part of many, will make such things possible.

Is it possible to have peace in our time? Other than wishing for a positive answer, we cannot provide a meaningful response. Perhaps the more relevant question is: What can we, as citizens, do to make it happen?

Those of us who are roughly in agreement on the contours of the solution need to work together, speaking up, organizing, and pushing this agenda of peace to all levels within our reach. Palestinian and Jewish Americans have a particular responsibility to tell the world that the majority of the people within our communities are for peace. We refuse to be divided simply along religious and tribal affiliations that define our stand on issues. The resolution of this conflict is not a zero sum game. The future of all Palestinian and Israeli children will be brighter if we make an honorable peace.

We also should break the taboo of not speaking to each other, in the open and forthrightly. We should not shrink from telling each other what we think. What the Palestinians think is that occupation is the source of all troubles and all other issues will dissipate as it comes to an end. We understand that for the Israelis, security is the main issue that dwarfs all others. It is our role as American citizens to work together to help the parties untie this Gordian knot. It is our obligation to see to it that our country does the right thing, for our sake and for the sake of the Israelis; for the sake of the Palestinians, the Arabs, and the Muslims; and, indeed, for the sake of the world at large.

We should see to it that our opinions are heard at the White House, the State Department, the hallways of the Congress, on the evening news, in the editorial pages, in colleges and in barbershops across the nation. Man-made conflicts are to be resolved by men and women. We cannot accept a religious and tribal feud that defines us beyond the realm of time. We will say to each other and to all who want to listen that we will extend a hand, and will take a chance on each other, and will work together for peace. Of course, individuals

COMMIT TO PEACE *(continued from page 14)*

Middle East, to someday be swept aside. That will crown the life achievement of every person in this world, because it will be the beginning not only of real peace in the Middle East but a new era for humanity. Because as we solve this riddle, so we become enlivened with the possibility that peace can spread all over the world. □

AGAINST INDIFFERENCE *(continued from page 13)*

some sort of rapprochement with Palestinians, and the same challenge faces the Palestinian community. To do so will require an understanding of one another's history and culture, and the impact we have each made on the life of the other community. To understand what it means to be a Jew requires understanding what it means to be a Palestinian, and how our political conflict has shaped all aspects of our self-understanding—our religion, our culture, even our biblical interpretations.

The horrors of that political conflict, the homelessness, wars, deaths, physical and spiritual wounds, have left many of us cynical, hopeless, and hard-hearted. Too many in the Jewish community have turned away from the visions of the prophets in favor of narrow, nationalist readings of biblical conquest. We have to ask the Palestinian community to join us in creating peace, not only because we both need a political settlement, but also because we need to return to the Judaism that stirs our hearts and makes indifference simply unimaginable. We need peace to help us, as Jews, reclaim the traditions we are proud of—our prophetic tradition, our tradition of justice. When we speak about those traditions, we can't be looked at with cynicism or contempt, because we are rejecting peace and prolonging conflict. We have to reclaim the integrity of those traditions, ultimately, to reclaim our soul. □

will let each other down—that has happened in the past and it forever will. But no progress, no peace, and no bright future will be there for our children if we fail to act now.

Let politicians in Palestine and Israel work to sort out their strategies, but let us here and now work on our own administration and our Congress to see to it that the vision of peace articulated by the president is translated into reality. In particular, now that the president has expressed his personal commitment, as well as his administration's, to making the road map work, we must labor to make sure his commitment does not waver. Let us not allow those who are steeped in mistrust and fear on either side make the world lose once again another opportunity for peace.

A thousand flowers are blooming across our country with voices for peace, interfaith groups, Arab-Jewish dialogue, Muslim Christian groups, and Palestinians talking to Jews about peace. Let us light those candles with courage and not in fear. A future defined by our vision and our energy is well worthy of our toil. □

Commit to Peace

Dennis Kucinich

The following is a partial transcript of Rep. Dennis Kucinich's address to the Tikkun Community Teach-In to Congress, June 2003

The genius of the human heart [is that] in reaching out to people and recognizing that so much has been lost, so much time, so many lives, there is simultaneously a sense that we have to do something. That something is embodied, certainly in the spirit, and in many of the elements of this Resolution to Congress.

When the United States was bombing Serbia a few years ago, I sat and watched people [who] are perfectly rational and good-hearted and compassionate people all of a sudden promoting war. When I saw that process, being inside government and seeing how people suddenly buy into legitimizing or supporting conflict without really reaching first for resolution non-violently, I started to study war in a way I had never done before. I realized first hand that in the twentieth century over 100 million people perished in wars, most of them civilian noncombatants.

So I began to craft a proposal to create a cabinet-level Department of Peace. The idea of a Department of Peace is to take the principles of so many spiritual leaders and a few political leaders and to make non-violence an organizing principle in our society.

On an international level, a Department of Peace would seek to intervene nonviolently on matters of human insecurity, famine, drought, any kind of human suffering where there has to be a presence, working with a nation or the world community, to avert conflict and to develop structures to develop peaceful paths. The ultimate goal is to try something many people think is impossible, that is, to make war itself archaic.

People get locked into certain types of thinking which create a self-fulfilling prophecy of inevitability. I'm sure you've heard this: "those people are always fighting," "those people will always be killing each other"—and, generally, those people do because no one tries to change it. What you are doing here is so fundamentally important because at a time when there is some broad interest in the possibility of changing the Middle East, you are coming through with some specifics that can help to create a frame and something that is workable.

Dennis Kucinich is a U.S. Representative (D-Cleveland, OH), chairman of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and a candidate for the presidency of the United States. (www.kucinich.net)



Years ago, in Cape Town, South Africa, Senator Robert Kennedy spoke to students who were living under the yoke of apartheid. They believed it would never change. Here's what he said to them:

"Each time a man or woman stands up for an ideal, acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he or she sends forth a tiny ripple of hope. And crossing each other, from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples can create a current which can sweep down the mighty walls of oppression and resistance."

What you are doing here, in this city, with your life's commitment, will enable the resistance to peace, the resistance to brotherhood and sisterhood, which is felt in the

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TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Yaniv Itzkovitz

CO-INITIATOR OF COURAGE TO REFUSE

“That night after my raid [on a house in Jenin], I had a dream. I dreamt that I went to my grandmother's house, may she rest in peace, and someone came and took away my father. When we dehumanize other people, we dehumanize ourselves. When we deny freedom to others, we Israelis are not free.”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

ILLUSTRATION BY STAN SHAW

In Pursuit of Peace

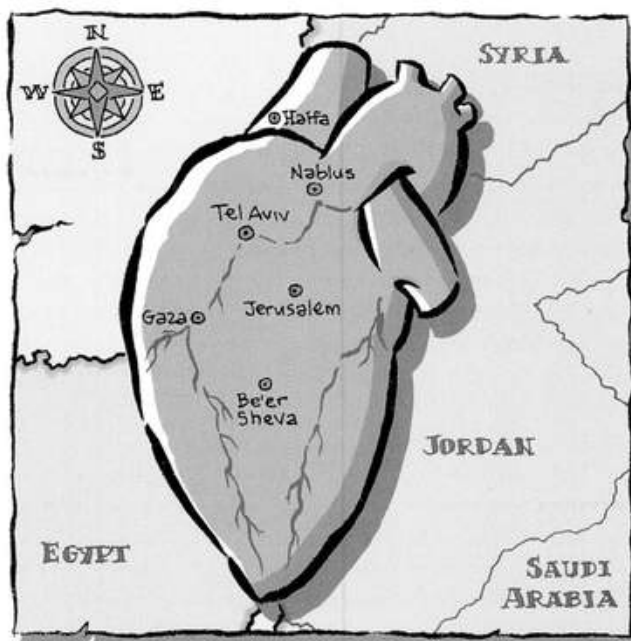
Ziad Asali

The march of events that we call history has been unkind to both Jews and Palestinians this past century. Europe, the seat of world culture and western civilization, was seized with convulsive fits of hatred and barbarism that culminated in the Holocaust and made the defeat of Nazism the highest moral order of the time. The Palestinians, caught in the ensuing whirlwind, were eviscerated, displaced, denigrated, and driven to desperation. Israel was established on 78 percent of the land of Palestine in 1948, and occupied the rest in 1967.

Much of what happened over the past several decades in these geographic confines that accommodate two peoples and three religions was a clash of narratives, a consequence of each side's belief in its exclusive possession of pain and suffering, its monopoly of victimization. The pain of the others was not only unfelt but rather has become a source of just recompense for the pain they inflict. Revenge, of biblical proportion, primitive and all consuming, has engulfed an ever-increasing circle of adherents within a maddening spiral of violence, mayhem and death. Individual responsibility has dissolved into a group ethos of hostility, undifferentiated and dominant. Individuals and tiny groups who have searched for a compromise out of this sad mess have been marginalized and rendered ineffectual.

The Palestinian/Israeli conflict can be viewed simply, and simplistically, as a real estate deal whose contract is being negotiated with blood. The problem with this construct is that the title deed for both people becomes religious texts and dogma, thus introducing all the metaphysical forces, perceived, imagined, or felt, by Jews, Christians, and Muslims of all times. Such a view takes the conflict outside the realm of time, both the past and the future, and ordains it to an eternal struggle. No sane person would see that as a legacy worthy of this generation to bequeath to our progeny.

Most of us, mortals with no claim to direct communication with the divinity, more encumbered with respect for law, justice, and peace than with visions of heaven on earth, cannot watch with indifference the workings of the extremists and zealots. It is indeed our obligation to present the world with a better vision for the future than that of the



“clashists” (as in Fascists), whose visions of Apocalypse and Armageddon compel them to achieve the glorious end of fire and destruction in Palestine.

The problem with history is that it has been around for a long time. It provides endless examples, lessons, and justifications for each action or plan imagined by humans. Add religion to that story and you get the history of the Holy Land. Add nationality as yet another layer of complexity and you get the history of the Palestine/Israel conflict. Add the current events created by live human beings fighting with no self-imposed limits for what they perceive to be their existence, security, and dignity, and you will have a sense why it is beyond the realm of the possible to expect the victimized people of Israel and Palestine to resolve this conflict if left to their own devices. Like abused children, these two peoples in their collectivity and by themselves are hurt beyond reason and compromise. There seems to be no end to their ability to test each other's limits of suffering and pain. A grown-up needs to intervene and put an end to this conflict.

The Jewish people have held on to their dream of going back to Palestine for ages as they endured the calumny of anti-Semitism and a Diaspora of the soul. They wanted nothing other than to live by themselves and take care of themselves. They achieved that by establishing Israel in 1948, but their achievement continues to be contested.

The Palestinian people, through no fault of their own, lost control of their ancestral land, homes, farms, villages, and cities as well as their identity as a people in 1948. They happened to live in a place desired and claimed by Jews fleeing an anti-Semitic Europe and welcome nowhere else. Enduring with uncommon valor and tenacity, they have held on to the dream of having their own country, living by themselves and taking care of themselves.

There is room in this world, and in historic Palestine, to accommodate these two dreams in a historic compromise. A State of Palestine alongside the State of Israel, with both peoples living in peace, would fulfill the basic aspirations of both

Dr. Ziad Asali is president of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the largest Arab-American grassroots civil rights organization in the United States. Dr. Asali is also the current chairman of the American Committee on Jerusalem.

BEYOND THE ROAD MAP

peoples. The basic fear of Palestinians is to end up without a state—a genuine, viable, independent, constitutional state of their own choosing, and not be cheated out of it by guile or uneven power. The basic fear of Israel is to be rejected and destroyed in the future by a hostile Arab and Islamic world after it makes concessions that might make it less secure and more vulnerable. Noises made by extremists and clashists on all sides do nothing to allay those fears. The fact that these noises do nothing to change the status quo, or to advance any cause, is less often noted or mentioned.

The two-state solution addresses the legitimate, fundamental fears of both peoples and cannot be abandoned because violent men, on either side, are allowed to exercise their veto power by unleashing their deadly wares.

The outlines of the historic compromise are:

1. Establishing a state of Palestine alongside Israel based on the borders of 1967 with mutually agreed border modifications.
2. A shared Jerusalem, with Arab East Jerusalem serving as capital of Palestine and West Jerusalem serving as capital of Israel.
3. A fair solution of the refugee problem based on international law and relevant United Nations resolutions to be negotiated between the parties.
4. The end of occupation and evacuation of settlements.
5. Signed peace treaties between Israel and all Arab states based on the Saudi proposal adopted by the Arab League.
6. A Marshall plan to rebuild Palestine and the new Middle East.

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Dana Rohrabacher

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE (R—HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA)

“People who are talking about the right of return are nixing the peace agreement. That will be the end of the peace process. At the same time, people who try to skip over the fact that Israel is going to have to give up the West Bank and those settlements are enemies of peace as well.”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

The broad contours of this compromise have been supported by the United States, the United Nations, the European Union, the Arab league and seem to get the support of the Israeli and Palestinian people as evidenced by surveys. Perhaps the most contentious issue is the right of return, which is a right that property owners have that cannot be abrogated without their consent. This right is not the same as the actual physical return of the refugees. Serious people will have to work diligently and together to resolve this issue with the view to solving it justly, rather than using

the issue to incite the kinds of primordial existential fears that preclude compromise.

Up until now, the ideology of collective victimization has precluded compromise and allowed the extremists to play on people's fears. The United States, the only country in the world able to step into this conflict, has not acted decisively, in spite of the crying need to do so. Global strategic considerations and domestic political calculations, as well as the inclinations of the ruling elite and successive presidents, have all led the United States to avoid a serious attempt at resolving the conflict.

Now, however, the new geopolitical reality emerging from September 11 and the seismic changes that are taking place in the Middle East may have at last placed the Palestine/Israel issue at the center stage for attention as well as action. Indeed, it has become critical to the national security interest of the United States to do so. Within much of the Arab and Muslim world, the Palestinian issue has represented people's sense of injured dignity, weakness, vulnerability, and impotence—feelings exaggerated by the failure of corrupt Arab and Muslim governments to pay little more than lip service to the problem. The best way to understand how Arabs and Muslims feel about this issue is to compare it with the Jewish feelings about the Holocaust. Rational solutions need to be found, and urgently, that provide a sense of hope and fairness to prevent the clashists from realizing their apocalyptic visions.

It is not beyond the realm of the possible to think that the road map proposed by the Bush administration is just such a solution. In essence, it is a map for the parties to follow in order to establish a Palestinian political system, with ever increasing separation between the two peoples and with enhanced security leading to the establishment of a state in its second stage, and, in the final stage, the negotiation of a final agreement with the Arab League resolution as a guide. The road map could, in principle, lead us all to the promising land of peace. It could just as easily lead us to unmitigated disaster. I have read with great care the opinions of scholars, seasoned politicians, and hard-nosed ideologues who paint with painful detail all the ways in which this road map can be derailed and abused and lead to a dead end. This all may turn out to be true, but it is also true that the road map is the only game in town.

It is my contention that the parties themselves are inherently unable to resolve this conflict on their own, not just because of individual or mass psychology, but also because of the flagrant imbalance of power between the two parties. The United States has to be more than the “honest broker” of bygone days. It has to be honest, and it has to be a broker. The fundamental issue of security cannot be left to locals to implement. Outside forces, strictly controlled by the United States, perhaps under NATO or other friendly forces, can play a constructive role in resolving this thorny

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Compromise for Peace

Yitzhak Frankenthal

I have lost my eldest son, Arik. He was an Israeli soldier, just nineteen years old, on his way home. He was kidnapped and murdered by Hamas.

When I was sitting *shiva*, mourning, my best friends came to me and said, "Yitzhak, you always thought that we could find a peaceful solution, you always say that the Palestinians are human beings just like us, but look, they murdered your son. Have you woken from your dream? Do you realize that the Palestinians are your enemies, that they are not human beings?"

I said, "I lost Arik for one reason. There is no peace between us and the Palestinians."

A month before Arik was murdered, I spoke with him. I asked him, "Arik, if you were a Palestinian, what would you do to achieve a Palestinian state?" He said, "Daddy, I would do what we Israelis did to the British. I would fight against the Israelis, I would kill as many Israeli soldiers as I could, because the situation they are living in is not one any human being could accept." A month later, this boy who was also my best friend was assassinated.

I have learned that if you would like to achieve peace, don't seek justice. There is no connection between justice and peace. On the contrary, if you look for justice, you won't find peace, because what is just for the Israelis is unjust for the Palestinians, and vice versa. Peace means compromise.

I am not looking for justice. I am looking for a wise way to make peace.

The Israelis have had a dream, and the Palestinians have had a dream. The Israeli dream has been to create a country from the river to the sea in security and peace. The Palestinian dream has been to destroy the Israelis and to have all that land as a Palestinian state. Both need to compromise their dreams.

Six Ways to Peace

The first step to such a compromise, on both sides, is to understand that we have made mistakes. We Israelis

Yitzhak Frankenthal is the founder of the Parents' Circle, an organization in Israel that has united hundreds of Israeli and Palestinian bereaved parents committed to promoting reconciliation, peace and democracy.



have made mistakes both in the way we have dealt among ourselves and in the way we have dealt with the Palestinians. Among ourselves, we have not had the patience or the dignity to listen to each other, and without listening to each other we cannot achieve reconciliation with anyone else.

Towards the Palestinians, we Israelis have made the mistake of Occupation. Occupation is a kind of terror and leads to the terror we have in the world today.

The Palestinians, in turn, have made the mistake of using force against the Israelis. I have spoken to the Palestinians many times. Once, in Gaza, I spoke to two thousand people supporting hunger strikers. They were
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TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Barney Frank

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE (D-BROOKLINE, MA)

“This is not the time to be confrontational, but to be supportive of Sharon’s recognition that continued Israeli presence in the territories is fatal for Israeli democracy. Let’s say, AIPAC has never been wrong, Sharon has been a seeker of peace from his Bar Mitzvah on, Abu Mazen is really a great philosopher: they can get together to make peace and then people can go back to arguing.”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Is There Life After the Road Map?

Tony Klug

It is tempting to join the chorus of support for the roadmap. Momentum is building and the plan has its merits: it keeps alive vital goals that zealots on both sides would dearly love to see buried. Its vision of two states, the end of occupation, the termination of all forms of violence, and a comprehensive regional peace accord have been part of the campaigning agenda of many of us for years, even decades.

Yet—like the child in the fairytale—we survey an emperor with no clothes. The principal parties pay lip service to this latest stab at Middle East peacemaking, but none of them really believes in it. This is the true meaning of “the only game in town.” Prime Minister Tony Blair is poised to redeem a pledge to his domestic constituency to act—post Iraq—on the Israeli-Palestinian track. U.S. President George Bush is set to pay a political debt to his steadfast British ally while endeavouring to placate inflamed Arab opinion. For Russia, the UN, and the EU, the initiative provides a rare opportunity to sustain the fiction that they are equal partners with the United States—through the “Quartet”—in the apparition of Middle East peacemaking.

Currying favor with the U.S. President and avoiding the blame when the roadmap finally falls off a cliff are manifest concerns of both the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his Palestinian counterpart Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen). The Israeli government’s reluctant approval of the plan is hedged in by more than a dozen deadly reservations, while the enthusiasm of the Palestinian leadership for a package strikingly less appealing than the one it rejected at Camp David less than three years ago is more than a little curious.

It would take a suspension of reason to suppose a brew concocted from this hotchpotch of motives could produce a genuine path to peace for the current generation of Israelis and Palestinians. What is actually required is either an authentic home-grown initiative which springs from the conditions, needs, and common aspirations of the local protagonists, or decisive external intervention to enforce a settlement that most people on both sides long for but—locked in a deadly embrace—are unable to achieve themselves.

The Oslo process was as close as we are ever likely to get to the first of these options. Crucial to its advancement were

a modicum of trust, goodwill, and a general commitment by both leaderships to a successful outcome. If any of these ingredients existed then, none is present today. Yet the roadmap is built on essentially the same premises and makes the same basic errors. If, in the end, Oslo failed, on what grounds may we expect a poor substitute, in markedly less propitious circumstances, to escape the same fate?

The major—and most fatal—weakness of the plan is the absence of an effective enforcement mechanism. If the Quartet means business, it must have the power to do considerably more than merely monitor, evaluate, assist, and facilitate, to use the document’s own words.

These are not its only deficiencies. The roadmap rests on a number of other dubious assumptions, some implicit, some explicit. For example, it assumes sufficient commitment in principle and adequate capacity in practice on the part of the main actors to make the plan work. In reality, there is no such commitment on the part of the Israeli government and no such capacity on the part of the Palestinian Authority (PA). Would a seriously impaired PA really be able—without substantial outside assistance—to restore basic services, build a state infrastructure, and coordinate an array of international development projects? Would international donors be willing to give vast sums for reconstruction and development to a PA institution—as opposed to an international body—in the light of its past financial mismanagement?

The plan requires the violence of militant Palestinian groups to be permanently ended while the occupation is still intact. Even if we assumed the PA was equipped to do this by force—which it is not—the attempt could ignite a Palestinian civil war. Alternatively, if these groups were allowed to keep their arms, this eventuality might be sufficient for the Israeli government to avoid its own obligations. Continuing violence might prompt it to move in and end PA rule. Abu Mazen could find himself battling Hamas, Arafat, and Sharon all at the same time. The roadmap may never get beyond the first phase.

A further doubtful assumption is that the Palestinians will accept provisional borders, let alone final borders, for their state that are much less generous than the ones rejected by them at the Camp David summit in summer 2000. Abu Mazen’s position on borders, including for Jerusalem, is no different from PA President Arafat’s or the vast majority of Palestinians. Palestinian cooperation is far more likely if the contours of a final settlement—based on previous negotia-

*Dr. Tony Klug is a veteran commentator on Middle East affairs. His *A Tale of Two Peoples* (Fabian Society, 1973) was one of the first cogent arguments for the two-state solution. ©2003.*

tions and a prevailing international consensus—are sketched out at the highest level from the outset.

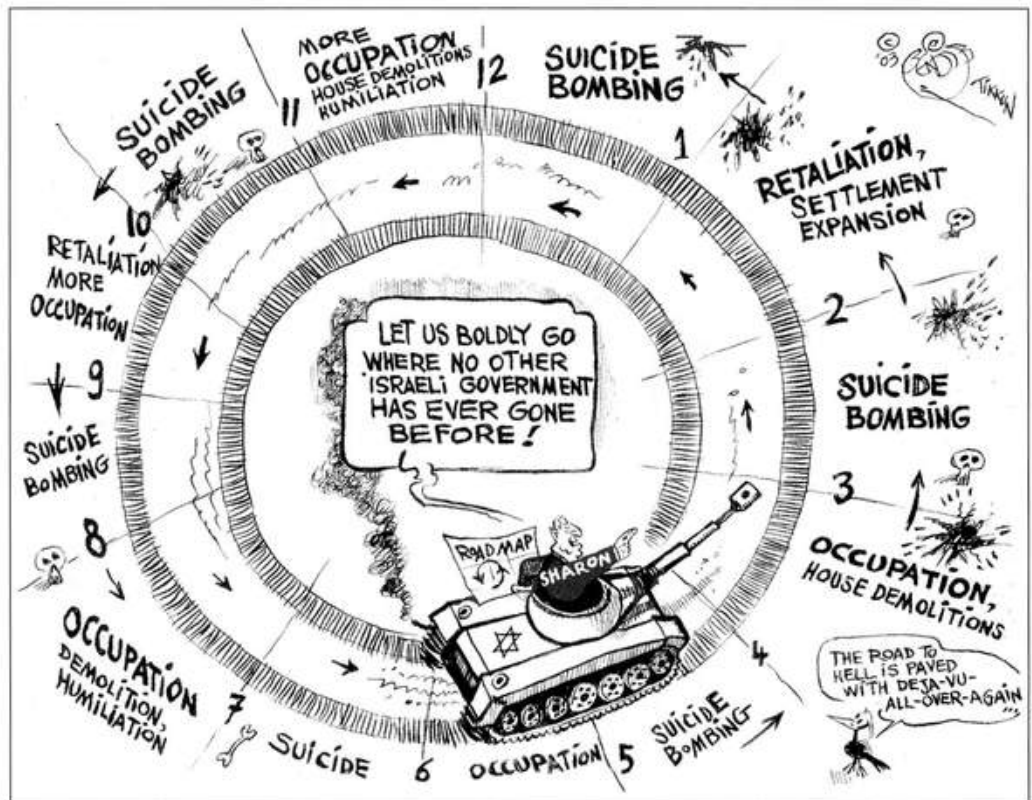
A notable feature of the roadmap is its “performance-based,” incremental nature. Although presented as a virtue, this approach once again hands an effective veto to the violent spoilers on both sides who have never hesitated to use it in the past—as testified to by the fate of the Oslo process, the Mitchell report, and the Tenet plan. Why should we believe it would be any different in this case?

The region may not be able to withstand another failed peace plan. Not only that, but the prospects for a peaceful resolution are in danger of vanishing altogether through irretrievable steps and irreversible positions taken on the part of one side or the other. So there is urgency to the peacemaking. We can’t afford to keep getting it wrong or to further delay a solution until there is an improvement in the political climate.

Yet, the current political conditions—while not conducive to the sort of step-by-step, “confidence-building” process anticipated by the roadmap—are in some ways quite favorable to a more ambitious, comprehensive approach. According to opinion polls, roughly two-thirds of Israelis and Palestinians want an end to occupation, the evacuation of most settlements, and peaceful co-existence between the Israeli and Palestinian states. On a broader scale, there is an unprecedented international and regional consensus on the contours of a final peace settlement, revolving around two states, a shared Jerusalem, the Clinton/Taba parameters on some of the finer details, and the Saudi Plan regarding regional peace.

Yet, through fear for their personal and national safety—the enduring legacy of the suicide bomber—most Israelis are not prepared to pull out of occupied lands if it means handing them over to the Palestinians. To break the logjam, what is needed is for a third party—an international protectorate—to take over formal responsibility for the West Bank and Gaza Strip from the Israeli occupation authority for a transitional period (possibly between three and five years) before passing these territories on to an elected government of an independent Palestinian state formally at peace with Israel.

A proposal to this effect would expose the gap between the security concern of most Israelis and the ideological concern of the current Likud-led Israeli government for a Greater Israel that includes—in part or in full—the West



Bank and Gaza Strip, including its settler population.

Within Palestinian society too, the presence of an international protectorate could drive a wedge between the mass of the population who desperately want the Israeli occupation off their backs so that they may get on with the business of building their state, and the ideological merchants who will only be satisfied, if ever, when Israel is extinguished from the political and geographical map.

In contrast, by leaving the outlines of a future settlement and its underlying principles vague, the roadmap allows the security and ideological arguments to co-exist. Thus, when negotiations commence, we are likely to find that nothing the current Israeli government may potentially offer the Palestinians would come close to meeting their minimum aspirations for a complete end of occupation and independent statehood. Similarly, nothing the Palestinians may offer a right-wing Israeli government is likely to satisfy its territorial or ostensible security ambitions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip or its wider ideological agenda.

The alternative of decisive external intervention has several other compelling advantages over the roadmap. First of all, an external authority would not be dependent on either the good favor of an obdurate Israeli government or on the capacity of a frail PA—although it would strive for agreement among the parties at every stage. Acts of violence by other parties would be neither pretext nor reason for the process to be delayed or abandoned. Above all, it would be the ultimate enforcement agency, brooking no unreasonable pre-conditions or amendments, of which an ever-increasing number may otherwise be expected.

To achieve its ends, an international protectorate would need to have both a security and a political role. Serious

muscle to deter attacks on either side—including on settlers while their final destiny is being determined—should be matched by a political mandate that would assist in restoring basic services; reviving the Palestinian economy; attracting development and relief funds; training security forces; enabling the regeneration of national institutions and the building of a state infrastructure; monitoring elections in accordance with international standards; encouraging good governance at every level; facilitating final-status negotiations with the Israeli government; supervising a program of resettlement, rehabilitation, and retraining of incoming refugees; and, as appropriate, organizing, managing, funding and coordinating diverse internationally sponsored projects.

Few of these vital tasks are addressed by the roadmap. Virtually none of them could be carried out anyway as long as Israel remained the occupying power, both because its very presence would continue to act as a magnet for further Palestinian attacks and because it would still be able to wield an effective veto over any political initiative affecting the Palestinians.

In some Palestinian circles, the proposal for an international protectorate may be regarded initially as yet another device for delaying independence. But in reality, far from statehood lurking around the corner, the drift is in the opposite direction. The Palestinians of the occupied territories today are effectively a nation incarcerated. The termination of the Israeli occupation and the entire paraphernalia of repression would mean a new start—politically, materially, and psychologically.

Objections may come too from Israeli or Jewish circles that feel the UN cannot be trusted with Israel's security. The

fear is that the UN has previously been guilty of incompetence, insensitivity, or bias and would be less effective than the Israeli army in combating terrorism aimed at the Israeli people. Without getting into the arguments, the current proposal is designed to accommodate all genuine concerns in a practical way.

The international protectorate's most immediate task would be to provide physical protection to both sides from the mutual slaughter and terror. Its structure would rest on three tiers. The upper tier would confer international legitimacy and legality on the protectorate and its scope of authority through a UN Security Council resolution. Without this, it is doubtful that the Palestinians and other Arabs would extend their cooperation. The resolution would designate, as the second tier, a "Mandate Authority" to oversee politically the work of the protectorate. A likely candidate would be the "Quartet," possibly expanded to include other appropriate powers by agreement.

The third tier, the protectorate administration, would be divided between the civil and security tasks, with military personnel drawn from countries assented to by both the Palestinians and the Israelis. One suggestion has been to designate the security task to NATO. Alternatively, it could fall to a coalition of the "willing and acceptable," which may include troops from the United States, the UK, Canada, Australia, and possibly Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, or others. What is clear is that without the strong political support and military participation of the United States, the proposal is unlikely ever to be put into effect.

On a pragmatic basis, pending final negotiations and the establishment of a Palestinian state, the protectorate would delegate back, in part or in full, interim *de facto* authority over designated areas of territory to either the Israelis or the Palestinians.

Heavy U.S. involvement may attract objections from circles concerned about giving legitimacy to further international intervention by a newly strident United States. The fact is that if the world wants to lay this conflict to rest once and for all, other agendas may have to be set aside for the time being.

If a U.S.-led protectorate is the only practical way of implementing this proposal—as is doubtless the case—and if this proposal is the only feasible mechanism for advancing a peace process that may deliver an acceptable, workable and sustainable resolution of the conflict—as may well be the case—then we are left with only one compelling conclusion, however distasteful this may be to some people.

The bigger struggle will be to get this proposal accepted by the powers in question. There is little prospect of this at present. What may be needed is a worldwide campaign at the grass-roots level to build up a momentum that policy-makers would eventually find difficult to ignore, particularly once the road map encounters its final road block—as, alas, it surely will. □

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A 'Conservative' Plan for Middle East Peace

A. Lawrence Chickering

The current rush to find a solution to the conflict in the Middle East is confronting the same obstacles that have blocked past peace initiatives. Now, of course, the situation is vastly worse, after months of violence and counter-violence by both Israelis and Palestinians have destroyed the political constituencies for peace on both sides.

Despite the extreme difficulty, the urgency remains. Where to begin? What approach is possible that has not failed in the past? To search for a new approach, we need to understand why past efforts have failed. Then we need to find in other experiences of success clues about what might work now in the Middle East.

All major proposals for achieving peace in the Middle East to date have reflected the basic assumptions of the larger international order that the only significant players are nation-states and their leaders. This mechanistic assumption is based on the belief that negotiating a formal agreement ("land for peace") will produce real peace. This is a mistake. Unless an organic, human process is found to support and sustain a formal peace agreement, no agreement will last.

What Do They Want?

In late 2000 and right up to the end of his second presidential term, President Clinton invested considerable energy trying to promote a Middle East peace agreement. When the effort failed, even optimists condemned Arafat for his failure to accept Israel's offer of land, an offer which was more generous than anything before and anything likely in the foreseeable future.

I believe the criticism failed to understand that alongside the objective issue of land for peace, both Israelis and Palestinians have deeper issues which road maps like Oslo have failed to address.

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Unless an organic, human process is found to support and sustain a formal peace agreement, no agreement will last.

Israel's need is for something much larger than peace. It is for assurance of survival. Peace is objective. Assurance of survival is subjective. The difference between them is the difference between a fact and an experience. The need for assurance of survival supercedes all others. If Israel loses a war, it ceases to exist. While some may dismiss the Israeli fear for survival because of its military superiority, a series of factors including history, geography (surrounded by enemies), the logic of weapons development (more and more weapons in the hands of more and more people), and the imperative of never losing a war make the Israeli fear for survival not unreasonable even with their military superiority.

Even if the Israeli fear is unreasonable, it is nevertheless real and plays an important role in the peace process.

The Palestinians' need, beyond land, is for honor. These proud people, with their extraordinary history of accomplishment, feel like victims, humiliated in their own land. This subjective need can only be repaired subjectively—by being honored first by Israelis and second by the international community.

These subjective needs on both sides are enormously more difficult to meet than the simple demands of land for peace. This is especially so at the present time, when the cycle of violence has pushed the relationship to the crazed extremes of antagonism. How does one honor people who terrorize innocents? How can anyone feel survival is secure when almost every day they are reminded it is not?

Conditions and Objectives Necessary to Peace

To answer the subjective needs of the participants and attain a sustainable peace, any process must consider the following conditions and objectives.

- First, a successful strategy must begin without assuming support from either the Israeli or Palestinian government. Past strategies all have depended on the Israeli and Palestinian governments to play the key roles—indeed, the only roles—in making peace work. However, at the present time, the two governments are caught in a cycle of violence that makes it unlikely either will contribute in any material way to initiate any new peace process. They will have important roles to play once such a process is underway, but other actors must initiate and lead the process. Not only should we expect nothing from either of these governments in the beginning, we should expect that both may even actively oppose and obstruct parts of a new initiative.

The greatest failing of past initiatives was that they depended too much on these governments to carry the whole burden of peace. It is time to look at other instruments and strategies to launch a new process.

- Second, a successful strategy must begin without assuming initial support from the United States. The United States will have an important role to play once the new process is underway. However, as with the governments in the region, at the outset the process should not depend on U.S. support.

One crucial challenge in a new process will be to reframe the conflict and devise a strategy for addressing it. Since they have been heavily invested in failed past strategies, the current principal actors—especially the United States—are unlikely to take the lead in promoting a new strategy. That means smaller countries such as Norway, Sweden, Canada, and possibly even Russia will have an important role to play in reframing the conflict and getting a new peace process started.

- Third, an essential element of a successful peace will

be an appreciation among all parties that the spirit of a peace agreement is as important as its formal terms. The central limitation of all past and present proposals for peace has been their concentration on governmental action and their failure to reach beyond governments to citizens. No real peace is possible when ordinary people experience their everyday relations as a virtual war.

Peace will only be possible with a real commitment on both sides to recruit citizens as active partners in the peace process. Michael Lerner has caught the spirit of this human, organic process by proposing that every Israeli family befriend a Palestinian family. I propose that engaging citizens in common purposes is the first step, though not the only step, we must take to address intractable conflicts in many realms of political and social life. Successful experiments can then be institutionalized.

- Fourth, a related thought is that no real peace is possible that is mechanically engineered without a spiritual component. Oslo—including both the formal agreement and the totality of behaviors and practices on both sides—implicitly sanctioned policies that gradually and inexorably inflamed a virtual war between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples at the very time the agreement was in force.

If you wonder why each side has acted so crazy for so long, it is because they have been forced to endure a “peace process” deranged by policies on each side that deny the identity of the other. On the Israeli side, the settlements policy has been designed to make it impossible for the Palestinians to have an identity embodied in a continuous, connected body of land. On the Palestinian side, the Palestinians have denied Israel's identity and right to exist by “educational” materials that feature maps of the region without Israel on them. (Palestinian youth even wear jewelry showing the region without Israel.) If you want someone to be crazy, few strategies can more surely accomplish this result than systematic denial of identity. Oslo played an important role in institutionalizing the current madness by acquiescing in these policies.

The Keys to a New Peace

The heart of a new approach to peace may be found in an extraordinary program called Seeds of Peace, founded in 1993. Seeds brings together young people (average age about fifteen) from Israel, Palestine, and a variety of Arab countries (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and others). It does this at a center in Jerusalem and also at a camp in Maine. Although the center in Jerusalem, which is on the border of East and West Jerusalem, is not as active as it was before the border closures, the program in Maine is thriving.

The program in Maine features two sessions of three and a half weeks each, bringing together 174 kids in conflict. The camp sessions are built on an elaborate program of traditional and nontraditional camp activities that promote

interaction. They are officially sanctioned by the governments of each country, which send official "delegation leaders" to observe each session.

The short version of the story is that personal relationships transform political differences. They create a true culture of peace built on what will be lifetime friendships in the face of intractable conflict.

Hearing about the Seeds of Peace program reminded me of an experience I had in the early 1980s as a founder of a similar experiment bringing together high level Jewish and Arab-American business leaders (including three former presidents of the Association of the Presidents of Jewish Organizations). Founded by Stephen Cohen, then of the 42nd Street Graduate Center of the State University of New York, and Joseph Jacobs, a Los Angeles businessman of Lebanese descent, the purpose of the Middle East Coalition for Peace and Development was to bring together pragmatic business people to do joint projects that would help lead the way to a new peace process.

I remember the first meeting. You could cut the antagonism and distrust with a knife. But the group met again, and again. And it was not long before these Jewish and Arab captains of industry were playing golf together. Unfortunately, the group never realized its potential because they missed the point of their own experience as citizens: each side continued to vest all responsibility for action in the governments in the region, and each pressed the other to pressure "their" government to compromise. If they followed their own experience, they should have seen the importance of a peace led by citizen interactions.

One highly successful experience in citizen peace-keeping came in a most unlikely place: South Africa after the fall of apartheid. Susan Collin Marks, in her book *Watching the Wind*, tells how the South African government recruited citizens to share responsibility for maintaining the peace by working neighborhood by neighborhood for it. Ms. Marks argues that this citizen initiative promoted by the South African government was a major reason why South Africa maintained relative peace at a time when most people expected a bloodbath.

Citizen engagement also has helped greatly reduce conflict in Northern Ireland and in the disputes between Greece and Turkey. In Northern Ireland, the mixing of Catholics and Protestants in different communities has been a key factor in reducing conflict. In the case of Greece and Turkey, institutionalized personal contact came in the form of blizzards of citizens meeting on every imaginable subject. The same sort of engagement will be the key to reducing conflict and increasing cooperation in the Middle East.

Why Will It Work?

Many designs can be imagined for this program of citizen engagement. One way would be to organize a series of facilitated Palestinian-Israeli "working groups" of experts, hosted by a local NGO, to address practical problems in the region. They should start on problems other than peace: water, trade, economic cooperation, and—most important—security. The first meetings should be held in private away from the region, say in Cyprus or Turkey.

Over time, as trust increases, groups would be formed to address the challenges of a new peace. Women should play an important role in the working groups.

To be effective, it would be important to operate the working groups at very substantial scales. Total budgets for them might be \$30–50 million per year in the first years. The investment would more than pay for itself.

How would these working groups satisfy the conditions set forth above for a successful peace process?

First, citizen-based collaboration does not depend initially on support from any government, either in the region or abroad. The working groups will be organized privately. If necessary, their initial meetings will be held away from the region. They can even be private and off-the-record. If necessary, the donors should be prepared to pay people to participate.

The first meetings will be the most difficult to put together. Over time they will become easier and easier to organize.

Second, if they are organized with a spiritual objective in mind, the working groups themselves will breed a spirit of peace. A major purpose of the groups should be for each side to make the other understand and respect their subjective needs (including survival for Israelis, honor for Palestinians, and other needs that will surface throughout the process). In the end, the entire process will depend on each appreciating the importance of subjective factors, and each recognizing how their own behavior—driven by fear—has sustained the virtual war that has made peace impossible.

Third, as trust builds, each side will genuinely value and even care for the other, and each side will commit to guarantee the needs for survival and honor that will ultimately determine the success or failure of any future peace process. Over time, the experiences of the working groups, and especially their spirit, will be communicated to larger circles of people. As this happens, and as the governments commit to institutionalize these new relationships in a wide variety of venues, trust will grow in people throughout the region. As this happens, there will begin to emerge a genuine culture of peace, which will animate a very different formal peace



process. With the beginnings of a culture of peace, a real peace process can begin for the first time.

This focus on the spirit of peace rather than on formal peace agreements should persuade many of the most skeptical conservatives in the United States about the possibilities for real peace. If this spirit does not develop in the working groups, and if a strategy is not developed to promote it among people in general, then people *should* be skeptical about the hope for formal agreements. In that event, it will be clear that even more work on the subjective is needed before anything more than mechanistic control of disorder is possible.

The groups will be successful, however, if they truly are rooted in personal contact and the trust it will promote. Years ago I did a study of varying citizen confidence in different industry groups, and the most powerful variable was degree of personal contact with the users. Industries with a great deal of contact such as banking got high confidence; industries with little contact (oil and steel) had the lowest confidence. One of the reasons the conservative economist, Joseph A. Schumpeter, in his classic *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, worried sixty years ago about the future of capitalism is that he thought people would lose their commitment to fight for a system in which forms of ownership were becoming more and more abstract (removed from contact with people in their ordinary lives).

Personal contact promotes trust, and trust is the crucial element in building a common culture that can serve as a foundation for peace. MSNBC correspondent Ashley Banfield, reporting live from Jerusalem, did an interesting live experiment that showed how quickly personal contact can begin to stimulate trust. She did two or three special hour-long shows in the spring of 2002 featuring three young Palestinians and three young Israelis commenting on the horrors of violence and counter-violence that rocked the city almost daily. It was a time when the word "peace" had disappeared from the vocabulary of most people.

It was a courageous thing to do, because with madness all around, the very public venue for this interaction made it reasonable to expect that distrust and even hatred would dominate the shows more than constructive reflection. Yet the personal contact and the sense of connection leavened the antagonism, and the participants became aware that without giving up who they were and what they believed, the experience changed their understanding of the conflict and of the possibilities for peace in some fundamental way. By the end of the third show, there was a strong sense that these six people could themselves have launched a new peace process.

"Peace processes" featuring only governments and without active roles for citizens provide almost no personal contact and no opportunity to build trust. When citizens

participate as partners, they engage each other in conditions that provide intense personal contact—spiritual contact—which can promote trust.

It Is Time to Try Something New

This proposal is different from past citizen diplomacy in two important and related respects. First is its scale. Past initiatives have moved in the right direction; they simply were not conducted at the scale that could really affect the peace process. Their lack of impact was especially evident as the

two parties, working under Oslo's auspices, fanned the fires of the virtual war between their peoples. A second, crucial difference is that the citizen activities described here would ultimately become officially recognized parts of a future peace process in which the spirit of agreements would be regarded the same as the letter of agreements.

A second unique aspect of this proposal is its potential appeal to political

conservatives. Mainstream conservatives will play a crucial role in any successful peace process, both in the region and in the United States. Peace agreements need broad support, and conservatives will be essential to uniting political cultures and creating such support. The reason may be found in the paradoxical logic of major policy changes: the party promoting the change rarely can bring it about. The change happens when the opposition embraces it and unites the political culture around it. Nixon's visit to China is the classic example of this, but it can be found in many major changes: A Democratic President (JFK) pushing the first major tax reductions for the rich (in 1962), a communist (Gorbachev) initiating the reforms that brought communism down in the USSR, an old apartheid advocate (de Klerk) ending apartheid.

Conservatives will like the notion of a citizen-based peace plan because its suggestion that a culture of peace be created before government action is Burkean; the strategy is organic rather than mechanical. Conservatives will relish the potential of this plan to head off future "liberal" proposals for government-led approaches that rely solely on objective reforms and implicitly ignore any role for citizens and culture. It thus avoids the "liberal heresy" of what the conservative philosopher Michael Oakeshott called "rationalism in politics."

Some people of impatient temperament will be suspicious of any proposal that conservatives will support because this suggests it will lack the urgency the issue deserves. In particular, they will assume that any citizen-based approach to cooperation will take too long. In response, I would suggest that it will take less time. The really "urgent" priority on all sides is to find an approach that will *work*, no matter how long it takes.

(continued on page 40)

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Ancient Visions, Future Hopes

Rabbi Aaron Samuel Tamaret's Objection to Zionism as We Know It

Everett Gendler

Thirty-six, 36, *lamed-vav*: in its classical source, Isaiah 30:15-18, the number is associated with righteousness, justice, and the hopeful certainty of Divine redemption through "turning and stillness, tranquillity and trust." In later tradition, thirty-six alludes to the thirty-six righteous who, usually unrecognized, quietly sustain the world. Invariably poignant, on this year, the thirty-sixth anniversary of the Six Day War, the number also stirs in me pain and distress. Why?

Thirty-six years have passed since the "realists" promised us that peace was at hand due to the preponderance of Israeli power. In real-politik, after all, are not power and peace coordinates? Why, then, despite the plaintive cries for "peace, peace," is there no peace? Is it entirely obduracy on the part of those who oppose a Jewish Israel? Or is it that power was the wrong path? Certainly Isaiah would have been profoundly skeptical; he had long ago proclaimed that peace would be "the work of righteousness," and that the longed-for "tranquillity and trust for ever" would also be "the result of righteousness" (32:15-18).

If we follow Isaiah, this thirty-sixth anniversary of the war that redrew Israel's boundaries invites a re-examination of the possible elements of injustice, residues of unrighteousness, that were embedded in the very beginnings of the Zionist movement. These need full, yet sympathetic, acknowledgement if ever a peaceful future is to become a reality.

This is no easy task. Apart from unresolved general issues of social causality, there are also the passions of the moment. Who is to be trusted? To which voices shall we give ear? When are criticisms of Israeli injustice genuine, when do they mask other motives, provide expression for simple anti-Semitism? If only we could escape from the entrapment of our own times, hear a fresh voice that we can trust, know that its challenges and criticisms emerge from love of the Jewish people, not hatred, from fidelity to Jewish values, not their rejection!

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There is, in fact, such a voice: Rabbi Aaron Samuel Tamaret's final pained and impassioned critique of political Zionism, *Sh'losha Zivugim Bilti Hagunim, Three Unsuitable Unions*, written in response to the Hebron riots of 1929. (Does nothing ever change in the Middle East?) Born in 1869 and soon dubbed "the prodigy from Maltsh" in recognition of his prodigious talmudic and biblical learning, Tamaret served as rabbi of the village of Milejczyce, Poland, from 1893 until his death in 1931. In contrast to most of his Orthodox colleagues, he early joined the political Zionist movement, and was a delegate to the Fourth Zionist Congress in London in 1900. That experience was profoundly disillusioning to him, however, and after a period of distressed silence, he began to denounce Zionism specifically and nationalism in general, a denunciation that became more intense with the passing years.

But can an outcry from seventy years ago contribute to a critical inquiry today? I believe that it can, by affording us a fresh perspective on a number of recurrent basic issues, issues whose avoidance has impeded any genuine solution to the agony of the Middle East today. Here, I have provided English translations of Tamaret's words along with my own commentary.

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In the aftermath of World War I, Jews successfully appealed to the League of Nations to receive lands the British had won in what was then Palestine. The Balfour

Declaration, and its implementation by Zionists, worried Tamaret, in that the terms of the Declaration appeared to validate the prior bloodshed and destruction of the War. He believed that this compromise with modern nationalism compromised both Jewish values and Jewish identity. He notes, for example, that Zionists (whom he often calls Balfourists) were willing to join forces with the ordinary Russians (whom he calls "Nikolai Nikolovitz") even though they had initiated pogroms against the Jews. Here are some of Tamaret's words on this issue, in translation from the Hebrew:

The World War should have been truly assessed for what it was: an unmixed defeat for humanity. Any decent man should have scorned its outcome, never excusing its brutality and blood-letting by any purported future results. For nothing can compensate for millions of young lives lost, millions of parents deeply bereaved, and millions of joyless, suffering disabled. And what of the utter pollution of the spiritual atmosphere, which turned men into beasts of prey and ambush!...men have become wolves to one another, life has deteriorated seriously, and Jews, always the target, are more maligned than ever.

...But our political Zionists have taken it upon themselves to praise and glorify this age of a new heaven and a new earth created by the war. Never do they cease from singing the praise of the spirit of "liberty" and "justice" which has awakened in the world as the result of nations girding themselves with swords and going forth to "free lands," or of the "righteousness" which has been awakened in the hearts of nations to correct the "historic burden" of Israel by returning it to its "birthplace."...

Not only in theory and words have our Balfourists shown solidarity with the rulers of the earth, but in practice as well. They founded the 'Jewish Legion' to fight with 'Nilolai Nikolovitz'—otherwise a persecutor of Jews—to 'liberate' Palestine from Turkey. Nor was this help insignificant.

Physically, of course, the help of a few hundred Jewish soldiers was inconsequential compared with the millions of men fighting in the Allied cause. The ethical help, however, was substantial indeed, consisting, as it did, in the destruction of ethical feeling and the removal from men's hearts of any remains of religious reverence, prerequisites for enabling men to wage war and attack others whom they had not previously so much as seen or known. Such was the very considerable moral contribution of the 'Jewish Legion' to 'Nikolai Nikolovitz.'

• • •

Tamaret took seriously the idea that Jews have a Divinely directed moral mission in the world, and while a fully observant, halakhic Jew, he understood our purpose in universal ethical terms. Using Torah terms, his belief that one small nation could influence the morality of the whole world might now seem archaic to us. Yet, even a cursory consideration of the current world interest in the Tibetan exile community, together with the adulation of the Dalai

Lama for his nonviolent teachings, might suggest that Tamaret was an astute and realistic diagnostician of this deep human moral hunger. Am I the only one to whom it seems that, in recent decades, saffron robes have become the update of Jochanan ben Zakkai's tallit?

In the first half of the twentieth century, Jews played that role. To say so was not simply fantasy on Tamaret's part. For evidence in support of his contention, look, for example, at the excerpt from Judah Magnes' *Journal* in which Magnes reports on his interview with President Truman in May, 1948 (especially pp. 494-495 in *Dissenter in Zion*, edited by Arthur A. Goren, Harvard U. Press). There Magnes recounts Truman's dream that "peoples whose life was based on the same moral code might get to understand one another." After referring to the common basis of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim moral codes, and his hope that this understanding "might help to lift the world from the materialism which was holding the world down to the ground and might destroy it," Truman laments: "But here it is—you Jews and you Arabs are spoiling things. You are not giving the Jews and the Christians and the Moslems of the rest of the world a chance to have confidence in one another. That is one of the reasons why I deplore so deeply this conflict in the Holy Land." However one may evaluate Truman's statement, it is clear testimony to the importance of the Jewish and monotheistic moral stance in affecting human affairs.

It was Tamaret's clear sense of Judaism's role as a moral guide that led him to criticize the Balfourist nationalists so harshly. In Tamaret's view, if Jews were to adopt the time-dishonored, ethically tainted tactics of violent statecraft, a grievous moral injury would be inflicted on all of humankind.

Small and humble is Jacob, and his ability to influence humanity for good is indeed limited. On the other hand, his ability to corrupt and pollute the moral atmosphere of the earth, should he pervert his way, is greater than anyone else's. For it unfortunately follows logically: if this frail and tender people, whose existence has always been secured by Moral Force, at last acknowledges the sword, how shall one answer those nations who have always lived by the Sword? ...

For Jews have suffered each time they saw, even from afar, the glittering helmets and flashing spears of a troop of soldiers approaching, and know well the terror which sends innocents running from shelter to shelter...

But it is not only because of Israel's extraordinary suffering at the blade of the sword that Jacob, should he, too, now begin to lust after sword and ammunition, has this special capacity to befoul the ethical atmosphere more than any other nation; it is also because of his distinction as "the chosen people."

How terrible is that corruption which would result from any evil example set by "Jacob, selected by God, Israel, His special treasure," were he, also, at last to adopt the faith of Esau.... One may be sure that when Jacob

behaves deviously or dishonorably, the example will be duly noted along with his distinction, and suddenly he will become a valued authority who serves to sanction their own misdeeds....

• • •

"Jacob's" role in the settlement of Palestine was all the more damaging to Jewry, in Tamaret's view, because the Zionists insisted that Judaism itself be redefined around the nationalist project. Tamaret rejected this Israel-centrism and Diaspora Jews' willingness to go along with it.

Political Zionism, as developed thus far, clearly imperils the character of Judaism, which has survived so many centuries free from the defilements of "nationalism" and "homelandism."

Additionally, the establishment of the desired political state with a Jewish majority would adversely affect Jews elsewhere, both physically and spiritually. Physically, this proclaimed preferable place for Jews gives implicit sanction to persecutors elsewhere who would like to oust "alien" Jews from other lands, for

they can now say: Jews, what complaints have you against us? Why do you insist on residing here where, by your own Zionist admission, you are mere temporary aliens? Go on to your own country, Palestine, where you are now the dominant majority; and en route, be sure to thank us for our kindness in recognizing your "historic rights" to the land of Israel!

As for the spiritual damage to Jews elsewhere, by exaggerating the delights and the incomparable dignity which Jews supposedly enjoy in the "fatherland," Jews elsewhere will come to despair of the quality of their lives as Jews.

The Zionists, of course, insist that everywhere in the world Jews will point with pride to Israel, and the people there will come to subject themselves to the "fatherland," and will finally accept it as the source of a spiritual revolution.

Yet, I find these consolations offered the millions of Jews outside of Israel—namely, knowing that there, in the "homeland," a handful of Jews live a "life of honor" and "are equal to all men"—are even emptier than the promise of the Feast of Leviathan, which others offer to presently suffering Jews. For the latter at least promises a personal recompense in the future for the sufferings of the present, while the prophets of the idol called "homeland" offer merely generic consolations: that lowly Jews in the Diaspora shall enjoy vicariously the lives of the proud Jews in Tel Aviv who dance the hora, and be satisfied that they are members of the same family. And even this, only on condition that the Jews of the Diaspora place themselves under the influence of the fortunate ones in Israel.

Do you hear? We had always imagined that as a

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Diaspora people, purified and cleansed of the pride of the sword, we should be able to share a goodly teaching with others. But now come the Balfourists and reveal to us the secret that we are lowly creatures who have no salvation except to listen to what proceeds from the mouths of our distinguished brothers in the "homeland," to make of their teachings a crown for our heads and whose words shall be our light.

However, if it is simply by virtue of dwelling in a "homeland" or "fatherland" that our Balfourists have become superior men, sanctified already in the wombs of

their mothers to be teachers and guides, providers of fare for the souls of all the Diaspora, then consider: distinguished teachers such as these already abound for Jews in the Diaspora! For in every single land where Jews dwell, there are many who try with all their might to stuff us with their own cultures, the culture of "by your sword shall you live." The Jews of the Diaspora have no need whatsoever to bring from afar such false bread as this!

• • •

Balfourists were intent not only on refocusing Jewish energy on the homeland, but on establishing Israel as Judaism's "spiritual center." Tamaret's principled religious rejection of this notion clearly reveals his understanding of traditional Judaism and its ultimate purpose.

As for building a "spiritual center" for Judaism, such advocates reveal a failure to grasp the nature of Judaism. For Judaism at root is not some religious concentration which can be localized or situated in a single territory.... Neither is Judaism a matter of "nationality" in the sense of modern nationalism, fit to be woven into the famous three-fold mesh of "homeland, army, and heroic songs." No, Judaism is Torah, ethics, and exaltation of spirit.

If Judaism is truly Torah, then it cannot be reduced to the confines of any particular territory. For as Scripture said of Torah: "Its measure is greater than the earth..." (Job 11:9).

Neither is Torah the monopoly of particular persons or particular places. Our Sages said of Torah (Yoma), and it is repeated by Maimonides (Laws of the Study of Torah): "The crown of Torah is prepared for all Israel." And in Abot our Sages said:

Prepare yourself to learn Torah, for it is not a biological inheritance." If Torah is not inherited from the womb, all the less is it the automatic inheritance of any "country."

If Judaism is ethics and exaltation of spirit, then its task is not simply to perfect peoples, societies, or other such abstractions, neglecting on their behalf the particular person. Rather is its task the perfection of the individual human being, living and actual.

Hence the true locus and center of Judaism is within the heart, within the heart of every Jew whose heart is of

flesh, not of stone. Wherever on all this earth such a Jew is found, there is the place of Judaism.

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Tamaret's analysis can neither be complete, adequate, nor without need of some qualification. Living before Hitler and the full Nazi expression of demonically destructive racist nationalism directed against Jews, Tamaret does not, of course, address himself to that appalling phenomenon. Would it have affected his analysis, attitude, or response? Might it have confirmed his worse fears about the ultimate distortions to which modern nationalism may be prone? Would it also have prompted a change of policy on his part, or would he have insisted that even then, "*en kategor naaseb sanegor*," that extending the malady of modern nationalism was no way to cure the cancer itself? Would he have agreed that under the circumstances the Jewish people had to become "like all the nations" in order to save Jewish lives, or would he have rejected this as, finally, both a short-sighted, illusory solution and an ominous renunciation of the Jewish Messianic function in world history? Who can say? The questions, unfortunately, must remain unanswered and unanswerable.

Notwithstanding, Tamaret's response to issues of hostile surroundings and persecution are important, for they strongly suggest that his stance would have been realistic if applied in the early stages of that period of horror, and that his position has relevance for us today. One example: Tamaret was, from the beginning of his rabbinate, concerned with societal problems; it was his activism that led to his early involvement with the Zionist movement. After breaking with political Zionism and directing his attention to matters near at hand, as early as 1905 he advocated the formation of groups of Jews to monitor the relations between Jews and the people among whom they resided, urging timely responses to tensions that arose. These responses were to include, internally, the Jewish communal cultivation of the spirit of "living in peace and amity with all people, whether or not they be of the Jewish religion;" and externally, "whenever plans are afoot to stir up hatred among the common people by intrigues and agitators, to turn to the masses of the common people, and in their language, invite them to peace and brotherhood, at the same time showing them clearly the falseness of the accusations leveled against us..." Tamaret also discusses the advisability of "revealing before the masses the source of these accusations and the destructive interests of their creators, whose only intention is to distract the eyes of the people from their own interests..."

Meaning what, in relation to Germany? First of all, even before the rise of the Nazi scourge, Tamaret would have been reaching out to his non-Jewish neighbors, trying to cultivate mutual understanding, establishing inter-religious communities of support that could have been appealed to in resisting the Nazi program. Could such solidarity have made

a difference in the face of the Nazi onslaught? Would resistance by fellow Aryans to the Nazi program have affected events? There are cases where it did, among them the ending of the early euthanasia policy. Even more astonishing is the case of the German wives of Jewish husbands, who banded together against the Gestapo in 1943 and, by public demonstrations in front of Gestapo headquarters on Rosenstrasse, successfully saved their husbands from transfer to the death camps! (Nathan Stolzofus' *Resistance of the Heart* is a well-documented, probing study of this important episode.)

The cultivation and growth of inter-group sympathy, advocated by Tamaret as an important component of Jewish self-defense, was undeniably one significant factor in the rescue of the Danish Jews, and there are numerous other instances where it was a vital element in saving Jewish lives.

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Tamaret's advocacy of inter-group sympathy provided the key principle for his alternative to the Zionist Yishuv. Tamaret was by no means opposed to Jewish immigration to Israel. He insisted, however, that such immigrants live at peace with their Arab neighbors, understanding that the current inhabitants would not look kindly on Jewish nationalists. It may be that the Arab and Palestinian peoples would never have accepted a large Jewish immigration, just as many Israelis now fear that the Palestinians and their Arab supporters will refuse to acknowledge the legitimacy of any Jewish state in Israel-Palestine.

It is not clear, however, how true this belief is. What shall we make, for example, of the public proclamation last March, by all the Arab states, of readiness to recognize and establish relations with the state of Israel in exchange for full withdrawal from the territories occupied in the Six Day War? Regrettably, this offer was not, to my knowledge, ever explored.

"But look at the Palestinians' insistence on 'the right to return;' doesn't this effectively deny the validity of the Jewish state?" is a frequent reply. In fact, I have heard from Palestinians who are willing to limit the annual numbers of their returnees to a percentage of Jewish immigration in that year. This surely bespeaks acquiescence to the Jewish need for self-determination, even if not concession of ultimate legitimacy. More to the point, however, is our unquestioning assumption of the self-evident justice of a Jewish state as we have come to know it. It may well be that at this point in time, it is the least unjust, least injurious solution to an increasingly intractable human impasse; a viable two-state "solution," one Jewish, one Palestinian, does seem to me the least worst next step. But this is far from claiming inherent justice for Jewish sovereignty, power-political in nature, over a modern nation-state. Here again, Tamaret, a *rov* in a Polish shtetl, saw and articulated the profound ambiguity, from the very beginning, of settlement in a spirit of dominance rather than of sharing. Not for him the empty reassurance of "a land without a people for a people

without a land;" such idle words did not set him at ease in Zion. Vividly he portrays what we might, perhaps, designate, from his perspective, as the original sin of the *political* Zionist settlement.

Travellers to Israel never entered as simple immigrants, merely desirous of a peaceful place in which to work and create a life for themselves, a place which would satisfy their romantic desire to hear echoes of the Biblical age still resounding on the mountains of Judah and which would, in due course, nourish their spirits with that revivifying air of the land of Israel.

A modest arrival of this sort would not have frightened and aroused the Arabs, and so it would have been possible gradually to establish there, in the land of our ancestors, a Hebrew settlement to the satisfaction of Jews everywhere, even though this *yishuv* did not dream of "statehood" and "sovereignty," nor presume to dominate Jews everywhere as "teacher of all Jews in the Diaspora." It would have been possible to establish a simple Jewish settlement in the land of Israel like Jewish settlements

everywhere on this earth, that the land of our forefathers not be less than lands elsewhere. Thus Jews in the land of Israel would have joined Jews everywhere in waiting for the true coming of the Messiah, that ideal moral redemption which is anticipated in Scripture and Rabbinic Teachings....

Armed with a piece of paper, the official permit obtained from Balfour, and with that pride which comes from having seen the face of the king, the Zionist leaders began to proclaim loudly and openly that they had come to establish a "Jewish State" and to become lords of the land. They further began to urge Jews to hasten from the four corners of the earth to the land of Israel, not because Jews personally needed to emigrate, but in order to achieve a Jewish "majority" and thereby become the "dominant people," outnumbering the original Arab inhabitants of the land, who would then become a "tolerated" minority....

... the Zionists hid their eyes from the fact that the actual place was not a newly-discovered, unsettled island located at the far ends of the earth, but was a place already inhabited by a people which was sure to feel the "nationalist" and "sovereign political" aims as a needle in its living flesh.

Thus the result resembles the tale told by Rabba bar Hanna (Baba Batra 73b). A group of seafarers saw a slope which from afar resembled an island, and so they approached, left their boats, and spent several days resting on it. During this interval they wandered about, spread themselves out, and soon felt like absolute owners of the place. Finally they lit a fire with which to bake bread and roast meat, and at last discovered that, although it had appeared to their eyes as a lump of inert clay, this was not

an island but rather a living whale. As soon as the fire was felt by the fish, he turned on his back, quaked, raged, and tossed them all into the sea. Had their boats not been near to rescue them, they might have drowned in the sea. The application is painfully evident.

The sharpness of his analytical knife and the heat of his cauterization are enough to induce surgical shock; extraordinary, also, is his ability to experience and express the phenomenon of Jewish settlement as the Arabs then living in the land might have felt it. Would that current returnees from

"solidarity missions" with Israel could offer us some comparably empathetic report on how Palestinians have experienced life under occupation since 1967. And what healing effects might we hope for from our serious self-scrutiny of felt injuries by the original Arab population, however unintentional on our part? Perhaps such a human perspective, gleaned from personal meetings, would enable us, as a community, to respond more adequately and more constructively to

what is evidently deep despair and destructive hostility among the Palestinians. Might this be somewhat analogous to the moving efforts of the Christian church to look afresh at anti-Jewish elements in Christian tradition, even in the Gospels, and to try to respond to them? The healing effects of this *teshuvah*, this turning towards recognition of the deeper sources of pain and conflict, dare not be disregarded by a tradition such as ours, for which it occupies such a central place both in ethics and in theology.

• • •

But what of Tamaret's rejection of the nationalist doctrine of Jewish sovereignty over the Holy Land? Does this not represent the abdication of responsibility for providing a place of refuge for Jews in need of protection? In evaluating this claim, it is vital to remember that there were committed Zionists living in Palestine who, even in 1948, were vocal in proclaiming their opposition to the United Nations partition of Palestine and the establishment of two states. They included Judah Magnes, first president of the Hebrew University, Martin Buber, Ernst Simon, and, until her death, Henrietta Szold, founder of Hadassah. They, residing in Palestine throughout those years, can hardly be dismissed for lack of knowledge of the situation there. Neither dare one accuse them of lack of concern for the rescue of Jews in need.

A case can be made, I believe, that a policy such as Tamaret's or, later, that of Berit Shalom, might have saved more Jewish lives during the Holocaust than the nationalist approach. How so? An analogy may be helpful. Compare William Penn's approach to the native inhabitants of Pennsylvania with the cowboys-versus-Indians approach all too common elsewhere. Was not the peaceable acceptance

Tamaret saw and articulated the profound ambiguity, from the very beginning, of settlement in a spirit of dominance rather than of sharing.

of Penn's newcomers testimony to the possibility of immigration and settlement in a spirit of mutual respect? Remember, also, stories of natives around Plymouth instructing the newcomers in helpful methods of agriculture in the new world.

Tamaret was entirely sympathetic to Jewish settlement in the holy land, but in a particular spirit.

... one who travels to the land of Israel must go for his own sake, not for the purported sake of the Jewish people. Let him there build for himself a house, plant for himself a vineyard, take for himself a wife, sire unto himself children and grandchildren. But let him not build a "national home" for the Jewish people nor a "spiritual center" for Judaism!

The Jew who immigrates to the land of Israel for self-fulfillment, and does so without any pretense of perfecting the Jewish people as a whole does, in fact, yield satisfaction to that people; for it is a delight to the spirit of the people that its children are to be found living in the holy land of its longings and desires. Such immigrants are indeed precious to all the Jews of the Diaspora.

But one who enters the land of Israel with trumpets and shouting, who proclaims that he "goes up" for our sake, the community of the Diaspora, that he goes to the "homeland" and the "national refuge"—such a one is, plainly put, a "troubler of Israel." For whoever builds a "national refuge" acts mistakenly, conceding thereby the Sodomite measure by which the dwellers of this planet are declared to be either "owners" or "intruders," with the former having the privilege of disposing of the latter as they see fit. Furthermore, such a one narrows the universal image of Judaism, demeans the image of Diaspora Jews, and casts upon them shadows of despair.

Think now of a Jewish settlement process that had followed the spirit proposed by Tamaret, and which every step of the way took pains to establish relations of mutuality with those already living in the land, at no point threatening dominance. If such a basis for amicably sharing the land had been early established between Jews and Arabs, cannot one imagine that there might have been some Arab predisposition, or at least willingness, to offer refuge to other Jewish settlers in desperate flight from the Nazis? This is, of course, mere speculation after the devastating fact of the Holocaust. But don't we permit ourselves speculation about how a sovereign Jewish state would have altered the outcome of events of those years of horror? Indeed it might have. But so might a process of settlement as advocated by Tamaret. And which might have offered the greater long-term security to Jews settling there? The question is again one which cannot be answered, but I would urge that we not unconsciously assume that the answer is obvious.

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Finally, a brief word in support of the political realism, even today, of policies in the spirit of Tamaret, that is to say, policies which accord full, generous-hearted recogni-

tion to the valid human needs of "the Other." In a remarkable "Letter from Porto Allegre: At a Leftist Summit, Cheers for a Separate Mideast Peace" (*Forward*, Feb 7-14, 2003), Lucy Komisar reports that "20,000 participants in the stadium were crying and cheering as the peace statement was read with the sound system playing John Lennon's 'Imagine.'" Instead of an anticipated resolution condemning Israel and questioning its legitimacy, a statement emerged that, in Komisar's words, while it might cause even some "Jewish doves (to) flinch," was "a powerful pro-Israel statement from the point of view of many activists on the far left prone to rejecting the very legitimacy of the Jewish state." How did this come about? There was serious dialogue and preparation before the Forum by local Jewish and Palestinian communities in Porto Alegre; Brazilian Chief Rabbi Henry Sobel was involved; there was support from new President Lula da Silva's Workers Party; and personally present were Shulamit Aloni, Galia Golan, Ely Ben-Gal, Zyad Abu Zyad (a member of the Palestinian Parliament), Alam Jarar, and Lana Nusseibeh. The statement affirmed "peace, justice, and sovereignty for our peoples, an end to Israeli occupation of the lands occupied in 1967, the creation of an independent Palestinian state side by side with Israel along the lines of 4 June 1967 with Jerusalem as an open city, the capital of each of the two states, an agreed just and fair solution for the Palestinian refugee problem in accordance with UN Resolution 194," and an end to violence on both sides of the conflict. That such a statement could evoke cheers, tears, and tumultuous applause at an alternative global summit of nearly 100,000 people, and that it could be characterized as "the highlight of the conference," testifies, I submit, to the profound wisdom of Tamaret's insistence that conducted in the right spirit, Jewish settlement in Palestine could enjoy the support and esteem of all.

Tamaret's outcry can, I believe, open our souls to fresh, creative responses to the tragic Middle Eastern tangle which is the focus of so much attention, concern, anguish, and longing. It can also help us towards a much needed redefinition of the proper relation of Judaism, Diaspora, and Israel. For his courageous, unflinching statement I am grateful. □

For further extracts in English from the writings of Rabbi Tamaret and a fuller biography, see "Passover and Non-Violence" (*Judaism*, Spring issue, 1968) and "Politics and Passion: An Inquiry into the Evils of Our Time," (*Judaism*, Winter issue, 1963).

Hebrew readers can now read Tamaret's autobiographical memoir, some scattered essays, and excerpts from four of his five published books—though none from his critique of Zionism—in the 1992 volume, edited by Ehud Luz, entitled *Pacifism and Torah: Works by Aaron Samuel Tamares*, published by The Hebrew University and Hebrew Union College.

Transcending Alzheimer's

Kim Chernin

My mother had Alzheimer's. The steady loss of personality was heart-breaking but it was also miraculous. She had lived her entire adult life as an activist with a revolutionary commitment to change the world. Her life's meaning never deserted her. This is a story about the way that meaning survived.

The disease came on gradually, it encroached steadily. It took memory first of all, leaving scraps and tatters where there had been chronologies. It eroded her ability to cook and feed herself, although she still went shopping. Neighbors told me she would drive to the nearby supermarket, forget she had a car, and stand on the corner clutching her groceries. One neighbor had seen her asking three young men in a beaten-up old car to drive her home. Apart from Village Green, the beautiful enclave where she lived for over forty years, most people thought of it as a rough neighborhood. They thought my mother was in danger, carrying on like this.

One day her car was stolen. A neighbor reported it to the police, who found it parked on the street in front of Village Green. My mother was pleased by this—it confirmed her faith in people. "Whoever stole it," she said, "thought better of it." I knew the way her mind worked: only a poor person would be driven to steal an old car; the poor person who stole it, realizing that it must have belonged to another poor person, brought it back. Undoubtedly, she herself had parked the car in front of the Village and forgotten about it. I did not mention this; I loved the way she seized the opportunity to think well of "the people."

Soon enough life began to take words from her. Sentences that started out promisingly got lost along the way. Other sentences, which made no sense at all, were spoken with great conviction. Driving in the car with me one late afternoon, she turned and said, very seriously, "Do you farm, Mom?" I answered spontaneously, "I sure do, blue." This seemed a satisfactory answer.

At that same time, other confusions emerged. She, who



This is a story about the way that meaning survived.

had been an organizer for the radical movement all her life, had begun to have trouble ordering the small details of daily life. This woman, who had always been fiercely proud and independent, now called me daily. She forgot appointments, watched television more often, seemed to be withdrawing from life. Occasionally, she thought I was my sister, who had died forty years before.

I did not care for this state of things. "As you live, so also you die," she had always told me. And I believed her. It did not seem right that this woman, whose life had been spent with people, fighting for a radical cause, should withdraw into herself and grow old alone.

We went to visit Sunset Hall, a retirement hall founded by the Unitarian Church in Los Angeles. Sadie, my mother's friend and lifelong comrade, met us at the gate. She was noticeably excited by the possibility of having Rose Chernin within her ranks once again. She explained, "Here people have spent their life in the progressive movement. They

Kim Chernin is the author of the celebrated memoir *In My Mother's House*, now available with new material in its twentieth anniversary edition from MacAdam/Cage. ©2003 Kim Chernin.

PERSONAL ESSAY

have been part of the labor movement, the peace movement, the struggle against poverty, discrimination, unemployment. And," she went on with a glance at my mother, "they are still active."

"When I can't take care of myself any longer, I don't want to live," my mother responded.

I could see from the notices tacked up in the lobby that the hall provided transportation to meetings, discussion groups, protest marches. Of the thirty-nine residents, ten were members of the Communist Party, all of them, during that time, keeping an eye on Gorbachev's rise to power in the Soviet Union. I pointed this out to my mother. She said, "If I can't be part of the struggle, I'd rather die."

My mother was a stubborn woman. "I can take care of myself," she said as I took her arm to help her into the car. When we got home she went into the kitchen. "Who said I can't cook for myself?" she asked, pushing a tray of chicken into the oven. She opened the refrigerator with a triumphant gesture.

Finally, however, a decision had to be made. My mother announced it with a tone of great dignity and resignation. She said, "I figured something out today."

"What's that, Mama?"

"I'm an old woman," she said.

• • •

The first time I went to visit my mother in Sunset Hall she grabbed my hand with her iron grip. "This is my daughter," she said to everyone we met, "you've read her book about my life?" They all had.

In the dining room, a bowl of yogurt and cottage cheese was waiting for me. "One thing I'll tell you," she said, leaning across the table to tap my arm. "When the Revolution comes to America, it's going to begin where I'm living now."

I was delighted that my mother had regained her old sense of hope and optimism. "We'll do it," she said, "we're not too old for that." But then she grew reflective. I saw shadows of doubt and uncertainty pass across her face. She shook her head with a grim expression.

"There certainly are some people in this place set in their ways. They can't change. They're too old."

"How old are they?" I asked.

"Old," she affirmed with a deep sigh, as if recognizing that their age might, after all, keep them from making the Revolution.

Then she said, as if it was this she had been leading up to, "How old am I?"

"Eighty-four, eighty-five maybe."

"So old?" she said wistfully as she watched me eat. "I thought I was younger. Much younger."

"How old did you think you were?"

"Seventy-eight, seventy-nine?" she whispered sadly.

She fell silent for a moment. I'm her daughter. I know what she's thinking without words. I saw her taking stock of

her life, going back over its defeats and struggles. My mother was not a woman to be defeated by realities. She began to make a fist. "Who said they can't learn something?" she said, hitting her fist down on the kitchen table. "Even at their age, I tell you, we can teach them to fight." I knew we'd chosen the right place for her retirement.

Some things about my mother didn't match the Alzheimer's profile. She never passed through a period of irritability or anger, she never had temper tantrums. What emerged in her, as she grew more frail, was a gentleness she had not been able to show during her lifetime. Maybe, I thought, Alzheimer's uncovers what is latent, not yet lived; maybe for many people that is their anger. For my mother it was tenderness, the inner core of her fierce indignation about injustice to "the people."

As time passed she grew smaller and sweeter until she began to look like an adorable, wild-eyed, somewhat ravaged, gray-haired child. She still called on the phone, although a friend had to dial for her and it was difficult for her to speak about her life until it came time to say goodbye. Then her sentences would become coherent and she would be seized by an urgent desire to communicate love.

"Do you know how much I love you?"

"Oh Mama, I do know."

"You can have no idea."

"Well, I sure do feel how much you love me."

"You just can't imagine. You cannot imagine how much I love you."

"I love you too, Mama."

"Of course you love me. I'm your mother. But do you know how much I love you?"

These exchanges could go on for fifteen or twenty minutes. They were moving and irritating; they brought tears to my eyes, they were exasperating.

Over these years my mother's personality was shrinking down to an essential, molten core, drawing itself in, distilling itself. In keeping with this, although inexplicable I suppose from a purely neurological point of view, she also kept track of Gorbachev. Even at a period when she lived most of the time in an absent state which seemed at once hollow and full of reverie, she came to attention whenever a conversation or news report mentioned Gorbachev. His struggle within the Soviet Union was new information which we'd imagined she would not by then have been able to assimilate, but perhaps because it went so smoothly through the filter of old, undying hopes, it was able to find a place in her memory.

One day I took her out for lunch at a neighborhood restaurant. It must have been a holiday, Easter or Mother's Day, and the restaurant was filled with well-dressed black families of several generations. My mother had developed the habit by then of warmly greeting people we encountered as if there were no strangers left in her world. This did not go over very well in some environments, but here she was warmly

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TRANSCENDING ALZHEIMER'S (continued from page 32)

received. This tiny, exuberant, white-haired old woman, no taller now than an eight-year-old child, clutched my hand as we made our way to our table, her face breaking into joyful recognition of people she did not know.

On that day I didn't expect us to have much conversation. She had reached a time when, if she said anything at all, I had to guess at her meanings and lead her to them. But she seemed to have something important to say. She plucked my sleeve and managed to extract the word "Gorbachev," tentatively, beseechingly. It was 1985, when Gorbachev had been elected General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

"Gorbachev? You like Gorbachev?"

"A good man," she said, "good, good man. Reminds me ... reminds me ... you know? You know?"

"Reminds you of Lenin?" I asked, hoping she wasn't thinking of Stalin.

She looked pleased, tapped the table with her forefinger.

"Lenin," she said, repeating the cherished name.

"You like the reforms he's making?"

"Don't you?"

"Of course, sure I do. I wasn't sure how you felt."

That Gorbachev meant so much to her was a confession, the rising up of a doubt or misgiving about the Soviet Union that had been kept hidden, probably above all from herself.

She slapped the table two times with her right palm, looking triumphant. "Glasnost," she said with a strong Russian accent and looked inquiringly at me. I was impressed by how much she was able to communicate with such a ravaged vocabulary. "Glas-nost," she said again, separating the syllables. Her eyes narrowed meaningfully. "You know what it means?"

"Well, not exactly. I mean, sure I know, in the general sense. He's opened up the Soviet Union. He's...."

"Opened up," she agreed with a sound slap on the table. I looked down at her, her face lifted ecstatically towards me, and I saw gleaming fiercely back at me the indestructible core of her life's meaning.

When I went down to visit her we spoke in the babble that sounded to other people like a language. "Wnyap, chamsk, chorkum, vwiebetsk." It was made up of Yiddish, English, Hebrew, and Russian sounds, which served for some basic form of communication. It allowed me to communicate, "I'm here Mama," and for her to respond with excited pleasure, "You're here, you're here!" But one day the babbling briefly stopped. My mother looked over at me with a still, searing gaze and named with perfect clarity the source of her life's enduring love. She said, "the people," and then repeated the last clear words we would ever hear her speak. "The people."



The last time I saw her she was no longer there. The little shrunken body had become almost transparent. There was no way I could open the clenched fists or get her to look in my direction. Her dentures had been lost a few months earlier; since then she'd begun to look like an old Russian peasant, her lips sunken, her face cut with long, deep ruts. She had stopped eating a few days before, and had become remote and unresponsive. I knew she would die soon.

I had come to say goodbye to her with Amy and Louise and Renate, three women who had become my chosen family. Louise drew the curtain around the bed, making the enclosed space oddly ceremonial. Everything seemed supercharged with meaning, which made me self-conscious. This is the last time you're ever going to see her, I told myself. I wasn't sure what to do. I'd never been with my mother when I couldn't get her to respond to me.

Renate suggested I take her in my arms. I picked her up, a dried-out leaf, and rocked her against my chest. Louise suggested we sing to her. We sang "You Are My Sunshine." I sang "Joe Hill" and "There Once Was A Union Maid" and the Garment Worker's song. The songs my mother taught me were coming back after years of being out of use. She didn't respond, not the slightest twitch or flutter or blink, not even when I whispered a few lines of The Internationale "Arise ye prisoners of starvation./Arise ye wretched of the earth./For justice thunders condemnation./A better world in birth," and then choked up and couldn't go on.

The four of us, riding down in the elevator together, pressing close to one another, felt that we had managed to close her life out on the right note. I wasn't sad, in the ordinary way, at losing her. I had begun to dream two years before about her death and dying. In one dream she came back with the ability to fly. She flitted about in the living room some three or four inches above the floor. I thought perhaps this was an image of her soul and wondered if she, a nonbeliever, would need my help getting back to God. These dreams had stopped over a year before her death, and since then I recognized that she had outlived everything in herself except the will to live.

She died three days after our visit, a few days before her ninety-fourth birthday in September, 1995. That was the month large numbers of women went to Beijing for the UN Conference on Women. It was the first time women from former Soviet countries were represented at an international conference of independent, non-governmental groups. I believe my mother was among them, a delegate from the far side, still passionately concerned about about "the people." □

Healing our Hearts

Deepak Chopra



We have the deepest aspirations. We want to create a new mythology that says that peace and harmony and laughter and love are possible. That says that social justice and economic parity and ecological balance and a sense for the sacred and a universal spirituality irrespective of our origins are all part of the tangled hierarchy, the interdependency chorus.

Human beings have only existed for 200,000 years. For most of this time, we have been surrounded by predators. In order to survive, we have had a biological response, the flight/fight response. Because we have become so good at this flight/fight response, we have become the predator on this planet. We are the most dangerous animal.

That is not our whole history, however. Something very interesting happened to us about 4,000 years ago, when a few luminaries across the world appeared at once. They were the prophets of the Pentateuch, the great Greek philosophers, the sages of the Upanishads, the Eastern seers like Lao Tzu, Confucius and Buddha, and many others. They developed the ability to get in touch with the domain of awareness that is non-local, that transcends the space-time energy and everything that we can perceive with our senses.

The great English poet William Blake once wrote, "We are led to believe a lie / when we see with and not through the eye / that was born in the night, to perish in the night, / while the souls slept in beams of light." When we see beyond the physical we see into our souls.

We can go a whole lifetime without getting in touch with our souls. But once we get in touch with this presence, there is no going back. This soul place is one of knowingness, of light, of love, compassion, and understanding. Intention, imagination, insight, intuition, creativity, meaning, purpose, and decision-making are the attributes of this presence. When we get in touch with it, we have recourse to what is called the intuitive response, which is a form of intelligence that is contextual, relational, holistic, and nurturing. When I'm in this presence, and you are, we are in the same place.

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*The world is nothing
other than the
projection of our souls.*

We see that we are part of a great chain of being where we interdependently co-create each other. There is more that we share than what separates us. We all seek love, we all seek self-esteem, we all seek creative expression, we all seek self-actualization—these are the birthright of every human being.

There is no more important task at this moment in our

history than to get in touch with the sacred core of our being that is common to all of us. Our practical proposals will be effective only when we get in touch with our souls, and feel this fundamental shift in our hearts. If we can feel that shift in our hearts, if we can join together and be living examples of this shift, then the

world will transform, because the world is as we are. The world is nothing other than the projection of our souls.

Just because we are part of a collective insanity, we must not assume it is normal. It is the psychopathology of the average. I am committed to the vision Michael Lerner has expressed in *TIKKUN* and elsewhere that we can emancipate ourselves from this psychopathology through the realm of spirit. Even though we have interesting scientific insights, the religious traditions of the world have access to universal truths.

A friend of mine sent me an English translation of an Egyptian papyrus discovered in the 1940s. The language is pre-Babylonian. We don't know who the author is, but he or she lived in the time of Solomon. The author is talking to God and he or she says:

You split me and you tore my heart open and you filled me with love.
You poured your spirit into mine. I knew you as I knew myself.
My eyes are radiant with your light. My ears delight in your music.
My nostrils are filled with your fragrance. My face is covered with your dew.
You have made me see all things shining. You have made me see all things new.
You have granted me perfect ease. And I have become like Paradise.
And having become like Paradise, my soul is healed.

At this moment, there is a rift in our collective soul. But there is one part of our evolution that says this rift can be healed. And if we heal it, we will all move into that ecstasy which is nothing other than the exaltation of spirit. □

Toward a Holistic Politics

Marianne Williamson

In order to fundamentally change anything, we must rethink it. And that includes politics.

Until recently, we have thought of politics the way we used to think about medicine. Our approach has mainly been allopathic: Treat the symptom, treat the symptom—do not take time to consider the cause.

Today that's changing, for we realize that not all political cancers, any more than medical ones, can be operated on or just zapped away. Hitler was an operable tumor, but terrorism has metastasized through the body politic, its spider tumors wrapped around healthy organs. We cannot just remove the problem and assume it will disappear forever. Now that we've embraced a more holistic approach to medicine, it's time for a more holistic approach to politics as well.

In a holistic politics, mental and spiritual and emotional factors become increasingly significant when material problems become more daunting. People have often said to me, "Oh Marianne, emotions have nothing to do with politics." Oh yeah? Well what is terrorism, if not hatred turned into a political force?

If we only perceive an issue superficially—in this case, that our problem is terrorism—then we are limited in our thinking as to ways to deal with it. Attack it, slay it, bomb it, nuke it. But if we perceive the issue from a holistic perspective, then we realize that our real problem is hatred itself; terrorism is merely the effect of that problem. And hatred forms a thought system that cannot just be zapped away. For every hater you destroy, at least one more will then rise up. The only way to rid the world of a hate-based thought system is to dismantle it, and the only way to do that is through atonement, forgiveness, and love.

Einstein said we would not solve the problems of the world from the level of thinking we were at when we created them. If violence is the problem, then violence cannot be the answer. What is emerging today is a new peace movement, in which we recognize that peace is more than the absence of war; it is the passionate, proactive, cultivation of peace. And the only true peace, in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., is a peace that stems from justice and brotherhood.

Yet we cannot cultivate justice and brotherhood, if we

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ourselves—in our own personal interactions—are not just, or do not behave like brothers. Gandhi taught, "the end is inherent in the means." If we want different ends, we must change our means. We cannot give what we do not have; an angry generation can not bring peace to the world. If we wish to achieve fundamentally different political goals, we must transform the very process of politics.

In other words, in order to go wide, we must go deep: If we want to achieve a powerful social effectiveness, then first we must enter the deeper mystery of our hearts. For people will hear us on the level we are speaking to them from. If you

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Jessica Benjamin

PSYCHOANALYST AND AUTHOR, *BONDS OF LOVE*

“It is crucial for us to remove ourselves from the language of blame, to remove ourselves from the language of one side is bad, to enable people to step back from that position of feeling they must defend themselves against an accusation and instead move forward toward reconciliation.”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

“speak from your head, they’ll just hear you with their heads. But if you speak from your heart, then they’ll hear you with their hearts. And the heart is a space that cannot be faked.”

How can I talk about Israelis and Palestinians forgiving each other, when I know I have not deeply forgiven someone in my own life? It is easier for me to talk about the violence in the mind of George Bush than the violence in my own heart. But to the extent to which I’m espousing a change in others, without seeking change within myself, my communication lacks moral authority, and thus political effectiveness. We don’t just need to get a message out; we need to get a message in.

This is why personal transformation is a political act. Until we change ourselves, we cannot change the world. Until we find a moral center within ourselves, we cannot articulate a moral vision at the center of a new, emerging world. Yet once we do find that center, there is no force that can stand against it. Consider the abolitionist movement, or

(continued on page 36)

Be Not Afraid

Jim Wallis

I'm a father, so I try not to be away from home for too many days. But when I am away, I have frequent conversations with my two boys, Luke and Jack. Luke is four, but he has the phone thing down. I want to tell you about one of those phone conversations.

I was in Florida, and Luke and I had already talked twice that day. So when I got to the hotel room and heard a little voice on my hotel voicemail I smiled. Two hours had passed—lots of things had happened. I had to be caught up.

I listened and heard this little voice go through all that had happened since we last talked. He said goodbye, but he didn't hang up, and what he said next stopped me dead in my tracks. He said, "Daddy, don't be afraid."

I heard my wife, Joy, take in her breath in the background. A little four-year-old child says, "Daddy, don't be afraid."

You might know that in the Christian tradition, Jesus instructed his disciples that way, using that phrase more than any other single instruction. Over and over again, Jesus said, "Be not afraid."

Even as I speak we are on Orange Alert, high danger of threat from terrorism, just as we were throughout the war in Iraq, a war that was argued for and justified mainly on the basis of fear. A monk named Thomas Merton said many years ago, "The root of war is fear."

Since September 11, our nation has been terrified. Even now, in victory, we are still terrified.

September 11 shattered the American sense of invulnerability. That was the invitation of September 11: accept the feeling of vulnerability that most of the world's people already live with. Join the rest of us.

Most Americans don't want to join the kids of color in my urban neighborhood who already are familiar with the kind of random, senseless violence that takes loved ones



away. They want something no one can give us. They want someone to erase our vulnerability. If the government says war will make it go away, they say, fine. If the government says suspending civil liberties will do that, they say, fine. If the government claims spending more and more of our tax dollars on the military and homeland security at the expense of everything else will make us once again feel invulnerable, they say, fine.

But we can't erase our vulnerability. Our vulnerability, in fact, is the source of some of our greatest creativity and best impulses. Being prudent and vigilant in the face of danger is good. But when a government offers to take away our vulnerability, I would suggest to you, theologically, that it borders on idolatry.

I am convinced that mere political action to counter policies based on fear will not be enough. We must go deeper, to the roots of our fear. Courage is not the absence of fear; it is the resistance to fear. For people of faith, that means trusting in the One we call God. For those who are not persons of faith, it means believing at some deep level that what you know, what you believe, and who you are is finally more trustworthy than that which others say you must be afraid of. We need nothing less than the healing of a nation, beginning with our fears; that healing will be essential to make peace-making possible.

Jim Wallis is an international commentator on ethics and public life; the executive director and editor-in-chief of Sojourners, Christians for Justice and Peace (www.sojournal.net); and the convener of Call to Renewal, a faith-inspired movement to overcome poverty.

HEALING FROM WAR

Those who now lead this nation, however, believe that peace comes through unquestioned military superiority. Presidential words from battleships point the way. A new Pax Americana is being offered quite boldly. The word "empire" is no longer a dirty word—it is being used in a positive sense. Bill Kristol of the *Weekly Standard* has said, "There is nothing wrong with dominance, as long as it is in favor of the right values." Meaning ours.

In 1997, Kristol and others formed a group called the Project for the New American Century, proposing a policy

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Ghaleb Darabya

COUNCILLOR FOR POLITICAL & CONGRESSIONAL
AFFAIRS, PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

“It is time that the American people and the Israeli people in particular know what is going on in these territories. There are one hundred and sixty-three Israeli checkpoints inside these territories. A checkpoint for a Palestinian means being dehumanized. Sixty-six Palestinian mothers lost their children at these checkpoints. One hundred and two patients lost their lives because they could not get to hospitals. We are talking about a nation in which 67 percent of the people are under the absolute poverty line, living on under two dollars a day. Two-thirds of the people of this nation are unemployed.”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

to enforce American interests throughout the world. They say in "Rebuilding America's Defenses," a September, 2000 report: "The United States is the only superpower combining preeminent military power, global technological leadership and the world's largest economy. At present the United States faces no global rivals. America's grand strategy should aim to preserve and extend this advantageous position as far into the future as possible. If an American peace is to be maintained and expanded it must have a secure foundation on unquestioned U.S. military predominance. The failure to prepare for tomorrow's challenges will ensure that the current Pax Americana comes to an end" (www.newamericancentury.org).

There is another way. My favorite prophet in an era of globalization is the eighth-century B.C.E. Micah. Micah says, "Ye shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate between strong peoples far away. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall there be war anymore." Then he says, "They shall all

sit under their own vines and their own fig trees; and no one shall make them afraid" (4:1-7).

See, Micah knew that we will not beat our swords into plowshares until everyone has their own vine and fig tree, meaning a share in this global economy. When you have a little piece of security, it is hard to make you afraid.

Micah knew there is no security for ourselves until there is security for others. There is no security for me when there is no security for my brother, my neighbor, even my adversary. There is no security when more than half the world lives on two dollars a day. There is no security when our own poor are denied a tax cut while the rich are given back thousands of dollars. There is no security when thousands are dying from AIDS without relief.

There is no security for ourselves until there is security for others. We will not be at peace until all of us can be unafraid. That is a profoundly spiritual reality and the most pragmatic, practical piece of wisdom you will hear. □

TOWARD A HOLISTIC POLITICS (continued from page 34)

the women's suffrage movement. Huge, gargantuan material powers were arrayed against them. Yet the sheer morality of their claim—reflected through the minds and hearts and actions of people who truly embodied that claim—literally moved those mountains, and changed the world.

Now it is our turn to do the same. Old geo-political calculations, based on domination politics and economic organizing principles, have no place in the moral evolution of our species. It is not just that they are politically or socially outdated. The point is that they are morally wrong. The sooner the progressive movement gives up its insistence that morality is a dirty word, the sooner we can claim the moral high ground that is historically and philosophically our due.

So don't worry that we don't have millions of dollars with which to wage our campaign for universal justice. Don't worry that we have so little material power to back up our views. Not one abolitionist had a computer; not one suffragette had a cell phone. What they had, in the words of Dr. King, was "the power in us that is more powerful than bullets." They had a passionate commitment to something more important than their own individual good; they had a passion for the possible, for the spiritual and political fulfillment of humanity's destiny. And they could see the role that America could play in the fulfillment of that destiny. We could demonstrate for all the world to see, a *novus ordo seclorum*—a new order of the ages—in which the world is released from its shackles because people are released from theirs.

We do not answer to temporal goals, or even to immediate political expediency. We are here because we are answering to the ages, to generations past and generations not yet born. We are a generation that will be remembered; history will definitely record that we were here. Whether we will be blessed or cursed is the only question, and its answer is up to us. □

Is the Solution the Problem?

Neale Donald Walsch

For millennia we have looked to religion to lead us from temptation and deliver us from evil. Is it possible that it's done exactly the opposite?

The list of humanity's problems is as long today as it has ever been. Perhaps it is longer. There has always been hunger and pestilence, disease and poverty, selfishness and dishonesty, oppression and repression, anger and violence, killing and war. And now we can add to the list the very real threat of our species' self-destruction. What is causing all of this? Why do we continue on our seemingly inexorable journey into the abyss?

I observe that the cause is humanity's belief systems.

Our belief systems have produced violence and killing, social injustice and raging poverty, and a growing disparity between those who have and those who have not.

Our belief systems have produced ruthless competition, horrible health conditions, starving children, ravaged women, and oppressed races. They have led to more misery than joy, more anger than peace, and more fear than love for more humans than we would like to admit or acknowledge.

I suggest that if we do not alter some of our most fundamental and sacred beliefs, we may find we have irretrievably altered our most fundamental and sacred experiences instead.

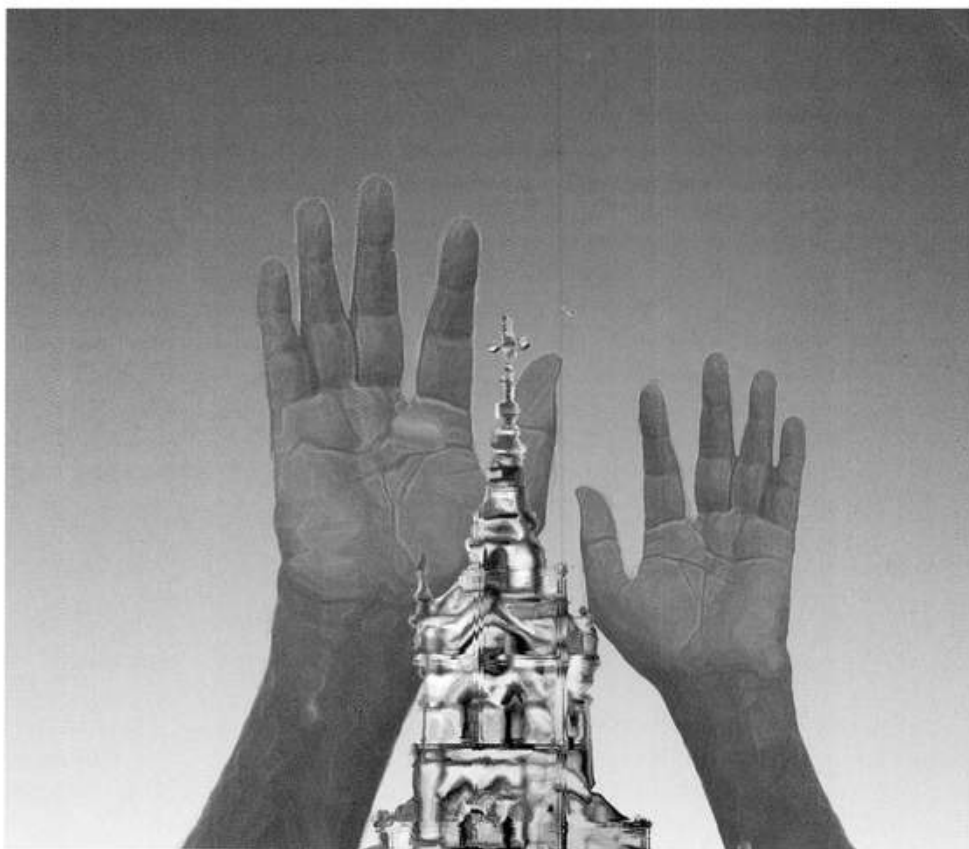
We may very well be bringing an end to life as we know it on this planet.

Looking at Today

Those who think that I imagine too dark a tomorrow need only look at the darkness of today.

In more than 100 countries over the past fifteen years income has dropped. Over 1.3 billion people live in absolute

Neale Donald Walsch is the founder of Humanity's Team (www.HumanitysTeam.com) and the author of fifteen books, including five New York Times bestsellers. His latest is *The New Revelations: A Conversation with God* (Atria Books).



poverty, existing on less than a dollar a day. In 1960 the income of the richest 20 percent of the world's population was thirty times greater than the income of the poorest 20 percent. Today it is more than *eighty-two times greater*.

In Russia, one-third of the population now lives in dire poverty. *One-third of the population*. In China, 60 to 100 million people are on the edge of starvation, living on less than sixty cents a day. The poverty is so extreme in Indonesia that doctors at two clinics say the number of patients they see has fallen by half because people can no longer afford to pay the consultation fee—the equivalent of five cents in U.S. currency. Some 78 percent of Indian homes do not have access to electricity. Worldwide, nearly 3 billion people (half the people on the planet) use wood, charcoal, straw, or cow dung as their primary source of energy.

The life expectancy in Mozambique is 36.45 years.

That's *36 and a half years*. In Swaziland it leaps to 38.62.

Currently more than 35 million people are refugees or internally displaced persons. These men, women, and children have had to flee their homes to save their lives.

Half of the people on earth still rely on agriculture for their main income, and one third of those are subsistence farmers, surviving by eating what they grow. About a billion people depend directly on fishing for a large proportion of their animal protein.

Over 1.2 billion people lack access to clean drinking water.

We have not talked yet about illness and disease (we think we have advanced medically, but an old disease, tuberculosis, has infected 1.75 billion people globally, and kills 3 million people a year, and we still don't know what to do about AIDS), and the birth explosion will most certainly produce, within the lifetime of today's children, a human

population at least 25 percent, and perhaps 100 percent, larger than it is now.

It does not appear as if the future of those children, if we continue on our present course, is very bright. And any future at *all* for *their* children cannot be guaranteed.

These bits and pieces of research come from the writings of Thomas Homer-Dixon, Duane Elgin, and contributors to *The Journal of the Conference for Global Transformation*, among others. It was Elgin who wrote, in 2000, that “by the 2020s billions of people will be living in urban slums without clean water, sanitation, telephones, transportation, health care or a place to grow food—yet most will have access to television that shows them in vivid detail the high-consumption lifestyles that will never be theirs.”

“This,” Elgin says, “is a recipe for resentment and revolution.”

Elgin asserts that for these billions, even a small rise in the price of food can be a serious threat to survival. To have a majority of humanity struggle all day to make a meager living and then view on television a flood of advertisements from the affluent world is, Elgin warned, creating “a schizophrenic planet that is divided against itself.” Then, many months before 9/11, Elgin added these sadly prescient words:

“Fueled by hopelessness and desperation, the potential for terrorism will be enormous.” Will my words in this article be sadly prescient as well? I hope not. I am writing to say to you: We can’t go on like this.

Why We Can’t Heal Our Dysfunction

We have now in our possession the tools of our annihilation. We can now end, or desperately alter, the entire Human Experience with one bad decision. We cannot afford any more global temper tantrums. Nor can we entertain the thoughts that sponsor them. We can no longer embrace our ideas of separation and superiority, nor indulge our taste for revenge.

It may not be easy to drop these beliefs, for they are our most sacred and have been given to us by our highest authority: humanity’s wisdom traditions.

In other words, religions.

Not all religions, to be sure, but, unfortunately, the most powerful and the most pervasive among them.

These religions have taught us—and have insisted on continuing to teach us—of an entire *system* of separation and superiority, at the top of which sits God, and at the bottom of which rests those who do not accept God in the form of which God approves.

These religions have told us, too, of an entire system of revenge that deals with those who do not respect God’s will in these matters.

Virtually all of humanity’s exclusivist organized religions

speak repeatedly of an angry, jealous, and punitive God who uses, and *condones* the use of, violence and killing as a means of conflict resolution.

Harsh words? Read the Torah. Or the Bhagavad-gita. Or the Book of Mormon. Or virtually any of the sacred scriptures of humanity’s largest faiths. The Bible alone lists over one million people said to have been destroyed at the hand or command of God.

But really, can we fairly lay our entire bill of complaint at the doorstep of exclusivist organized religion? Is religion really responsible for all the raging poverty, all the constant oppression, all the wars and killing?

To me the answer is obvious, and it is yes. Yet not all of us may agree, or, even if we do, many of us are loath to admit or announce it. And if we can’t announce agreement on the cause of humanity’s dysfunction, we will founder in seeking to heal it. Indeed, that is why we continue to treat these problems as if they were political or economic or even military problems.

They are not.

The problem facing the world today is a spiritual problem.

Why We Behave the Way We Do

It must be clear to even the casual observer of human nature that beliefs create behaviors. If what we *believe* is untrue, incomplete, or inaccurate, we will behave in ways that work against the very goals for which we say we are collectively striving.

The difficulty in our world for many centuries has been (and continues to be) that humanity seeks to alter its experience *at the level of behavior*. It cannot be done this way. Not in the long term.

A band-aid may be put on our collective reality by prohibiting or temporarily halting certain behaviors through war or political power or economic pressure, but those behaviors will inevitably re-emerge in human societies so long as the beliefs which sponsor them remain in place.

Nowhere is this more painfully in evidence than in the Middle East—and particularly in the never-ending struggle between Israel and the people of Palestine.

There and elsewhere we have proven over and over again that neither bombs nor votes nor coins ultimately cause or change behaviors. Beliefs do. The way bombs and votes and coins are *used* is a *result* of beliefs.

If we can say that “what we believe” is just another set of words meaning “our spirituality,” then we see that the problem with the world today is a spiritual problem. Humanity’s present difficulty is found at the roots of the contemporary spiritual experience itself, and in how humans have been introduced to it, told of it, led to it, and conditioned to understand it by the spiritual leaders of our time and of the past.

The problem facing the world today is a spiritual problem.

The profile of God which has been shaped and moulded by many religious institutions over the centuries has had a profound influence on us. Yet what if this profile is inaccurate, the poorer version of a people of poorer vision?

Our religious understanding at the present time often veers off into gross *misunderstanding*. War and other deplorable behaviors are, in too many circumstances, deemed to be acceptable conduct. That is why I assert that unless and until we enlarge humanity's most basic understanding about God, about life itself, and about living with each other, we will never see an end to the kinds of tragedies we are now seeing in Iraq. And it is today's organized religions which must assist humanity in enlarging these understandings, for it is exclusivist organized religions from which we have received our limited understandings—and which continue to give them moral authority.

A Spiritual Problem

What am I asking of religions today? Am I asking that they disband and fold? No, of course not. There is too much good in them, and too much would be lost, for anyone who really knows about religions to seriously desire this.

Am I asking that they reject all of their own teachings? Never, for the same reason.



I am asking that organized religions simply take another look at what they are teaching to see if some of it—just some of it—may be producing, not peace, but its exact opposite.

Yet I alone cannot ask that. We must all ask it. For few listen to a voice in the wilderness, least of all entrenched institutions.

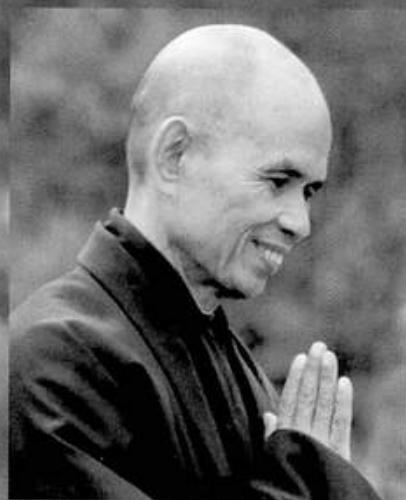
And so, we must all become very brave. Our political leaders must have the courage to call the problem in the world today what it is: *a spiritual problem*.

Our economists must have the courage to discuss the world's distribution of wealth and resources, its production capabilities and possibilities, *in spiritual terms*.

Even our militaries must, if they are to be truly victorious in any real sense, have the courage to approach armed conflict as what it is: the result of *spiritual misunderstanding*. (This is exactly what it is in Iraq, to be sure. Conflicts have raged there for a long time, not just before and during the 2003 War, because of mistaken and false beliefs—not the least of which are the beliefs I mentioned earlier: separation, superiority, revenge.)

Declaring our problems spiritual problems may not be very easy for some. It is easier to say our politicians are wrong. We, and they, are used to it. It is easier to say our economists are wrong. We, and they, are used to it. It is easier to say the military is wrong. We, and they, are used to

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HEALING FROM WAR

it. But call our religions to task? Declare that they are, at the very least, a major part of the problem, and not nearly enough a part of the solution? That's another matter altogether.

Yet the brave among us must do it. We must invite the religious community to join together in creating the space for a New Spirituality to emerge on the earth. A spirituality based on the deep wisdoms in our present Holy Books, but not limited to those sources alone. A spirituality opening itself to the possibility that there is something we do not *know* about God and about Life, the knowing of which could change everything. A spirituality that allows for the possibility that new revelations, equally as valid as the old, may yet be given to humanity *through* humanity—even as all spiritual revelations have been brought forth.

Creating a New Spirituality

In creating the space for this New Spirituality, today's religions can allow huge new truths to emerge, supporting ways of behaving on our planet that nurture the sacredness of humanity, and of all life.

Human beings are moving in this direction whether their religions are or not. The question is, can humanity move fast enough to save itself without the help of religions? Can our exclusivist organized religions expand, enlarge, and refresh our spiritual understanding with us—or must we do it in spite of them?

Can humanity's religions become inclusive of other faith traditions and nationalities? Can they arise from their deep sleep and focus on connection and unity with God and all of life, rather than separation and superiority?

Will religions do any of this unless requested to by their own members? No. History has shown that unless we do now what Martin Luther did in 1517 when he nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, there will be no adjustment of religion *by* religion. Modern-day Martin Luthers must do it. We must call for a Second Reformation. We must create a freedom movement, a civil rights movement, *for the soul*, loosing humanity at last from the bonds of an oppressive God.

Conditions on the earth are creating desperation for too many, and desperation creates terrorist teams ready to give up their lives to end the misery of their brothers and sisters. The soul now cries out for an end to terrorism, and to the terror that causes terrorism. The soul calls out, *Who will be on humanity's team?*

I believe that God is. But not Yesterday's God. That is the God of fear and rage and intolerance and violence, of exclusivity and rigidity and anger, a God who condones killing. The God who is on humanity's team is Tomorrow's God. Will you join the team with Her? Will you help Him help us win the human race?

It is a race against time, and one that we cannot afford to lose. □

A 'CONSERVATIVE' PLAN FOR PEACE (from page 24)

Having said that, the strategy I am proposing should bring results far sooner than most people expect. The reason is that its most important elements are subjective rather than objective—they turn on *perceptions* rather than reality. Honoring Palestinians and assuring Israelis about survival are issues of *spirit*, and if the citizen engagements produce these “subjective” results, the news will spread very quickly that a fundamental shift is occurring in the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians. Once that happens, anything and everything will become possible. On the other hand, if no shift occurs, we will quickly—say, in a year or so—know that this strategy will not work.

A skeptic might reasonably ask: what if the Israeli and Palestinian governments do not act to support the subjective needs of both sides? If they don't, then the program of citizen engagement will need to be continued and expanded to strengthen the political constituency for peace. But even in the current climate of violence, both governments have shown openness to alter the policies that are denying the other's identity. The Israeli government at various times has talked about rolling back the settlements, and a new IPCRI study commissioned by the U.S. Congress through the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv has found that the new Palestinian text books “do not incite against Israel or against peace.”

A final virtue of this approach is that it can be implemented with little risk to any party. All initial meetings can be—indeed should be—private and off-the-record to minimize risk. If the experiment fails, the failure will never be shown on the evening news. At a time of such intractable tension and conflict, the absence of risk will be a crucial element to encourage all parties to participate in a new initiative.

This approach is not a panacea. It will provide crucial support for any proposed, formal agreement between governments, but it cannot itself replace a formal peace agreement.

Neither will it be easy. The idea of governments recruiting citizens as partners in the peace process is a radical departure from an international system that focuses entirely on government-to-government relations. Governments currently not only lack experience in seeing citizens as partners in meeting international challenges, they lack the institutional mechanisms to do what is proposed here. This lack of capacity is already becoming apparent in Iraq. Building civil society through networks of citizen engagement similar to those called for here is precisely the key to building both the culture and institutions of a new democracy in Iraq.

Building the capacity to recruit citizens as partners in the Palestinian, Israeli, and U.S. governments will be important in a new Mideast peace process. It will be important in Iraq. And it will be important in the growing numbers of flash point places of danger in a world that is becoming increasingly unstable. □

Enchanted Agnosticism

Kirk J. Schneider

Let's face it: with regard to faith and ethics today, we're between a rock and a hard place. The rock is extremist-fundamentalist religion and the hard place is postmodern free-market anarchy.

Fortunately, there is an alternative to these debilitating excesses which have the world in a vise-grip; I call it "enchanted agnosticism." Agnosticism has a long and many-layered history. In recent times it has come to be associated with scientific doubt (or the unverifiable); but there is another kind of agnosticism that takes doubt, and particularly the mystery of being, a step further. I call this alternative *enchanted agnosticism*.

By enchanted agnosticism, I mean bedazzled uncertainty, exhilarated discernment, and enraptured curiosity; I mean the openness and skepticism of science wedded to the zeal and exaltation of religion; I mean the veneration of mystery wedded to the solemnity of responsibility. To put all this in philosophic terms, I mean our existential faith in the inscrutable.

Enchanted agnostics believe that behind every institutionalized religion is a transcendent question, "But what is beyond that?" Our answer is that behind every bounded faith resides an evolving, indefinite faith. Beyond every bounded god resides an expanding, indecipherable god. Captivating as they may be, gods and goddesses, idols and icons, obsessions and fixations are but pale stand-ins for the inscrutable. Even concepts like the Absolute or Atman or the Void—to the degree they are decipherable—are but veneers of this mysterious power. As Paul Tillich put it in *The Courage to Be*, veneers (or pieces) of the holy must not be identified with the holy itself, which is a "God beyond God."

This radically new view of God, being, or creation is a view that trumps nihilism as it does dogma; purposelessness as it does certitude. It is a view that basks not in particular



things, but in the amazement, astonishment, and bewilderment of things. Whereas definable gods (such as those in the Old and New Testaments, ancient myth, and popular culture) tend to polarize us, either by containing and belittling us on the one hand, or inflating and exaggerating us on the other, the inscrutable fosters wholeness—not puritan or absolute wholeness, but dynamic, paradoxical wholeness. The inscrutable evokes our humility and our possibility at the same time, but instead of dictating these conditions from on high, it inspires *us* to negotiate them, to find our way *within* them. The result of this understanding is that devotees of the inscrutable are more inclined to see *through* their investments and be less driven by them. They are less entrapped—either by false hope or false despair—and they are enlivened by a poignancy to life, an overview, that heightens each attendant moment. Enchanted agnostics are the leaders-to-be of a new spiritual consciousness.

Three Principles

Faith in the inscrutable combines three intertwining perspectives: the magnificence of creation, the mystery of creation, and our responsibility to creation.

Magnificence

We don't need a directive or a definable god to feel the presence of divinity. The magnificence of creation demands it. That creation exists at all is magnificent, amazing, incomprehensible. So too, all that partakes in creation must be seen as equally amazing, equally magnificent—death as well

SPIRITUAL PATHS

as life. This magnificence measures the span of humanity's hope, and demands the tolerance that comes from being open to awe.

As Whitman reminds us:

Grand is the seen, the light, to me—grand are the stars,
Grand is the earth, and grand are lasting time and space,
And grand are their laws, so multiform, puzzling,
evolutionary,
But grander far the unseen soul of me, comprehending,
endowing all those ...

(*Leaves of Grass*, n.d.)

Mystery

The flip side of magnificence is mystery. One of the greatest dangers of our age is jadedness. The more jaded we become, the less we acknowledge Mystery; the less we acknowledge Mystery, the more we lose touch with its current and with the inscrutable itself.

Magnificence and Mystery are a pair. We cannot have magnificence without uncertainty, and we cannot have mystery without hope. This paradox is often overlooked in mystical circles, which sometimes emphasize magnificence to the detriment of mystery, but was familiar to Tillich, who points out in *The Dynamics of Faith* that mysticism neglects "the separation of man from the ultimate. There is no faith without separation."

With separation comes anxiety; faith must live with this sense of unease. Uncertainty reminds us of our fragility, but it also reminds us of our possibility. Again, Tillich:

[F]or man is finite, and he can never unite all elements of truth in complete balance. On the other hand, he cannot rest on the awareness of his finitude, because faith is concerned with the ultimate and its adequate expression. Man's faith is inadequate if his whole existence is determined by something that is less than ultimate. Therefore, he must always try to break through the limits of his finitude and reach what never can be reached, the ultimate itself. (p. 57)

Responsibility

Creation's magnificence leads us to such foundational religious concepts as respecting the stranger, venerating God, and so on. Mystery, however, leads us to responsibility, the challenge to respond. The call of magnificence can be answered by reflexive, even passive, approaches to worship. Mystery, however, calls us to what Ernest Becker describes as reflective, even dialectical worship (see his 1974 interview with Sam Keen in *Psychology Today*). Once we understand the mystery of the inscrutable, we understand that each of us, as individuals, must bear the brunt of decision-making.

We enchanted agnostics cannot passively defer to authority, because there is no certain authority to accept our surrender. There is no marked path, no "highway to heaven," no inviolable canon. It is *we* who must sanctify the scripts, *we* who must find the path. But we are not rudderless when it comes to this process either; faith in the inscrutable does

provide landmarks. The first, following Magnificence, is an appreciation for all being; the second, following Mystery, is an openness to what evolves; and the third, following Responsibility, is a challenge to respond to or discern what evolves. That which Tillich calls "listening love" (which is akin to depth therapy as well as Buber's philosophy dialogue) is a concrete realization of the aforementioned principles. "Listening love," elaborates Tillich in *My Search for Absolutes*, is a wholebodied immersion in a dilemma or concern. "It is a listening to and looking at the concrete situation in all its concreteness, which includes the deepest motives of the other person...." Tillich concludes, "The more seriously one has considered all the factors in a moral decision, the more one can be certain that there is a power of acceptance in the depth of life"—and in our own lives, I might add, for the decision we risk.

The responsibility to respond compels a mutable respect, a respect that leans on humanity. Just as one can't apply a "fits all" product to a diverse and opinionated populace, one can't force a "fits all" ethic to a complex and changing existence. Instead, the principle of responsibility that is at the heart of enchanted agnosticism calls upon the deepest energies of democracy, the fullest engagements of dialogue, and the keenest perceptions of context.

Nor is the principle of responsibility a kind of "situational" ethics, as that approach is conventionally understood. Enchanted agnosticism advocates an "awe-based" situational ethics, an ethics infused by the thrill and anxiety of living and the reverence, humility, and wonder of living. While other situational ethics tend to resort to intellectual or consensus-based criteria, an awe-based ethics is ever attuned to the whole, the embodied, and the relational in its deliberations (as in listening love, or person-to-person encounter).

The Way to the Inscrutable

Enchanted agnosticism is thus very different from the reflexive faith of disciples, or the expedient faith of marketers, or the obsessive faith of fanatics (or even G.W. Bush's faith-based education!). Faith in the inscrutable is wrought from our *encounter* with these and other, singular faiths. It is a faith wrought from the encounter with the myopic, the fleeting, and the one-dimensional—a faith wrought from pain but not confined by pain. It is a faith born of deep self-inquiry, deep presence to the results of that inquiry, and deep trust in the unfolding of the results. It is a faith born of confidence that one can survive one's own intense grappling, but it is not just a faith in survival; it is a faith in that which permits survival to occur.

Awe-based faith entails a "giving up when there's nothing left," as Ernest Becker put it in 1974, a placing of one's trust in the "tremendous creative energies of the universe" to work through and with us when we are spent.

The key here is that such faith often requires that we struggle until we are spent. Struggle jolts the system, dents

the armor, and jars the rails. But struggle is only the beginning. The shock and the awakening we experience are only preparatory. The next crucial question is how we pursue, engage with, and emerge from this struggle. We must learn to acknowledge, identify with, and yet somehow be more than that with which we contend.

Expediency, the catch-word of our time, is not a route to the inscrutable. It is a route to the definable, the consolable, and the delimiting. One cannot partake of the fruits of vibrancy, of the profound and the emancipating, through gimmickry. There are no tricks to cultivating awe. The danger today is that we delude ourselves into believing in such tricks; that we mistake Isaiah Berlin's jigsaw puzzle universe for the brute and throbbing one into which we are thrust. Almost every cutting-edge technology poses this danger—virtually every designer drug, genetic manipulation, and robotic innovation holds the potential for abominable self-delusion. While we can be aided and, indeed, miraculously transformed by these developments, we must not lose touch with their partiality and their envelopment by the inscrutable.

Vision

If enchanted agnosticism were to become the norm, then, how would the world look?

I envision a time when enchanted agnosticism is echoed in schools and in temples, in boardrooms and in embassies, in bedrooms and in alleyways—in every human sphere. This would be a time when churches throw open their doors to mosques, and mosques to synagogues; when Buddhist priests can perform sacred chanting rites before Hindu congregants; and when Jewish temples sanction Protestant services. It would be a time, perhaps, when every major denomination would regularly and on a rotating basis host every other major denomination and yet maintain their respective identities; when families of all faiths and backgrounds would pray together, break bread together, and partake in each others' heritage.

This would also be a time when enchanted agnosticism—awe-based living—is practiced in business and diplomatic circles; when politicians and mediators and entrepreneurs model the actions they expect of others; when they partake in interfaith ceremonies, avail themselves to intimate interchange, and open to diverse folk traditions. Then, and only then, will the spirals of hate, of tit-for-tat, and of intercultural estrangement be stanchd. Then and only then will conciliation have a chance.

Further, this would be a time when diplomatic and trade meetings are attended not only by policymakers, but also by ethical philosophers, spiritual leaders, and organizational

psychologists; when, for example, attendees participate in professionally facilitated process groups and promote frank exchanges of feeling; and when the input from scientists and philosophers matches that from legislators and generals. It would be a time when representatives can broach each others' personal fears as well as state or corporate agendas; when international relations can be spoken about in terms of interpersonal relations; and when hopes and trepidations can be coupled with predictions and averages.

Finally, this would be a time when people everywhere approach each other and our world from a stance of curiosity, wonderment, and potentially even attraction, for commensurate with the rise in enchanted agnosticism would be the corresponding rise in intra- and intercultural reassessment, trust, and cooperation, and with these developments, entire worlds will unfurl. Religious and scientific

types, for example, would begin to perceive not only their respective divergences, but also their respective convergences, utility, and virtues. While adherents of doctrinal faith would reassess the value of openness and skepticism, devotees of calculation would reevaluate the legitimacy of veneration and faith; while spiritualists would rethink material realities, materialists would revisit the ethereal, poetic, and felt. Although hesitant at first, each of the respective parties would become increasingly appreciative of the others' legitimacy, lucidity, and sublimity.

Sound remote? Out-of-reach? Not necessarily. Social theorists from Carl Rogers to Michael Lerner have been promoting such interchanges for years and many have partaken of their fruit. As more partake in The Great Conversation, fewer will pine for The Great Detonation, or The Holy Vindication; and as some invite deepening and widening, others will permit risking, opening. In short, enchanted agnosticism—the embrace of mystery—has tremendous potential to address the confusion and spiritual hunger of our lives.

In her illuminating study of religion, *The History of God*, Karen Armstrong concludes that we in the West have reached a developmental milestone. We have witnessed the disasters of fundamentalist tyrannies and, equally, of post-Enlightenment oligarchies, and we are in need of something different. This alternative, Armstrong suggests, just might be what she calls "mystical agnosticism," which is very akin to my "enchanted agnosticism." The problem, Armstrong cautions, is that in order for such an alternative to be viable it must be "felt upon the pulse," or as Buber put it, "hallowed in the everyday." That is precisely the challenge that I pose to TIKKUN readers today: to feel enchanted agnosticism upon the pulse. □

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The Rise and Fall of the Donut Church

Patrick Mulcahey

Virginia Dubendorf didn't have the homeless in mind when in 1998 she proposed opening Golden Gate Lutheran's doors Monday through Thursday afternoons. She was thinking of the folks, especially the young ones, who attended the 12:15 AA meetings at the San Francisco church. If they weren't working or weren't in school, what was there to keep them from drifting back into bars, out of boredom? Then there were the neighborhood working poor, pulling night shifts in gas stations and convenience stores, with nothing to do all day while the nine-to-five world wasn't home.

Virginia figured on serving a little snack, some coffee; it wouldn't cost much. People could watch TV, play ping-pong, socialize. Her pastor, Ed Miller, didn't need much convincing. The church hall was standing empty, mostly, after the AA people left. A quiet little drop-in center, say two hours a day, would be a fine thing to provide for Golden Gate Lutheran's neighbors. It started out much the way Virginia and Ed envisioned. For the first six months, they saw two or three, then maybe ten or fifteen people each afternoon. Some of them were hungry, Virginia noticed. They would gorge themselves on snacks. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to serve them a hot meal? Not every day, but once in a while. The church kitchen was well laid-out, not grand but not tiny either. In the old days they'd served breakfasts and pot-luck suppers to a then-thriving congregation without much strain. How hard could it be to feed fifteen people?

Fifty was harder. Hot meals drew hungry people, and not the same people who'd been dropping by for coffee and ping-pong. To Ed and Virginia, the rise in numbers meant they were doing the right thing, meeting a need unmet in the neighborhood, and they cast around for ways to do more of it. The congregation was willing to commit resources but had grown too small to tap for volunteer help, so Virginia and Ed turned to the people they were serving, and they weren't disappointed. Longtime guests became volunteers; word went out on the grapevine, and all sorts of help appeared out of the blue. People willing to cook, every day. Food donations, cash donations, eventually even city money. Ed made a friend at the Entenmann's Thrift Store,

whose abundant gifts gave rise to Golden Gate Lutheran's street nickname: the Donut Church.

With so much support, serving meals even to 100 proved to be no great strain. By then, of course, most of the original daily visitors were gone. "When the homeless come around," says Virginia, "the others just ... go away." The first signs of a gathering crisis arrived at the end of 1999, with the closure of San Francisco's infamous Mission Rock Shelter. Many of the 650 people it housed each night found themselves out on the street with no idea where their next meal was coming from. Soon Ed and Virginia were having 150, 200 visitors a day—sometimes they topped 250. The hall, however, has nothing like 250 seats, so if you wanted to eat sitting down, you had to be there when the doors opened. The crowd would start to assemble early, a crush on the sidewalk that spilled across the street into quiet Dolores Park. If there were no seats left, you ate standing up, then had a nap or a lie-down in the park to bask in that not-hungry-right-now feeling. Sunbathers or passersby might be hassled for spare change, or even for general purposes. Drug dealers were drawn to the park, seeing that's where the customers were. Junkies might shoot up in the park bathrooms, unless they were full or closed, in which case they'd huddle under a blanket to do their dope. Come four o'clock, when Golden Gate Lutheran closed, the toilet shortage was apt to dot bushes, hedges, gardens, and lawns all around the park perimeter with human droppings.

The neighbors Virginia had set out in 1998 to serve were distressed. What had happened to their peaceful neighborhood? How had their lovely park been hijacked, right under their noses? Ed and Virginia are straightforward, uncomplicated, just-folks people, and were baffled and hurt by the outrage directed at them. All they were doing was feeding the hungry, at no small cost to themselves, financially and personally. How was the mess across the street their fault? They were only open eight hours a week. If the homeless gravitated to Dolores Park outside of those eight hours, wasn't that because it's one of the few places it's legal for them to be, where they're not loitering or trespassing?

Virginia and Ed tried to cooperate with the police in a doomed effort to curb loitering on the sidewalk in front of the church. They put up signs and bit their tongues when patrol cars would scoop up guys who were sleeping or hanging around outside. But they couldn't bring themselves to take a role in the enforcement efforts, and any child could have predicted what happened next: the sleepers and hangers-around

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just crossed the street and slept or hung around in the park with impunity. Finally, after a neighborhood powwow in January to which Ed and Virginia were not invited, a group of neighbors threatened Golden Gate Lutheran with a class-action lawsuit. Embattled on all sides, Ed and Virginia finally gave up. They closed their doors on January 31st of this year.

What happened to the Donut Church is a cautionary tale from which it behooves us to take away a few lessons:

1. *The success of any homeless program depends not on what happens inside its doors but on how it looks to a casual passerby.*

The program I run is called “Wednesday Suppers.” Each Wednesday we serve dinner, offer haircuts, and show movies at my parish church to 120 pre-registered guests. Nothing we do at the Wednesday Suppers is as important to our survival as how we admit and contain our guests and disperse those we cannot serve. We have a faithful little band of fifteen to twenty guests who arrive before I do every week, and my greeting to them is always the same: “Hello, beautiful people!” (Which is what they are to me, and they know it.) “Could we all scoot one way or the other and keep the sidewalk clear?” I always feel a little pang when they immediately form a single line. Life in line is what they are used to.

Once supper gets underway in the hall, I don’t figure our neighbors mind a few people smoking or stretching their legs outside—and if they do, tough. But having guys on the sidewalk eating or sleeping curled up against the church doors does not play well to the neighborhood or to the parish, and we had to put a stop to it. Tricky, since of course it tends to happen on days of the week when we’re not around. Myself, I find it touching, the way some of our Wednesday guests gravitate to the structure itself when none of us are in it. Their faces, their body language, as they sit or lie against the outer church walls say: *This is a place where no one will hurt me. I have been loved in this place.* But because of that love they always honor my arguably unreasonable request to sleep or eat somewhere else.

2. *Anger and frustration about homelessness will always target the people trying to do something about it.*

To borrow a metaphor:

In the final chapter of *Moby Dick*, Captain Ahab and his men take to rowboats in pursuit of the great white whale, wounded and slowed by the rain of harpoons from the Pequod. As soon as they hit the water, the men see they’re surrounded by sharks. The sharks want the whale too, but it’s still too big, too fierce, too alive an adversary. If they wait for Ahab and his men to finish it off, the sharks could have their fill of the carcass before it’s towed onboard the ship. But what do they do instead? Pursue the boats, and begin taking chunks out of the oars and the gunwales.

The great white whale is the crisis of homelessness. In the rowboats are Ed and Virginia and you and me. In the water are our fellow citizens, beside themselves because they don’t know what to do.



No, I am not calling our beloved friends and neighbors sharks. (Anyway, in the book they’re not bad sharks. Melville doesn’t have them eat anyone.) Their goal is the same as ours. The difficulty arises when their panic threatens to prevent anyone from achieving it.

Panic is a reaction to feeling unsafe. It’s safer to rant at calm, courteous church folks in sensible shoes than to go one-on-one with somebody big and unwashed who’s eating a sandwich on your front steps. He could be crazy or drug-addled, he could have a knife and attack you—such are the stereotypes about the homeless. And who can say about any given stranger whether he’s one of the violent few or not?

Well, if he’s one of our guys who’s just taken his bag lunch down the street, we can, because he’s not a stranger to us. We want our neighbors to have our phone number and to call us when this sort of thing happens on Wednesdays. We don’t want them to feel powerless or victimized. We can not only address the problem situation, we can facilitate an introduction between the unwitting offender and the offended—and that can change everything.

Two-plus years of laughing and crying and chowing down with our Wednesday guests have given us good information about the quirks and characters of, I would guess, about 300 of our neighborhood street folks. We know who the half-dozen problem guys are and what problems they pose. It’s also given us something much more valuable: relationships. In relationship, there is safety. Creating relationships is creating safety. A stranger doesn’t care whose rosebush he’s peeing in, but it’s always possible to influence the behavior of someone to whom you and

your good opinion matter. Of all the things we as a society deny to the homeless, friendship is the least defensible.

There is being safe and there is feeling safe: one without the other is not enough. I am pleased with the safe, friendly environment we have established for our guests and ourselves, and I believe our neighbors are safe too, if only they knew it. The best way to help them believe it themselves is to invite them into the community we have created. We now count eighty of our neighbors and parishioners as regular or occasion volunteers, and that's a good start.

3. *Mere do-gooders will inevitably be advised to step aside and leave the job to the professionals.*

This might be the angle that rankles me most. Ed and Virginia are forever having friend and foe alike wag a finger in their faces, telling them what they've attempted is hopeless and always was a mistake. They were foolish to think they could run a feeding program without a paid staff, outside oversight, security guards, all the trimmings.

Sorry, but I don't see the professionals doing such a bang-up job that we should retire our spatulas and stay home to cluck over the plight of the loveless and confused on *Oprah*. I refuse to believe there is nothing the ordinary person is qualified to do for the poor and needy. And I see every day there are possibilities inherent in an all-volunteer organization that aren't available to a business or professional non-profit model. We can be a meritocracy, or a motivocracy. Our volunteers can rise to positions of responsibility for the simplest and purest of reasons: because they want to and because they can, since there are no toes to step on, as there always are in a hierarchy organized from the top down.

That we don't know what we're doing—and that we do it for love—are our pre-eminent qualifications. We do get the infrequent agency or foundation visitor who will gawk and sputter: "What are you people thinking, this is not how it's done!" But their protestations feel like merit badges to me. We don't want to be in the charity business. We just like having 120 friends over for supper.

4. *Flexibility is our friend—but a treacherous friend.*

Ed and Virginia adapted their mission to the need that made itself felt. So did the Wednesday Suppers. We began as an outreach to the homeless youth of the Castro. So when forty-, fifty-, sixty-year-olds began to show up at our door, we had a decision to make: tell them they're too old to feed, or try to do more than we set out to? We adapted, expanded.

But nothing can expand infinitely, except perhaps need itself. When we reached the point where our hall was full every week, with more people outside clamoring to come in, we were faced with new decisions. Should we abandon everything that didn't fit on a dinner plate? The movies we show, the shampoos and haircuts from our volunteer barbers? The flu shots, the legal clinics, the donated clothing, the toiletries—should we ditch all that, cut dinner short and fill the hall twice instead, so that everyone who comes to us could be fed? No, we decided. Food service was not our

expertise. Relationships were. Cultivating twice as many relationships of the same quality was an impossibility.

The willingness to define what it is we do best and to acknowledge our limits has been a saving grace. I try always to keep that in sight.

5. *Saying yes means saying no.*

Whether limiting the number of guests we admit or placing restrictions on their behavior, we must accept that establishing community with our homeless neighbors is tantamount to imposing boundaries. "Community" is a term much in vogue. "The gay community" means everyone gay, "the homeless community" means everyone homeless—once useful abstractions, maybe, but look at them closely and the meaning tends to evaporate before your eyes. Any real-world community is gated, in a sense. There is always somebody who can't be in it and actions that it cannot tolerate. Our faith calls us to reach outside the walls fear and ignorance have built, but beyond those there will always be a wall that love itself must build—not immovable, not impermeable, and not without a care for those outside it, but a barrier nonetheless.

We had a crisis ourselves in January. Another nearby meal program stopped serving on Wednesdays, and suddenly a throng of sixty or seventy new faces was at our gate, pleading for something to eat. There was no room inside, so our first impulse was to ask them to wait, while we scurried around to fix up something they could take with them. And wait they did, one hour, two hours, sometimes in the rain, clogging the sidewalk, laughing, complaining, arguing. Nothing too uproarious; the real uproar came from the neighbors and the parish.

It took us a few weeks to adjust. These days, people we cannot seat are greeted at our gate with an apology and a bag lunch to go, complete with an admonition against littering. The bag lunch itself is nutritious, sufficient, if not very inspiring: a sandwich, some juice, a dessert snack or piece of fruit. Make it more appealing and we know we'd attract another hundred, two hundred people.

Standing at that gate with that box of brown bags is the most difficult thing we can ask of a volunteer. Only a handful are willing to do it; and frankly, some I won't allow to. Mostly I insist on being there myself.

Why? Because to my mind, the most critical encounter of every Wednesday is the meeting between us and someone who must be denied all the good things we'd like to give him. I am not talking strategy now, or the mechanics of keeping everyone happy. I mean that, spiritually, our saying "no" to a man or woman who needs us is the most important moment of the evening, and the most important thing to get right. It is a hard truth, but only by saying no to some folks can we say yes to others. In that sense, the people we turn away make everything we do possible. We owe them gratitude, kindness, patience, dignity, we owe them everything. But we cannot let them inside. Not to face and accept that paradox would be cowardly, dishonest. □

We the Unreasonable

Jeff Gates



If you were just listening to America's two major political parties, you would hear that the economy is on a path to recovery. Yet, according to a broad range of social, fiscal, cultural, political and environmental indicators, the world's 'richest' nation is experiencing a steady twenty-year decline. The nation now faces record-breaking debt, record-breaking trade deficits, record-breaking reductions in public services, record-breaking rates of incarceration, and an under-funded infrastructure while three major public-sector programs—Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—are expected to double as a share of the economy, putting untold pressure on tax rates, the economy, and the budget. And that's before taking into account the fiscal burden of funding an Occupation Army in Iraq, rebuilding a nation we helped destroy, and financing our hyper-hawks' next War for Empire in the Middle East.

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After several decades of both major parties embracing reverse Robin Hood policies, the United States faces a future that is certifiably dysfunctional: socially unjust, economically unworkable, culturally divided, politically fractured, fiscally devastated, and ecologically unsustainable. Add to that an aggressively militarized foreign policy that's become a menace abroad, de-legitimizing American democracy while endangering our long-term national security.

Any American who is not outraged or profoundly saddened is profoundly ill-informed. Yet one must now wonder, are Americans ignorant by design? Over the past two decades, the rules favoring community-based broadcasting were gradually repealed. As broadcasters merged, broadcasting itself—the oxygen of democracy—gradually morphed into a financial property as its ownership consolidated along with the diversity of viewpoints.

A single firm, San Antonio-based Clear Channel, now owns 1,225 radio stations and syndicates programming to another 7,800 broadcasters, enabling hard right icon Rush Limbaugh to dominate America's drive-time eardrums while crowding out other perspectives like nothing ever

experienced by *any* nation hoping to sustain a robust democracy. With steady support from both major parties, American democracy now finds itself trapped in a media environment where it's difficult to find the real facts about the perilous state of the nation.

As I will show, media consolidation helps obscure the disastrous mismanagement of the nation's affairs, particularly over the past two decades, as both parties embraced the University of Chicago's "neoliberal" economic model. Without immediate and dramatic reform, this fast-spreading disaster will continue to deepen. As an American learning to cope with the necessity for change in a shutdown political environment, I suggest that reform requires that We be Unreasonable.

Making the Rich Richer While Sending You the Bill

The U.S. began the 1980s \$909 billion in debt, already a huge burden on the next generation, or so voters were then told by presidential candidate Ronald Reagan. After 20 years of White House leadership by two fiscally conservative parties, that debt is now expected to top \$7,500 billion next year. But that's before the full fiscal cost of the War on Terrorism, the War on Iraq, and the War on Civil Liberties tellingly cast as a presidential security service for the "Homeland."

The world's strongest economy can structure its debt in many ways. That's a strategic advantage as U.S. government bonds have long served as the "gold standard" for financial securities worldwide. Yet at every turn, regardless of political party, this swollen debt has been structured to make the already-rich far richer. Backed by taxpayers' full faith and credit, interest paid on those bonds goes to just four percent of taxpayers. Those payments skyrocketed from \$58.5 billion in 1980 to \$247.5 billion by 2000. Yet taxpayer-paid interest is only the most obvious way that both parties favor the wealthy with deficit financing that preempts fiscal resources required for other purposes—education, healthcare, research, foreign aid, environmental restoration and such.

For example, in 1981, a Reagan-Bush I "supply-side" investment stimulus was enacted at a projected fiscal expense of \$872 billion, all of it deficit-financed. This leveraged the entire U.S. economy and doubled the national debt in just one bill. It also reflected a long-term GOP strategy designed to reduce the size of government by reducing its fiscal capacity, a budgetary "crowding out" scheme conceded by then-Budget Director Dave Stockman. The "other" party (led by neoliberals Clinton and Gore) embraced a similar supply-side investment subsidy in the 1990s at a fiscal cost of \$268 billion, likewise 100 percent deficit financed.

At every turn, neoliberals piled on more and more debt to build wealth for fewer and fewer Americans, particularly those who contribute to their political campaigns (only 0.25 percent of Americans give more than \$200 in an election

cycle). The Bush II tax cuts enacted in 2001 came at a ten-year fiscal cost of \$1,350,000,000,000 (\$1.35 trillion). Making those cuts permanent beyond 2010, as Bush proposes, would reduce fiscal resources by \$4,100,000,000,000 (\$4.1 trillion), more than twice the projected shortfall in long-term Social Security funding, a fiscal strategy certain to put untold pressure on the nation's financial health, endangering the value of all pension benefits. Fully half the long-term benefits of his tax cuts are designed to further enrich the richest 1 percent of taxpayers. The tax cuts are timed to have their most devastating fiscal impact just as baby-boomers most need those fiscal resources.

What's the result of these deficit-financed changes in law? A huge increase in government debt, a huge reduction in budget capacity, and a huge windfall for those already the nation's most well-to-do—along with a huge increase in political contributions (more than \$1.1 billion for both parties during the 2002 election season). In 1982, when the Reagan-Bush I supply-side investment subsidies became effective, *Forbes* magazine required a personal net worth of at least \$91 million to be included on its list of the nation's 400 richest people. Average wealth was then \$200 million. By 1986, average wealth topped \$500 million.

By 2000, \$725 million was required to make the list, compared with an inflation-adjusted \$161 million. Average wealth by then topped \$1.4 billion as, from 1998 to 2000, the wealth of this politically favored few grew an average \$1.9 million per day. That's \$240,000 dollars per hour, or 46,602 times the minimum wage. Good work if you can get it. Or if you can hire those lawmakers willing to change the rules to get it for you—sticking taxpayers with the fiscal tab for a policy prescription that increased the number of billionaires from 13 in 1982 to 274 by 2000.

Deficit-financed investment subsidies, deficit-financed interest income, and deficit-financed income tax cuts are not all that the rich receive. Now that their private fortunes have grown far larger—at public expense—repeal of the estate tax will reduce revenues by an even larger amount—another \$740 billion commencing in 2011, just when the first baby-boomers turn age 66. The impact of this latest deficit-financed gift would be especially narrow in its reach. Though Hard Right Talk Radio assures its listeners that the "death tax" devastates small business and family farmers, that's another Big Lie protected from public scrutiny by today's bought-up and shut-down media (farmers already enjoy a \$4 million estate-tax exemption).

What's true is that repeal will de-capitalize the nonprofit sector, ensuring a dramatic drop in charitable bequests that now support hospitals, clinics, colleges, and so forth. As the proponents of repeal know but dare not tell, half of all estate taxes were paid by 3,300 estates in 1999, 0.16 percent of the total, while a quarter of the taxes were paid by 467 estates worth more than \$20 million each. Fully half the financial benefits of this latest version of fiscal crowding-out

will flow to the topmost one-hundredth of 1 percent, funding a fiscally induced financial aristocracy just as baby-boomers begin their lengthy retirements.

Working Harder for Less

It's difficult to overstate the extent to which the wealth of the nation's wealthiest is directly due to changes in public policy and to the bipartisan embrace of "Chicago" economics. For example, over the past 30 years, *Fortune* magazine reports that the average pay of the top-paid 100 executives skyrocketed from \$1.3 million to \$37.5 million, or from 39 times the average employee's pay to 1,000 times. To put that phenomenon in proper context, understand that these executives are managing other people's money, the bulk of which was intended, *by law*, to fund retirement security for a broad base of Americans. As someone who played a hand in crafting much of that law (*mea culpa*), let me explain.

When I became counsel to the Senate Finance Committee in May 1980, Wall Street money managers oversaw \$1,900 billion. Their "funds under management" now exceed \$17,000 billion, with roughly 55 percent of that money directly traceable to tax subsidies provided for retirement security, my specialty on the Committee. Those subsidies now reduce tax revenues by \$110 billion per year, for a projected \$553 billion fiscal cost over the next five years, ranking retirement security second only to national security (and interest on the debt) as a budget expense that preempts other public needs.

In addition to allowing senior managers to skim at least \$500 billion (more than \$1 trillion at the market peak in early 2000), what else did Wall Street do with the retirement funds entrusted to their care over the past two decades? For starters, the nation's share of after-tax income received by the topmost 1 percent nearly doubled from 1979-1997. Over that period, the average income of the richest fifth jumped from nine times the income of the poorest fifth to fifteen times. By 1998, the richest one percent had as much combined income as the 100 million poorest Americans. The top fifth now claim 49.2 percent of national income while the bottom fifth gets by on a record-low 3.6 percent.

That lack of widespread purchasing power fuels what the Chicago cognoscenti call recurrent "overcapacity" recessions as the capability to produce goods and services outstrips the financial capacity of Americans to buy what could be produced. Just prior to the 9-11 attack, the United States was (once again) sinking into an overcapacity recession, a key reason we now lack the essential economic tools to pull ourselves out of this latest morass, despite massive (deficit-financed) spending on armaments and on the Department of Homeland Security.

Rather than investing to catalyze broad-based purchasing power, half the total gain in real income (47 percent) between 1983 and 1998 flowed to the topmost one percent while only 12 percent trickled down to the bottom four-fifths. Keep in mind that these trends were financed with *your* retirement savings and with vast fiscal resources meant to encourage *your* saving—resources that could have been used for other public purposes. Sixty percent of the income gains captured by the top one percent flowed to the top 0.1 percent while almost half that gushed to the topmost 0.01 percent—those

13,000 taxpayers with annual incomes of at least \$3.6 million. By 2000, the richest one percent were pocketing 21 percent of national income. This systematic looting of pension savings was covered up by neoliberal theorists happy to rationalize more executive-suite skimming even as the average pay of the top-ten CEOs soared from \$3.45 million in 1981 to \$154 million in 2000.

What does this mean? Even as America and Americans created vastly more financial wealth, few people saw more money in their pockets or more wealth in their portfolios. Even as presidents representing both parties trumpeted "our" economic boom, most folks had roughly the same or even less than before. Meanwhile, neoliberal lawmakers leveraged-up our national balance sheet, loading it up with massive debt while holding us personally liable. Don't pay your taxes (to repay our debt) and off to jail you go.

Households likewise leveraged up their personal balance sheets, helping finance a Wall Street-boosting illusion of shared prosperity as purchasing power was financed with household debt built on a combination of home equity loans—particularly for the top 20 percent—and massive credit card debt.

At one end of the neoliberal food chain, the annual pace of personal bankruptcies continues to hold steady at 1.4 million for each of the past five years, an average 7,000 per hour as household debt topped \$7.6 trillion in 2001, a record-breaking 73% of GDP, while home mortgage foreclosures reached a 30-year high. Meanwhile, anticipating brisk sales, Daimler-Chrysler launched over the July 4, 2002 weekend its \$300,000 *Maybach* luxury sedan as high-end boatyards continued to report strong demand for super-luxury yachts, 150-feet or longer.

The personal windfall pocketed by the topmost few was financed largely from three sources: public debt, public retirement savings, and public tax subsidies meant to fund retirement security. Yet the scope and the scale of this heist—clearly the largest in history—reaches well beyond the realm of finance. The typical American now works 184 hours longer than in 1970, an additional 4½ weeks on the job for nine percent more pay. So much for 200 years of

*At every turn,
neoliberals piled on
more and more debt to
build wealth for fewer
and fewer Americans.*

labor-saving progress, much of that also financed with taxpayer-subsidized research and development. The bottom fifth saw their average after-tax income fall nine percent from 1977 to 1999.

This massive rip-off includes not only the theft of peoples' time and dignity but also their healthcare and even higher education as college costs spiraled out of reach (the typical student now graduates with \$15,000 in student loans, up from an average \$2,000 in 1980). All values were forced to play second fiddle to the Chicago-inspired pell-mell pursuit of financial returns—at the cost of civil cohesion, community viability, even sacrificing to Wall Street the health of the natural capital on which all life depends.

The all-encompassing extent of this systemic thievery comes more clearly into view once you realize that national economic policy is based on full employment while the largest tax paid by four out of five Americans is a tax on jobs—the Social Security payroll tax. With support from both parties, the largest tax hike of the past two decades was enacted in 1983 after Alan Greenspan chaired a Reagan-Bush I presidential commission that raised the Social Security tax, already the nation's most regressive tax, a 'flat tax' now levied on the first \$80,900 of income.

Beware: Neoliberal Looters Lurking

Looking at the Social Security tax, some taxpayers have grown receptive to the neoliberal notion that we should partially privatize this retirement insurance. Wall Street's favorite proposal would redirect \$100 billion in job-tax revenues into financial markets that have been anything but kind to the typical investor. For example, from 1983 to 1998, 53 percent of market gains flowed to the top 1 percent of households.

This ongoing redistribution of wealth to the wealthy will accelerate if money managers are given another \$100 billion each year in market-boosting funds to manage. Imagine the stunning chutzpah of these neoliberal looters—knowing *ahead of time* that 53 percent of that stock market boost will boost the portfolios of their well-heeled clients, all of it funded with job-endangering taxes on employment. Plus that's \$100 billion per year in tax revenues that will no longer be available to pay current Social Security benefits, ensuring *even more* fiscal crowding out.

These Chicago-inspired gangsters make Al Capone look like a small-time hood as they have rigged Wall Street with enthusiast help from both major parties. Advised by a tight network of think tanks (Heritage Foundation, American Enterprise Institute, Brookings Institute and others), this cabal is converting America's pension savings into a source of funds for creating an autocratic over-class. That process, already well along, continues to accelerate, financed with more taxpayer-backed debt, more taxpayer-paid interest payments, more taxpayer-subsidized investment subsidies, more deficit-financed tax cuts, more taxpayer-paid research, and

more taxpayer-funded government contracts, including those that fund "our" commitment to empire in the Middle East.

To keep their legislative lackeys in line, Wall Street's money managers and stockbrokers now account for 71 of the nation's top 400 political contributors. The top five zip codes for political contributors to "both" parties now run up the posh upper East Side of Manhattan, coincidentally home to the nation's media and money-management elite. To those who propose the public financing of federal elections, I suggest they're *already* publicly financed, you just can't see it because the funding is so circuitous. Wall Street funds its political input largely with investment fees extracted from *your* pension savings and from tax subsidies meant for *your* retirement.

The neoliberals have infected the policies of "both" parties to such an extent that only the top 20 percent of Americans are now able to keep up financially. Yet even the highly indebted top fifth live in constant fear of financial free-fall, a fear worsened by the loss of 2.2 million jobs in just the past two years, particularly among the bottom 80 percent who find themselves working longer and having less to show for it. That includes not only less time for their friends and families but also less time for the civic engagement now needed to jettison those policy-makers who've long embraced this dysfunctional and perilously anti-democratic economic model.

Persuaded to seek ever higher financial returns, Americans watched helplessly as their retirement funds flowed into the portfolios of managers, the well-to-do, and a lavishly paid cadre of professionals who service the financial-services industry. Accountants, attorneys, bankers, investment bankers, stock analysts, pay consultants, and assorted other accomplices remain delighted to cover-up their thievery with what passes for logic in the neoliberal worldview: "Just maximize financial returns and, trust us (we're from Chicago), everything else will work out fine." Engineering the global pursuit of that reductionist notion requires lots of high-priced legal talent. By 2001, average partner pay in the top 100 law firms nationwide was \$792,500. Senior partners in large Wall Street firms pocket some multiple of that amount.

Yet even the profound insecurity that this model creates domestically pales in comparison to the wall-to-wall wreckage its operations create abroad. Neoliberalism went full-throttle global when the World Trade Organization joined the World Bank and the IMF as the Big Three regulating global finance. With finance the animating force driving globalization, the fixation on financial returns became not just a means but an end in itself. In the U.S. alone, \$17 trillion of Wall Street-managed money is constantly on the hunt for returns, 24/7. This returns-myopic model is now busily at work financing empire in the Middle East, jeopardizing national security while trashing a half century of American goodwill earned at immense cost in both blood and treasure.

Poverty Abroad

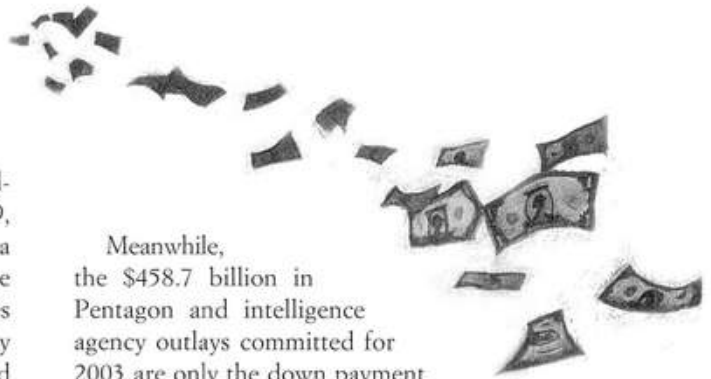
Today's stunning concentration of wealth is now a worldwide phenomenon that accompanies the worldwide spread of the Chicago model. In the four years to 1999, the world's 200 richest people doubled their wealth to a combined \$1 trillion. By comparison, the combined income of the world's 2.5 billion poorest is \$1 trillion. In countries where the neoliberal model is deemed "successful" (by Chicago standards), the results are reflected in recent World Bank research showing, for example, that 62 percent of Indonesia's stock market wealth is owned by that nation's 15 richest families. The comparable figure for the Philippines is 55 percent and 53 percent for Thailand.

Income patterns are also highly concentrated worldwide. The richest fifth now account for 86 percent of global consumption while the poorest 20 percent get by on 1.4 percent, down from 1.7 percent two decades ago. By the mid-1990s, the combined income of the topmost one percent worldwide (50 million people) equaled the combined income of the poorest 57 percent (2.7 billion people) according to World Bank research. Since 1985, says the former head of the UN Development Program (UNDP), economic decline or stagnation has affected 100 countries, reducing the incomes of 1.6 billion people. For 70 of those countries, average incomes are less in the mid-1990s than in 1980, and in 43 of the countries, average incomes in the 1990s were less than in 1970.

Three billion people presently live on \$2 or less per day, while 1.3 billion of those get by on \$1 or less per day. With population expanding 80 million each year, World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn cautions that, unless we address the "challenge of inclusion," 30 years hence we could have five billion people living on \$2 or less per day. The UN reports that two billion people suffer from malnutrition, including 55 million in industrial countries. These trends suggest that, in three decades, today's brand of globalization could create a world where 3.7 billion people suffer from malnutrition, including 100 million in developed countries.

UNDP reports that 1.1 billion people lack safe drinking water. Adequate sanitation is lacking for 2.3 billion. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 36,400 people die each day from conditions related to malnutrition; most are children under five. Universal access to primary health care for children remains a distant dream, even in the United States. At present rates of development, the UN estimates that even universal access to safe drinking water cannot be expected before 2025 in Asia, 2040 in Latin America, and 2050 in Africa—after a half-century of development assistance.

After two decades of pursuing a political strategy designed to ensure fiscal crowding-out, U.S. policy-makers now routinely cite the lack of fiscal resources as the rationale for failing to support even the most rudimentary development need (safe drinking water). Instead, we propose that the human family wait another half-century to address critical human needs that were first identified a half-century ago.



Meanwhile, the \$458.7 billion in Pentagon and intelligence agency outlays committed for 2003 are only the down payment on an imperial vision meant to project American military might worldwide. Bush II warns us to expect even more deficit-financed military spending this summer in a supplemental appropriations bill, now that the GOP enacted its latest round of deficit-financed tax cuts for the well-to-do. The fiscal crowding out due to defense appropriations alone is on track to top \$500 billion per year by fiscal year 2009, further eroding Washington's financial ability to fulfill a broad range of commitments and responsibilities.

The book of Isaiah advises very simply: if you want peace, work for justice. Global justice remains the best formula for national security in a globalizing age. If the goal of globalization is to encourage genuinely open societies worldwide (i.e., democracies), then armaments are no longer a feasible means to secure societies. During the Cold War (1948–1989), national security spending topped \$12.7 trillion (in inflation-adjusted 2000 dollars). We've since invested another \$4.9 trillion (1990–2002). We're now committing to defense outlays totaling another \$3,500,000,000,000 (\$3.5 trillion) through 2009, for a six-decade outlay of \$21.1 trillion.

Meanwhile, neoliberals in "both" parties insist on spreading an economic model that *foreseeably* creates divisions more severe than anything the human family has seen since just before the Great Depression, the last time such a Great Divide was embraced by policy-makers.

Fixing the Crisis

The worldwide persistence of abject poverty is not inevitable. Given the model's *foreseeable* results, any objective observer must conclude that present-day results are intentional. If so, policy-makers are complicit. Either that or the results are unintended, suggesting that policy-makers are incompetent. Take your pick: clueless or corrupt. Where the model fails most dramatically is in the fast-widening gap between rich and poor, both within and among nations. As the world's most financially sophisticated nation, it's difficult to imagine that the results of neoliberal theory were not fully foreseen, even now. To sort beguiling theory from real-world results, systems theorists coined the acronym POSIWID—the purpose of a system is what it does.

Development based on the neoliberal model is certain to further widen today's unjust, terrorist-inducing divide. Far from being genuine conservatives, Chicago-entranced policy-makers expose themselves as profoundly lousy risk-managers. Rather than manage long-term *systemic* risk—the litmus test of

any true conservative—they're funding yet another costly round of arms and armies meant to suppress symptoms that are destined to worsen with the spread of more arms and more armies. Meanwhile, those costs preempt the modest fiscal resources required to eradicate the persistent abject poverty that's certain to fuel global discontent.

Political motives become suspect when you realize just how few financial resources are required to address this systemic failure (i.e., persistent abject poverty). United Nations Development Programme reports that \$35–\$40 billion per year is sufficient to address the minimal conditions required for the flowering of human potential worldwide: safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, sufficient nutrition, primary education, basic health care, and family planning for all willing couples. That \$35 billion is only 7.6 percent of our 2003 budget for national security, or roughly what we spent in 1999 to maintain the military readiness of our nuclear arsenal, a decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall. For the developed world to raise \$35 billion would require foreign aid totaling 0.7 percent of each donor countries' GDP. That compares to an average 0.22 percent presently contributed, and just 0.11 percent by the United States.

Rather than propose a sensible development strategy, G-8 leaders announced in 1999 a debt relief initiative for heavily indebted poor countries, aiming to cap debt service for each of the world's 41 poorest countries at 15–20 percent of export earnings. That may sound like a good deal, but compared to what? When the victors of World War I limited German war reparations to 13–15 percent of exports, the financial burden triggered a humiliating recession that led to WWII and the rise of a virulent form of fascism as Germany morphed into the Fatherland.

After seven years as counsel to the Senate Finance Committee and since advising in 35 countries, I can say with confidence that finance is a design science that can be structured either for exclusion or for inclusion. Imagine if policy-makers polled people on their preferences. What sort of ownership patterns would voters consider optimal? Imagine if national economic policy included not only widespread employment of the nation's labor resources but also widespread ownership of its capital resources. What if an "ownership impact report" were required everywhere public policy impacts finance, including the financing of development in other countries? Imagine if U.S. tax policy favored broad-based ownership as a way to anticipate future fiscal needs, reducing demographically foreseeable tax burdens.

Imagine if every government contract required that contractors include, as shareholders, not only their employees but also their suppliers' employees—and those employed by their suppliers' suppliers. What if private firms were granted access to public lands (for drilling, mining, lumbering, ranching, etc.) only if they set aside a prescribed amount of their shares to fund the next generation's retirement needs? What if the airwaves, another public asset,

were reserved for use by broadcasters whose ownership is imbedded in the communities they serve?

Imagine if the proceeds from carbon emission rights were used to finance capital accumulation for broad swaths of the American public rather than, as now envisioned, giving the proceeds (totaling hundreds of billions) to the oil companies. Imagine if your retirement savings were invested not to convert managers into multi-millionaires and millionaires into billionaires but to fund *your* retirement security. As a design science, alternative financial futures are politically possible provided the rules are changed, along with the rule-makers.

We the Unreasonable

In 1999, UNDP reported "we have entered an era of grotesque inequality." Their conclusion: "Development that perpetuates today's inequalities is neither sustainable *nor worth sustaining*." Paradoxically, the free enterprise component of democracy is founded on the sensible notion that free markets provide an opportunity for free people to freely express their free choices and thereby enjoy the dignity of self-determination, democracy's most treasured freedom. Yet due to the neoliberal model's indifference to wealth and income patterns, development often undermines the very premise on which its operations are based.

For example, to equate markets with the free expression of the common will is misleading, even deceptive. Markets don't respond to people but to people *with money*. Embrace a policy mix, like today's, that concentrates income, and that mix undermines both self determination *and* markets, the very foundation on which free enterprise democracies are built.

Similarly, private enterprise is based on the sanctity of private property as a bedrock component of democracy, offering both security and sanctuary. Yet private property depends for its legitimacy on its lack of exclusivity. Embrace a policy mix, like today's, that concentrates ownership and that mix is destined to endanger both private enterprise and democracy. Add to these results today's dramatic lack of fiscal foresight and it's clear that, whatever neoliberalism's political champions may call themselves, "conservatives" they certifiably are *not*. Yet rather than abandon or alter the paradigm, "both" parties insist that the model borders on perfection and, alas, it's the world and those in it who must change to fit the model.

Support for today's dysfunctional, anti-democratic results requires systemic corruption to maintain a model that is itself systemically corrupt. After several decades of Chicago-insistent finance-fundamentalism, wed to 20 years of GOP-insistent fiscal crowding-out, the future we now face is a form of intergenerational financial terrorism. A nation designed to endure 'for the ages' requires a policy mix designed to generate more sensible and sustainable results. That's why the well-informed will remain *We the Unreasonable* until we detect in our policy-makers some semblance of decency and plain, sane common sense. □

The Three-Fold Torah

Rami M. Shapiro

The entire structure of rabbinic Judaism hinges on a single sentence:

Moses received the Torah at Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua, Joshua to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Assembly. (Pirke Avot 1:1)

Deny this and you place yourself outside normative Judaism; disprove it, and Judaism collapses under its own weight.

I have no desire to deny or disprove this statement. On the contrary, I take it as the starting point for my understanding of Judaism in general and Jewish Renewal in particular. It is to explore the meaning of this statement that I am writing this essay.

The impetus for this essay, however, is not the sentence itself, but a critique of Jewish Renewal by Allan Nadler that appeared in the April 18 issue of *The Forward* ("Can New Agers Channel the Old Rebbes' Spirit"). At the heart of Nadler's critique is the following:

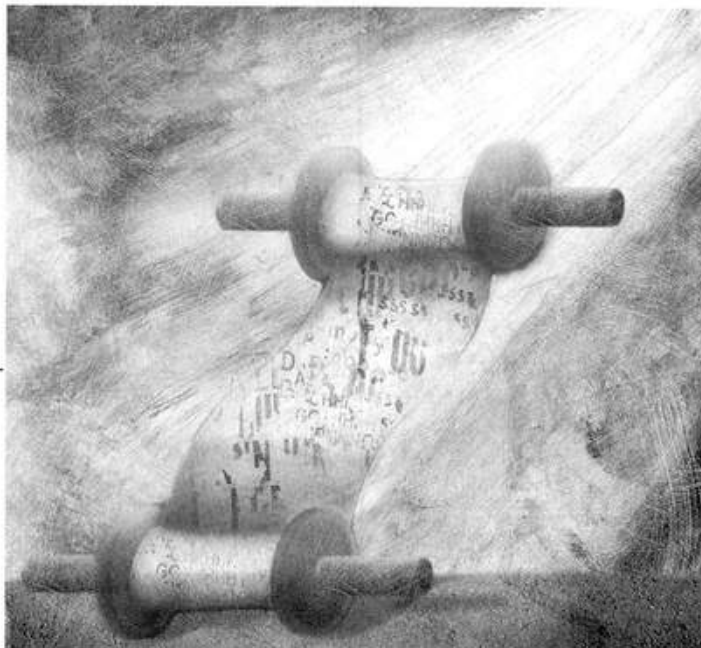
It is not at all clear to me how much of Judaism is left when one sidesteps its historically central texts like the Mishna, Talmud and Shulkhan Arukh—i.e. the entire rabbinic tradition—and goes directly to esoteric mystical sources that were never intended for popular consumption.

With this single sentence Nadler cuts to the heart of the revolution that is Jewish Renewal, but we cannot see why unless we first understand the revolutionary nature of Rabbinic Judaism itself.

Imagine yourself a Levite working in the Second Temple in the early decades of first century Palestine. Out of curiosity you attend a conference of scribes and Pharisees. The topic as advertised is "Revelation for Our Time: The Oral Torah of Moshe Rabbeinu." You have never heard of the Oral Torah, and calling Moses "our rabbi" when in fact the term "rabbi" is of very recent vintage seems quite odd, but you have come to learn, so you settle down to listen.

"Moses received the Torah at Sinai," the speaker begins,

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"and transmitted it to Joshua, Joshua to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Assembly."

What?! Moses gave the Torah to whom? You raise your hand to object. The speaker nods in your direction: "Excuse me, sir, but this is incorrect. Everyone knows Moses entrusted the Torah to the Levites. You have just ignored a thousand years of Temple service and priestly rule. Torah is clear regarding the centrality of animal sacrifice and...."

The speaker smiles, holds up a hand to interrupt, and says: "You mean the Written Torah, the Five Books of Moses."

"But the Five Books of Moses is the only Torah," you reply. "I don't understand what you are saying."

"What you are failing to grasp," the speaker says, "is that Moses received two Torahs on Sinai: the Written Torah which you priests have followed for all these centuries, and the Oral Torah which was passed down by word of mouth from master to disciple outside the power structure of priests and Temple. What I am about to explore is some of this Oral Torah given to us by God...."

You can feel your face burning in anger: "Where is it written that God gave two Torahs? This is blasphemy! By whose authority do you claim this?"

"By the authority of those who received it. If you knew how to read your Torah the way God intends it to be read you would see that it clearly hints at a second Teaching."

"But that's just hearsay! Your reasoning is circular! There is no proof!"

"Look," the speaker says sensing the agitation of his audience, "we can argue this some other time. I am simply telling you what I know to be true. Why is it so upsetting to you?"

"Because it is not at all clear to me how much of Judaism is left if you sidestep its historically central texts *Shemot* (Exodus), *Vayikrah* (Leviticus) and *BeMidbar* (Numbers)—the entire Levitical tradition—and go directly to esoteric oral sources that by your own admission were never intended for popular consumption."

Now return to the present. Can you see that Allan Nadler's challenge to Jewish Renewal is exactly right? Can you see that he is in the same position as our imagined Levite at the birth of rabbinic Judaism? And, most importantly, can you see that our response to him must be the same as the rabbis' response to the priests: We are not denying your Torah, nor do we ask that you do so. All we are doing is revealing in its proper time the third Torah given to Moses at Sinai, one that was passed down outside the official power structure of the rabbinate and its halachic system, and one that will clarify the Written and Oral Torahs so that they once again speak powerfully not only to the Jews, but through the Jews to the world.

This is not so easy to see and very difficult to admit, even for those of us committed to Jewish Renewal. We Renewalists want to see ourselves as operating within the Two-Fold Torah of the Rabbis. We want to be seen as spiritually focused fellow travelers, not as revolutionaries. We want to renew the product of the Pharisaic revolution, and not the revolution itself. But renewing the revolution is in fact precisely what is needed. The real work of Jewish Renewal is not to tinker with the first two Torahs, but to reveal the third. The Levites gave us the Written Torah; the Pharisees gave us the Oral Torah; we must now reveal the Silent Torah.

The Silent Torah, or more accurately the Torah of Silence, is the *torah* (teaching) that emerges when we enter into deep spiritual quiet and hear the "calm, whispered Voice of God" (I Kings 19:12) that speaks when all other voices are muted. We experience it first as the simple breath of God inspiring us to life. As this breath moves through us it cleanses what the Hasidim call the "Three Garments of the Soul," the three ways humans engage the world: thought, word, and deed. It purifies our thoughts that we might know that God is the Source and Substance of all reality. It softens our speech that we might use our words to heal rather than hurt. It opens our arms wide that our deeds embrace not only those we call "us" but also those we are taught to call "them."

Sometimes the Voice of God speaks to us of perennial truths that are recalled and remembered. Sometimes the Voice says something new and startlingly bold. And always it arises from and points toward the core truth of the Torah of Silence—one God, one planet, one humanity, one moral code—justice and compassion for all.

Why was the Silent Torah not revealed to the rabbis on Sinai? For the same reason the Oral Torah wasn't revealed to the priests: it wasn't time. The Written Torah spoke to a tribal society moving from wilderness to farm. The Oral Torah spoke to a statist society moving from farm to city. The Silent Torah speaks to a planetary society moving from the city to the global village.

It took a thousand years of war and worship, exile and return, politics and schisms before the Pharisees knew it was time to share what had been secretly passed on to them from Sinai.

It has taken two thousand years of exile and pogrom; false messiahs and true *tzaddikim*; expulsions and migrations; genocide and rebirth; the global threats of nuclear and biological terrorism, over population, and environmental poisoning; the ever-deepening dialogue among the world's religions; the emergence of feminism, secularism, humanism, and scientific inquiry; and the photographic icon of planet earth floating in blue-black space to prepare the world to receive the Torah of Silence.

The Silent Torah is a humble Torah. It comes without power, and establishes no ruling elite. The Written Torah came with the implicit threat of *Korach*—mess with Moses and you die—and it established a priestly caste of Levite men. The Oral Torah came with the implicit threat of *karet*—mess with the rabbis and you will be cut off—and established a scholar caste of educated men. The Silent Torah carries no threat. Its power is not coercive. It speaks only to those who desire to hear it. And it creates no ruling class, but rather a community of *chaverim* (friends) who help each other in the quest for silence and the truth silence reveals.

The Torah of Silence does not add to the revelation, it clarifies it. It is not yet another book, but a clarifying of the old books. It strips the Written and Oral Torahs of their tribal fears and patriarchal phobias. It cleanses them of xenophobia, misogyny, legalism, and idolatry. By taking the teachings of the Written and Oral Torahs into silence, their core message is heard anew: "Love HaShem your God with all your heart, with every breath, with all you have and are," (Deut. 6:5); and "Love the stranger as yourself," (Lev. 19:18).

Bringing this message to the world through Torah is the true purpose of Jewish Renewal. We are the revolutionary vanguard of the Silent Torah. If we are to honor our mission, we must do what the men of the Great Assembly did: give fresh meaning to the old/new revelation from Sinai; offer people a way of living that revelation in their daily lives; and provide them with teachers who can help them do just that. In other words, we need a new Torah, a new Talmud, and a new rabbinate.

A new Torah. Just as the Oral Torah did not replace the Written Torah, so the Silent Torah will not replace either of its predecessors. What makes this Torah "new" is its focus on those sections of the Hebrew Bible that deal with universal themes and ethics such as the great myths and legends of Genesis and Exodus, the Ten Commandments, portions of the Holiness Code, and the prophetic call for justice. Alongside these texts, the new Torah honors the Feminine by focusing on *Chochmah* (Wisdom) and Her teachings found in the books of Koheleth, Job, Proverbs, and even Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon. And it celebrates the body, pleasure, love, and human sexuality by reclaiming the Song of Songs as the Jewish tantric hymn Rabbi Akivah called the Holy of Holies. These are the texts we ought to study on Shabbos; this is what we ought to hold out as our gift to the new world.

A new Talmud. At the heart of the new Talmud is the teaching of the Prophet Micah: "What does God require? Do justly. Love mercy. Walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). The purpose of a new Talmud is to set forth models, how-tos, for living Micah's revelation. The new Talmud can learn from the old, but need not imitate it; the value of the halachic system for the people of the Third Torah is as a catalyst to our own creativity. The authority of this new Talmud will rest simply on its ability to translate justice, mercy, and humility into practical and intrinsically compelling actions. People will revere the new Talmud not out of fear, but out of respect for the fact that it works: following the path of the new Talmud purifies our thoughts of fear, our words of anger, and our actions of violence.

A new rabbinate. The new rabbinate of the Silent Torah is shaped by the challenge of the prophet Micah: "What does HaShem require? Do justly; love mercy; and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Rabbis of the Silent Torah should be masters of justice, compassion, humility, and spiritual transparency. We should be trained to live in the presence of God, and to lead others into that presence as well. The Silent Torah needs teachers, spiritual directors, masters of religious arts such as music, yoga, sexuality, meditation, prayer, calligraphy, etc., who can create a *chavurah kaddisha* (a holy community) of Jewish seekers rooted in the new revelation.

Complaining, as Allan Nadler does elsewhere in his *Forward* essay, that Jewish Renewal rabbis are halachically weak is like complaining that Pavarotti can't dance. It is irrelevant. We cannot allow ourselves to be sidetracked by Second Torah critics speaking to a worldview we do not share. Nor need we seek to placate those critics by forcing our rabbis to master the Oral Torah. Let the men of the Great Assembly do their work; and let us get on with ours.

And we are. The revolution is already underway. The new Torah, Talmud, and rabbinate are emerging. Jewish Renewal, both as an organized effort and as a powerful and unincorporated idea, has sparked the beginnings of a true revolution in Judaism. Reb Zalman and Aleph; Arthur Waskow and the Shalom Center; Michael Lerner and TIKKUN; Jeff Roth and Elat Chayyim; Tirzah Firestone, Ellen Bernstein, Daniel Siegel, Shefa Gold, Andrea Cohen-Keiner, David and Shoshanna Cooper, Marcia Prager, Art Green, Mordecai Gafni—these are our revolutionaries, and there are many more!

We are in the early stages of a revolution. This unfolding will take time, courage, and lots of patience. We must not be distracted from the true calling: God desires the work we do. If we do not believe that, we have no right to continue. If we do believe that, we have no right to stop. We have yet to honor our own *chutzpah*. And that, perhaps, is what we need most of all. □

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Parents at Prayer

Jeremy Kalmanofsky

To Yedidya—Is he not my darling child?
 To Hadas—May she stand among saints
 To Isaiah—May he turn darkness to light
 To Odelya—I give thanks with all my heart

לידידיה – הבן יקיר לי
 להדס – תעומד בין הצדיקים
 לישיעיהו – יתן מחשך לאור
 לאודליה – אודה בכל לבב

The man sat in my armchair, telling me about the time when, in despair, they nearly called off his two-year-old son's cancer treatments. Surgery was planned to remove a portion of the child's cancerous liver. Now the procedure was thrown into doubt by an unexpected test result—unknown spots in his lungs. It might have been a fluke, or a harmless condition. It might mean that tumors had spread to his lungs, that treatment had failed and that hopes were ended.

"I was on the floor," the man told me. "Literally on the floor at the doctor's feet. Literally begging: *Tell me it is going to be all right. You have to tell me this going to be all right.*"

What do we imagine the doctor experienced at that moment? This is a man whose job description—*pediatric oncologist*—may constitute the worst phrase in the English language. This man is a doctor, whom the rest of us believe in, who bears so much authority. What could it be like to see before him the tortured father of a tortured child? What could he say to the man on the floor at his feet? What could he say? Nothing except exactly what he said:

"I cannot do that."

...

I pray. My spiritual life as a Jew is centered on the regular saying of morning, afternoon, and evening liturgy. The experience of praying and the words of the prayer book bring me through my days open, ready, and aware of God.

In the morning I say: *Blessed is the One who spoke and the world came to be; You plant righteousness and make salvation sprout; May You enlighten our eyes with Torah.* Then with Moses and the throngs of the Israel, I walk through the Red Sea, singing the song they sang; and I take three steps forward and begin the silent prayer. In the afternoon, in what the Talmud calls *dimdumei hama*, the time of the silent and red sun: *You uphold the fallen and draw up those bent down; We sanctify You in this world, as angels sanctify You in high heaven.* At night, reflecting on the day's work: *You roll*

away light before dark and dark before light, in turn; may You lay us down peacefully tonight, and may You rouse us tomorrow to life; upon all things may Your name be blessed.

Not that I never miss any prayers. (I should have such a problem.) Not that I never rush through the prayers, or never say them as a thoughtless routine. (Even the loftiest contemplative nun sometimes thinks about laundry during devotions.) But often enough to keep faith, I discover that in prayer I draw something from my heart that I did not know was there, that God's real presence is waiting to hear me say what it is, and that I can whisper my secret in God's ear.

I do not pray for things, not conventionally anyway. Often, I pray for intimacy—that God will be near and that I will experience God's presence: *God is near to all who call in truth*, says Psalm 145. Often, I pray for spiritual sensitivity and intellectual readiness: *Open my heart to Your Torah and let my soul pursue Your commandments.* I am moved by the saying of Rabbi Hayim of Sanz, a nineteenth century Hasidic master, that he would pray to be able to pray. In this, the Sanzer must have followed the Ba'al Shem Tov, a century earlier, in teaching that prayer is its own reward: "The comprehensive prayer, which wraps all other prayers within it, is that one may pour forth one's meditation, that one may speak directly with the King. This is the only object."

The closest I come to praying for something is when I invoke blessing upon the world. In my best prayers I draw from my heart a wish that the world know only joy and health and comfort and sweetness. At moments like these, I feel myself blessing every creature in the cosmos. I feel like Saint Francis of Assisi, preaching to birds. Or like his fellow thirteenth century mystic, the author of the Zohar, who wrote about what mystical prayer can effect:

The face of the King is hidden in the depths, behind dark walls. But those who know how to unify the name properly can shatter the dark, so that the King's face will appear and glow upon all, so that all above and all below are blessed. [2.57a]

I find prayer like this both elevating and heartbreaking. It elevates, because from this experience one gathers the strength and resolve to live an ethical life, to do the small but sacred things we can to improve the world. And heart-

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breaking, because I cannot deliver on this blessing, no matter what I wish. It is not in my hands to make it rain or heal the sick, no matter how intensely I pray and no matter how vigorously I work. In these moments pervaded with care, I direct my loving wishes toward the universe. I feel everything within me say: "May you know only safety and sweetness. There is nothing I would not do for you, if I could. I am full of wishes for you. They spill out of me. I would save you if I could."

But I cannot do that.

• • •

I pray with my baby in my hands. You weigh nothing. Small body, soft bones, your ribs are matchsticks. Your smooth skin, luminous and translucent. I can see beneath to your tiny purple veins carrying your tiny blood. With my finger, I feel your pulse through the fontanel—that soft spot atop your head—and I realize that it will take some time before you are hard-headed enough to keep your brains safe within their shell. For now, I palm your skull and feel the heat and I bless the One who is *God of Abraham, and God of Isaac and God of Jacob, God of Sarah and God of Rebecca and God of Rachel and God of Leah, sovereign, aide, savior and shield*. Ancestors, this infant and I are both your children. Yet somehow, I find I am this child's parent.

I pray with my baby asleep, barely moving in my hands. My left hand strokes your cheek. My right hand, wrapped in straps of tefillin, holds your body, swaddled in blanket and shirt. Like the leather of tefillin, your skin has a grain. Genesis says that God made us coats of skin when we were driven from paradise. Mystic readers say that these garments of hide replaced Adam's original garments of light. Looking at your pale skin beside the dark animal hide of my tefillin, as I pray my morning prayers, I think the mystical pun is right: you are both *'or* and *'or*, both light and hide. And I bless God *who crafts light and creates darkness, who will radiate a new light upon Zion*, whose light pours off you to illuminate my room.

You suck on my fingertip as I pray with my baby in my hands. Your instinct is to seek milk. On your mother's body, you suck and are nourished. On my finger ... well, it calms you down; although I cannot see how this does not frustrate you, voracious little mouth. Still you suck, seeking more milk. I pray from Psalm 81: *I am the God who raised you from Egypt, open your mouth wide and I will fill it*. I would if I could, tiny mouth. I would give you everything I have and everything I ever will have, but I cannot give you milk.

My baby squirms in my hands as I pray. What if I become absent-minded and relax my watch on you? What if you pitch and slip and fall? Your face screws into discomfort as you start to wake. You grow red and cry out, unhappy at something, probably an intestinal gripe. I try to soothe you with kisses and caresses and I fail. From the silent prayer, I offer gratitude *for our lives, which lie in your hands, and for our souls, entrusted to you*. And I pray, with



Psalm 122: *For the sake of my comrade and friend, for the sake of the House of God, I seek peace and well-being for you*. What can I do to care for you? What can I say or think or wish that will share with you all the care I feel for you? You don't even know what pain is coming, little dove, nor what tears you will shed. Can I dry them all? I would crawl across broken glass to dry your tears. Can I keep you from sorrow? I would fight wolves if it would keep you safe.

• • •

The Talmudic sage R. Ammi teaches: "A person's prayer is not heard unless he carries his life in the palms of his hands" (Ta'anit 8a). By praying carrying my baby in my hands, I know this is true. Sometimes a wakeful child allowed me to pray at sunrise. Countless evenings I put children to sleep, swaying through evening prayers. In those moments, I experienced and expressed depths of devotion and gratitude, as well as hope and fear, awakened by the baby in my hands.

So it was with sorrow that I learned the halakhic ruling of R. Moses Isserles (Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayim 98.1):

It is forbidden for a person to kiss his young children in the synagogue, in order that he may instill in his heart that no love compares to the love for God.

In my prayer I loved God and God's creatures at once. R. Isserles counters that to love God, you must mute your love for your children. You must be Abraham at the Binding of Isaac: loving God so much that you are willing to put aside the dearest of God's creatures, your own children. I have wrestled hard with the practical demands of this law, which I, as a Conservative rabbi, presumptively affirm. (Those interested in more halakhic detail on this matter, please see the appendix to this essay on the TIKKUN website.) But ultimately, I cannot live with this rule. It falsifies divine love by

teaching that God wants us to turn toward Heaven and ignore each other. Instead of cultivating the care and beneficence that comes from prayer holding your loved ones, this Halakhah would have us come to prayer as solipsists, imagining that nothing in the world exists but God and ourselves. R. Elijah de Vidas', author of the seventeenth-century pietistic classic *Reshit Hokhma* (Gate of Holiness, ch. 8), offers a severe formulation of this view:

Thus it is proper that when a person wishes to pray, let him not look upon any person, even a child, so that he may not think of anything regarding that person. Rather, in the moment of prayer, let him sanctify himself and think that he has no relationship and no intimacy with any person, but rather with God alone. This will be a great boon to his intensity in prayer.

It seems to me like terrible ingratitude to expunge from your heart God's greatest gift at the moment when one stands before the Holy One in prayer. Biblical pilgrimage festivals stand on the opposite premise, according to Deuteronomy: "Do not appear before the Lord your God empty-handed. Each person with his particular gifts, according to the blessing with which the Lord your God has given you." Do not come before God alone, abstracted from the relationships and intimacy that one shares with others; come instead holding your gifts in the palms of your hands.

Moreover, putting aside one's children in prayer is to spurn the chance to understand the difficult theological metaphor of divine parenthood. To confront *Avinu Malkenu*, our Father our King, *Avinu She'BaShamayim*, our Father in heaven, *Av Harabaman*, merciful Father, then pray with your baby in your hands.

• • •

The religious difficulty of paternal imagery is not primarily due to its androcentrism or patriarchy. Were we to substitute a maternal image for every second paternal one, or alternate *Imenu Malkatenu* with *Avinu Malkenu*, such language would still be vulnerable to one of modernity's most rigorous critics of religion: Sigmund Freud. Freud held that theological ideas are not answers to questions of spiritual meaning; they are questions about the psychological conditions that would produce such ideas. Religious ideas, Freud wrote in *Future of an Illusion*:

are not the residue of experience or the final result of reflection. They are illusions, fulfillments of the oldest, strongest and most insistent wishes of mankind. The secret of their strength is the strength of these wishes. We already know that the terrifying effect of infantile helplessness aroused the need for protection—protection through love—which the father relieved; and that the discovery that this helplessness would continue through the whole of life made it necessary to cling to the existence of a father—but this time a more powerful one.



Such illusions "approach the psychiatric delusion" in that they derive from the wish that something be true, "while disregarding its relations to reality." Says Freud: "We say to ourselves: it would indeed be very nice if there were a God, who was both creator of the world and a benevolent providence ... But at the same time it is very odd that this is all just as we should wish it ourselves."

This is indeed a challenge for us believers to confront. I do not deny that will plays a significant role in belief. (This is not all bad: one might praise religion for prompting us to envision the noblest world we can find within ourselves to imagine.) But one reason I am unwilling to abandon my faith before Freud's critique is the narrowness with which he reads religious ideas, particularly the idea of God's parenthood. The only level on which this idea functions, for Freud, is as a balm to the terrified infant. Powerless babies in a silent universe wish they could lie in the hands of one indescribably mighty and just; so we invent God to be Big Daddy: to punish us when we do wrong, to reward us when we do right, to protect us in danger, to feed us in hunger and thirst. From this viewpoint, the idea of God's parenthood does seem awfully like our inner need for safety projected onto the screen of eternity. It does look awfully like unresolved issues with our actual parents, projected onto a mythic parent. I suspect even many religious people sense the power of this critique, and feel uncomfortable with their God.

But the theological trope of God's parenthood is experienced only partly by seeing ourselves as powerless children. Religious experience surely is more multivalent than Freud realizes; I do not concede that theological ideas "are not the residue of experience." Exactly which experiences are so incompatible with our religious illusions? People experience life in multiple, subtle ways, each of which might offer theological insights, ways of imagining who God is and what God wants from the world.

Since my first child was born, on a clear, cool April night in 1994, the theological trope of God's parenthood speaks to me very differently. I hear its spiritual power—not through my experience as a powerless child—but in my experience as a powerless father, who prays holding babies. For, God, I love these small people more than I love my own life. I would crawl across broken glass to dry their tears. I would fight wolves if it would keep them safe. God, if I could only keep them from bullies and nightmares, unreturned love, leukemia, bulimia, depression, bi-polar disorder, cocaine, car accidents, flunking math, AIDS, rapists, Osama bin Laden. *But I cannot do that.* If I could only save them from themselves, save them from their own mistakes, it would be so much safer. It would hurt so much less, for both of us. *But I cannot do that, and would not even*

(continued on page 62)

Prayer as a Rebellion

What Happens When You Ask God For Help?

Leonard Felder

During the past few years I have been giving workshops on the psychology of prayer at temples, synagogues, and Jewish book fairs nationwide. At each event, I invariably get asked the same probing questions: “Is it OK to ask God for assistance?”, “Do Jews still talk to God about their dreams and desires?”, “Do these personal prayers and meditations make a difference?”

For a variety of reasons, the majority of Jews today have stopped asking God for anything. I have found from interviewing thousands of men and women from all branches of Judaism that, for the majority of Jews, Jewishness consists of shared history, ethnic food, compassionate values, and feelings about Israel. Only a small percentage still pour out their hearts each day like Moses or Tevye or your great grandmother did when they constantly argued and confided with God about the problems they faced. Most Jews today have tried many more flavored varieties of bagels than their ancestors did, but they have stopped conversing with God.

One of my counseling clients told me, “I stopped praying after my wife and I lost an infant child. Our prayers seemed to be unanswered.” A close friend of mine who is the daughter of a Holocaust survivor told me, “I stopped asking God for help when I was a teenager and I heard my father tell me about the cruelty and randomness he experienced in the camps.”

Yet another counseling client, an Israeli, stopped praying when she lost her nephew to a suicide bombing. “I no longer talk to God,” she said. “I’m angry at God.” I also have found that many of my counseling clients, friends, and colleagues who entered adulthood during the politically-



charged 1960s and 1970s don’t pray. As one counseling client told me, “We grew up with a devotion to repairing the world, but we weren’t going to wait for God to help.”

I remember listening to FM radio in 1969 when Jim Morrison and the Doors sang angrily and hypnotically, “You cannot petition the Lord with prayer.” In those days you needed to be quite your own person to possess the guts to sit down and converse with God. *Time* magazine had proclaimed that “God is dead.” Most of my college professors and intellectual mentors were devout atheists. And the state of the world didn’t look like the Creator was still responding to any personal requests for help.

So why bother in the year 2003 to ask God for help? Why should you study the Jewish methods for connecting with the Mysterious Presence or the guiding life force that may or may not be responding to your requests? Why pour out your feelings, your desires, and your vision of how things ought to be if there might be nothing at the other end of the conversation? Why petitionary prayer?

For the past twenty-five years I have been studying various Jewish approaches to petitionary prayer. I wanted to learn which part of my brain to follow—the skeptical part

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raised on Jim Morrison shouting “You cannot petition the Lord with prayer,” or the curious part that longs for a way to gain access to deeper levels of awareness and that hungers to connect with the unseen forces of the universe. I found in Judaism several reasons for choosing the path of prayer. Here are a few for you to consider:

Petitionary Prayer Can Help Us Resist Indifference

As you probably have discovered for yourself, we live in a society that is designed to keep us numb and distracted. Rather than seeing or responding to the pain and injustices of the world, our lives and our media are filled with ways to avoid what really matters. We’ve built freeways and expressways that race past neglected neighborhoods, as well as expensive ad campaigns that tell us Phillip Morris really does want to prevent lung cancer and Chevron really does care about ocean ecology. We each have different ways of “being too busy” to deal with the outrages of our times. For some, it’s that we work too hard. For others, it’s that we are absorbed with a house remodeling project or raising our kids. We fear becoming too involved in community service projects that might drain our energies.

According to a powerful lecture I heard several years ago from Rabbi Mordecai Gafni of the Bayit Chadash school in Israel, the essence of being a Jew is to “*shry gevalt*” (to cry out passionately) and demand a response from God and God’s human ambassadors whenever you see cruelty or injustice in the world. Gafni cited numerous Hasidic and traditional teachings reminding us that to be a Jew is to strive to become fully “Yisra-el,” the one who wrestles with God.

If you can wrestle with God, you can definitely petition the Holy One with prayer. When you see cruelty or injustice, you are obligated to speak up and ask the Creator of the Universe or the in-dwelling Presence that connects all of life to please give us help and guidance. Not necessarily for God to fix the problem without our participation and partnership, but rather for the divine sparks within each of us to be awakened by fervent prayers that say, “Help us God. Open our hearts. Don’t let us become numb or indifferent. Give us clues and visions on how to repair this broken part of the world. Give us strength and persistence to follow through until healing does occur.”

Whether you are someone who prays often, rarely, or never at all, Jewish teachings tell us that right at the moment when you see something which has been broken by human callousness or someone who has been wounded by human cruelty, it is not only permissible but also a sacred duty to cry out in spontaneous words of prayer and ask the mysterious Creative Force to light up a path for healing and repair. As it says in the Pirke Avot (the teachings from our ancestors, verse 2:21), “It is not your duty to complete the work [of repairing the world], but neither are you free to desist from it.” Crying out to God is the first step toward opening

your heart wide enough so that you will be able to ascertain and focus on what needs to be done.

Petitionary Prayer Connects Us to Our True Selves

A second Jewish reason for clarifying your needs each day with God (in whatever way you imagine God to exist) is for its therapeutic value for your own psyche and soul. According to Martin Buber, the best way to become whole, complete, and fully alive as a human being is to move beyond cold and objectified “I/it” conversations and small-talk in order to reach a deeper way of relating. Buber called this deeper way of connecting with human beings and with God “*Ich und Du*” (a German phrase that is often mistranslated as “I and Thou” but is closer in essence to “becoming one with each other” or “connecting soul to soul” or “feeling fully met and understood”).

In his writings about Hasidic Judaism as well as in his lesser-known professional guidelines for Gestalt psychotherapists, Buber explains that if you are only partially honest or somewhat suppressed in your relationship to a loved one or to God, you will feel split, phony, or alienated. But if you can become fully yourself, fully honest, and fully present when talking with another human being or with the mysterious Oneness, you will experience a holy moment that is both transcendent and quite healing.

For many years I had wondered if it was permissible to ask God to fulfill my personal needs and desires. Wouldn’t that be treating God like some giant Santa Claus or ATM machine in the sky? But several years ago I heard Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi sound a lot like Buber when he explained:

In Judaism we have a very honest and intimate love relationship with a mysterious Presence. Just as a marriage doesn’t work if both sides are being too polite or too restrained, it’s the same way in your relationship with God. Don’t try to hide your needs, your desires, your curiosities, and your flaws. Pour out your heart and soul to the Soul of the universe and don’t try to be so polite or sneaky. When you’re offering up a prayer request to Ribono Shel Olam (the guiding force of the universe), tell the truth and be completely honest, even if you think it’s small or inconsequential. God is the creative energy that expresses itself in even the tiniest particles of life.

When I think of what it means to follow these teachings of Reb Zalman and Martin Buber, when I contemplate talking to God in a vulnerable, honest, and authentic way, I think of Moses crying out to God, “Why did you give me this frustrating task to lead so many complaining Hebrews when I have a speech impediment and no one is listening to me? Please help me God. Please guide me on what words and actions will move these stubborn people.”

Or you can think of Tevye asking God for insights on what to do about his precious daughters who keep falling in love

with men who don't believe what Tevye believes. Or you can picture your grandmother or great grandmother asking God each day and night for help on how to raise a family and have the strength to deal with all the difficulties of life as a Jew. Or you can think back to the times when a loved one, a therapist, a friend, or a teacher listened to your most vulnerable and heartfelt needs with complete respect and compassion.

Buber would argue that these moments of conversing in pure at-one-ment with another soul, or with the Soul of the universe, are the most nourishing moments for your own soul and psyche. These are the intimate moments when we are most fully alive and fully authentic.

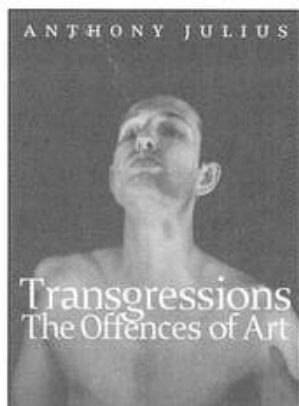
Petitionary Prayer Can Stir Up Positive Changes in Ways We Might Not See

Now we come to a Jewish explanation of prayer that requires a bit of faith. According to the mystical tradition in Judaism, when we pray and ask God for help, we stir things up at levels of existence you and I can't see with our limited vision or our constricted human awareness.

For example, when you pray for a loved one who's ailing and you give *tzedakah* (charity or acts of justice) on his or her behalf, the mystical tradition in Judaism says you are stimulating the flow of *shefa* (divine outflowing), *chesed* (lovingkindness), and *rachmones* (compassion) not only on this

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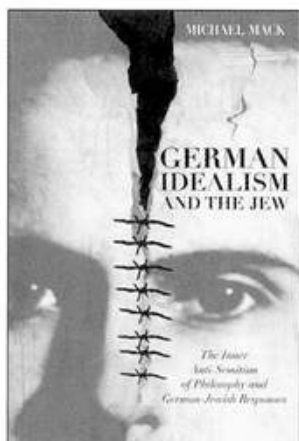
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PRAYER

physical level of existence but also on other levels as well. Your loved one may or may not achieve a physical healing. The healing might occur on a soul level that is hard to describe, or the healing might be that some aspect of suffering or alienation in this world or in another level of existence is being repaired by your acts of kindness. You and I can't control what happens when you stir up the flow of goodness with your words of prayer or your acts of *tzedakah*. All we can do is stir things up and then let the forces of the universe do what they do.

To give you just one example of how a formal or spontaneous Mi Shebeirakh (prayer for healing) is a revolutionary act, consider what happened for one of my counseling clients several years ago. Her mother had advanced pancreatic cancer and was told by her doctors she would probably die in a matter of weeks. My client prayed fervently for a healing of body and soul. She also gave to a favorite charity that does important work helping battered women rebuild their lives.

I can't say that my client's mom had a miraculous physical recovery, but during the remaining fourteen months of her

mom's life something miraculous did happen on an emotional and soul level. My client and her two siblings got closer to their difficult mom and experienced a deeper love than they ever had before. And seven years later my client met a well-dressed and successful woman at a conference whose life had been transformed by the battered woman's shelter that my client had given money to in honor of her dying mother.

In Judaism there is a word for prayer, "*avodah*," that also means "to be of service" and "to work or take action for a higher purpose." Prayer is not a passive activity, but rather a way to stir things up and get things rolling. I think of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel marching with Martin Luther King, Jr. and saying they were "praying with their feet." Prayer that is connected to service and action is the way we bring God's Presence into the world.

I can't guarantee what will happen if you use prayer and *tzedakah* to ask God for help. But you just might create an unstoppable flow of healing and repair, a very different result than if you close your heart and do nothing. You just might open up a path of light where before there was darkness. □

PARENTS AT PRAYER (continued from page 58)

if I could. If I could only guarantee that everything will be all right. *But I cannot do that.*

One February morning in 1996 I lay in bed in Jerusalem, holding my eldest son and playing, when we heard a ferocious bang. A suicide bomber carrying a dug-up land mine blew away a bus, killing twenty-five people, including a classmate of mine. There were more bombings in the next days, and Israelis stayed off buses for weeks after that. As they do now, people avoided public spaces, knowing that dumb luck could put you in the mortally wrong place at the wrong moment.

About six weeks later, on a Saturday night, my family could not avoid riding a bus from Herzliya to Tel Aviv. I tried to be calm. The bus was crowded, including many soldiers carrying packs. At one point, a young man who appeared to me to be Palestinian boarded the bus, carrying a large duffel bag. He had a smirk on his face. I was certain this was the end of us. My two-year-old son was looking out the window. I thought to myself: I brought him on this bus, and he's never getting off again. I played with his hair and stroked his cheek. I implored: *God, let his last moments be peaceful.* The ride went on, no one blew us up, and I gradually calmed myself. Still, in the terror of that ride, I repeated my inner petition: *God, keep us from the wrong place and the wrong moment.*

And I listened carefully for the answer: *I cannot do that.*

Our Parent in Heaven, I think I understand how You feel, since I am a parent myself. I love more than I can comprehend, but my power is scant. You are all powerful, it is said, for You created the universe. But I know from mystical Judaism that You restrain Your own power. If You did not unleash Your power in 1941, You're not going to

unleash it to protect children now. Why You should be this way is beyond any of us to grasp. It is the tragic mystery of existence, that You are *Melekh Asur Barehitim*, to borrow a phrase from the Song of Songs, a King trapped in his own long hair.

Still, I am not lacking in faith. I have deep faith that Your love surpasses Your power. I have faith that you are a fountain of blessing, that you spill over with good will, that you would do anything for your children, as I would for mine. You long, as I long, for their safety and happiness and redemption. But You and I both know that we cannot fix everything for them, no matter how our love overwhelms. And even if we could fix it all, we hope for the good sense not to do it. We brought our children into the world so that they could grow. We brought them to the world so that they might realize the potential for wisdom, courage, and kindness that lie within them. We want our children to become fully realized human beings, living embodied images of God. They can attain this only if our power to protect them is limited, even as our love is infinite.

Merciful Parent, I have faith that, in the end, Your infinite love will overcome the finite use of Your power. And I have faith and hope in an End of Days, in which you will wipe tears off our faces. Until then, *Avinu She'BaShamayim*, we are parents together, loving beyond any promise of comfort. We stand together over beds of sleeping children, checking to be sure they are still breathing; we pick them up and hold them in our hands, kiss their warm cheeks; and full of good will and tender care, we are parents at prayer:

May God bless you and keep you. May God's face shine upon you and grant you grace. May God treat you favorably and grant you peace. □

What to Do *when being* Aged by Culture

Brief Annals of the Twentieth-Century Hormone Wars

Margaret Morganroth Gullette



Last July, the National Institute of Health ended its long term study of “hormone replacement therapy” (HRT) after finding that the drug they were testing caused substantial dangers, including increased risk of breast cancer, heart attacks, strokes, and blood clots. Many women immediately stopped taking their prescriptions. This spring, a second large double-blind study conducted by the Women’s Health Initiative has demonstrated that HRT has no demonstrable benefits for the majority of women. The American College of Physicians now says HRT is beneficial only for diminishing hot flashes. This has been a historic year in a century-long war over the middle years of life for men as well as women.

How could so many women have been convinced to take HRT for so long? The short answer is that pharmaceutical companies, their advertising agencies, many doctors and the mainstream press convinced women that HRT would keep them “forever young.” They told women (and increasingly men) a story about their lives marked by a steep decline from what they pictured as the heights of youth to the worst depths of old age.

The prime movers in this biographical narrative were the so-called sex hormones, whose miniscule chemical traces have ruled body science for a century, giving the world a major metaphor for the difference between men and

women and between youth and old age. In the decline story promoted by American age ideology, unavoidable drops in estrogen and testosterone signaled not only serious sexual

*How could so many women
have been convinced to take HRT
for so long?*

inadequacies, but other alleged losses—in memory, learning power, and ability to keep up in the economy—that radiated far beyond endocrinology. For men, the pharmaceutical answer was supposed to be Viagra. For middle-age women, only “hormone replacement therapy” offered salvation. Mare’s urine became the twentieth-century’s snake oil.

Those of us who could see past the alarmist decline story did not have to think hard to say “no” to HRT. The very label on Prempro, the Wyeth product most women were taking, warned, as Gina Kolata pointed out in an August 2002 article in the *New York Times*, of the risks of heart attacks, strokes, and breast cancer. A highly regarded statistician—Sonja McKinlay—told me that a glass of red wine a night would be better for one’s cholesterol level than HRT. “And I know which one I’d choose,” she said dryly. In 1994, *The New Ourselves Growing Older*, from the tireless Boston Women’s Health Book Collective, displayed skepticism about hormones. In a widely reviewed book, Dr. Susan Love warned about the risk of breast cancer from HRT use. Publications

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of the National Women's Health Network emphasized exercise and gave non-hormonal options for that small percentage of women who present with problems: say, the lowered bone density that might or might not signal osteoporosis. The NIH started its longitudinal study of 27,348 women—the one it closed early—because of such pressures.

The feminist public health narrative was historical and anthropological as well as cautious, evidence-based, and cumulative. Of course, all the advice was localized around the term “menopause,” because the concept “menopause” could not be dropped from the cultural narrative even in a critique. So in 1993, I published an article in *Ms. Magazine* that warned, “Women have less to fear from menopause than from menopause discourse.” I sent copies to friends. I became part of the attempt to publicize the feminist alternative to HRT and its decline narrative. In my 1997 book, *Declining to Decline*, I gave the subject a chapter. Big Pharma already had become suspect after historians uncovered its history of selling costly medications to women that turned out to be harmful. DES had also been prescribed for menopause, and the first estrogen-only “replacement” pill increased endometrial cancer. Anthropologist Margaret Lock reported that Japanese women didn’t suffer from any of our American “symptoms.” (Culture being what it is, they had others. Japanese women got stiff necks.)

In short, the evidence was readily available, as early as 1993, that HRT could cause serious harm. Feminists had long argued that aging is a normal process and that the midlife is potentially a great period in women’s lives. Yet HRT sales only grew stronger during this period, accompanied by a new emphasis on “andropause” that enabled pharmaceutical companies to sell a silver bullet of youth to men as well.

How does a dominant narrative stay dominant even as its science is being questioned elsewhere? The overarching answer is that there is still too little cultural, historical, or scientific criticism in the media questioning such narratives. There is still too much reliance in the health professions on unquestioned assumptions about “nature,” and far too much indifference to gender and age critique. The narrative implied that HRT-objectors were insufficiently committed to their own health.

In the medical profession, a century of treating the normal end of menstruation as a women’s disease has had profound effects. Some doctors currently practicing were taught in medical schools that menopause was an “ovarian failure.” (Nurses didn’t get that training, and often gave more weight to the down sides of HRT.) In 1992, the American College of Physicians recommended that all “postmenopausal” women consider beginning hormone therapy. Blanket remedies take less time, require fewer tests and often give more sense of efficacy than doing nothing. Whether doctors knew those ACP guidelines or not, many

tended to prescribe HRT as a blanket remedy for aging, without looking at each patient as an individual.

“What will you do about menopause?” my gynecologist asked me every year. I had no symptoms. I hadn’t even known that the occasional warm sensations I felt had a name until they had almost disappeared. “It’s not a disease,” I replied. Without knowing it, my doctor was indoctrinating her patients with the life-course bias that menopause signals decline. Eventually she caught on that I was never going to succumb and learned to say, “Oh right, you don’t want to take hormones,” but not as if she were convinced for herself. Women like me, with no risk factors, who refused HRT, were supposed to accept this defensive position, that we were refusing something for our own good, like recalcitrant children.

The HRT boom of the 1990s was started in part by writers like Gail Sheehy,

who dared women to “out” their menopausal symptoms—as if silence rather than hyperbole were the problem. Those who refused to take HRT were essentially told we had defects we refused to cure. Those who did take HRT had a defect they were curing: aging. Some had a more particular fear: fear of “vaginal dryness.” The fact is that lubrication may be one or two minutes slower on average as a woman gets older. Taking HRT in such circumstances can be a way to help a man avoid foreplay. Or perhaps it’s a woman’s way of avoiding the subject of her pleasure with a male partner whose inclinations she believes are rather inflexible. Easier to take a pill than to raise the issue.

Many women asked their doctors for a prescription, convinced by the hype. For others, the easiest course of action, given the shame of no longer being young, lay in accepting their doctors’ recommendations. I stopped arguing with my friends. Even someone convinced that there were not enough benefits in taking HRT to overbalance the dangers could mistrust her competence in a realm consistently presented as “scientific” or believe that her friends doubted her credentials. What power did a cultural critic have? My main argument was that I was in charge of my narrative.

The neglect of the feminist health alternative worsened as the 1990s wore on. As Barbara Seaman pointed out, by 1993 “The cautious [feminist] view on hormone therapy [wa]s no longer admitted on talk shows.” Doctors were telling women to consider HRT or prescribing it when asked. Glossies were promoting its youthful effects and warning of the consequences of not doing so. Women choosing HRT did not seek or hear dissenting voices. They were not in a position from which they were free to decide. “Choice” is a lie when people don’t have correct information or have been given a misleading way to balance pluses and minuses.

Doctors’ faith in HRT might have been justified if medical research were always the objective, neutral science it claims to be. However, in the last decade, the FDA regulations

*“Choice” is a lie when
people don’t have
correct information.*

protecting the neutrality of such research have been gutted by pro-business interests in Congress. Big Pharma now pays for many FDA studies, and the doctors who do them have not always had to reveal this financing when they published their results.

In the case of HRT, Big Pharma could have stuck with the modest and verifiable claim that short term use of exogenous estrogen would relieve the ephemeral sweats code-named "hot flashes." But the market would not have grown sufficiently on the basis of that humble narrative. No one would have called the drug a "replacement" or a "therapy" or connected it with youthfulness; no one would have needed to inflate the end of menstruation into a named condition, "menopause," with symptoms, diseases, and a dangerous life biography attached.

Even today, when the NIH bombshell has made estrogen-science look faulty, and when Jerome Groopman, writing in the *New Yorker*, has warned men that testosterone science is sparse and unreliable, Big Pharma is unlikely to give up the lucre or drop its story line. If the scandals around HRT had caused hormone theory to loosen its hold on science and the public, it might now become harder to derive middle ageism from biology or gender difference. But I wouldn't hold my breath. Pharmaceutical companies have a stake in the "decline" of age, and will no doubt come out with other rejuvenators, providing other occasions when people feel they must buy even though the science seems dubious. And American age ideology will use any rejuvenators—like growth hormone, the latest "wonder drug"—as it used HRT, to convey that it is necessary for each of us to worry about aging-into-the-middle-years and "deal" with it.

As Hilde Nelson tells us in *Damaged Identities*, the way to counter such dominant narratives is to tell our own

narratives. In the case of aging, we can speak our women's knowledge. For myself, menopause was one of many good things that happened to me in my fifties. My aging-into-the-middle years has brought increasing confidence, smarts, empathy, and more, and any declines I have experienced have had nothing to do with menopause.

At midlife, women leave behind cramps, fibroids, Tampax, shields, fear of public embarrassment, and urgency about contraception. By then, most don't want babies. Many women are too busy—with jobs, adult children, frail parents, social service, politics, whatever—to be distracted by symptoms they now know were exaggerated by the commerce in aging. Being postmenstrual can be felt as a tremendous relief, a reward for getting older. It can be part of a midlife progress narrative.

I don't want to live in a world in which the life course for men and women is treated as a biological decline. I don't want anyone's life course broken in two at midlife as if by a magic marker. Even if I had had worse "symptoms," I knew that how I approached my aging was my own decision to make, and a narrative decision at that. We have to get into the habit of determining for ourselves which life events are paramount. Rejecting HRT brought me life in a better symbolic world. There I joined the holistic-health advocates and the positive-aging feminists, the ones who didn't take HRT but who continue to say that menopause is a "challenge" or a period of "growth." I think they're wrong to make such a big deal out of it (because that is the mirror image of Big Pharma's view). But the main thing is that we are together in an anti-middle ageist world. The more women and men there are who know what their midlife narratives entail, the more control we all might have over the ways we are aged by culture. □

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COMPROMISE FOR PEACE *(continued from page 17)*

very hungry, very angry. I told them that using force was a mistake. I said that using force is the way of weakness. Some of them wanted to kill me. Yet others protected me. Later, I got a phone call, thanking me and apologizing for the violence against me. Now, 90 percent of the hunger strikers are for peace and reconciliation.

The second way to make peace is to understand what our Talmud says, "who gives charity makes peace." We will not make peace by closing our hand. We must be generous. If we do so, we will get back what we give.

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

Ghaleb Darabya

COUNCILLOR FOR POLITICAL & CONGRESSIONAL
AFFAIRS, PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

“ I represent a generation within the Palestinian people that has wanted to believe in co-existence, to live together in peace. We have given the Israelis the right to exist on 78 percent of Palestine and we have accepted that we will live on 22 percent of the land. That was a unilateral concession from the Palestinian side. Unless Israelis understand that, there is no way we can move forward. ”

TEACH-IN TESTIMONY TEACH-IN TESTIMONY

The third way to peace is to prepare the people to make painful compromises. In Israel, you can hear many, many reasons for not compromising with Palestinians—that Israel is our holy land, that it was never a Palestinian state, that the Palestinians will fight us if we give them a state, that there is no real partner for peace, and so forth. All of those reasons are only a fig leaf for people who are not ready to understand that Palestinians are people just like us and deserve their own state.

To compromise means to be ready to pay the price. My family, the parents in our organization, we have all paid the price. If we would like to achieve reconciliation, all of us can prepare to pay the price for peace.

I have met Arafat and members of his government many times. They don't think they can destroy Israel. They don't even really want that. They want to live in peace. They are willing to pay the price.

Fourth, we need to work here in the United States, in the Jewish community. When right-wingers in Israel have argued against ending the Occupation, Jewish organizations in the United States have supported them. Then look what happened. Suddenly, in May, Sharon said, "We have to end the Occupation." Over all these years, 6,000 people have been killed. Where was Sharon, all these years? Where were American Jews, all these years?

The message of peace and compromise must go into the ears of the people who need to hear it, the ears of American Jewish society. We need to work to turn public opinion here in America. We must find words they can hear and understand so that they will help, and not hinder, this effort.

Fifth, we need to work with the American government, both to lead them to Israeli and Palestinian partners for peace, and to also prepare the Americans to pay the price for peace.

Finally, we need to build a vocabulary for peace. For example, we need better words to define terror and terrorism. You in America suffered through September 11, a terror created by ideological people. Some Americans and Israelis have linked the Palestinians to Bin Laden, but that is a mistake—these are two entirely different kinds of terror. Bin Laden's terrorism is based on ideology, while the Palestinians are conducting acts of terror out of despair. If you would take away their despair, these acts of Palestinian terror would end.

Road to Peace

I do see many roadblocks to achieving peace. The Israeli government may change right in the middle of this peace process. There might be a new terror attack. The Israeli right wing might rebel.

We can continue the peace process, however, if we remember these ten things:

1. The Palestinians are human beings;
2. The Occupation is a kind of terror;
3. A Palestinian state is in the interest of Israelis as well as Palestinians;
4. Holy places are holy no matter what civilian authority they are under;
5. We need to ask not what we *can* do to the Palestinians, but what we *cannot* do to the Palestinians;
6. We need to change Israeli and Palestinian attitudes;
7. We need to do this work with empathy and sympathy;
8. We need to express ourselves on events of the day through media;
9. We need to act here in the United States to change attitudes;
10. We need to give hope to the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Recently, we had a blood drive. Israeli families who had lost children went to Ramallah and donated blood to Palestinians, and Palestinian families who had lost children went to Israel and donated blood to Israelis. There were many media stories. Everywhere, people asked, "What is going on, how could these people donate blood to the people who murdered their children?" We want people to ask themselves these kinds of questions, because when they find the answer to these questions they will find a way to peace.

We give blood to our enemies because they are human beings. We give blood to our enemies because we do not want any family to suffer. We give blood to our enemies because peace is not about justice. Peace is about compromise. □

Bring the Settlers Home to Israel

Marcia Freedman

The United States has the power to eliminate one of the major obstacles to peace between Israel and the Palestinians—the existence of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the territory designated for the future State of Palestine.

Instead of waiting for Ariel Sharon's government to make "painful concessions" on this territory, the United States could act, right now, to bring the settlers home to Israel. As outlined in a petition campaign launched by Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, the Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace, the United States should urge Israel to reverse its longstanding policy of offering economic inducement to settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and instead redirect those funds to settlers who are now willing to return to Israel proper. Alternatively, assuming the refusal of the current government of Israel to do any such thing, Brit Tzedek is calling on the United States to spearhead international financing to buy the settlers out—whether or not the Israeli government is willing to participate in this endeavor.

Why should we believe this solution could work? And why, after spending so much money on these settlers, should we spend more money to get them out? Why reward them for doing the wrong thing in the first place?

The Bring the Settlers Home to Israel campaign is appealing because it is pragmatic: it can work regardless of the actions of either Israel or the Palestinian Authority, its price tag is relatively low in international terms (estimated at \$2–3 billion), it is not a military initiative, and it is a way of moving forward towards the desired negotiated settlement.

But most appealing of all, I believe, is that it does not vilify the settlers. There is nothing in it that in any way can be construed as Israel-bashing. For those of us American Jews who are pro-Israel, it is an easy way to demonstrate our care for the long-term well-being of the Jewish state at the same time that we express the belief held by many of us—that the establishment of settlements has been and continues to be a grave error that endangers Israel's security and is wrecking its economy.

Marcia Freedman is a former Member of the Israeli Knesset, author of Exile in the Promised Land, and President of Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, the Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace (www.btvshalom.org).

The United States could act, right now.

A survey done in 2002 for Peace Now makes clear that of the more than 200,000 Israeli settlers who live on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the vast majority would relocate either to the large settlement blocks around Tel Aviv and Jerusalem that the Palestinians have indicated willingness to accept or to land within the 1967 borders. The Hopp survey (July 2002) indicates that 60 percent of the settlers would not only obey a lawful order to evacuate, but they would also be "prepared to accept a withdrawal from the settlements in exchange for suitable financial compensation."

The Hopp survey reveals that 80 percent of the settlers currently living in the West Bank moved there in order to improve their quality of life. For the past twenty years, the government of Israel, largely headed by Likud, has offered Israelis economic incentives to move to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These include tax breaks worth approximately \$4,000 per settler, subsidized down payment and mortgage interest rates, and per capita spending per settler that is more than double that for Israelis living within Israel proper (see the March 2003 report of the Adva Center at advainfo@bezeqint.net).

In short, the majority of the settlers are not zealots but rather people whose government made them an offer they simply could not refuse. The increase in violence has made many reconsider their choice. Their children are in danger and their beautiful homes are all but worthless on the market place. They now want to leave, but, as residents of three West Bank communities made clear to Labor candidate Amram Mitzna, they can not afford to do so.

There is evidence that those who can afford it are already creating reverse "facts on the ground." According to records of Israel's Central Election Committee, the number of eligible voters in the West Bank is in decline. Now is the time for us to help all the settlers who wish to leave the territories return to Israel. That's why Americans as diverse as Ed Asner, Michael Chabon, Gloria Steinem, Eric Alterman, Theodore Bikel, Art Spiegelman, Vivian Gornick, Adam Hochschild, and a large number of rabbis, including Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg and TIKKUN's editor Rabbi Michael Lerner, have signed onto this campaign. This is one pro-Israel plan that can be implemented right now and can have a direct, positive effect on peace negotiations.

You can find a copy of the petition on the facing page, or by going to www.bringthemhome.btvshalom.org. □

Of Being Numerous

Libbie Rifkin

■ *New Collected Poems*, by George Oppen; edited with an introduction and notes by Michael Davidson; preface by Eliot Weinberger. New Directions, 2002

One of the most immediately intriguing aspects of George Oppen's career as a poet is that for twenty-five years in the prime of his life—from 1934 to 1958—he wasn't one. His first book, *Discrete Series*, came out in 1934 with a preface by Ezra Pound. It introduced a spare, fragmentary poetry that was also deeply committed to "the world, weather-swept, with which / one shares the century." Soon after the book was published, Oppen went out to live that commitment full-time. He joined the Communist Party, got drafted, wounded in action, and awarded a Purple Heart for his service in World War II; and worked as a cabinet-maker in Mexico City throughout much of the 1950s in an effort to shield his daughter from the anti-Communist investigators pursuing her parents. Refusing to see poetry as a purely political instrument and yet loathe to write it for an elite few, he stopped writing it.

Oppen understood the significance of these life experiences in generational and collective terms. As he wrote of the 1930s in "Blood from the Stone," his first poem upon returning to poetry, "So we lived / And chose to live / These were our times." When he started writing again he was fifty, and he managed to produce an entire oeuvre before he died in 1983, including *Of Being*

Numerous, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1969, and his *Collected Poems*, nominated for a National Book Award in 1975. A beloved mentor to a generation of poets coming of age in the Sixties and early Seventies, Oppen began to enjoy more widespread recognition at the very end of his life.

The *New Collected Poems*, lovingly re-edited by poet and scholar Michael Davidson, includes Oppen's final book, *Primitive* (1978), as well as the poems Oppen published in magazines and anthologies, and selected unpublished poems culled from his voluminous working papers. More importantly, Davidson's edition re-imbues Oppen's poetry in the collective experience that nourished him as a poet and a person. While never intruding on the pleasures of reading Oppen's spare, quietly beautiful lines, Davidson's notes reveal the poet working in conversation with a wide but intimate circle of friends and family. The context Davidson provides is not exegetical—that practice might have suggested that Oppen's work demands expert interpretation, which it doesn't. Davidson simply presents the poems in the open environment from which they came: a life lived in and for community.

This editorial choice breathes human warmth and referential texture back into poems that can and too often have been read as stages in an arid if remarkably effective thought experiment. Oppen's first three books painstakingly unfold the possibilities for knowing the material world through a language shorn of myth, ideology, and ego: from the "empirically

justified" elements in *Discrete Series*, to the "lyric valuables" that compose *The Materials*, to

The small nouns
Crying faith
In this in which the wild deer
Startle, and stare out

from *This in Which*. "Consciousness exists and it is consciousness of something," Oppen believed, and the poems born of this faith can be just that bare, almost pre-poetic in their effort to establish the grounds for speaking.

Oppen finds his public voice in "Of Being Numerous," the long serial poem that is, by most accounts, his masterpiece. "There are things / We live among 'and to see them / Is to know ourselves,'" it begins, the quoted phrase (Davidson provides the source) announcing Oppen's frank dependence on other voices to construct even his most oracular statements. Though the Oppens moved from Brooklyn to San Francisco around the time it was written, "Of Being Numerous" is a New York poem; its forty short, numbered sections have a shard-like variety, fragments of vision carved out between skyscrapers viewed from the ground. "We are pressed, pressed on each other," Oppen writes, acknowledging that the experience of other people—squeezed into subways, washing over streets—often feels involuntary. And yet "we have chosen the meaning / Of being numerous," because the alternative, "the end of a chain / Of lives, single lives" is, at this late stage of urban modernity, at once terrifying and inconceivable. Never alone, even in moments of extremity and through periods of silence, Oppen's poetry sounds a quiet gratitude for "the act of being, the act of being / More than oneself." □

Libbie Rifkin directs the poetry program at the Folger Shakespeare Library, and is the author of *Career Moves*: Olson, Creeley, Zukofsky, Berrigan and the American Avant-Garde.

Democratic Socialism, Social Democracy

Reginald E. Zelnik

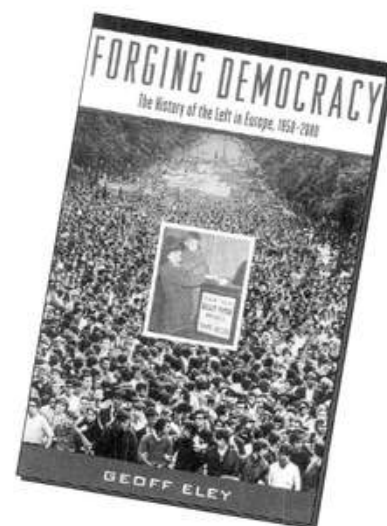
■ *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850–2000*, by Geoff Eley. Oxford University Press, 2002.

Professor Geoff Eley of the University of Michigan, a highly respected and very independent British-born American scholar in the field of Modern German History, has published what is by far the best single volume ever written on the history of the European Left. And refreshingly, for once, the word “European” can be taken at face value since Eley’s European coverage is not confined to the usual big three—England, France, and Germany—but extends to Eastern Europe, Russia, Southern Europe, and Scandinavia. *Forging Democracy* is a virtual encyclopedia of detailed, comprehensive, and reliable information on the history of European socialism, communism, and related movements over a 150 year period. To use a much overused term, it is a *tour de force*.

But it is also much more than that. Eley weaves into his 591 pages of text and information-packed notes a passionate yet restrained and coherent interpretive narrative in which he wrestles openly with the complex meaning(s) of his story and its implied political lessons. He may or may not recognize it, but Eley’s text reveals him to be something of a romantic, albeit a

guarded one. He makes no attempt to disguise his retrospective admiration for certain aspects of the socialist past: the excitement of the barricades and revolutionary upheaval (1848, 1871, 1905, 1917); the leading role of socialists in expanding the realm of democratic practice in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; the long but ultimately doomed period of cooperation between left intellectuals and a broad-based militant workers’ movement; and above all (and perhaps most nostalgically) the heroic role of so many European leftists in the various anti-Nazi resistance movements of World War II. Yet many of these and other admirable strands in the complex history of the European Left are also presented by Eley as lost opportunities, lost in part due to the misguided and in some cases even criminal conduct of some leftists themselves. And therein lies the internal tension in his writing that makes the book so interesting. Eley wants to know and to let us know what went wrong, what went awry, why the radical vision that he so enthusiastically shares with many of his subjects failed to materialize, who (which people, which parties) and what (which ideas, which structural pressures) were to blame.

Eley’s responses to these questions, many of them presented as only tentative, are too elaborate and intricate to summarize adequately in a brief review, but they seem to pull him in



two general directions. First, disappointment with rigidly dogmatic leftists whose culpability lay in their narrowly based, ultra-left, insurrectionary and sometimes terrorist excesses (e.g., Italy’s Red Brigades, Germany’s Red Army Faction), their failure to break in a timely fashion with Stalinism (most European Communists), or, referring to more recent times, their failure to open their minds to the questions of race, gender, and gay rights and to alternative cultures. Second, disappointment with excessively pragmatic leftists who failed to maintain a sharp enough critique of capitalism and allowed their radical vision to soften to the point that their socialism became merely nominal (while often being as blind as the first group to the value of new alternative cultures and to issues such as sexual preference and the environment). To put it another way, Eley sees serious historical (and, by extension, contemporary) flaws in both narrow left sectarianism and tame, domesticated social democracy. In his search for solutions, however, he is too sophisticated a thinker to take the easy way out of simply splitting the difference or espousing a vacuous, formulaic argument for balance between the extremes. Instead, he prefers to demonstrate and evaluate each of the challenges and pitfalls as they occur chronologically, while not hesitating to share with us his judgments about the wisdom, or lack thereof, of the historical actors involved. Oxymoronic

(continued on page 75)

Reginald Zelnik is professor of European History at U.C. Berkeley. He has recently published the edited volumes *Workers and Intelligentsia in Late Imperial Russia* (*International and Area Studies*, UC Berkeley, 1999) and (with Robert Cohen) *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s* (*University of California Press*, 2002).

Setting Limits

Scott Russell Sanders

■ *Enough: Staying Human in an Engineered Age*, by Bill McKibben. Holt, 2003.

In Genesis we read that God appeared to Abraham and told him, "I am *El Shaddai*," a name commonly translated as "Almighty." But David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk, notes that God's announcement may also be interpreted as, "I am the One who sets the limit; who tells you what 'enough' means, who determines the measure of fullness and perfection."

I can't judge Steindl-Rast's scholarship, but this interpretation captures for me one essential quality of God as recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures. What is the warning against eating the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, if not a setting of limits? What is the instruction to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy, if not a curbing of human enterprise? The most famous limits are those imposed by the Ten Commandments, with their ringing "thou shalt not's." But every taboo, every restriction on diet or sex, every threat of punishment for breaking the law reveals a God intent on drawing boundaries, on telling us what "enough" means.

We live in a society whose most vocal and influential figures, from the White House to the talk show studios, from the board rooms of global corporations to local chambers of commerce, seem incapable of accepting any limits on consumption, technology, private wealth, or economic

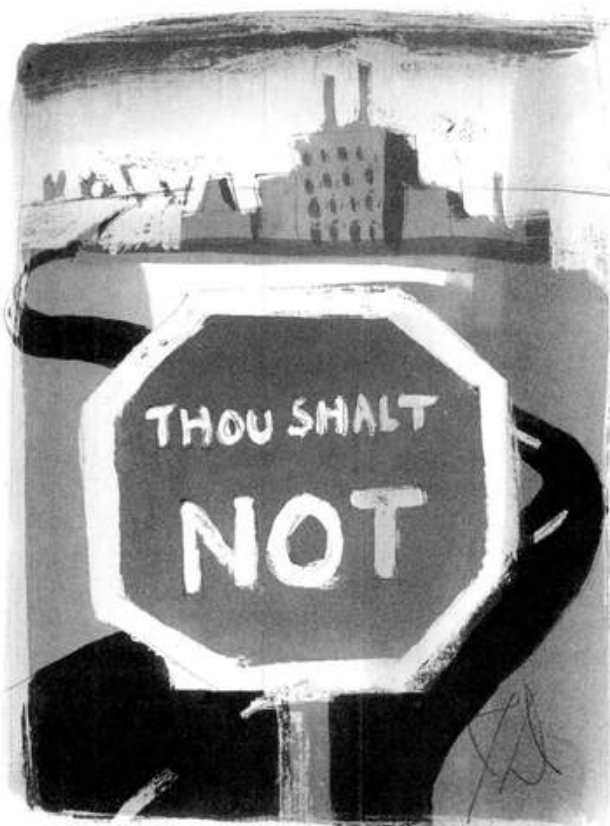
growth. Their vocabulary does not include the word "enough." Instead of calling for a reduction in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions to help slow global warming, they demand that poor countries make sacrifices first. Instead of working to conserve oil, they push to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and in other public lands. Instead of recognizing that the richest Americans have benefited most handsomely from our commonwealth and should therefore pay a correspondingly handsome share of the costs for maintaining our society, they push to lower taxes on the rich. They support the draining of wetlands, the paving of farmlands, the selling of genetically modified food, the patenting of organisms, the cutting of roads through the last remnants of wild forest, all in the name of profit.

Apologists for this lack of restraint call it progress. The old-fashioned term for it is gluttony. That word comes to mind every time I see the image of some politician or CEO smiling above a cascade of extra chins. It comes to mind when I hear a clip of some billionaire bemoaning taxes. It comes to mind when I learn about a media mogul who already controls a large fraction of what passes for news buying up yet more papers and television stations. It comes to mind when I read that General Motors is bringing out a 16-cylinder, 1000-horsepower

Cadillac to stoke up the fires of aggression on our highways.

The glutton is one who cannot stop gobbling, no matter the cost. The costs we are paying for gluttony in America today are both social and ecological—a widening gulf between the rich and the poor, leading to grotesque waste at one extreme and neglect at the other; a corruption of our political system, degrading an imperfect democracy into a brazen plutocracy; and an accelerating erosion of our soils, pollution of our waters and air, and destruction of our wildlife.

Over the past fifteen years or so, no one in America has brooded on the consequences of our gluttony more insistently or cogently than Bill McKibben. In *The End of Nature* (1989), he gave the first widely-read report on the dangers of climate change caused by the accumulation of greenhouse gases. In *The Age of Missing Information* (1993), he surveyed the rapacious, fragmented, and thoroughly narcissistic worldview flowing from television, in contrast with the humbling and holistic vision arising out of contact with nature. In *Maybe One*



Scott Russell Sanders, professor of English at the University of Indiana, Bloomington, is the author most recently of *Hunting for Hope* (Beacon 1998), *The Country of Language* (Milkweed Editions 1999), and *The Force of Spirit* (Beacon 2000).

(1999), he argued for slowing the growth in human population by choosing to limit the size of our families, especially in the richest nations, where the ecological impact per capita is greatest.

Although McKibben offers warnings as dire as anything in the Hebrew prophets, like Jeremiah or Amos he doesn't merely deliver the bad news but also points the way to redemption. So in *Hope, Human and Wild* (1995), he reports on efforts underway in Brazil, India, and the United States to find solutions to our environmental dilemma through living more lightly and allowing room for wildness. In *Hundred Dollar Holiday* (1998), he proposes ways of resisting the orgy of consumerism that now masquerades as Christmas, and restoring to the holiday a spirit of simplicity and community.

The recipe for renewal offered by McKibben over the course of these books might be summed up as follows: We must learn to live within the limits imposed by Nature, if not by God; we must curb our appetites by seeking spiritual fulfillment rather than material accumulation; we must share the blessings of the Earth and of human effort more equitably among ourselves; and we must share the planet more generously with our fellow species.

In light of McKibben's work thus far, it's appropriate that his latest book should be called *Enough*, because, as he sees it, our refusal to embrace that word, our refusal to rein in our appetites or powers, is at the root of our predicament. The powers that concern him in the new book are those derived from new technologies: from genetic engineering, which opens up the prospect of custom designing human beings; from robotics, which threatens to appropriate many of the skills, tasks, and decisions that have defined our species; and from nanotechnology, which increasingly blurs the line between body and machine.

Advocates of these technologies foresee a "posthuman" future in which disease, illness, and perhaps even death

itself have been conquered. In this brave new world, every detail of our offspring will be programmed, from eye color to IQ. Clever devices will eliminate the need for work, pouring out a cornucopian abundance, leaving us to lounge about seven days a week.

This sounds remarkably like the Garden of Eden before the fall, except the techie garden will be wired, and

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it will come to us not by way of a stringent and inscrutable God, but by way of molecular biologists, venture capitalists, and advertisers. The techno-zealots—as McKibben dubs them—would most likely be appalled by the religious analogy. Yet they're clearly promising us a new and improved Paradise, with genetically modified apples, nifty electronic gadgets, and no snakes. With such wizards designing our future, who needs a Creator, especially One who sets irksome limits to what we can do?

If this degree of hubris seems implausible to you, read the array of quotations gathered by McKibben from the techno-utopians. It would be hard to exaggerate their arrogance or their pie-in-the-sky optimism. Our descendants, they say, will escape the nuisance of flesh, the dependence on Nature, the confines of Earth, all thanks to our unbridled ingenuity. You would think that the daily evidence of devastation wrought by technology—from bomb craters in Iraq to holes in the ozone layer—would give the enthusiasts pause. You would think that the periodic failures of our most elaborate inventions—from the crash of a space shuttle to the crash of a computer—would teach them humility. But no.

They have seen the bright future, and it is Us, our egos expanding to encompass and control the genome and the galaxy.

As a veteran of the struggle to protect the biosphere from the effects of the technology we already have, McKibben is understandably skeptical of claims for the latest whizbang solutions issuing from factories and labs. I suspect he would sympathize with the early nineteenth-century English cottage weavers who smashed the factory looms because they believed, quite rightly, that the new technology would destroy their way of life. These Luddites, as they came to be called, did not oppose all inventions, but only "Machinery hurtful to Commonality"—machinery, in other words, that damages the health and wealth of the community, however much it may profit corporations and selected individuals.

Like the much-maligned Luddites, McKibben does not represent technology as uniformly wicked, but rather as a complex human enterprise, improving our lives in some ways, impoverishing or endangering our lives in other ways. *Enough* is a passionate, carefully reasoned, and thoroughly documented appeal for us to weigh the likely benefits and risks of any innovation, and to have the courage to say no when the risks appear too great.

What good is a "smart" bomb if the very idea of dropping bombs on other people is stupid? What good is faster Internet delivery if pornography and spam account for most of the traffic? What would be the good of designing a baby if she must grow up in a polluted and war-torn world? What good would it do us to live forever if we had no useful or skillful work to do, nothing to encounter except our own inventions, nowhere to go except through a maze of mirrors giving back our own endless reflections?

We can distinguish between biotechnologies that aim to repair genetic damage or reduce the incidence of hereditary diseases, on the one hand, and those, on the other, that aim to make our offspring taller, stronger, or

smarter. We can distinguish between robots designed to carry out dangerous work, as in mines or Superfund sites, from those designed to replace every form of skilled and satisfying work. We can distinguish between genetically engineered organisms designed for cleaning up oil spills, and those designed to prevent peasant farmers from saving and replanting seeds from their own crops. We can welcome what's clearly beneficial while resisting the potentially harmful products of our ingenuity.

Humans have made such choices in the past, as McKibben documents. The Chinese decided to disband their merchant navy, the Japanese decided to get rid of guns, the Amish decided to forgo the automobile, Gandhi and King chose to forgo the use of violence to combat violence, and we Americans have chosen to protect parts of our country as wilderness.

Citing those who fought to keep dams from flooding Yosemite and the Grand Canyon, McKibben observes, "They were able to rally people by appealing to the *other* parts of our nature, the parts that aren't always striving and questing and grasping. Not the limitless parts, but the limiting parts. The parts that understand beauty and scale, the parts that sympathize with the rest of creation, the parts that can imagine sufficiency." The parts of our nature that feel sympathy and resonate to beauty also respond to the sense of a creative force at work in the universe, one that teaches us what "enough" means, one that reveals to us measures of fullness and perfection.

In this heartfelt and useful book, McKibben challenges us to exercise our capacity for restraint—to embrace technologies that serve, and to resist those that violate, our deepest sense of what it means to be human. Honest people will disagree over what it means to be human. But that is the conversation we should be having, instead of talking, as the techno-zealots do, only about what is feasible, what is profitable, what is technically sweet. □

DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM, SOCIAL DEMOCRACY (continued from page 72)

though it may sound, his judgments are for the most part nonjudgmental, and it is only on rare occasions that his prose takes on a censorious tone.

One attractive theme that runs through the book like a red thread is the enormous contribution the European Left has made to the growth of what Eley repeatedly calls "democracy." Although he is not always crystal clear about just what he intends to suggest by that concept, his meaning is probably best summed up as the extension of citizenship rights, especially the franchise, to all segments of the population, and the enrichment of modes of political participation through the extension of fundamental rights such as free speech, freedom of the press, and the right to organize. Mainly in reference to the past few decades, "democracy" also seems to encompass the direct, unmediated grassroots participation of citizens in local social and political movements—or what some would call "participatory democracy." Eley clearly and persuasively supports something that might better be described as a democratic *ethos* than democracy as a systematic ideological position. Given the post-1989 tendency to associate everything to the left of liberalism (and sometimes even liberalism) with the crimes of Stalinism, totalitarianism, and the like, Eley thereby offers us an important corrective. Many socialists (though certainly not all of them, and certainly not socialists alone) have indeed helped bring democratic values and practices to Europe, and the historical record will show this, no small thanks to Eley's efforts.

The problem Eley needs to face, however, is that unless one equates the dictatorial régimes of Eastern Europe with socialism, which Eley generally does not, the same socialists have never succeeded in bringing *socialism* to Europe (or anywhere else). They

have brought parts of Europe a rather dull, deradicalized social democracy, but for Eley that unvisionary form of politics, though not entirely lacking in value, is not genuine socialism either, and in any case even social democracy in recent years has been struggling for its own survival.

In the end, though insisting that his

Eley quietly abandons hope in socialism.

book is not an epitaph (p. 503), Eley's way out of this cul de sac is to quietly abandon hope in socialism as such, or what he calls socialism's "prefigurative project," and to substitute for it the notion

of socialist *values*, not terribly different, as I read him, from the democratic values just discussed. In fact, he strongly implies that it is democratic values that should provide the ultimate touchstone for evaluating the historic contributions of socialists. While socialism as a comprehensive, totalizing vision melts away among both workers and intellectuals, it is the core democratic values European socialists supported that he sees as the essential distillation of that movement. This approach is probably a good one, for it takes us away from traditional systemic prerequisites of socialism such as nationalization of the means of production and the elimination of the market and allows us instead to talk about and espouse ideas and movements that uphold such desirable goals as social justice, the more equitable distribution of wealth, equal access to health care and education, and so on. One wonders, though, whether assigning the term "socialism" to these values—a different issue than evaluating the historical contributions of socialists—is of any great benefit, whether analytical or political.

Ultimately, now that the bloom is off the rose, Eley's reddish-greenish affinities may not be as far from a robust version of the social-democratic perspective as he would comfortably acknowledge. □

Fighting Liberals

Michael Bérubé

■ *Terror and Liberalism*, by Paul Berman. Norton, 2003.

I am among the roughly 289.9 million Americans who had never heard of the Islamic radical theorist Sayyid Qutb before September 11, 2001. I did not know about the existence of the Muslim Brotherhood or the history of Wahhabism, the Saudi-based Islamic fundamentalist movement. I was aware of Islamist radicalism only in a kind of loose and scattered way, from the Iranian revolution to the assassination of Anwar Sadat to the emergence of the mujahideen in Afghanistan to the fatwa issued against *The Satanic Verses* to, finally, the al-Qaeda bombings of the late 1990s. In all honesty, though, I had not kept track of Islamist developments in Nigeria, Algeria, Pakistan, Indonesia, and the Sudan.

But in the weeks and months after September 11, I knew just enough to know this: most of my compatriots on the American left who were urging their fellow citizens to put that day's attacks "in context" didn't know very much about Islamist radicalism either. No one on the left, to my knowledge, truly *blamed* America for the attacks; whereas a few Christian fundamentalists like Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell agreed that we'd had it coming, most leftists condemned the murder of innocents on American soil—whether sincerely or furiously or perfunctorily, according to their desires and their degrees of sympathy for the dead and the grieving. Still, when the American left asked after the "root causes" of the

attacks, almost without exception, they read from a script with which I was thoroughly familiar: the ugly tale of American imperialism, from the CIA's overthrow of Mossadeq to the U.S. support for the Shah and his secret police to the Carter/Reagan arming of the Afghan mujahideen and the Reagan/Bush arming-and-white-washing-and-then-demonizing of Iraq. Many leftists seemed quite sure that the attacks had something to do with the growth of the Israeli right and the steady expansion of the settlements in the Occupied Territories, just as most conservatives were sure that the attacks had something to do with what they called the "appeasement" of Arafat. In short, as far as these critics were concerned, to put September 11 in context, you didn't need to know about the history of political Islam since Kemal Ataturk's dismantling of the Caliphate or the arguments mounted in Qutb's *In the Shade of the Qu'ran*. In fact, you didn't need to know very much at all about the actual beliefs of the people who ordered and carried out the attacks, as long as you knew about American and Israeli actions in the Mideast.

Over the course of the following months, I learned that al-Qaeda and its friends were not a ragtag bunch of bomb-throwers, but rather a deadly serious global network; that their ideological leaders were learned, deeply committed men who wanted to extend *shariah* law across the globe; that they held liberal democracies beneath contempt and regarded the United States as a paper tiger that would collapse when met with sustained resistance;

and that they favored stonings, public executions, and a form of violent, ultrareligious patriarchy so extreme as to outdo even the most vicious and visionary theocrats yet produced by the Bible Belt—that is, the domestic fundamentalists I'd scorned my entire life. These Islamists were freedom fighters, all right—but they were not fighting *for* freedom, seeking to throw off the yoke of Western oppression and establish true democracy; on the contrary, they were fighting *against* freedom, against everything I like about democratic freedoms, and they were doing it worldwide. Gradually, I decided that people who believe in the promises of liberal democracy should oppose Islamist radicalism, just as they would oppose Christian radicalism, and that in the case of the Taliban and its terror-training camps, this opposition should include (but should not be limited to) the use of military force.

In the curious parlance of certain American leftists, my view is not understood as "fighting against violent, ultrareligious patriarchy." It is understood as "moving to the right."

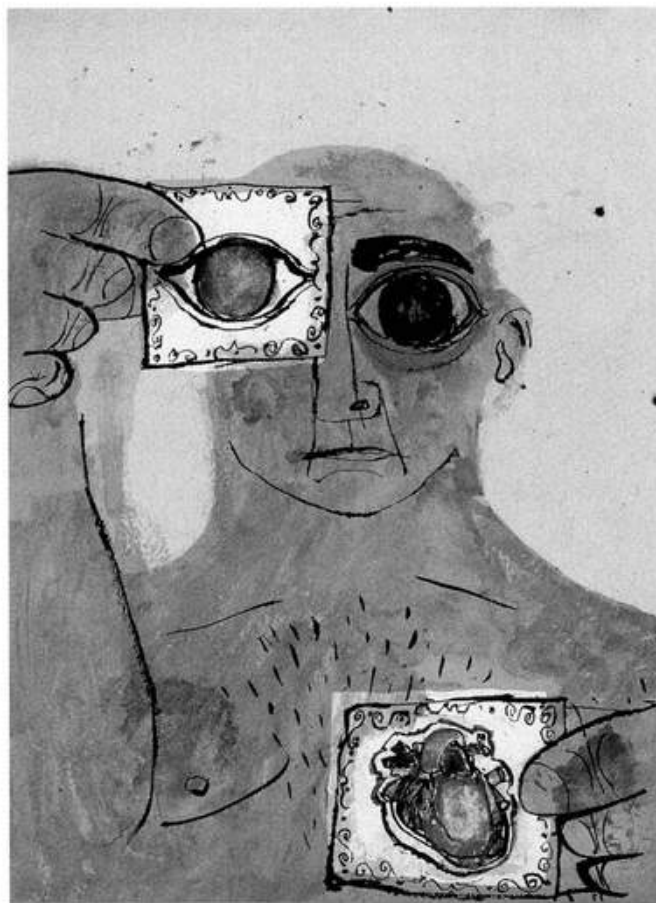
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Paul Berman, they say, has moved to the right as well—and judging from his recent reception among the neocons who now run U.S. foreign policy, they may have a point. But the American right is interested in Berman's conclusions, not in his analysis; for the most part, they could not care less about Berman's interpretation of Sayyid Qutb or the way Berman links Islamist radicalism to European totalitarianism. With the exception of a few true believers like Paul Wolfowitz, they don't even really care that Berman has become a

Michael Bérubé is the Paterno Family Professor in Literature at Penn State University.

warrior for liberal democracy. All they care about is that Berman supported the war on Iraq—and, gauging from a few of the passages in the latter half of *Terror and Liberalism*, might be game for similar wars on Iran and Saudi Arabia as well. Whereas I, from my precarious perch on the plank of the American left that supported war against the Taliban but opposed war on Iraq while acknowledging the desirability of Saddam Hussein's removal, have almost precisely the opposite response to Berman's book: I like his analysis of terrorism but disagree with some of his central conclusions.

Berman deserves praise for his reading of Qutb, which, as many reviewers have already noted, provides *Terror and Liberalism* with its most important and compelling chapters. But more than this, Berman deserves praise for putting the attacks "in context" from the perspective of the attackers—and for refusing to construe Islamism as a form of belief utterly alien to Western thought. Quite the contrary: what makes *Terror and Liberalism* so valuable a contribution to post-9/11 debate is its insistence that the machinery of Islamist terror and its cult of death was first assembled in Europe, and that Islamism must be seen not as a counter to but as a continuation of the strands of anti-liberal European thought responsible for the major cataclysms of the twentieth century. I will not pretend to have learned enough in the past two years to be able to determine if Berman is doing justice to the many strands of Islamic thought. Instead, I will briefly paraphrase his argument about Western secular modernity and its discontents—and then try to debate him with regard to the conclusions he draws from this argument.



The machinery of Islamist terror and its cult of death was first assembled in Europe.

Berman does not rely on the term "modernity," but it is central to his argument nonetheless. Berman prefers "liberalism," which he describes as "the tolerant idea that every sphere of human activity—science, technology, politics, religion, and private life—should operate independently of the others, without trying to yoke everything together under a single guiding hand" (37). Likewise, Berman does not use the word "secularism," but he makes it clear that liberalism begins with the separation of church and state: "The churches, from their place in private life, would be free to bestow blessings and curses. But they would not be able to enforce their blessings and curses by calling out the police. The state, by contrast, would be free to call out the police—but would not have the power to bestow blessings and

curses" (80). From these premises follow all those quaint, hopeful nineteenth-century beliefs in the power of human reason, human progress, human emancipation ... all the beliefs wrecked by the carnage of the First World War, and all the beliefs rejected by the children of modernity who loathed liberalism and devoted themselves instead to what Berman calls "an irrationalist cult of death and murder" (40) that first took hold among Europeans—from dotty Russian anarchists to crazed German chancellors. One of the key features of Western modernity, Berman argues (and he is not alone here), is that it produced its own most virulent

opposition. It should come as no surprise that in the wake of the organized slaughter of tens of millions in Europe, some of Western modernity's most irrational and virulent ideas would have found their way to Egypt and points east.

Because Berman's narrative is a history of ideas, and because it insists so strenuously on the Western origins of terrorism and totalitarianism, *Terror and Liberalism* sometimes makes it sound as if Osama bin Laden and Mohammed Atta came to us, via Qutb, by way of D. H. Lawrence and Martin Heidegger. Indeed, readers of Berman could be forgiven for getting the impression that the fate of the world hinges on the outcome of the battle between partisans of Charles Baudelaire and partisans of Walt Whitman. Writing in the *Washington Monthly*, Joshua Micah Marshall suggested that Berman may have given into what Marshall calls the "Orwellian temptation," namely, the temptation to "take momentous, morally serious questions and make them out to be slightly more momentous and world-historical than they really are." I

think it is still much too soon to tell whether Berman is, as Marshall tentatively suggests, “overstating the danger of radical Islam.” But it might well be the case that he is overstating the danger of radical poets and philosophers, or making poets and philosophers more determinative of momentous, morally serious questions than they really are. Call it the Heideggerian temptation.

That, however, is not my principal criticism of *Terror and Liberalism*. I think it makes every kind of sense for Berman to take on the intellectual legacy of Islamist radicalism, and it makes every kind of sense for Berman to dig where the soil seems to be richest, in the writings of Qutb. And of course, ideas do have consequences, particularly when the ideas in question involve stories about a group of people who can regain a lost purity and/or achieve dreams of global hegemony only by purging the globe of unbelievers without and craven accommodationists within. In linking Islamism to Leninism and Nazism, Berman’s keen eye and his flair for the counterintuitive are at their best.

Rather, my caveats have to do with the second half of Berman’s book, in which Berman turns from being a reliable guide to modernity’s discontents to being a less than reliable guide to world events since September 11. The most problematic of Berman’s claims, I think, is his insistence that in 2002 world opinion sided with Palestinians in direct proportion to the frequency and deadliness of Palestinian suicide attacks: according to Berman, “the high tide of the terrorist attacks, in the early months of 2002, proved to be the very moment when, around the world, large numbers of people felt impelled to express their fury at the Israelis” (142). For Berman, this suggests two things: one, that “the titillations of murder and suicide” (143), the allure of the cult of death, called forth a grisly worldwide sympathy vote for suicide bombings. And two, that well-meaning, fuzzy-headed liberals and

leftists, not realizing quite what was at stake in the struggle against Islamist terror, were once again replaying the role of the French antiwar Socialists in the 1930s, the Paul-Fauristes, who had somehow talked themselves into believing that “the truest danger” came not from Hitler and the Nazis, but “from the warmongers and arms manufacturers of France itself, as well

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of the land-for-peace
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inside an issue of a
progressive Jewish
bimonthly magazine.*

as from the other great powers” (125).

That’s not the way I remember recent history—and until now I have not written about the question of the Occupied Territories, being one of those depressed American leftists who believe that a fateful corner was turned after 1995 when Israel did not crack down on its own death-cultists, the ones who’d just murdered Yitzhak Rabin. Still, I remember Arafat leaving Barak and Clinton twisting at Camp David, I remember the beginning of Intifada II, and I remember world opinion turning sharply against the Palestinian Authority at a result, so much so that by late 2001 it seemed that the remaining members of the land-for-peace Israeli left could fit inside ... well, not quite inside a phone booth, but perhaps inside an issue of a progressive Jewish bimonthly magazine. Berman remembers the boycotts of Israeli scholars; I remember scholars around the world condemning the boycotts. Berman remembers the world joining in solidarity with Palestinians as they blew up night clubs and pizza parlors; I remember that the expressions of solidarity with Palestinians depended not on the actions of Palestinians,

which were horrifying, but on the actions of Ariel Sharon, which some observers insisted on seeing as still more horrifying. I am not saying that I shared that reaction myself: my own sympathy with the Palestinian cause was deeply damaged by Arafat’s refusal to negotiate at Camp David. I believe that both things are true—that Sharon is a war criminal, and that Arafat helped to elect a war criminal by walking away from Barak (if Arafat did not know he was doing so, he was incompetent; if he did know it, he was something worse). And I agree that 9/11 helped to flush out some serious anti-Semitism, here and in Europe, that had been hiding under the banner of peace and justice. But I believe it is a severe misjudgment to think that half the world is half in love with suicide bombing, and that those of us who still consider the Palestinian cause a just one are secretly thrilled, rather than repelled and disgusted, by the second Intifada and the tactics of its foot soldiers.

As for those antiwar French Socialists, this is a story Berman has told before; indeed, it runs through his work over the past ten years. “Political correctness,” on his 1992 account (an account I contested with some bitterness at the time), wasn’t simply the work of fussy campus bureaucrats and their foolish speech codes; it was a world-historical phenomenon, “the fog that arises from American liberalism’s encounter with the iceberg of French cynicism.” In *The Tale of Two Utopias* Berman told a similar story, of the good-hearted, naive kids in SDS unable to realize when their democratic movement had been taken over by a motley assortment of thugs left over from the days of the Third International. Here, it’s the anti-imperialist/neo-isolationist left, unable to imagine any evil greater than that of George W. Bush and his allies at Enron, Bechtel and Halliburton, and unwilling to entertain the possibility that the fight against violent, ultrareligious patriarchy abroad might be tied to the fight against violent, ultrareligious patriarchy in the United States.

In one sense, I'm glad that Berman has found a target worthy of this analysis: the idea that campus PC could be explained by analogy to Stalinism struck me as unserious, whereas I think Berman is right to claim that some addled leftists, in the United States and elsewhere, have no idea what they're dealing with in al-Qaeda—and have taken every opportunity to demonstrate that they have exceptionally poor political judgment, as well. My favorite example, among those leftists still taken seriously in campus circles (if nowhere else), is Edward Herman's insistence (in late 2001, no less) that "the idea that the Taliban is a fascist and expansionist threat, and that Islamic fundamentalism more broadly speaking is the same, doesn't hold water.... Anybody on the left recognizes that the real and frightening 'expansionism,' now in an accelerating and violent phase, is centered in Washington, and Bush's war"—this would of course be the war on the Taliban—"is an ugly facet of it." One wonders just how far Islamists would have to reach—beyond, say, Kabul, Lagos, New York, and Bali—before Herman would consider them "expansionist," and how many more millions of Muslims they would have to kill before Herman would consider them sufficiently dangerous to warrant attention from the left.

But in another sense, oddly enough, Berman's account is unsatisfying not because of its description of liberalism's enemies (which is riveting) or of the softheadedness of certain "hard" leftists (which is overdrawn but all too accurate). Instead, what I find unsatisfying is Berman's account of democracy. Berman tends to confine his discussion of democracy to political institutions—what he rather breezily calls "free elections, political parties, opposition newspapers, a system to defend individual freedom, and that sort of thing" (162)—with the occasional and undetailed invocation of human rights. I'm willing to fight for the ideals of liberal democracy, but I'd like them to be enunciated more care-

fully and more robustly than this. I'd prefer instead to premise democracy on the ideal of participatory parity among democratic citizens, and I'd insist that participatory parity cannot be approached, let alone achieved, unless a society first agrees that certain human rights—to food, education, shelter, and health care—are so fundamental to human flourishing that access to them should not be rendered subject to individuals' abilities to pay for them.

It is this conception of democracy that leads me to oppose Islamist radicalism, and to oppose—though in a different register—the conservative and libertarian opponents of democracy in the United States. It is this conception of democracy that leads me to insist that I will not trust those who subvert democracy here (whether by rigging elections in Florida or by rounding up Iranian-American emigres in Los Angeles) to bring democracy to the Middle East. And it is this conception of democracy that leads me to suggest that Berman is quite mistaken to argue, in closing, that "we need a new radicalism to press Bush to explain the stakes more clearly and to offer political solutions to people around the world who might otherwise become our enemies" (208). What follows from Berman's muscular analysis of Islamism, I would think, should not be a resolution to render George W. Bush a more eloquent and diplomatic spokesperson for the virtues of liberal modernity; rather, what follows from Berman's analysis should be a resolution to replace Bush—by democratic means—with someone more likely to foster the democratic ideal of participatory parity at home and abroad. My position may still imply a kind of soft, liberal imperialism—a determination, in Berman's spirited closing words, to be "for the freedom of others" (210) regardless of whether those others are currently claiming they want nothing to do with freedom. But it has one important advantage, namely, that it does not put lovers of liberal democracy in the position of resting their hopes on leaders who despise liberals. □



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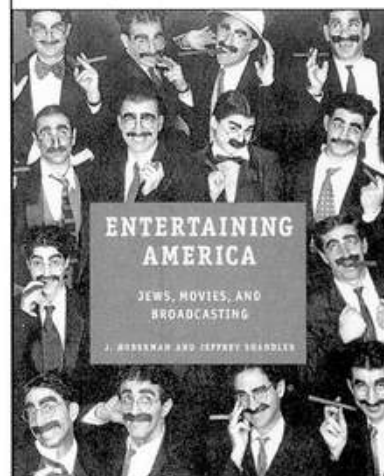
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Living with Illness in America

Peter Gabel

I'm sick, chronically sick, recovering (I hope) from a long-time prescription drug addiction that I didn't know I had. To even write these words for publication makes me hesitate: Am I facing disgrace by doing so?

Will my sense of power in the world or my charisma or sex appeal or *worthiness of recognition as still in community* be fatally compromised? In saying publicly that I'm sick, I am stating a truth that I am afraid will lead others to feel sorry for me, pity me, subtly withdraw from me, "wonder how I'm doing" but no longer engage with me as a vital participant in their lives, or in life.

This is the secret of living with chronic illness, and it's worse than the illness. It leads us, unnecessarily, to lead two lives: one drawn into the self and preoccupied with the illness and its effects, the other presenting a good face to the "outside world"—faking as much normalcy and strength as possible so as not to face a hemorrhage of identity. Was I strong enough this morning to have been a good father for my seven-year old son Sam or was I a subtle disappointment? Should I tell him I need to lie down this afternoon and hope so much that he'll just playfully join me, or should I pull it together and play catch in the park like a real father is supposed to do, and put that spring in my step whether it wants to be there or not? If my fatigue or anxiety shows in my speech, will the listeners to my talk be unmoved by my words or otherwise disappointed by my surprising inadequacy? Or can I "summon the strength" to be the me they expect and shut down the voice inside that so resists that summoning of outer power, objecting to my splitting the self that I actually am?

Yet both sides of this split are unnecessary. The preoccupation with inner symptoms results *mainly* (if you're not facing death or severe pain) from how it may affect carrying forward the outer self to meet and satisfy the expectations of others that you are well. The false lifting-up of the outer self does not reflect a true inability to engage and participate fully in the world but reflects our fear that revealing the effects of the illness will lead others to think that we are not already so engaged.

Peter Gabel is a professor of law and director of the Institute for Spirituality and Politics at New College of California. He is also the Associate Editor of Tikkun.

So instead of teaching with my illness, whose effects are unpredictable from day to day, I cancelled my contract law class for the fall. This would have been completely unnecessary if I could have taught as a sick person, openly revealing

the effects of insomnia, anxiety, adrenaline imbalances and other symptoms, instead of feeling I had to teach in spite of being sick and cover the symptoms to the extent that they might arise. I've cancelled talks and avoided other "commitments" because I know or think I know or worry that I can't be accepted in a somewhat weakened or altered state, that I must "rise to the occasion"—meaning pretend that I'm "fine," that I am *with* everyone in the manner

expected of a speaker "like me."

In a larger sense, being sick provides us with a unique window into the price the soul pays for its conditioning. To be well in an artificial society is often to conceal the inner longing for unconditional and authentic love and recognition behind a series of masks that eventually requires forgetting that the mask is a mask, the source of our common emptiness, restlessness, frustration, the silence between us amidst the busyness of our common activities. To engage in *tikkun olam*, to heal the world, transforming our response to sickness might provide an opening to a cure for the functional alienation that so often passes for health.

Instead of having to choose between withdrawing in a kind of shame from the world and covering one's illness to fake being normal, what sick people need is to be fully embraced and included in all aspects of life while being openly sick. This requires the creation of a kind of intermediate space that is socially legitimate, that makes room for the sickness in the manifestation of one's talents and vitality, and that may even bring an element of vulnerability into everyday life that offers a unique contribution to the recovery of our common humanity in undivided form. Ultimately this extends to the collective embrace of aging, dying, and death, our universal destiny, as a sacrament blessed by the full and continuing presence of the Other, rather than as the increasingly isolating tragedy that it now usually is, as we each live it out, secretly together, in appearance one by one. Grant me my real condition, dear Reader, and I'll join you in yours, and all will be well and all manner of thing will be well. □

*Being sick provides
us with a unique
window into the
price the soul pays
for its conditioning.*

*Tikkun (te-kün) ... to heal, repair and
transform the world.
All the rest is commentary*

תיקון

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