

A Critique of Politics, Culture & Society

TIKKUN

Foreign Policy Manifesto | Richard Falk
Democracy & Zionism: The Deepening Conflict | Jerome Slater, Gilad Atzmon,
Raluca Eddon, Harvey Chisick

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

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2004



Kerry and the Progressive Dilemma

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Ecology & Spirit

Roger S. Gottlieb

Genocide in Sudan

Angelia K. Means

Gay Orthodoxy

Steve Greenberg

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PLUS: Danah Zohar on Bush's Destruction of America's Spiritual Capital, Kim Chernin on Life's Long Learning, Sidney Schwarz on the Privilege Gap, Bernard F. Dick on Paul Buhle's Hollywood Blacklisting and a poem by Marge Piercy

This One

The first one wasn't real.
But I opposed it.
I opposed it in a workshirt.
I opposed it in a mini-skirt.
I opposed it on my way to buy
 birth-control pills.
I opposed it ecstatically.
I opposed it out of principle.
I opposed it in my kitchen bathtub
on the Lower East Side.
I opposed it on the streets with my friends
who were scruffy and raucous and funny,
who opposed it with their youth
 and great bodies.
I opposed it with my boyfriend
who wore my pleated blouse,
whose hair swung down to his waist.
I opposed it as a New York citizen
I opposed it as Emma Goldman's neighbor.
I opposed it as the daughter of my parents
who'd met at a union meeting
back in '37.

We leaped and danced and shouted.
We turned the volume up
as high as it would go
to make the country hear us.

This one is different.
We've lost so much already:
a city
a democracy
a way to be together
a fantasy of hope
(which glimmered like a silver-misted island
at the edge of possibility).

Now it's hard to see that island
through the thickening smoke.
Poison tears our eyes
as newer fires break out.
They tease our feet as we walk past.
They flicker at our floorboards.

The sky grows dimmer.
This river stinks of death.
What is its name? The Tigris? The Euphrates?
The lordly Hudson?

The leaders we've elected
(and those we didn't)
keep talking through the smoke.
Their words are losing meaning.
(Did she say "war" is "peace"?)

An awful force is gathering.
It's real. It's getting stronger.
It doesn't mean us well.

But I'll oppose it
with my smoke-clogged brain.
I'll oppose it with a stone in my breast.
I'll oppose it with blood in my underwear.
I'll oppose it with my friends
in their aging, less reliable bodies.
I'll oppose it with my husband
whose beard is gray and beautiful.
We'll oppose it facing traffic
on a rainy Sunday
in an apple growing county.
We'll oppose it dressed in silence.

—Enid Dame
(1943–2003)

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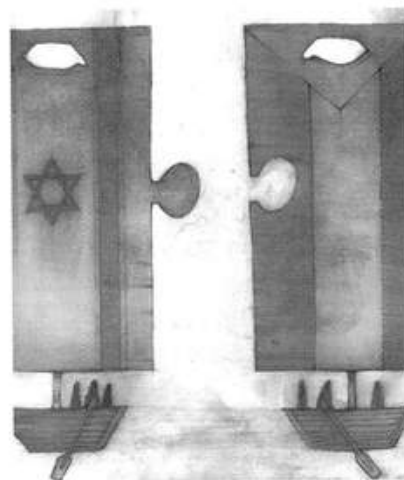
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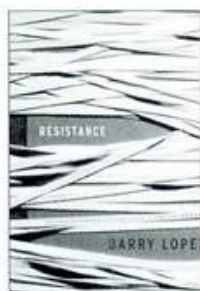
Sikkum

TIKKUN RECOMMENDS...

RESISTANCE

Barry Lopez
Knopf, 2004

The nine fictional stories in this book are accounts of resistance to a fundamentalist government and its homeland security which has so expanded its totalitarian powers that the resisters can do little more than change their identities and flee. Yet the stories are not of despair, but of creative accommodation to a world that is easy to imagine should there be a second term for the Bush administration. Lopez has a deep understanding of contemporary culture, and one comes away from his book with a sense of hope that others who share his perceptions of the world will at least protect us from loneliness should the madness in contemporary global life accelerate.



REGIME CHANGE BEGINS AT HOME: Freeing America from Corporate Rule

Charles Derber

Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2004

No, it's not only Bush who needs to be changed, but also contemporary corporate ascendancy and its hostile takeover of Washington, D.C. Though George W. Bush has taken the corporate regime in more extreme directions than ever before and has hollowed out the institutions that enable ordinary Americans to have a say in how our land is governed, the problems presented by Derber will persist in a Kerry presidency as well. Written with verve and easily accessible in style, *Regime Change* could be a valuable stimulus to a popular movement to free America from corporate rule.

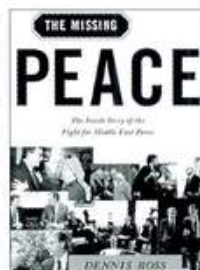


THE MISSING PEACE

Dennis Ross

Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004

Dennis Ross was the U.S. envoy to the Middle East from 1988 to 2000, serving under President Bush Sr. and then under President Clinton. His story is indispensable for understanding how American diplomats construed their options and how both Israeli and Palestinian negotiators were confined within their own narrow frameworks and unable to truly understand the perspective of the other side. Ross is



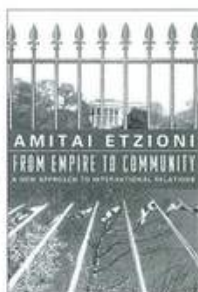
likely to play an important role in a Kerry administration—his commitment to peace is impressive and moving, his intelligence compelling, and his book will give you a full understanding of the contours, possibilities and tragic limitations of what American diplomacy is likely to produce in the Middle East in the coming years.

FROM EMPIRE TO COMMUNITY: A New Approach to International Relations

Amitai Etzioni

Palgrave Macmillan, 2004

The founder of the contemporary communitarian movement has developed an extraordinarily important analysis of how American foreign policy might evolve beyond the predictable dimensions when the Clintonites return to power in a Kerry administration (not much chance of this book getting a serious reading should the current crowd remain in power). Hawkish in his practical suggestions (he envisions military force against nations like North Korea that command or are developing WMDs, are governed by tyrants, and might turn the weapons over to terrorists—so Israel and the United States get to keep their nukes), he is insightful and at times visionary in his rejection of the demonization of Eastern sensibilities. Etzioni recognizes the legitimate appeal of religious worldviews and emphasizes that it is not only liberty but community that matter to the peoples of the world—and that the emerging Western-dominated global marketplace can be understood to sometimes have a destructive impact on community.

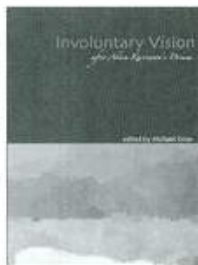


INVOLUNTARY VISION: After Akira Kurosawa's Dream

Edited by Michael Cross

Avenue B Press, 2003

Poetry's "involuntary vision" can offer a way to see and understand the present more deeply as we look to the future. The Bay Area "New Brutalists" of this volume follow in the path of William Carlos Williams and the objectivists to present "the thing itself." For example, former TIKKUN staffer Julia Bloch observes how "streetlight swings/through the window, curves/off a table and lands thickly/on regiment."



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Letters to the Editor

The Platform for Love and Generosity

To the Editor:

I am driven to say YES to TIKKUN's "Platform for Love and Generosity" so inspiringly written in the July/August 2004 issue. And I say YES to the struggle that will be required to implement it in the United States. I pray that candidate Kerry reads it and, more importantly, that he incorporates it into his campaign and into his presidency. Thank you for continuing to express what is in the hearts and souls of so many of God's people. God's "chosen people" are all of those who express love and generosity without fear and with faith in its truth.

DONALD P. EDWARD

Atlanta, GA



that Western values are so low that to foist them off on others is ludicrous. I deeply disagree with that implication. The values of the United States are not perfect "higher values" but they are considerably higher than those of Saddam Hussein and his two seriously flawed sons. The Iraqis have not gotten that bad a deal. Yes, there are troublesome elements at this moment. Yes, people have died. This is war after all and war is

To the Editor:

There is so much I disagree with in your platform that it would make this letter too long. Your views on the Iraq war are wholly wrongheaded. You sound cynical when you say that we went in to spread our "higher values," the implication being

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indeed ugly. (Contrary to what some say, we have not necessarily won it yet either.) There are political snafus but that is life. Politicians are people, and as such, not always perfect. But the United States does not plan to occupy, to strip the Iraqis of their culture, or to steal their oil. If that was the case, our soldiers would not be spending a great deal of time building schools, training policemen, or restraining themselves when they have all the might they need to flatten the enemy that is coming at them with, shall we say, greater insurgency.

I really think the Iraq position must be rethought by many who cry out for human rights and dignity yet could tolerate the actions of Saddam Hussein. I believe that one day soon the Iraqis will have an election, their economy will be up to speed, and the United States will have a good ally in the Middle East. It will not be smooth sailing but it is not going to fail. Too much is at stake. And all this because George Bush decided to try to fix a country that had dissolved into humanity's lowest common denominator. What difference does it make who gets rich off it (Halliburton) or what Michael Moore thinks of it or if it helps the oil supply? The point is, something has been done to restore the lives of Iraqis at great cost in lives and money to ourselves. No, Rabbi Lerner, the West is not the bottom of the barrel. In fact, we are getting better all the time due to the fact that we have a system that enriches people enough that they have the time and money to think outside of themselves now and again and a desire to see people living lives of dignity—you and your organization being a perfect example.

GAIL BURKE
Studio City, CA

To the Editor:

In American politics today, I often hear loud criticisms and complaints which continually focus upon specific iniquities. These are useful only if they make us aware of a deeper, more systemic, malady—and frequently in the media and among our political leaders this systemic level critique is absent. We have to do more than point our fingers at what we perceive to be failures and wrongdoing. If we continue to problem-solve for the short-term without attending to the creation and implementation of a new vision for our collective futures,

we will have abandoned our right to chart our own human destiny. TIKKUN is one of the few arenas in which I hear or see much in the way of creating a new vision for the future of humanity.

The writers of the Constitution were as visionary as they could be, given their origins and the worldviews that were prevalent at that time in human history. Today, however, we need a renewed vision, and a new Human/American/World Constitution.

We need to see, read, hear, and speak about our vision so that we can proceed to craft our mission and identify goals and tasks. We need to "visit" with one another however we may—in person, on the telephone, via email, and through the sharing of ideas on progressive sites available on the Internet. The fact that we are in such new territory, and that we aren't entirely certain what will work and what won't, actually works to our benefit. If we approach the need for massive change with a sense of innocence and humility, commit to becoming mature learners, and work together, we will be successful and a great deal happier. There will be bumps along the way, but we can start, and we can learn as we go. The alarming conditions we face today may be mild compared with the potential horrors awaiting us in the future if we fail in this responsibility.

Perhaps if we hold hands, speak of the deep desires of our hearts, and commit to one another, the journey to genuine democracy and freedom may be far less difficult and far more joyful than we ever imagined.

MARTHA WHITE
Murfreesboro, TN

To the Editor:

We are angered and offended by your July/August cover headline, "Will Kerry Blow it?" Why cast such negative aspersions on our greatest hope to defeat the Bush White House? We are surprised and disappointed that the TIKKUN editors, proponents of "politics of meaning," let this pass.

In a story, Elijah the prophet disguised as a beggar, meets a wretchedly poor woman on the road. When he asks how she is, she replies, "I am rich with love, and children, and so many blessings." Elijah grants her such wealth. Then he meets a woman rich with designer clothes and gourmet food, servants, and homes. When he asks her about her life, she de-

scribes its brutality: the food is lousy, her servants are lazy, she has no new clothes, and her children are rude. Elijah answers her by granting her just this: destroying her homes and leaving her alone in a hovel.

The Elijah story teaches us that you get what you affirm. TIKKUN, do you really want to affirm Kerry "blowing it?"

SARA SCHLEY AND JOE LAUR,
Wendell, MA

Editor Responds:

As a non-profit legally barred from supporting candidates, our headlines are not designed to enhance the political careers of any candidate or political party—but to challenge all of them all to speak to the deep need for a New Bottom Line of generosity, kindness, peace, social justice, awe at the grandeur of creation, and love. Our message to them all: you will be successful to the extent that you are perceived as truly fighting for that kind of world.

Academic Freedom in Israel

To the Editor:

David Newman accurately describes the right-wing threat to Israeli academic freedom ["The Threat to Academic Freedom in Israel-Palestine," July/August, 2004], but he grossly exaggerates the role of academics in critiquing the Israeli government. There are some 4,000 Israeli academics and my research has turned up no more than 100 willing to take a public stand against the Occupation (which, among other things, is destroying Palestinian academic freedom) beyond signing an occasional petition. Many more than that number work for the Israeli government and army to perpetuate the Occupation. The vast majority are complicit by their silence. Israel has become another South Africa and it is time the world treated it as the apartheid state it truly is.

LAWRENCE DAVIDSON
West Chester, PA

To the Editor:

David Newman writes that "The political atmosphere in both the United States and Israel during the past two to three years has brought, in its wake, an emerging McCarthyism...." McCarthyism!? At a time when Michael Moore's polemical anti-war film *Fahrenheit 9/11* is the highest-grossing "documentary" of all time. And left-wing writer Al Franken's book *Lies and the Lying Liars*

Who Tell Them: A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right is enjoying a huge success. Singer Ozzie Osborne recently sang "Pigs of War" while a huge screen behind him showed photographs of Bush and Hitler. Performers Jon Bon Jovi, Dave Matthews, James Taylor, Wyclef Jean, and Mary J. Blige now openly rail against Bush. Pro-peace and anti-war activities on most U.S. campuses are on the rise. Anti-Bush websites like CounterPunch, Antiwar.com, The Wilderness.com, Axis of Logic, and others are thriving. Some McCarthyism!

As for the Israeli scene, Newman mentions Illan Pappé. Here is a person who writes a book dedicated to his two sons "with the hope that they may live in a free Palestine"—which means that he wants Israel dismantled and replaced by Palestine—and nothing happened to him. He continues to teach at an Israeli University, where he is completely free to express his anti-Israel opinions.

Another academic, Ran HaCohen, publishes articles on the Antiwar.com website. He has a logo at the head of his articles depicting a map of the area where the territories taken by Israel in 1967 are designated as "occupied by Israel in 1967." The areas inside the green line are designated as "occupied by Israel in 1948." To him, even the University of Tel Aviv where he teaches is located in "occupied territory." Of course he sees nothing wrong in working in this "occupied" area and getting paid by the occupiers. Still nobody is infringing on his right to free expression which he uses continuously. The Israeli academics who signed the letter of support for the boycott continue to work at their universities and enjoy total freedom of expression. Contrary to David Newman's opinion, the freedom of expression in the Israeli press and in Israeli academia is alive and well.

JACOB AMIR
Jerusalem, Israel

David Newman Replies:

Lawrence Davidson would have sanctions imposed upon Israeli academia because, in his words, it is an "apartheid state," while Jacob Amir argues from the opposite end of the spectrum that it is the radical left-wing critiques of Israeli policies which demonstrate that academic freedom is alive and well in Israel. One does not have to agree with the positions of people such as Ilan Pappé and Ran HaCohen to be aware of the growing threat

facing academics, especially young non-tenured academics, in expressing their views loudly and whole heartedly. Equally, one does not have to accept the fact that there are many academics who work directly for, and with, the government (as they do almost everywhere in the world including the United States) to use this as an excuse to impose a boycott which would only harm the long-term interests of those who do cooperate closely with their Palestinian colleagues. What Amir and Davidson prove (and I apologize to them for bunching them together in the same category) is that the characterization of the academic community into distinct polarized groups will only turn Israeli academia into another political battlefield instead of one of the few remaining places where alternative views and constructive critique can find a home. Yes, academic freedom is still alive and well in Israel, and we must do everything to ensure that it stays that way by rejecting calls to boycott from the extreme Left, or censure and MacCarthyism from the extreme Right.

Ben Gurion University, Israel

Israel's Destructive Occupation

To the Editor:

I'm aware of and appreciate your appeals against Israel's abuse of Palestinians. However, a complete response to the matter demands more than that. It demands the repudiation of Israel entirely—of the very concept of a Jewish state in Palestine. The forced installation of Israel in Palestine is extremely unjust and in the long run it is unworkable. Israel is not justified existing on land stolen by blackmailing the UN and terrorizing the indigenous people off the land.

The taking of the land of Palestine, which was recognized by the British in the early 1940s as being owned by Arabs (in 1943 only 6 percent of Palestine was owned by Jews: www.palestinere-membered.com), is an outrage—all the more so because it was done for a state that excludes them. (Only a harmless-sized Arab minority has been allowed to remain on their own land.) The UN and imperialist powers, manipulated by Zionists, without even consulting the people living there, much less getting their permission, "gave" it to outsiders! This is like a new neighborhood organization that you didn't even participate in deciding to give your home to someone else!

It is far too premature to dismiss this outrage as an event deep in history and

let bygones be bygones. Palestinians are profoundly aware and upset about their dispossession (Al Nakba). In fifty-six years their feelings have not subsided, and are now possibly stronger than ever. Many Palestinians in the diaspora, as well as the refugee camps, dwell on it constantly. Subsequent generations take up the cause with gusto.

The abuses Israel engages in are predictable. Stolen property is hard to defend. The victims are uncooperative in their dispossession, so Israel resorts to extreme oppression. The answer is to correct the fundamental wrong: the existence of Israel.

People say, "Ah, but America did the same." But it's not the same—most obviously because the American indigenous dispossession is no longer an active issue. The Zionist project is not workable as the United States has been because of the extreme differences in the relative numbers of immigrant and native populations in these two cases, the sharing of the resultant society in the United States (which gives Native Americans a stake in it), and the world's much reduced tolerance for racism and colonization at the cost of "lesser" peoples now than in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The "reasons" given for Israel's installment in Palestine are entirely inadequate. That the United Nations, Britain, or France "gave" Palestine for a Jewish homeland is inadequate: it was not theirs to give. That ancient ancestors had that land is inadequate: there had been centuries of discontinuation in Jewish possession, except of a scant portion. That the Old Testament decreed it is inadequate: the Old Testament is not the universal book of man. That the Jews were victimized during World War II is inadequate: one victimization doesn't justify another. And that they had no home of their own is inadequate: other people should not be dispossessed of their homes in order to provide them one.

The mission of Israel as a place particularly for Jews is an inevitable barrier to resolution of the conflict. It thwarts the return of the Palestinian refugees, which is essential. Until the refugees are allowed to return to their confiscated land there will not be enough acceptance of Israel in Palestine or in the world for Israel to relax. The only way out is to rescind the Jewish platform of Israel. "Unthinkable" perhaps at the present time, but "unthinkable" things, given the

merciful "forgetfulness" of passing and replacing generations, occur all the time. The paradigm of Jewish persecution will likely become unmotivated to some future generation of Israelis, who will not have known it themselves but who will have felt considerably the shame, world ostracism, and spurning arising from those disgraceful practices which keeping the Palestinians dispossessed requires.

People assume that a single state of Israelis and Palestinians won't work because these two peoples have so much "bad blood." Tending to refute this, though, is the fairly satisfactory relations between Israelis and Israeli Arabs, as well as the fairly good relations between Jews and Arabs in Palestine before the huge influxes of Jews into Palestine starting in the late nineteenth century. South African whites, coloreds, and blacks had a lot of "bad blood" but that didn't make a single state unworkable.

Thanks for your work, but please go further. Like Israel Shamir, embrace the idea of state(s) not based on ethnicity. Reject the "Jewish State" of Israel. A state for a race necessarily is racist.

JENNIFER WINKLER
Fairfield, California

Editor Responds:

Judaism is not a race but a faith community, and anyone from any race can convert to Judaism. It was the fascists who invented the category of race and then murdered anyone who was born into that faith community and anyone whose parents, grandparents, or great grandparents had been born into that community. Because the genocide of the Jews was only the worst manifestation of a two-thousand-year history of demeaning and oppressing the Jews in both Christian and Muslim countries, the United Nations agreed to set up a state specifically for that oppressed people. Like subsequent attempts at affirmative action, the privileging of those who had been previously oppressed resulted in some discrimination against people who were not directly involved in that oppression. For that reason, we've been seeking to rectify that history of oppression by creating an affirmative action state for Palestinians. But the labeling of Israel as racist simply belies the fact that Arabs who live inside the pre-1967 borders have the same basic rights as Israelis—they vote in elections, attend schools and universities, are not prohibited from using the same public facilities as

Jews, and otherwise can participate in the life of Israeli society. They do face de facto segregation in the same way that minorities face de facto segregation in housing and schooling in the United States, and as in the United States they can escape that segregation when they have enough money to buy into upper-middle-class housing.

On the other hand, those Arabs who live in the occupied territories face terrible oppression and we at TIKKUN have consistently opposed that. Yet the treatment of those Arabs is not based on hatred of their race, but a deep fear—reinforced by frequent terrorist bombings of Israeli civilians—that these Palestinian Arabs are determined to wipe out the Jewish people if given a chance to do so. We at TIKKUN believe that this perception of the Palestinian people is mistaken about the majority of Palestinians, but not about the 30 percent or more who support Hamas—an organization that explicitly calls for the elimination of Israel. However, our belief that the majority of Palestinians would live in peace with Israel and do not want to wipe out the Jewish people would be massively reinforced were the Palestinian people to adopt a 100 percent nonviolent method of struggle against the Israeli Occupation. If all forms of violence against Israel were to cease, if the Palestinian people were to embrace nonviolence not only as a tactic but as a philosophy of life, and if they were to repent previous acts of violence and do all they could to show the Jewish people that they were not out to destroy the Jews but instead recognized the humanity of the Jewish people (in other words, were they to adopt the approach used by Martin Luther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, and Nelson Mandela), they would almost certainly win full independence within a ten-year period. And that is a much quicker timetable than any likely to happen as a result of struggling to eliminate a Jewish state entirely.

Those who care about the suffering of the Palestinian people ought to seriously consider championing this approach. However, for those of us who doubt that the Palestinians can embrace such a strategy (in part because their oppression is so severe, in part because of the failure of imagination, creativity, strategic sophistication, and empathy for the Jews that have always been the major deficiencies in Palestinian leadership), the only realistic path left is to advocate for a change in Israeli and U.S. policy so that Israel takes the

leadership in ending the Occupation. Calls for the elimination of a Jewish state make our task far more difficult and almost certainly strengthen the hands of Ariel Sharon and those on the political Right in the United States and Israel. For that reason, we back the Geneva Accord as the most likely way to move forward, and hope that after the elections the United States will play a role in putting the Geneva Accord back into play as a viable solution.

To the Editor:

As an American Jew, I have begun to question the forces of Israeli society that cause so much suffering and destruction in the Middle East.

My view of the human community is grounded in a species-wide solidarity. For example, when I contemplate my son, a boy barely past his toddler years, I feel an immense love for him. Yet I am painfully aware that all my love for him is shallow if I do not feel as much love for someone else's child. To love my son is to love the child, not my possession of him. For me to love my own offspring but not to care as much about other children suggests that the love I have for my son is a selfish love. As Martha C. Nussbaum warns, "Compassion for our own children can so easily slip over into a desire to promote the well-being of our children at the expense of other people's children."

I recently had a conversation with an Israeli in which I criticized Israel for, among other things, killing Palestinian children. After cursing the Palestinians, the Israeli responded that she did not "give a damn" about Palestinian children and wished for the Palestinian people to "disappear." This response, I felt, was paradigmatic, as most nations and ethnicities, at some point in time, have used hate to gain or protect a material or psychological advantage over another group. When we express this hate, however, we become unable to see how all children are special, including the children of those we define as our enemies. Yet, by being insensitive to the suffering of other people's children, we cheapen the love we have for our own, and we lose respect for the adults that children become. In this way, the common good suffers and hope for a better future grows more dim.

OMAR SWARTZ
Denver, CO

Here's to the Skinny Kid with the Funny Name

George Vradenburg

Barack Obama—the keynoter at the Democratic Convention—is a new political talent with enormous potential. Speaking with striking eloquence of the “politics of hope,” he electrified the Democrats convened in Boston in language appealing to Republicans and non-voters as well.

What was so unique about this new voice? He spoke simply but compellingly of what unites us, not of what divides us. He spoke in honest and visual language of one America, not two (and John Edwards adjusted his message accordingly). He spoke of creating opportunity by empowering every American to fulfill their dreams—not by taking from those who have been successful. And he spoke for all of us in saying that “we have real enemies in this world. These enemies must be found. They must be pursued. And they must be defeated.”

This perspective, no doubt, reflects Obama’s personal background. Born of an African father from Kenya and a white mother from Kansas, he was raised in Hawaii and Indonesia. This product of a multiracial, global background brings in a different and more inclusive perspective. Obama is seeking the open Senate seat in Illinois as only the fourth African-American Senator.

In his keynote address, Obama didn’t offer any programmatic specifics, but that was not the purpose or place for detail. His message did demonstrate, however, an unusually clear and articulate understanding, not contempt, for those who might have a different point of view.

As just one example, Obama noted, “we worship an awesome God in the blue states, and we don’t like federal agents poking around our libraries in the red states.” He spoke “not of a liberal America and a conservative America” but of a “United States of America.”

Senator Kerry’s acceptance speech mirrored Obama’s rhetoric and, to some extent, began to outline foreign and domestic priorities of a future Kerry administration. Notwithstanding a powerfully delivered, fully inclusive vision for a better America, Kerry’s foreign and domestic program does not yet match the inclusiveness of his articulated vision. Without further development, Kerry is vulnerable to claims that he does not “walk the talk.”

For example, while Kerry forcefully and effectively uses

his own war experience to demonstrate his personal “strength” on national security matters, he articulates only tonal, not substantive, differences with the Bush foreign policy. He is not articulating the broader and more unifying message that America is committed to the UN Millennium goals of reducing oppression, poverty, illiteracy, gender inequity, and disease, and that military force is one—but only one—tool in achieving those goals. In that larger context, Iraq is a battle worth winning because victory in securing the peace there will provide hope that freedom, gender equity, and prosperity is achievable even in historically repressive environments.

And Kerry plays “old” politics by promising to reduce middle-class taxes and increase taxes only for those making \$200,000 a year or more. Whatever the efficacy of this divisive political strategy to “tax the rich” (most middle-class Americans aspire to earning over \$200,000 and regard a tax on the “rich” as potentially applicable to them), Kerry is not articulating a broader, more unifying call for all Americans to chip in to make sure all Americans have health care coverage. An across-the-board tax increase, even with a progressively greater contribution from the wealthy, feels less like an attack on the success to which everyone aspires than a fair contribution to the common wealth.

Is it likely that President Bush will broaden his appeal and unify us around common values? The Republican Convention is weeks away, but based on his record to date, optimism is hard to come by.

So, our candidates, once again, will base their strategies on narrow appeals to what is perceived to be in our particular “interest,” failing to recognize that all Americans have a genuine interest in the well-being of all Americans.

It is the greatness of this nation that we are not locked into class, or caste, or position. Rather, we are a dynamic and generous people who share a common destiny. There is so much more that unites us than divides us. Appeals to our shared values can rally us in ways that political pundits can not even imagine.

Intriguingly, the son of a goatherd from Kenya sees clearly the shared vision that is our America. We are confronted daily by those who claim to want to be “unifiers” but propose policies that drive us apart. We can only hope that with time and experience, Obama will find the policies that match his appealing message. □

George Vradenburg is co-publisher of TIKKUN.

Racist Attack on Muslims— From an American Jewish Leader

Michael Lerner

Malcolm Hoenlein, Executive Chair of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in the United States, made a quick trip to Israel in late July 2004 in support of the building of the Wall through the West Bank.

Hoenlein, described in *Ma'ariv* as "U.S. Jewry's most prominent leader," (July 16, 2004) told the Israeli newspaper that he was extremely concerned about the growth of the Islamic community in the United States. *Ma'ariv* quotes Hoenlein as saying that "Europe is the current Muslim battlefield, but America is their ultimate goal. There are already 10 Muslim schools in New York, and my feeling is that despite growing post-9/11 awareness, there is still a degree of naiveté among Americans. I warned against the growing US Muslim community 10 years ago, but nobody understood it then. It is estimated that there are currently around 10 million Muslims in the US illegally and the authorities are finding it very difficult to find them. It's like a game of cat and mouse." (Interview available at www.maarivintl.com).

Imagine what the Jewish reaction would be if the person we believed to be the most prominent Islamic figure in the United States were to issue a statement warning about the growth of the Jewish community in the United States. Imagine if he pointed to Jewish schools as a part of the danger and decried the naiveté of Americans in not recognizing the degree of threat these Jews posed. The outcry would be overwhelming.

TIKKUN received a letter the next day from Iftekhar Hai, director of interfaith relations for the United Muslims of America. He says:

For the last twenty years I have been reaching out to the American Jewish community as an American Muslim—trying to build peace among Arabs, Muslims, and Jewish people in the USA. [Hoenlein's statement makes it seem as if] my children and my grandchildren are guilty because they were born here as Americans. We all learned a lesson from the suffering of the Jewish people during the Nazi era, that if good people keep quiet and do not speak against [this sort of thing] we encourage a climate of bias, bigotry, and hatred. Can you please help me understand how we should act? The climate against American Muslims is so poisoned now—what can follow next, God knows.



I have contacted the ADL [Anti-Defamation League] and the JCRC [Jewish Community Relations Council], but nobody seems to understand the deep implications [of Hoenlein's statement] for the American Muslim community. I was told very casually this is not what he meant. Mr. Hoenlein is a very intelligent leader—he commands a lot of respect and has a great influence on American Jewry. How do you think we should handle this situation?

Ma'ariv must have heard these complaints too, because the next day, July 27, the paper ran a second story on Hoenlein, in which he claimed that "in his previous interview...he had been referring to the Islamic fundamentalists, not the American Muslim community." Hoenlein's story now is that he was only referring to fundamentalist infiltrators of the American Islamic community. Even in this "corrective" interview, however, Hoenlein implies that any illegal immigrant who follows Islam is or could be a terrorist: "I also mentioned the fact that according to the best estimates available, there are about 10 million illegal aliens in the US, some of whom are Muslims. Some of these include emissaries and agents of militant pro-jihadist groups" (*Ma'ariv*, July 27, 2004). This reminds us of talk during World War II when illegal Jewish immigrants to the United States—fleeing Nazi persecution—were often described as threats to the American way of life.

The reality is that voices like Hoenlein's can only be adequately confronted if enough people are willing to align themselves with the forces that oppose this kind of bigotry. An important first step is for enough people to tell papers like *Ma'ariv* that men like Hoenlein do not speak for us and to ask that the media pay attention instead to voices like TIKKUN, Rabbis for Human Rights, Bereaved Parents, Jewish Voice for Peace, Americans for Peace Now, American Jewish World Service, Progressive Jewish Alliance, and Brit Tzedek.

Who do you call or write to? Go to www.tikkun.org/community/index.cfm/action/media_list.html and you will find a list of key media people. Take a few minutes each day to call or write to one name on this list, and you will have a cumulative impact. Insist that they start quoting other voices who reject the racism supported by supposed Jewish leaders like Hoenlein. □

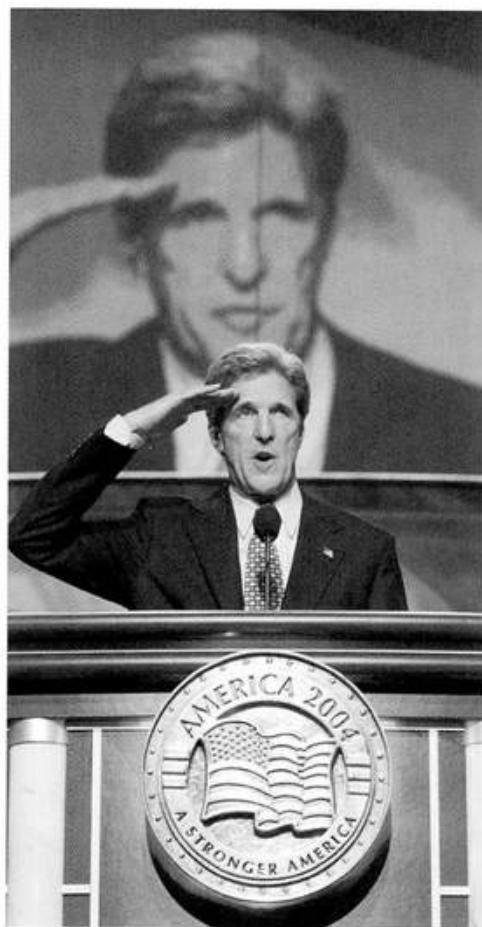
When the Democrats “Disappeared” Anti-war Progressives

Michael Lerner

The predicted post-convention boost to the fortunes of John Kerry was far below that which followed candidates nominated in past conventions. Pollsters may have been surprised by the flatness of polling numbers—liberals and progressives whose anti-war voices were silenced during the convention were not. The overwhelming desire to beat Bush was the club used to silence dissent about the war in Iraq within the Democratic National Convention. But many delegates who spoke to TIKKUN during and after the convention already had grave doubts about the wisdom of Kerry's strategy and feel betrayed by the blandness of the vision being projected by their Party's platform and speakers.

Delegates overwhelmingly accepted the discipline of the Party. Few progressives were willing to face the wrath of the Kerry leadership or of their media sycophants who would all too willingly have blamed the anti-war people for creating the impression of disunity, thereby undermining an important element in the Kerry strategy. However, many privately feared that the Party forged in Boston lacked the vision necessary to excite the many Americans whose choice is not between Bush and Kerry, but between voting and not bothering. The managers of the Kerry strategy, delegates complained, seemed more concerned to not alienate Republicans and mainstream pundits than to help Americans see what policies a Kerry presidency would pursue.

Incredibly, television commentators talked about the convention uniting the base of the Democratic Party. But where was the voice of the peace forces? A *New York Times* poll released the first day of the convention reported that 51 percent of all Americans, 66 percent of all Democrats, and 94 percent of all Democratic delegates believed that the war in Iraq was a mistake. Yet speakers at the conven-



Presidential nominee John Kerry salutes during the Democratic National Convention at the FleetCenter in Boston, Thursday, July 29, 2004.

tion were warned to not criticize the Iraq war. Only Senator Edward Kennedy and the Rev. Al Sharpton broke that rule, and then only in peripheral ways. There was no opportunity for a serious presentation of the anti-war perspective, no opportunity for real debate, and no sense from the Kerry people of a foreign policy strategy for the years ahead.

The DNC on Iraq

Here are the words of the platform on the war in Iraq:

People of goodwill disagree about whether America should have gone to war in Iraq, but this much is clear: this administration badly exaggerated its case, particularly with respect to weapons of mass destruction and the connection between Saddam's government and al-Qaeda. This administration did not build a true international coalition. This administration disdained the United Nations weapons inspection process and rushed to war without exhausting diplomatic alternatives. Ignoring the advice of military leaders, this administration did not send sufficient forces into Iraq to accomplish the mission. And this Administration went into Iraq without a

plan to win the peace.

Now this administration has been forced to change course in order to correct this fundamental mistake. They are now taking up the suggestions that many Democrats have been making for over a year. And they must—because having gone to war, we cannot afford to fail at peace. We cannot allow a failed state in Iraq that inevitably would become a haven for terrorists and a destabilizing force in the Middle East. And we must secure more help from an international community that shares a huge stake in helping Iraq become a responsible member of that community, not a breeding ground for terror and intolerance.

As a first step, we must create a stable and secure environment in Iraq. To do this right, we must truly internationalize both politically and militarily: we cannot depend on a U.S.-only presence. Other nations have a vital interest in the outcome, and we must bring them in to commit troops and resources. The Bush administration has missed three great opportunities to do that. First, the President broke his promise to build a legitimate coalition in Iraq by exhausting diplomacy before resorting to the use of military force. Second, when the statue fell in Baghdad, Kofi Annan invited the United States to come to the table to discuss international support—but we rejected his offer. Third, when the President addressed the United Nations last fall, he once again refused to acknowledge the difficulties we faced in Iraq and failed to elicit support from other nations.

The President has not given our troops the clarity of mission, the equipment, or the international support they need and deserve.... In a Democratic administration, that will change....

To succeed, America must do the hard work of engaging the world's major political powers in this mission. We must build a coalition of countries, including the other permanent members of the UN Security Council, to share the political, economic, and military responsibilities of Iraq with the United States.

To win over allies, we must share responsibility with those nations that answer our call, and treat them with respect. We must lead, but we must listen. The rewards of respect are enormous. We must convince NATO to take on a more significant role and contribute additional military forces. As other countries, including Muslim majority countries, contribute troops, the United States will be able to reduce its military presence in Iraq, and we intend to do this when appropriate so that the military support needed by a sovereign Iraqi government will no longer be seen as the direct continuation of an American military presence.

Second, we need to create an international High Commissioner to serve as the senior international representative working with the Iraqi government. This Commissioner should be backed by a newly broadened security coalition and charged with overseeing elections, assisting with drafting a constitution, and coordinating reconstruction. The Commissioner should be highly regarded by the international community, have the credibility to talk to all the Iraqi people, and work directly with Iraq's interim government, the new U.S. Ambassador, and the international community.

At the same time, U.S. and international policies must take into consideration the best interests of the Iraqi people. The Iraqi people desperately need financial and technical assistance that is not swallowed up by bureaucracy and no-bid contracts, but instead goes directly into grass-roots organizations. They need to see the tangible benefits of reconstruction: jobs, infrastructure, and services.

What dismayed many of the peace-oriented delegates was not what this platform said, but what it did not say. The platform did not mention, let alone discuss, the arguments

that led a majority of Americans to oppose the war, nor did it offer any clue about what would be a sufficient condition for the withdrawal of American troops. In Kerry's statements there is a rhetoric of escalation for the sake of "victory," but no clear sense of what victory would actually mean or how it could be achieved. Many delegates left the convention worried that a Kerry Administration would resemble the LBJ years in Vietnam: progressive domestic legislation undermined by a growing militarism and quagmire in an unwinnable war.

Still others argued that the worst part of the Democrats' self-presentation was the immense focus on cheerleading for "strength," which was more often identified with military might than with moral integrity. Boston became testosterone city.

There is nothing inherently unprogressive about a strong America. But we have argued that authentic strength and security will come only when the United States is seen as the primary embodiment of a new global ethos of generosity, kindness, and the recognition that the well-being of every American depends on the well-being of every other person on this planet. Our interfaith educational outreach organization, the Tikkun Community, teaches that we Americans are fundamentally interdependent with the rest of the world's peoples, and therefore the issues of global poverty, homelessness, hunger, inadequate health care, and inadequate education must be the first battleground in the struggle against terror and insecurity.

It would have been unrealistic to expect that a Kerry campaign would have given this Tikkunish perspective its primary focus. But the total absence of such a perspective from the allowed public discourse at the convention seemed to fit all too neatly with the appearance of an endless string of military figures—the implication being that only military endorsement could make us feel safe with Kerry. Indeed, as some progressives pointed out, there was something incongruous about all the hoopla around Kerry's service in the Vietnam War and the endorsements of his military colleagues when the very reason Kerry had come to national attention, and his springboard into politics, was his role in publicly decrying the war as immoral and blowing the whistle on the war crimes that were a daily part of the reality of Vietnam. What should have been honored about Kerry was this move of bravery—and the bravery of all those who served the United States, both then and now, by refusing to serve in immoral wars or collaborate with war crimes.

To demonstrate how this kind of honoring could have been done without weakening Kerry's own positioning of himself as a strong military leader, imagine a paragraph of the following sort in Kerry's acceptance speech:

"I also want to pay tribute to the millions of Americans who have marched, demonstrated in peaceful ways, written letters to newspapers and emails to their friends in an attempt to challenge the logic of war and war-making.

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While I do not always agree with their perspective, I want to acknowledge that their activities are a respected part of our Party, and a form of patriotism that strengthens our country and deserves our attention and respect. In fact, their challenges to the Bush administration's claims about weapons of mass destruction proved correct, and though sometimes their positions have proved mistaken, the protestors often raise significant challenges to the dominant government and media perspectives. They play an important role as watchdogs of American democracy. Though I myself may continue to disagree with their opinions in some important ways, their service to our country is an invaluable contribution."

Expressing such support would have given positive affirmation to a whole generation of peace-oriented people in their twenties who were mobilized by the anti-war movement, but who, under the barrage of the current militaristic Kerry campaign, might fade into passivity and despair and not even bother to show up at the polls in November.

The DNC on the Middle East

Equally troubling at the Democratic National Convention was the Middle East platform:

The Democratic Party is fundamentally committed to the security of our ally Israel and the creation of a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace between Israel and her neighbors. Our special relationship with Israel is based on the unshakable foundation of shared values and a mutual commitment to democracy, and we will ensure that under all circumstances, Israel retains the qualitative edge for its national security and its right to self-defense. Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and should remain an undivided city accessible to people of all faiths.

Under a Democratic Administration, the United States will demonstrate the kind of resolve to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that President Clinton showed. We will work to transform the Palestinian Authority by promoting new and responsible leadership committed to fighting terror and promoting democracy. We support the creation of a democratic Palestinian state dedicated to living in peace and security side-by-side with the Jewish State of Israel. The creation of a Palestinian state should resolve the issue of Palestinian refugees by allowing them to settle there, rather than in Israel. Furthermore, all understand that it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949. And we understand that all final status negotiations must be mutually agreed.

Give this platform statement a careful read and you will see that it runs counter to the Geneva Accord and follows the line of Ariel Sharon. The Geneva Accord calls for the Jewish section of Jerusalem to be part of Israel and for the Arab sections of Jerusalem to be part of a new Palestinian state (that is the desire of the hundred thousand Arabs who

live there). The talk of an "undivided Jerusalem" is the rhetoric of Sharon—it has nothing to do with the reality on the ground where very few Israelis even dare to walk in the Palestinian sections of that town for fear of the deep hostility that a people who perceive themselves to be militarily occupied feel. The existence of a democratic Palestinian state has been called for by Sharon, but his intent is to create that state on less than 50 percent of the West Bank, thus guaranteeing that it is politically and economically unviable. It is this Sharon plan that is implicitly being endorsed by the Democrats. It is this recipe for disaster that was explicitly endorsed by Kerry when he publicly applauded the Bush/Sharon accord this past Spring.

So where were the peace forces?

Howard Dean's uninspired talk at the convention made none of the arguments against the war, leaving many of his delegates (and millions of his supporters around the United States) feeling perplexed and disturbed. Remember the heady days when Moveon.org and others were being pointed to as harbingers of a new kind of grassroots politics that could push the peace forces into prominence in the Democratic Party? The point of raising all that money for Dean was to have a spokesperson who would articulate the aspirations of the American people for an alternative to militarism, not someone who would trade getting a place for himself on prime time for silence about the war.

Similar complaints pervaded the Kucinich caucus. When people asked "Why does Dennis keep on running in May and June of 2004 when it is clear that Kerry has won the nomination?" they were told, "So that the viewpoint of those who put peace and justice first will be represented." But at the last moment Kucinich deserted his troops, telling them they could "vote your own conscience" rather than asking his delegates to work as a group to insist on a peace message. When it came down to it, Kucinich lacked the political courage that was supposed to be what distinguished him from Dean and the others. Kucinich has been such a fresh voice in politics, his call for a Department of Peace so very important, that we hope he will continue to voice the perspectives that he has articulated in this campaign despite his capitulation at the DNC. Perhaps if he gets more support, Kucinich would feel less isolated and less likely to cave on his principles the next time progressives seek a national spokesperson.

"Bush lite"

The same logic that had led many Democrats to vote for Kerry in the primaries even though they agreed more with Dean or Kucinich—the logic that "Winning is everything, we've got to beat Bush"—now produces a strategy that even some Kerry delegates are willing to call "Bush lite."

The "Bush lite" strategy led to a convention notable for its blandness, its milquetoast speeches (except for those of

Barak Obama, Al Sharpton, and Ted Kennedy), and its enforced conformity. Some of the delegates even talked about sensing an absence of spiritual center or grounding in their Party. Though Party leaders want to make the Democrats look like Harry Truman's party of the late 1940s, there have been great advances in consciousness in the past sixty years. Many Americans no longer give priority to material success, domination over others, or the need for America to be "number one." This new worldview derives less from the football field or from war games than from a growing religious and spiritual revival which teaches that what matters is the political, economic, and environmental well-being of everyone on the planet, and our ability to see everyone (not only U.S. citizens) as created in the image of God and equally deserving of caring and respect. These Americans sometimes described in the media as "cultural creatives," or by TIKKUN as people attracted to a spiritual politics—talk of a world of mutual interdependency and interconnectedness in which the egotistical nationalisms are transcended by a more ecological, more holistic vision.

It was these people who entered Democratic Party politics with new energy this past winter and spring, yearning for a turn toward peace, social justice, and a whole new discourse of caring. Many of them believe that the rhetoric of American superiority, exceptionalism, and "our needs above the needs of everyone else on the planet"—a rhetoric repeated at the convention even by those thought to be most progressive in the Democratic Party—is precisely what undermines our capacity to envision a world of mutual interdependency, and generates anger from the rest of the world. For these people, the Democratic Party convention was like watching the reptilian brain reassert itself over the later stages of human development.

The "realists" in the Party have responded by saying, "Winning is everything—we've got to beat Bush." Well, progressives in the Democratic Party want to beat Bush as well. That is the reason they have been willing to go with the Kerry strategy during the convention and through the campaign this fall. However, looking back at this militarist-oriented convention and noticing how little the Kerry strategy seems to have helped boost their candidate's polling, some of these "anyone-but-Bush" progressives are now more convinced than ever that they should have stayed true to their vision for a better, different kind of world. Many of these

progressives now believe that only a vision of a world healed and transformed will really stir the 40 to 50 percent of the population who don't bother to vote at all to come to the polls this year.

The Kerry strategists respond that the fear of Bush is so deep that one need only remind waffling voters of the danger of a Supreme Court packed with anti-civil libertarians who wish to revoke abortion rights, blur the line between church and state, and support other elements of a right-wing agenda. Or that voters will turn to Kerry once they are reminded that a second Bush administration would dismantle environmental protections, strengthen the Patriot Act, and might even lead us into war with Syria, Iran, or North Korea. While that fear-generating rhetoric was mostly underplayed at the convention, the Kerry people say privately that it could easily be rolled out when necessary in the fall.

But it is the war and national security that will remain the central issues in this campaign, and it is there that progressives worry that Kerry has failed to create an alternative world view, and is instead playing on the same terrain as Bush, arguing that he will do a better job, be tougher, etc. What progressives warn is that, historically, Americans have not been willing to switch horses midstream in a war if they feel that the war itself is the *right* war. Because Kerry insists that this *is* the right war, first in Iraq, then against global terrorism, he risks an electoral battle in which he will occupy the weaker ground. A more radical critique of the war and a fundamentally new direction

It is the war and national security that will remain the central issues in this campaign, and it is there that the progressives worry that Kerry has failed to create an alternative world view, and is instead playing on the same terrain as Bush, arguing that he will do a better job, be tougher, etc.

in fighting terror (namely, a global Marshall Plan to eliminate poverty and dry up the cesspools of despair from which the terrorists draw many recruits) might be more likely to provide people with the willingness to risk switching rather than staying the course.

TIKKUN's goals for this election

TIKKUN does not endorse candidates or parties; our stake is different. Our goal is to educate American society to a new ethos of love, kindness, and generosity. We want that ethos to be articulated by all parties and all candidates, because in so doing they strengthen the chances of moving the United States toward a New Bottom Line in which institutions and social practices will be judged efficient, rational, and productive not only to the extent that they maximize money and power, but also to the extent that they maximize love, caring, kindness, generosity, social justice, and peace. We

encouraged the “compassionate” part of Bush’s compassionate conservatism agenda in 2000 (an element that sadly seems to have disappeared completely from this administration). We hope, in this election, to see some recognition of a New Bottom Line in the Kerry campaign. Elections are important to us because they open people to thinking more deeply about the direction of the society, so we use election discussions to try to infuse them with a deeper spiritual dimension and a more profound analysis of the needs of our planet and the entire human race. Our concern is in building a different kind of world—and that can only happen when people realize that their safety and security and well-being will be enhanced more by policies that reflect love and generosity than by policies that reflect military strength and the power to dominate over others. Of course, we recognize that politics is not a zero-sum game, and that a policy of generosity (say, the global Marshall Plan that we’ve called for these past several years), could work in tandem with increased military strength and military operations against al-Qaeda. But it is especially distressing to us to see the discourse of generosity and love being dismissed as unrealistic.

The hard-nosed realists retort: “You had your chance for that kind of politics in the primaries, but the candidates who embraced views close to yours—candidates like Kucinich in the Democratic Party—got nowhere. Face it, people don’t respond to that kind of an appeal.” This argument is only partly accurate. The sad truth is that most people who share a visionary politics don’t have enough faith in the American public to believe that others would rally to it. They’ve accepted the realists’ account of their fellow Americans, so they imagine themselves alone and unlikely to win if they stay true to their own beliefs.

This kind of thinking led to the amazing dynamics of the Democratic primaries: we saw millions of people who actually agreed more with Kucinich than anyone else, but then supported Dean, or later Kerry, because the media had proclaimed that these men had the winnability that Kucinich didn’t have (even the very week Kucinich declared his candidacy, the media dismissed his candidacy on those grounds, so that few people even heard what he believed in until

some of the nationally televised candidate debates in the fall of 2003). It was not the absence of progressive or spiritually sensitive voters, but their inability to believe that the rest of the American people would respond to that kind of politics when facing a choice between hope and fear in the general election against Bush, that led them to vote for candidates that they didn’t believe in but whom they thought *others* would respond to (as measured by the media accounts of whom these others would really trust).

We at Tikkun insist that the yearning for a world based

We at Tikkun insist that the yearning for a world based on love could be a powerful motivator in American public life today, but it can only be that if people are willing to be tough and strong in fighting for that world of softness and kindness. One reason that many Americans distrust liberals is that they won’t fight for what they really believe in—so why trust them to be strong defenders of America’s best interests?

on love could be a powerful motivator in American public life today, but it can only be that if people are willing to be tough and strong in fighting for that world of softness and kindness. One reason that many Americans distrust liberals is that they are liberal about their liberalism. That is, they won’t fight for what they really believe in—so why trust them to be strong defenders of America’s best interests?

Already by late summer, some conservative commentators were suggesting to Bush that he might get the most strength by pointing out this hypocrisy of the Democrats—their refusal to claim publicly what they really believe privately, their willingness to continue the Clinton tradition of shaping their policies around what the polls tell them. Hard as it is for liberals to believe, the Bushites see themselves, and are seen by many of their followers, as more principled than the Democrats because they are willing to stick by their principles even when under attack (smart Democrats respond by pointing out the ways that Bush’s conservative Right sees Bush as being similarly opportunistic in abandoning part of their right-wing agenda).

However powerful may be the yearning for a different world, a more peace- and justice-oriented world, it has at least temporarily been silenced by the fear of an imperialist George Bush. The ultimate irony may be that it may have been the willingness to open up and allow that vision of a different world—not just the refining of the old liberal politics that have been so uninspiring for the past thirty years—that might have been the most effective way for the Democrats to defeat Bush. It may yet turn out that the “Bush lite” strategy behind the Kerry campaign is not so “realistic” after all. □

Israeli Democracy and the “Demography Problem”

Jerome Slater

There is a growing consensus in Israeli society that Israeli democracy will face a genuine crisis within the next fifteen years if Israel does not withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza. The source of this crisis is the “demography problem”: the growing percentage of non-Jews, particularly Palestinians and other non-Jewish Arabs, who are citizens of Israel or residents of the occupied territories.

In fact, an examination of the requirements of genuine democracy should make it clear that the crisis is not a matter for the future, but exists right now. Nor can it be solved by any of the expedients currently being considered in Israel. The kind of limited Israeli withdrawal from Gaza that Ariel Sharon has in mind in reality would continue Israel’s *de facto* control over its people and, of course, the Sharon plan would extend rather than diminish Israeli settlement and control over at least half of the West Bank. A complete end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, in all its forms and guises, and the creation of a genuinely independent Palestinian state is imperative not only for moral reasons, not only for Israeli security, but for Israeli democracy itself.

Until the last few years, Israeli and other opponents of Israel’s policies since 1967 focused on the moral and security arguments in calling for an end to the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Since the creation of the Jewish state had the unavoidable consequence of dispossessing the Palestinians, it was argued, a compromise under which the Palestinians would gain their freedom in their own state was morally required. Moreover, once the Palestinians began their nationalist revolt against Israeli rule, there was a growing Israeli realization that there was little prospect for long-term Israeli security until the minimal demands of Palestinian nationalism were met.

It is now evident, however, that the moral and security arguments have failed to persuade most Israelis that they must end their occupation of Palestine. Most Israelis now seem to believe that the “separation barrier” currently being built, together with Sharon’s plan for “withdrawal” from Gaza, will ensure Israeli security. As for the moral issue, it



has largely disappeared from Israeli discourse. Palestinian terrorism aimed at civilians has created a climate of opinion in Israel that makes it difficult, if not impossible, for a peace strategy that focuses on the moral issues to succeed. Indeed, terrorism has created considerable ambivalence even in what remains of the Israeli Left. The peace camp has no chance of convincing Israeli public opinion to focus on the moral issue if it is confused or has developed moral amnesia itself.

On the other hand, there is a rapidly emerging consensus in Israel—now including a growing number of the non-fanatical right—that “the demography problem” *does* make some kind of withdrawal from the occupied territories a practical necessity. The feared scenario is described this way:

- It is likely that the Palestinian population growth rate will continue to be much higher than that of Israel, and it is unlikely that there will be a large offsetting increase of Jewish immigration into Israel. Moreover, because the Palestinians have not given up “the right of return,” a peace settlement could have the consequence of swamping Israel with returning refugees. For these reasons, some time in the next decade or two, Palestinians are likely to become a majority in the historic land of Palestine between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

ILLUSTRATION BY KIM BALTHAZAR

Jerome Slater is the University Research Scholar at SUNY/Buffalo, and the author of many articles on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both for *Tikkun* and for professional history and political science journals.

■ At this point, the Palestinians may cease pressing for an independent state and instead demand the creation of a single Jewish-Arab state, on the basis of majority rule democracy: one man, one vote.

■ This would create an intolerable dilemma for Israel: if it resists the demand for a single, binational state, it will cease to be a democracy; if it accedes, it will cease being a Jewish state. Even Ariel Sharon now defends his Gaza withdrawal scheme as necessary if Israel is to remain Jewish and democratic, although, of course, he rejects this logic in the West Bank.

Despite this emerging Israeli consensus, there are several odd features in the scenario predicted by the “demography problem” argument. To begin with, there is practically no chance that the Palestinians will give up their struggle for independence in favor of pressing for a single binational state which they could then control politically through democratic means. And this is so not only because most of them don’t want to live side by side with Israelis in a binational state, but also because they surely understand that there is absolutely no prospect that Israelis would agree to such a “solution.”

Nor should they: in light of the two-thousand-year history of murderous anti-Semitism—often breaking out after many decades or even centuries of peaceful coexistence—it can hardly be assumed that the Jews no longer need a state of their own. In any case, after nearly one hundred years of Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a binational state would be a formula for a binational civil war. Come what may, Israel will remain a Jewish state.

Given that, concedes the Israeli consensus, the issue of whether the Jewish state can “remain” a democracy cannot be avoided. This concern is fully warranted, of course, but it does not go nearly far enough: under what framework can we say that Israel today is functioning as a democracy? The issue is not whether Israel can *remain* a democracy, but whether the Jewish state can *return* to a fully authentic democracy.

What do we mean by democracy? In effect, the “demography problem” argument equates democracy merely with free elections and majority rule, but this is a quite shallow understanding of the requirements of genuine democracy. As political philosophers have long pointed out, democracy also requires minority rights and constitutional restraints on strict majority rule; the rule of law; political or civilian control over the military; a substantial degree of economic and social equality as well as formal, one-person-one-vote political equality; and a strong education system that is independent of the government and teaches the public the arts of citizenship in a democracy, especially a deep commitment to democratic values.

Few if any representative democracies—the only kind

practical for modern, large-scale societies, at least at the national level—fully realize this ideal. Certainly American democracy does not, especially in terms of economic and social equality. When measured against each of the democratic criteria, however, Israeli democracy is going in the wrong direction on every one, and even today—i.e. supposedly before the demography problem becomes a reality—it falls so far short as to call into question whether it deserves the name of democracy at all.

In evaluating the state of Israeli democracy, it is important to distinguish between “Jewish democracy,” (i.e. for the Jewish population only), “Israeli democracy,” (i.e. Israel within its recognized and accepted pre-1967 borders, including its Arab and Bedouin citizenry), and what I shall call “Greater Israeli democracy,” meaning the state of democracy for all peoples that are effectively ruled by the Israeli government, not merely formally or *de jure* but *de facto*, meaning all Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza.

Jewish Democracy

Ha'aretz is Israel’s most prestigious newspaper, the country’s equivalent to the *New York Times*. Here is what many of its journalists, editorialists, and columnists have been saying in the last few years about the state of Israeli democracy.

Values. According to both public opinion surveys and many *Ha'aretz* writers (including, among a number of others, the political scientists Aviad Kleinberg and Ze’ev Sternhell as well as the columnists Tom Segev, Amira Hass, Gideon Samet, and Uzi Benziman) there has been a dramatic decline in public commitment to democratic and humanistic values, and there are ominous signs of political extremism: growing anti-Arab racism, support for “transferring” the Palestinians out of the country, and violent, pogromist attacks by settlers on ordinary Palestinian people, often ignored by Israeli army and police units.

According to a recent poll, Israeli public support for democracy—even in the abstract—has declined in the last decade from 90 percent to 77 percent of the Jewish public, placing Israel last on a list of thirty-two democracies. Even more alarming are some of the specifics: 50 percent of the Jewish public agrees with the statement that “strong leaders can do more for the state than debates and laws”; 50 percent agreed that in the case of conflict between security interests and the rule of law, security should prevail; and only 57 percent agreed that violence should never be used to attain political objectives.

These are the kinds of phenomena that Segev and Benziman have in mind when they write, respectively, that “interest in human rights has never been so negligible as it is today,” and that “democracy in Israel is merely formal, and there has been a significant decline in the public’s support of the elements of democracy, including freedom of expression and equal rights for minorities, political and

social." Benziman concludes that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is "destroying the foundation of Israeli democracy."

The Rule of Law. In a forthcoming book, Moshe Goral, the legal commentator of the Israeli Broadcasting System, charges that Israel is on its way to becoming a banana republic with respect to the rule of law. He cites growing governmental corruption; a growth in both organized and individual crime; racism towards Arabs; a forgiving attitude toward rabbis who incite violence against not only the Palestinians but against Jewish dissidents and even the state itself; and, growing every day, nonpolitical intra-Jewish violence, especially in the family and against women in many contexts. The courts have become "brutalized," argues Goral, and look away from the spread of violence, sometimes even murder.

Moreover, as many commentators have noted, the judiciary, even including Israel's High Court, is increasingly failing to fulfill its imperative obligation to uphold law and human rights against widespread governmental abuses, so long as the government or armed forces cite "security needs" as their justification; the recent High Court ruling that the government must remove certain sections of the "separation barrier" because of the damage done to the Palestinians is a rare exception.

Civilian Control of the Military. Civilian control of the military is eroding as the Israeli armed forces have become increasingly politicized, activist, and involved in government and the decision-making process. Since 1967, an increasing number of important politicians and prime ministers have been retired generals or otherwise became famous—or, in several cases, infamous—for their armed exploits: prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin, Ehud Barak, and Ariel Sharon came out of the IDF, and the road to power for Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir was their leadership of pre-independence Jewish terrorist organizations.

As well, many of Israel's defense ministers (including Moshe Dayan, Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, and current minister Shaul Mofaz) are retired army generals, and retired military officers are prominent throughout governmental ministries and the national bureaucracy. Indeed, even while still on active duty, Israeli chiefs of staff (especially the current chief, Moshe Ya'alon) have made highly publicized statements about governmental policies that go over the line supposedly separating the armed forces from politics, and that make it clear that the army identifies with the settlers and views the Israeli Left—or what it considers to be the "radical" Left—with general contempt.

Equality. Israel has adopted some of the worst features of American corporate capitalism, the consequences of which

include rising unemployment (now about 11 percent), major cutbacks in the welfare system and various safety nets, and a growing gap between the rich and poor. Furthermore, many Israeli writers point to economic, social, and cultural discrimination against the Sephardim.

Despite the socialist ideals that were initially an integral part of mainstream Zionism, Israel today is one of the most inegalitarian of the Western nations.

The Education System. Religious messianism and fundamentalism, together with secular but primitive nationalism and militarism (à la Ariel Sharon) are on the rise throughout Israeli society. As a result, as Gideon Samet has written, "the elite and academe have become the butt of anti-intellectual mockery," academic freedom is under severe attack, and the education system at all levels is in serious decline, both in terms of student academic performance and governmental interference.

In the last few years, the Sharon government has taken a series of steps to control the curricula at the primary and high school level, in particular to rid the secondary school curriculum of the remnants of the demythologizing Israeli New History. And in the last two years, the government has been implementing a plan (called, in true Orwellian fashion, "The Plan to Enhance Higher Education") to transfer university control over academic administration and budgets to the Ministry of Education, to drastically cut the budgets of universities that defy rightist ideas about how to conduct teaching and research, and to otherwise curtail academic independence. As Elia

Leibowitz sums up: "The universities in Israel almost alone bear the flag of rationalism and independent thought in Israeli society...[but] in recent years these institutions have come under intensifying attack from various quarters of Israeli society, headed by the government of Israel."

The consequences of the underfunding and politicization of education, together with growing anti-intellectualism throughout Israel, are already becoming evident. In the last decade there has been a startling decline in the educational performance of Israeli school children: as measured by international tests, Israeli elementary and high school students rank among the lowest in the West. And if the Likud remains in power, it seems likely that similar results will soon be seen at the university level.

Israeli Democracy

The 1.3 million Israeli Arabs, who constitute about 20 percent of the overall population of Israel proper, are, at best, second-class citizens. They have the vote and consequently some representation in the Knesset, but in all other

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respects they have always suffered from economic, social, and political discrimination. Except for a handful of professionals and intellectuals, the Israeli Arabs are not integrated into Israeli life and society—they are even prohibited from serving in the armed forces, the traditional path to status and advancement in Israel. In addition, Arabs own only 3.5 percent of the land in Israel, and their separate education system is funded far below Israeli Jewish levels.

Sammy Smootha, Israel's leading academic specialist on the Israeli Arabs, sums it up this way: "The Arabs are a disadvantaged, working-class community in a middle-class society. They are totally isolated from the Jews: 90 percent of them live in all-Arab communities and 10 percent in separate neighborhoods in Jewish cities. They do not enjoy power-sharing and suffer from discrimination in public budgets and appointments and in private sector hiring."

In the last two years, matters have gotten much worse. In June, a *Ha'aretz* story, entitled "Most Jewish Israelis Support Transfer of Arabs" discussed a Haifa University survey which revealed that 49 percent of the Jewish public believes that the Arabs receive *excessive* support from the government, 45 percent said they would support depriving the Arabs even of the right to vote and be elected, and 64 percent believes the government should "encourage" the Arabs to leave the country.

Even taking into account the obvious consequences of the intensifying Jewish-Arab hatreds of the past few years, the implications of these findings are ominous. Indeed, even some right-wing Israelis are shocked at what is happening. As Moshe Arens, (a former defense minister in Likud governments and a man who on some issues is to the right of Sharon) has recently written: "From [a] distorted point of view, the solution to our problems seems so simple: complete the building of the fence, remove the Jews living on the other side of the fence, then get rid of the Arabs living on our side of the fence, and there you have it—a 'democratic Jewish state,' all Jewish. Have we lost hold of our senses? Have we thrown overboard the values that are at the foundation of the democratic State of Israel?...It is time to wake up and remind ourselves of the norms of modern Western democracies."

Greater Israeli Democracy

The "demography problem" argument contains two major fallacies. The first is its premise that only when the Arabs become a majority will there be a major problem for

Israeli democracy. The second inheres in its unrecognized premise that there is a significant difference, in terms of democratic legitimacy, between formal, *de jure* rule and informal, *de facto* rule.

In fact, for all practical purposes, Israel has sovereignty over the occupied territories. The consequence is that while the Israeli Arabs are, at best, second class citizens, the Palestinian people as a whole—i.e. the Arab residents of Gaza and the West Bank—are effectively denied *any* claims to citizenship, indeed, nearly any rights at all.

Put differently, the "demography problem" argument in effect holds that there is no democracy problem so long as the Arabs constitute no more than 49.9 percent of the population, but suddenly there is a big problem when

they constitute 50.1 percent. It ought to be obvious, however, that it is irrelevant to the democracy issue whether the Arabs constitute a majority or simply a large minority in the land controlled by the Jewish state. In short, the demography problem confuses majority rule, which is just one component of democracy, with democracy itself. As already noted, majority rule must be accompanied, and constrained, by minority rights: the Palestinians in the occupied territories have no such rights—and the creation of a Gaza Bantustan would not solve the problem.

Who Cares?

In light of the recent growth of anti-democratic attitudes among Israeli Jews, is there any reason to think that most Israelis are really concerned about the erosion of democracy in their country? Might they not argue one or more of the following?:

- Some democratic practices are always suspended during wartime (as

in the U.S. roundup of the Japanese in World War II, or the erosion of American civil liberties in the current "war on terrorism").

- Israel is still far more democratic than its Arab enemies, including the Palestinians under Arafat.

- Democracy is a Western value, not a Jewish one—it is not commanded by our Torah, which calls on us to wipe out our enemies, not incorporate them into our state, democratic or otherwise.

- We no longer need to be democratic to sell ourselves to the Diaspora and to the United States (the only outside support we need or care about), because today it is enough to be seen as America's most loyal and effective ally against global terrorism.

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■ If we are forced to choose, we choose survival over democracy.

There is no doubt that such antidemocratic temptations are increasing in Israel. Even so, they are not yet the dominant attitudes within the Israeli left or center, nor, indeed, even within the reasonably moderate Israeli right, as indicated by Moshe Arens' passionate statement (above). Indeed, the widespread acceptance of the "demography problem" argument (however fallacious), with its conclusion that there must be a separation from the occupied territories to avoid having to choose between having a Jewish or a democratic state, at least demonstrates that most Israelis remain committed, in principle anyway, to democracy.

In any case, in the last analysis, those of us who still care about Israel have no choice but to act as if the future of Israeli democracy really does matter. How, then, can Israeli democracy be saved? The *sine qua non* is obviously an Israeli-Palestinian settlement and the creation of an independent Palestinian state, which is not only a necessity if Israeli democracy is to survive, but also a moral imperative and the bedrock requirement for long-term Israeli security.

Ariel Sharon's plan to withdraw Israeli settlements and most military forces from the Gaza strip is designed to avert the demography problem by (ostensibly) ending Israeli control over 1.5 million Palestinians. However, it cannot accomplish this goal even in Gaza—let alone the West Bank, where Sharon plans to actually *extend* the Jewish settlements and Israeli control—because Sharon intends to retain Israeli control over Gaza's borders, air space, sea access routes, water, and electricity. Thus, as Meron Benvenisti and many other Israelis have observed, it is not a state that is being created in Gaza, but a Bantustan, i.e., a nominally independent but Israeli-controlled pseudostate.

The only real solution is that embodied in the Geneva Accord and, for that matter, in nearly every serious peace proposal in the last decade: a relatively minor redrawing of the 1967 borders to bring large Jewish settlements near the Green Line into Israel; a genuine Israeli withdrawal from the rest of the West Bank as well as from Gaza; a fair division or sharing of Jerusalem; a Palestinian renunciation—formal if possible, *de facto* if necessary—of the right of return; and the creation of a genuinely independent and viable Palestinian state.

Tragically, though, in the current atmosphere, there is no chance that the Israelis—and perhaps not even the Palestinians—will agree to the compromises embodied in the Geneva Accord. In their effort to persuade Israelis to adopt Geneva, supporters of it are currently emphasizing the demography problem. However, this strategy has failed. What is needed instead is an approach that speaks to the deepest values of the Jewish people and shows them that the Geneva Accord is the way to achieve those values.

At the same time, the Palestinians must unequivocally renounce violence. At the outbreak of the second Intifada,

there was a reasonable argument that decades of Israeli occupation and repression had given the Palestinians the right of revolution, as in so many other nationalist revolutions against colonialism, including the American revolution. However, it is now clear that violent revolution has failed, morally because it degenerated into terrorist attacks on Jewish civilians, and in practice both because of Israeli military might and because it has driven the Israeli public to the right. Thus, there seems to be little hope that Israeli consciousness can be raised without a full Palestinian commitment to nonviolence along the successful path of Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Conclusion

Israelis can stop worrying about having to soon choose between remaining a Jewish state or losing their democracy, for they've already made that choice: as long as the occupation continues, the only issue is whether the Jewish state will be a majority autocracy, as in effect it already is, or a minority autocracy, as it will become in the next decade or so if the Palestinian population increases as projected. To be sure, it might then be a little harder—though maybe not—for the Jewish minority to continue to repress the Palestinians and deny them their basic human rights, but that is a mere practical difference, not a moral one or one that has anything to do with democracy.

While the demography problem argument has failed, however, there are four excellent arguments the Israeli and Diaspora peace camp should emphasize in order to persuade the Israeli Jewish public to support a comprehensive peace settlement: without it, there can be neither justice for the Palestinians, genuine democracy in Israel, general Middle Eastern peace and stability, or security for Israel—perhaps not even mere survival.

At the moment, most of the Israeli public has bought into the argument that the "separation barriers" are the solution to the security problem, for it does appear that terrorist attacks have greatly diminished in the areas already covered by the barriers. Yet this apparent calm cannot last—in the absence of a settlement, the Palestinians will surely find ways to strike at Israel, walls or no walls. Nor will "transfer" work: the expelled Palestinians will end up in Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan, where they will resume the struggle, this time in all likelihood actively supported by an enraged Muslim world.

In the absence of a full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and the creation of a genuinely independent Palestinian state, it will not just be Israeli democracy that will be imperiled, but survival itself. What, in God's name, can Israelis and their uncritical "pro-Israeli" supporters be thinking? Just what do they imagine will be the outcome of Israeli intransigence, Islamic fanaticism and suicidal terrorism, and the inexorable, unstoppable spread of biological and nuclear weapons? □

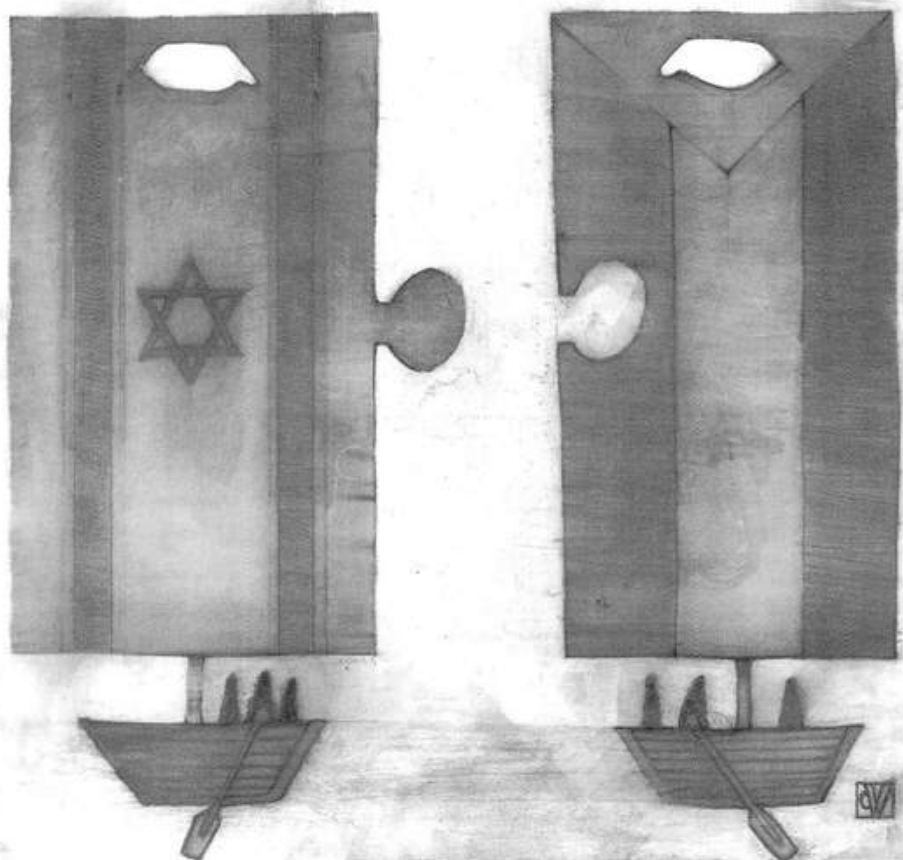
The Myth of the Israeli Left

Gilad Atzmon

Since the earliest days of Zionism, the opposition between right-wing and left-wing Zionism has been more than a little confusing. Where Zionism is concerned, it is difficult to determine who is the dove and who is the hawk. It was Ben Gurion, the legendary "dovish" Labor leader, who led the ethnic cleansing of the indigenous population of Palestine in 1948. It was Menachem Begin, the legendary hawk, who signed the peace deal with Egypt in 1977. It was Yitzhak Rabin, the Labor minister of defense, who ordered Israeli platoons to break the arms and legs of Palestinians (in the first Intifada). And now, it appears, it is the Israeli "Peace Now" movement that supports Ariel Sharon's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza. Many of the elder doves similarly support the separation wall going up in the West Bank—unsurprising considering the fact that it was Haim Ramon, a Labor minister, who was the first to come up with the idea of such a wall.

As a matter of fact, the much-discussed Israeli Left/Right polarity is no more than a virtual concept. In his book, *The Iron Wall*, Avi Shlaim argues that, in practice, the Israeli "Left" leadership has adopted a hard-line right-wing philosophy since the 1930s. A paper published recently by Israeli political scientist Neve Gordon explains the current emerging alliance between Peace Now and Sharon. He says that "in terms of militarist ideology, certain elements within Peace Now hold views that are in many ways similar to Sharon's." According to Gordon, the members of Peace

Gilad Atzmon is a world acclaimed jazz saxophonist, composer, and author. His latest album, Exile, won the BBC's "Best Jazz Album 2003." His book, Guide to the Perplexed, has been translated into 15 languages.



Now in fact endorse a Zionist, nationalistic interpretation of their country that is utterly "non-universalistic."

The Zionist project is the belief in the necessity of a Jewish national home in the land of Zion, i.e. Palestine. Zionists cannot, by definition, live peacefully with Palestinians or any non-Jews in their midst. That is why almost all Israeli "doves" support the two-state solution. Like the right-wing, they want an ethnically-cleansed Jewish state "separate" from a Palestinian state. For example, even Uri Avnery and the movement he helped to found, Gush Shalom—the most vocal humanist voices of the Israeli Jewish population—support the two-state solution. In fact, they argue that the two peoples should be separated. As it appears, the only real debate within the Israeli Left is how high the separation wall should be. If these are the Israeli doves, who needs Jewish warmongers?

ILLUSTRATION BY CAMILLE WAINER

So is there any difference between Right and Left in Israel? If there is any difference, it is more of a cultural one. It is a form of speech and dress code rather than a substantial philosophical or ideological distinction. Far from drawing the Left closer to a real solution to peace, however, the Left's particular cultural forms and practices are actually more harmful for Palestinian interests than the Right's.

Within the Israeli Left's internal discourse, Jewish peaceniks identify with secularity, rationality, and sanity. In their eyes, these elements are the voice of reason. Yet what the Israeli Left has been essentially pushing for is the transformation of Palestine into a list of Bantustan-like isolated patches.

The Left paints the Right as irrational, yet within the general parameters of Zionist discussion, the right wing argument is quite rational. Very much like the Palestinians, the right wing has noticed that Left Zionists have no intention of addressing the Palestinian cause. The Israeli Left camp has never acknowledged the 1948 mass expulsion of the Palestinian population. The Israeli Left denies the Palestinian right of return and avoids the issue of Jerusalem. In practice, the Israeli Left supports peace with the Palestinians as long as the latter are left out in the desert. Moreover, if we look into Left Zionist philosophy, we find that it is in fact no less messianic or irrational than its counterpart.

Even if we accept the bizarre assumption that Jews are a nation and are entitled to a piece of land, that statement doesn't necessarily imply that this land should be in Palestine (Zion). As a matter of fact, it was Left Zionism that invented the notion of the colonialization of Zion. It was Left Zionism that transformed the Bible from a spiritual text into a legal document (a land registry). If this isn't messianic, then the notion of messianism should be redefined. Since it is Left Zionism that invented the notion of "redemption of the land," the American settlers who flood the West Bank in the name of their Jewish God are, in practice, the real followers of the Left Zionist school.

At least the right wing is honest about what it wants.

So where exactly is the political dispute? Apparently, Left Israelis amended their world view in the last decade. They would still argue that the land of Zion should be redeemed but they'd agree to be far more flexible when referring to the definition of Israeli territory. While the right wing would talk enthusiastically about the redemption of the whole of greater Israel, left-wing Zionists adopted a more moderate stance on the subject. For the peacenik, Israel is where he lives, i.e. within the 1967 borders. The peacenik argues that there is indeed room for the two peoples on this land (as long as he stays in Tel Aviv and the Palestinian stays in Gaza). He would propose to erect a separation wall, and shred the Holy Land into Bantustans. Of course, he would turn a blind eye to the blatant fact that the vast majority of pre-1967 Israel is in fact confiscated Palestinian lands. Israeli doves refuse to admit that the vast majority of the Pal-

estinian people are in fact dispossessed refugees. They live in complete denial of their present and past. They are happy with the concept of peace as long as they determine its terms and conditions. Funny enough, Sharon is following this very philosophy.

While trying to analyze Sharon's acts we should remember that the big man himself grew up in the Israeli Left. Much like his mentors, Sharon adopted an offensive military doctrine. He believes in the Israeli power of deterrence. He believes in a Jewish democratic state rather than a state of its citizens. He believes that it is Israel that should dictate the fate of the region. This is the story behind his unilateral withdrawal from Gaza. This is the story behind his separation wall. This is very much the essence of Left Zionism.

This leads us to the following absurd realization: While the Israeli Left endorses the most radical nationalistic and supremacist interpretation of Zionism, it is actually the Jewish right-wing expansionist philosophy that pushes towards a one-state solution. In fact, it is the settlers from Brooklyn who are going to help the Palestinians to establish a multi-cultural society throughout the whole of Palestine. It is the American Jewish zealots who will make this dream a reality. This is where the settlers become so vital for the chance of the Palestinian future.

As it appears, the one-state solution is the only viable option from now on. □

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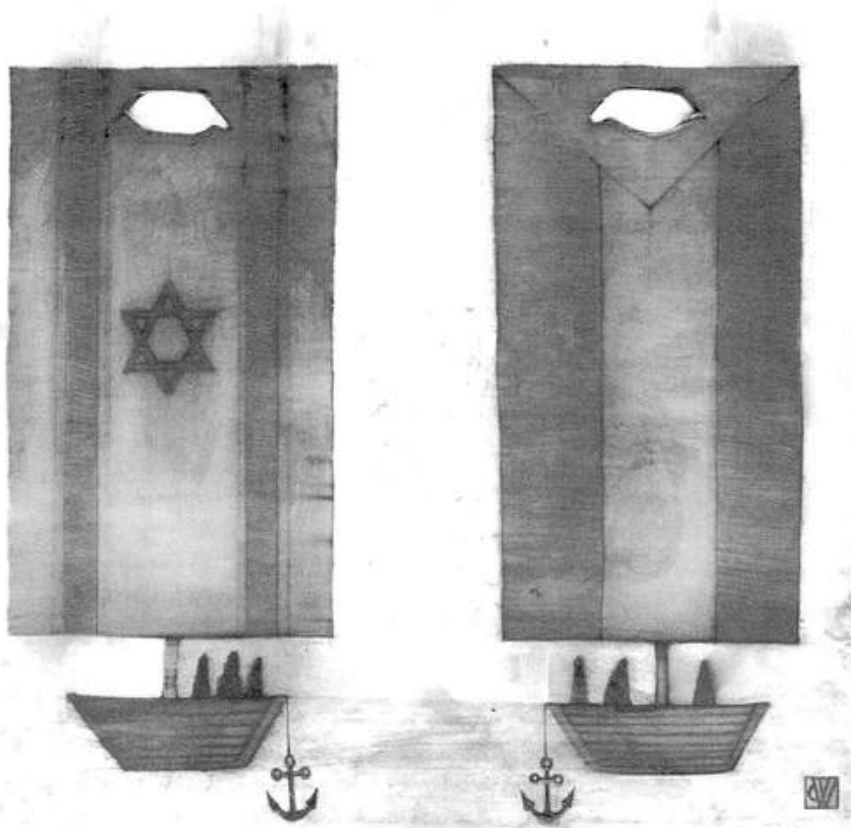
Israel and the Binational Idea

Raluca Eddon

When nothing seems to work, anything can pass for an acceptable solution. This is one of the fundamental paradoxes behind the recent revival of the binationalist debate around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The target of this debate is the two-state solution: the idea that a just solution to the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians involves the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. Proponents of binationalism present their position either as a matter-of-fact description of an existing reality, or, on the contrary, as a radical ideal. Thus, while the first group suggests that it may no longer make sense to speak of a two-state solution since the tireless efforts of the Israeli settlers have already created a binational reality on the ground, the second, among them most recently Tony Judt (in the *New York Review of Books*), claims that binationalism provides the kind of radical vision required to overcome the current impasse and move forward. For Judt the idea of binationalism may be "an unpromising mix of realism and utopia," but the alternatives "are far, far worse."

But are they? As Judt's critics, such as *The New Republic's* Leon Wieseltier, have noted, the binational state envisioned by Judt "is not an alternative for Israel. It is an alternative to Israel." Further, as Wieseltier also points out, there is nothing new about the binationalist idea. The fantasy of a binational state "is as old as the conflict itself. It has been thought and thought and thought—by Jews in the late

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1920s and early 1930s and by Palestinians and Israeli Arabs during the last decade."

Wieseltier is right to emphasize that the idea of binationalism is, in effect, as old as the conflict itself, but he is wrong to lump together the "new" binationalism of the past decade with the "old" Jewish binationalism of the pre-Israel era. The most obvious difference between these two historical periods is the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. While a number of prominent Jewish intellectuals were indeed in favor of binationalism prior to 1948, they voiced their concerns within the context of an internal Zionist debate about the goals of Zionism and the future of the Jewish community in Palestine. Some later changed their position; others didn't. But once the State of Israel was established,

ILLUSTRATION BY CAMILLE WAINER

the "old" binationalists nevertheless accepted its legitimacy as a matter beyond dispute. In this sense, it is crucial to understand the historical context of the binationalist debate, lest we grant the new binationalism a moral and historical pedigree that it does not deserve.

I. Brit Shalom and the Ideal of a Binational Society

Binationalism as a coherent ideological program was put forth for the first time in the mid-1920s through the efforts of a small group of Jewish intellectuals in Jerusalem who called themselves the *Brit Shalom*, or "Peace Association." Most of Brit Shalom's members were German Zionists who had immigrated to Palestine in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The goal of their association, as formulated in the 1927 Statutes, was "to arrive at an understanding between Jews and Arabs as to the form of their mutual social relations in Palestine on the basis of absolute political equality of two culturally autonomous peoples, and to determine the lines of their co-operation for the development of the country." The list of founding members who came together around this platform included Arthur Ruppin, an eminent economist and professor at Hebrew University; Gershom Scholem, then a young lecturer at the Hebrew University and one of the Brit Shalom's guiding lights; Hugo Bergman, then librarian and lecturer in philosophy at the Hebrew University and later its Rector; I. Lurie, then director of the Education Office of the Zionist Executive; Hans Kohn, then staff member of the *Keren Hayesod* (United Israel Appeal) Head Office and later a prominent historian of nationalism; Isaac Epstein, professor of Hebrew; Jacob Thon, manager of the Palestine Land Development Company; Radler Feldman (Rabbi Benjamin), Hebrew writer; and M. Kalvarisky, later in charge of Arab relations on behalf of the Jewish Agency. What is noteworthy about this group is the prominence of its members in the *Yishuv* (the Jewish community in Palestine) as well their multiple ties to the Zionist establishment. Brit Shalom's goal may have been to speak truth to power, but it was hardly a stranger to power itself. Indeed, it may be best described as a sort of loyal opposition on the left of the Zionist establishment—a group that emphasized the development of a binational society in Palestine against the maximalist nationalism of the Revisionists on the Right.

Unlike Revisionism, however, Brit Shalom, which also called itself the Brit Shalom Society, never aspired to develop a mass following; rather, it became something of a cross between a think tank and a political discussion group. Its selective recruitment of new members was in this sense deliberate. As Brit Shalom's secretary reported, "the Society has not attempted to enroll members on a large scale. It has always had about 50 full members in Jerusalem, but has a much larger number of sympathizers in other parts of Palestine and elsewhere, particularly in Germany....Mem-

bers are only admitted by cooption by the existing members." One did not simply join the Brit Shalom, it appears; members were elected by a majority decision of its governing Committee and sympathizers included many prominent German Jews, such as Robert Weltsch, who was the editor of the *Jüdische Rundschau* in Berlin.

The careful selection of members was no doubt in keeping with the Society's explicit mission to influence Zionist politics through innovative ideas rather than mass organizing. As indicated by an instructive note from Brit Shalom's "Research Sub-Committee" (i.e., Scholem, Bergman, and Kohn) and attached to a memorandum addressed to the Palestine Zionist Executive in Jerusalem and the Zionist Organization in London, "the memorandum should be a confidential document and should not be published in the Press nor distributed to persons other than the members of the Society. It should, however, form the basis of the Society's programme and should be a source of material for press articles and speeches." While this particular memorandum appears to have been lost, the note leaves little doubt that the Society's efforts were directed at persuading the Zionist leadership as well as the public through the most effective means at their disposal: articles, lectures, and other public statements. If enough Zionist leaders and other prominent public figures could be swayed in support of the idea of Jewish-Arab cooperation, the Brit Shalom hoped, its political agenda would have a serious impact on mainstream Zionist politics despite the relatively small number of its supporters.

Predictably, however, Brit Shalom's elitist efforts backfired, and before long its members were accused of betraying the Zionist cause by negotiating with the Arabs behind the back of the Jewish community. A translation from the Hebrew press dated April 30, 1930 and still preserved among the Brit Shalom papers in Jerusalem, illustrates the criticism to which the Association was subjected:

The attitude of "Brit Shalom" is quite different [from that of mainstream Zionism]. They seek peace with our neighbors and fight against us, the true Zionists. They accuse Zionism of following after British Imperialism. They consider it a sin that the Zionists cannot forego their aspirations for a Jewish state.... The psychology of the gentlemen of "Brit Shalom" is quite different from that of the other Zionists and even though they say the same thing, they mean quite different things. They think like the anti-Zionist British officials in the country.

A number of these accusations were true: the members of Brit Shalom were indeed deeply concerned about the alignment of Zionism with British imperialist interests in Palestine, and they did argue that it would be foolish to think that the Jewish aspirations for justice, which were embodied in Zionism, could or should exhaust themselves in the founding of a state. Unlike their critics, however, the members of the Brit Shalom did not regard these principles as a betrayal

of the Zionist cause, but rather as the sine qua non of the fulfillment of the true ideals of Zionism. "True" Zionists, they argued, did not aspire to repeat the political mistakes of the European regimes they had left behind. Rather, they had a moral duty to do better when founding their own society.

The most notable of their proposals was what Bergman referred to as "the definitive abolition of a majority-minority framework"—a proposal that ultimately aimed to challenge the very concept of national sovereignty as the basis for future political institutions. As Bergman explained, "we demand that here in Palestine such a regime be constructed that a priori should take all *national questions* out of the sphere of majority versus minority decisions." In Palestine, he concluded, "there is no room for 'the people of the state' or for any 'national sovereignty.'" Bergman's proposals, however, were short-lived. While they may have found an echo among left-leaning Zionist circles in the 1930s, by the mid-1930s the agenda of the Brit Shalom collapsed under the pressure of external events. One of the concessions Brit Shalom sympathizers had been willing to accept in the interest of a new political framework was a restriction on Jewish immigration to Palestine—a condition that in light of the rise to power of the Nazis in Germany now seemed unacceptable to most of them.

Among the prominent members to withdraw their support in the mid-1930s was Gershom Scholem, who had been one of the Society's animating spirits. Scholem articulated his disappointment about the failed efforts of Brit Shalom almost a decade later in a revealing letter to Hannah Arendt dated 1946: "I cannot blame the Jews if they ignore so-called progressive theories which no one else in the world has ever practiced. Even though I have a clear notion of the vast differences between partition and a binational state, I would vote with the same heavy heart for either of these two solutions." Since it had not been possible to establish a genuine dialogue between the Jewish and the Arab populations of Palestine, both partition and a binational state amounted for Scholem to a defeat of the moral and political ideals that had inspired Brit Shalom. Scholem concluded:

Unfortunately, it is by no means idiotic when the Zionist politicians declare that, given the sabotage efforts made by the British administration, there is no chance of reaching any kind of understanding, however formulated. Certainly, as an old Brit Shalom follower, I have heard the precise opposite argued. But I am not presumptuous enough to think that the politics of Brit Shalom wouldn't have found precisely the same Arab opponents, who are primarily interested not in the morality of our political convictions, but in whether or not we are here in Palestine at all.

II. *The Ichud and the Ideal of a Binational State*

The idea of a binational state in a narrow political sense dates back to the *Ichud* (Unity), a group founded in 1942 that both continued and diverged in important respects from the ideological line of Brit Shalom. While for Brit Shalom a binational state had been merely a theoretical ideal, the international political context had changed dramatically by 1942, thus allowing the Ichud to view the founding of a binational state as a concrete political goal. A few members of the Brit Shalom joined the new organization (notably Hugo Bergman and Ernst Simon), but the political dynamic of the Ichud was set by a different group of personalities: Martin Buber, Judah Magnes, and Henrietta Szold were all founding members, and Hannah Arendt later offered her ardent support to Magnes' post-War diplomatic efforts in the United States.

The members of the Ichud shared a radical social vision

The members of the Ichud shared a radical social vision for Palestine that was opposed to the founding of a Jewish state.

for Palestine that was opposed to the founding of a Jewish state and emphasized instead the crucial significance of Jewish-Arab cooperation to a peaceful development of the Middle East. According to its Statutes, the Ichud adhered to the Zionist movement "insofar as it seeks the development of a Jewish National Home for the Jewish People in Palestine." The Ichud was, however, equally committed

to "the struggle throughout the world for a New Order in international relations and a Union of all the peoples, large and small, for a life of freedom and justice without fear, oppression and want." This position was reflected in the association's statutes, which in Article 3 defined the association's goals as follows:

- a. Government in Palestine based on equal political rights for two peoples.
- b. The agreement of the steadily growing Yishuv and of the whole Jewish people to a Federative Union of Palestine and neighboring countries. This Federative Union is to guarantee the national rights of all the peoples within it.
- c. A Covenant between this Federative Union and an Anglo-American Union which is to be part of the future Union of the free peoples. This Union of the free peoples is to bear the ultimate responsibility for the establishment and stability of international relations in the New World after the war.

These goals reflected the underlying belief of Ichud's members that a new world order would emerge at the end of the war and that Palestine would (and should) be at its forefront. The Ichud was in this sense not in principle

against statehood—Martin Buber, for example, hailed the right to self-determination against colonial rule as “one of the most important characteristics of our revolutionary age.” However, he also argued, in terms reminiscent of Bergman’s position, that in Palestine there was no room for the national sovereignty of either Jews or Arabs because the sovereignty of one people would undermine the claims to justice of the other. Thus, either people, if sovereign, would reinstate a majority-minority framework, and as such turn Palestine from an outpost of the new order into a stronghold of the old. Buber therefore wrote in 1947 that “we describe our program as that of a binational state—that is we aim at a social structure based on the reality of two peoples living together. The foundations of this structure cannot be the traditional ones of majority and minority, but must be different.” The different social structure envisioned by both Buber and Magnes and later supported by Arendt as an alternative to a Jewish nation state was a federation: “a Federative Union of Palestine and neighboring countries.”

Buber’s support for a federation in the Middle East both echoed his turn-of-the-century views about “the great complex of Oriental nations” whose “spiritual reality” he opposed to the cold rationalism of the Occident, and attempted to erase the moral burden associated with his initial support for Germany during the first years of World

War I. (His glorification of German national self-affirmation had driven many of the German Jews who revered him to enlist in the War.) Buber never forgot this mistake, though it is striking how attached he remained to the intellectual framework in which it had been rooted. Thus, still in 1947, the linchpin of Buber’s critique of Zionism rested on the charge that it betrayed the spiritual reality of Judaism by embedding Palestine “in international entanglements and attempts towards their solution, [thus] isolating it from the organic context of the Middle East, into the awakening of which it should have been integrated in accordance with a broader spiritual and social perspective.”

As for Magnes, who, in contrast to Buber, had taken a radically pacifist position during the First World War, a Federation seemed the only solution consistent with his pacifist convictions and his belief in the role of the Jewish people as an ultimately ahistorical people whose ethical mission transcended the quarrels of empires. As Magnes wrote in 1917, “How many empires have we not seen destroyed, how many cities laid waste; how many battle cries have we not heard, the iron of how many armies pierced our flesh; how many religions and philosophies and ideas and patriotisms have we not seen justifying the slaughter of men.” The Jewish people, Magnes concluded, had experienced innumerable historical trials, but had survived them all because it had known how to remain above the fray of

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political confrontations. The ultimate commitment of the Jewish people, Magnes therefore believed, should not be to any land, but, rather, to its universal ethical mission among the nations of the world. As he wrote in a 1914 letter to Chaim Weizmann, "the despair theory of Zionism does not appeal to me. I have not despaired of the Jewish people, and I believe in its eternity even without Palestine."

Finally, Hannah Arendt thought that precisely because Jews had been the first victims of Nazism, it was incumbent upon them to respond to persecution through concerted political action and thus recover through their deeds, for themselves and for the world, a sense of revolutionary freedom. As the pariah people par excellence, Arendt argued, the Jewish people had a moral duty to serve as an example to all other pariah peoples in their quest for liberation. It was this idea of freedom that Arendt thought should animate Zionism as a political movement and that ultimately led her to oppose the idea of Jewish sovereignty as incompatible with this revolutionary ethos. A Federation, by contrast, seemed an institutional arrangement ideally suited to preserve the social-revolutionary character of Zionism and to secure the existence of a small nation in the emerging world order. In the long run, Arendt suggested, "the only alternative to Balkanization is a regional federation.... National sovereignty, which so long had been the very symbol of free national development, has become the greatest danger to national survival for small nations. In view of the international situation and the geographical location of Palestine, it is not likely that the Jewish and Arab peoples will be exempt from this rule." How and why could a federation of Middle Eastern nations have come about at that particular historical junction? On what basis could the Arab population be expected to cooperate with the Jews? Arendt's answers, as well as those of Buber and Magnes, were as abstract as they were vague and hardly amounted to a coherent political platform.

III. *Old vs. New*

Is there a point in scrutinizing the "old" binationalism today? After all, Brit Shalom was rendered obsolete by the rise of fascism in Europe, and Ichud's platform was premised upon political transformations that never occurred. Despite these failures, the efforts of the Brit Shalom and the Ichud in pursuit of a peaceful solution in Palestine arguably set an important historical precedent. Close scrutiny of this precedent, however, suggests that there is little continuity between the humanist Zionism that animated the "old" binationalists and the anti-Zionism of the new. Unlike the "new" binationalism, which considers the State of Israel a "dysfunctional anachronism" (in Tony Judt's words), the binationalist efforts of the Brit Shalom, as well as the later political polemics of the Ichud, were an integral part of an internal debate about the purpose of Zionism. Within this context, both the Brit Shalom and the Ichud agreed that

Zionism owed it to itself to avoid doing injustice to the Arab population of Palestine whenever possible and to work towards a just framework for coexistence. In contrast to today's critics, however, who worry that the behavior of a self-described Jewish state affects the way everyone looks at Jews, the motivating question for these thinkers was not, What will the world think of Zionism? (such a question, they would have likely suggested, was sadly reminiscent of an exilic mentality). Rather, they asked, How should Jews think of themselves? What should they make of the extraordinary opportunity to reconstitute themselves as a political community in Palestine after almost two thousand years in exile? To be sure, their answers differed in important respects from those put forth by the Zionist establishment and were no less radical in their emphasis on genuine equality than those put forth by the "new" binationalists today, but they remained engaged with mainstream Zionism both personally and ideologically. The "old" binationalist were, in Michael Walzer's words, "connected critics"—intellectuals who stood "close to but [were] not engulfed by their company." The same can hardly be said about today's proponents of binationalism.

Furthermore, once the State was founded, even the most vociferous critics within the Ichud accepted it—not because they had been defeated, but because they had the moral integrity to take the consequences of its destruction seriously. As Buber wrote in 1958, "I have accepted as mine the State of Israel, the form of new Jewish Community that has arisen after the war. I have nothing in common with those Jews who imagine that they may contest the factual shape which Jewish independence has taken. The command to serve the spirit is to be fulfilled by us in this state, by starting from it." This wasn't Buber's final word: "the command of the spirit," he emphasized in the same article, was "still to prepare the way for the cooperation of peoples"—even under the most trying circumstances, when such cooperation seemed unlikely and perhaps doomed. Indeed, arguably the most compelling legacy of the "old" binationalism is the idea that political dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians is an inescapable requirement of coexistence and therefore must continue even during years of crisis, as well as the emphasis on compromise as the only plausible foundation for the long-term survival of both political communities. But none of the "old" binationalists saw the dissolution of the State of Israel as a prerequisite of a just solution in Palestine. They understood that the establishment of a binational state after 1948 would by implication amount to the destruction of Israel, and, therefore, to the very opposite of a peaceful solution. Thus, if anything, the radical commitment to peace of the "old" binationalists today points away from a binational state in the sense envisioned by its current proponents and towards a Palestinian state alongside Israel. Binationalism, therefore, has *not* come full circle. □

The New Post-Zionism

Harvey Chisick

There are two kinds of post-Zionism. The better known argues that historically the State of Israel was born through violence, and at the expense of another people. Favoring universal rather than particularist ethics, most post-Zionists maintain that Israel should no longer define itself as a Jewish state, which would mean revoking the right of return and other legislation favoring Jews exclusively.

Given that anti-Semitism remains a serious problem outside Israel, few Jews, whether in Israel or abroad, agree that a state for the Jewish people is no longer necessary. Though post-Zionist historiography has raised serious questions about traditional narratives of the foundation of the State, its universalism is not convincing in the atmosphere of confrontation and anxiety in which Israel has found itself in recent years. The post-Zionism of the intellectuals, vocal and explicit, has made few converts and has had little influence. Not so with another, more practical, form of post-Zionism.

The new post-Zionism is as universalist as the old, but it is implicit and indirect. It does not use history to challenge the legitimacy of the State of Israel, and it is only incidentally political. It does not seek to call Zionism into question directly, but it operates on principles that subordinate the needs of the Jewish people to other values. It is not anti-Zionist in doctrine, but it is in effect. Its members cross party lines, and its policies, based on an extreme form of economic liberalism, are indifferent to international frontiers.

The economic policies that form the basis of this new post-Zionism were pioneered by Margaret Thatcher in England and Ronald Reagan in the United States. It is known internationally as globalization. The basic principles of this form of economic liberalism are that the market disposes things for the best, and therefore should not be interfered with; that resources should be directed from the public to the private sector; and that government and capital deserve preferential treatment from governments because they are more sensitive to market forces.

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Globalization and its Discontents

The practical policies implemented by mostly right-wing governments, which favor unrestricted market economics, are broadly similar wherever such governments gain power. Privatization, which entails the transfer of resources and public companies to the private sector, and amounts to the state divesting itself of its assets, is a main policy component, while others are the easing of tax burdens for the rich and big businesses and, often, subsidization for big companies and corporations.

Typically, economic liberalism aims at removing restrictions on the functioning of the market. It is hostile to all forms of regulation, preferring to leave economic forces to themselves and assuming that they will function efficiently. This school of economic thought objects to state expenditures on social programs (such as welfare, old age pensions and unemployment insurance) which were put in place to aid the weak and disadvantaged. Extreme economic liberals feel that even basic services, such as education and medicine, are better managed as private, profit-oriented enterprises, and they tend to cut government spending in these areas drastically. They also seek to minimize the size of the

public sector and to privatize other services that the government has traditionally provided, such as the postal system and road maintenance.

The rationale behind these policies is to reduce government spending so that governments can tax less and leave more money in the hands of private citizens and businesses. It is claimed that this will result in benefits for all.

The main beneficiaries of this set of policies are very large and international companies and corporations, which are able to use imbalances in world markets, most obviously labor, to their own benefits. The wealthiest also benefit, as their share of taxation is reduced. However, in countries where Thatcherite economic policies have been implemented, the result has been to increase the gap between rich and poor and to reduce more people to poverty.

In favoring business and the private sector, right-wing governments pursuing policies of extreme liberalism also seek to weaken unions and reduce the rights and benefits of employees. In an economic climate informed by increasing technological sophistication and haunted by recession and unemployment, this is not difficult. So at the same time that social programs are cut back, wages stagnate or are reduced, large entrepreneurs enjoy unprecedented profits, and more and more ordinary people lose both their sources of livelihood and the support of programs that were designed to help people over difficult periods. With the rise of unemployment, the deterioration of conditions of employment for those who still have jobs, and the dismantling of the social safety net, homelessness, poverty, crime, and destitution increase. And yet populations suffering from the effects of these policies still elect governments who implement them. Why?

The success of globalizing and market-oriented economics can be explained in a number of ways. In its initial phase it produced good quality, low-priced consumer goods for developed countries while the price to developing countries was largely ignored. In economic terms, it was efficient and it "worked." But more importantly, as a school of thought it has had no real competitors since communist regimes discredited themselves by their incompetence and inefficiency. In Western countries the followers of Milton Friedman are without much competition.

In addition, though the outcomes of free-enterprise policies benefit only a minority, this minority constitutes a powerful and articulate elite that controls key positions in governments, economic agencies (such as national banks and the World Bank), a large portion of the media, the universities, and, of course, business. It uses state-of-the-art methods

to influence public opinion, hiring the most expensive public relations companies to provide the spin that big business and its agents want. They speak in vague and general terms about the economy, growth, efficiency, prosperity, markets, and production, but say very little about reductions in services, pensions, and medical care that result from the implementation of these policies. As much as possible, political rhetoric—inevitably nationalistic, xenophobic, and anxiety-laden—is used to veil right-wing economics. The message is directed to an indefinite future in which we are assured that once globalizing and free-market policies have been implemented in their entirety, all will be well.

Most of the agents for extreme free-market economics are executive types whose goal is to get it done (whatever "it" is) as quickly and cheaply as possible, without regard for niceties. They play hardball. Consider the last presidential election in the United States, or the way the current government in Israel treats signed labor agreements.

Advocates of the free market and globalization are also benefiting from a far-reaching shift in assumptions about what society is and how it should function that has occurred over the last several hundred years. Classical political theory, which posits that the purpose of the state is to assure the common good, and that citizenship involves a delicate balance of rights and obligations, has been increasingly eroded. The growing vogue of individualism has weakened the sense of community and nationhood to the point that in

the West any notion of a common good distinct from the self-interest of agents in the marketplace has all but disappeared. Any nationalism that still remains is largely expressed as hostility toward other countries or cultures. To a degree that has probably not been seen before, politics has lost its autonomy and been subordinated to economics. The result is a rhetoric of future prosperity together with a set of policies that reduce the social rights and standard of living of the population in general, and the more vulnerable, in particular. In the United States, the richest country in the world, more and more people are being reduced to minimum wage jobs or losing their jobs altogether. They find that they are unable to pay medical insurance and in personal crises lose their homes. The country is richer than it has ever been, but there are more homeless and destitute people than there have been, proportionately, since the depression. Extreme polarization of wealth and the devaluation of the poor are part of the logic of unrestricted, deregulated capitalism. These conditions are perfectly acceptable to the elites of the "liberal" democracies where they are occurring, despite the social price they exact. The same shift is happening in Israel,

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the founding generation
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capitalist marketplace.*

and it is acceptable to the wealthy elites here as well. But Israel does not have the same background, nor does it function under quite the same imperatives as other countries.

Zionism and Its Intent

Zionism, as it was conceived by most of the founders of the State of Israel, called for political independence so as to assure the physical security of the citizens of the new state, of whatever race or religion, and for Jews in the Diaspora who were threatened with persecution. It also had a social component that was explicitly intended to provide a decent standard of living and a sense of dignity to the residents of the new country. This was in part because the majority of founders were socialists of one sort or another and assumed that it was the responsibility of the State to regulate economic activity and to distribute wealth for the benefit of the population as a whole.

The years after the Second World War also saw the establishment, or broadening, of basic institutions of the welfare state in Western democracies; so, the kibbutz movement apart, the social organization of Israel did not differ very much from the social programs being implemented in Canada, England, or much of Europe. There is, however, another reason that Israel was established as a welfare state with a high level of socio-economic equality.

Following the Second World War and in the first years of the State, many of the immigrants to Israel had survived the horrors of Nazi Europe and experienced unspeakable deprivation and suffering. To bring such people to their homeland and tell them to manage as best they could made no sense. Not only a socialist vision of the ingathering of the exiles, but also the life experiences of many of the ingathered, required that the new state provide affordable housing, health care and education, and sometimes employment. In other words, whatever the divisions within the founding generation, there was general agreement that Zionism meant decent social conditions as well as political independence.

From this perspective, the social and economic programs of the Sharon government are post-Zionist. Western democracies governed by right-wing governments can dismantle the welfare state and redistribute wealth from the poor to the rich without contradiction. They stand for an unregulated market, the reduction of social programs, and the aggrandizement of the private sector, all of which deepen poverty and abandon the vulnerable to their fates. But these same policies, now being energetically pursued by the present government with Mr. Netanyahu as their most prominent spokesman, are incompatible with the founding social vision of Zionism.

It must be admitted that the Zionism of the founders was a kind of tribalism. It sought to provide a refuge for Jews simply because they were Jews and in need of refuge. It was self-evident that members of the tribe were to be assured a minimal level of material well-being that was to guarantee

their human dignity. That the institutions of the new state did not always work as well as they might is true enough, but the intention was good, and immigrants to Israel enjoyed benefits that were unknown to immigrants elsewhere.

At some point the Right in Israel abandoned the particularist but mutually supportive tribalism of the founding generation, and shifted its allegiance to the international marketplace. The problem, from the point of view of Zionism, is that the globalized market has no preference for Israel or for Jews. If it is more economical to manufacture textiles and shoes in the Far East, or elsewhere in the Middle East, rather than in Israel, then factories in Israel will be closed and relocated where labor is cheaper and more pliable. If investment is more profitable and secure elsewhere, that is where investors, whatever their nationalities, will place their investments. That this is not good for the Jews is a matter of indifference to the market. Whether Israel continues to exist or not, and what conditions its population lives in, are irrelevant to the market. But this is not the perspective of Zionism or the State of Israel.

The market has its logic, but beyond honoring contracts, it has no ethics, no humanity, and no national preferences. For this reason it does not make sense for any nation to subordinate its own interests to those of the market. Nevertheless, this is what a variety of Israeli politicians have done. Not only are the Likud, Shinui, and the National Union directly pushing forward policies of extreme economic liberalism, but Labor politicians such as Ehud Barak and Amram Mitzna openly support them too. Still, the leading exponents of economic post-Zionism are in the Likud: quietly and consistently, Mr. Sharon; more vocally, Mr. Netanyahu.

Mr. Netanyahu seems to believe (and he certainly wants us to believe) that Israel's economic problems can best be solved by adopting free-market, globalizing policies. His claims, which he repeats at every opportunity like a mantra, are that Israel must shift from "a culture of handouts to a culture of work," that "efficiency" must be increased, that deregulation and privatization are the way to prosperity, that monopolies must be dismantled, that government spending on social programs (though not necessarily in other areas) must be reduced, and that it is necessary "to go forward and not backwards." How probable is it that these policies will, given world and time enough, bring general prosperity? On the basis of the information available, not very. Netanyahu asks us to have faith in his vision of the future, even though his policies have so far worsened poverty and widened the gap between rich and poor.

Where free-market, privatizing, and globalizing policies have been implemented, they have resulted in deepening poverty while concentrating wealth in the hands of multinational corporations and the superrich. The effect is simultaneously to stimulate the economy, to reduce state services to the citizenry, and to increase the numbers of those below the poverty level. If this is prosperity, it is a very limited and un-

democratic kind of prosperity, and one that is much kinder to big business than to ordinary people. And so far the free-market policies of the Israeli government are having precisely the effects here that they have had elsewhere.

To get a sense of Netanyahu's economic policies, let's examine what Netanyahu means when he says we need to move from "a culture of handouts to a culture of work." The first part of the formula is easily enacted in practice: cut back entitlements to the unemployed, single mothers, the disabled, and others who need support. This the government has done with the effect of deepening poverty and rendering the precarious situations of many impossible. In concrete terms, many people have found that with their support payments reduced, they are unable to pay their rent and utilities and feed themselves and their families adequately. This does not impress Mr. Netanyahu and the clerks in the finance ministry. They see these reductions as negative incentives to get people into the labor market. The problem is, the market doesn't have much to offer.

In virtually all Western economies the number of available jobs is falling while the population remains more or less stagnant. During the recent economic recovery in the United States more than a million jobs were lost. In Israel jobs are being lost as the population grows, and despite the army being a huge consumer of manpower, unemployment increases. The reasons for such high levels of unemployment are pretty much the same here as in the United States or Europe. Improved technologies and high levels of mechanization mean that industries can produce more goods with fewer workers. If more jobs are not being created in other sectors, then the consequence of this desirable form of progress is structural unemployment.

Compounding the effects of mechanization on the job market is the tendency for manufacturers to shift their plants to areas of low labor costs. Textile plants, shoe factories, and electronics assembly plants have massively shifted to the Third World where workers, usually young women, can be paid a few dollars a day and denied benefits entirely by a system of limited term contracts. Textile and other factories that used to operate in Israel, especially in the development towns, have been moved to Third World sites, and not much in the way of alternate employment has appeared. In conditions such as these, to reduce people's support payments while telling them to go and look for work is the equivalent of telling thirsty people to go to the desert to look for water.

The effect of reducing social support systems when there is not nearly enough work that pays a living wage is to create conditions in which salaries can be depressed to bare subsistence levels, while the work force is made vulnerable and hence less likely to contest demands of employers. Mr. Netanyahu's "culture of work" is in fact a culture of poverty.

From a historical perspective, what is remarkable about the economic developments of the last half century or so

is the tremendous increase in wealth. The newly available social wealth of the West was fairly broadly distributed by the welfare state that developed from the 1930s through the 1960s. In recent decades, however, a new distribution of wealth in favor of the rich has occurred. The inevitable consequence of the cutting away of social safety nets and the polarization of wealth is greatly increased poverty. Throw-away people. The notion of throw-away people poses no problem for the market, but it is not one that traditional Zionism can live with. Members of the tribe are not for throwing away. Which is why Mr. Netanyahu's economics makes him, and those who talk like him, post-Zionists.

It may seem odd to identify Mr. Sharon, Mr. Netanyahu, most Likud politicians, the hawkish and ultra-nationalist NRP, Shinui, and the National Union with post-Zionism. Still, in social terms this makes sense. It is not possible to destroy the social fabric of Israel and turn the country into hostile camps of haves and have-nots, and still be Zionists in the sense in which the founders of the country understood the term. Yet there is no doubt that the present government, and all its components, consider themselves far better patriots than any of the opposition parties.

Hatred of another people is not enough to make one a patriot. For right-wing post-Zionists the global market has come to replace mutually supportive tribalism, and patriotism has come to mean perpetuating conquest and continuing to rule another people. The imperial project naturally arouses hatred among the occupied, engenders hostility among Arab nations, and causes a lack of sympathy among nations generally friendly to Israel.

At the same time, brutal acts of terrorism directed by the Palestinians against the civilian population of Israel makes Israelis across the political spectrum feel vulnerable and anxious. To stifle acts of terrorism, the government and army in Israel have recourse to ever-more-brutal methods of repression and more comprehensive means of defense. These are not completely effective, and a feeling of powerlessness and anxiety paralyzes considerable sections of the country. The more anxious and vulnerable people feel, the more they welcome a rhetoric that promises them security and assures them that the country's means of defense and offense are adequate.

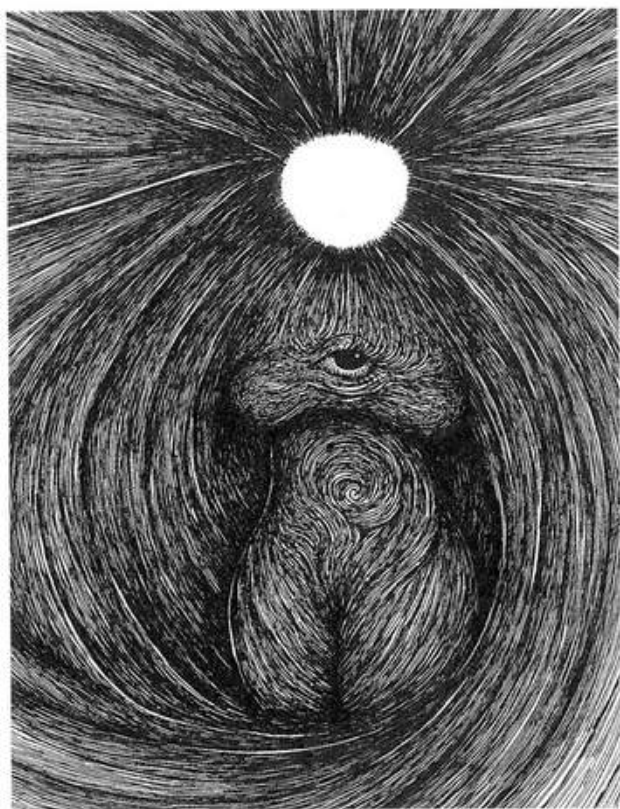
A policy of confrontation in the territories serves as a screen for economic policies that hurt the weakest and most vulnerable elements of Israeli society most. A government that drastically reduces spending on social programs, seeks to destroy the organization of labor, and is intent on cutting old-age pensions and forcing pension funds into the stock market is the same government that spends lavishly on the territories and has huge sums to hand out as incentives to established companies and corporations. And so it is that extreme nationalism and expansionism, together with free-market economics, are compatible with, and indeed essential to, the new practical post-Zionism. □

Rethinking Women's Body Politics in the New Century

Judith A. H. Rosenbaum

In 1970, feminist activist Robin Morgan declared “we are the women that men have warned us about,” gleefully celebrating the perceived danger and radicalism of the women’s liberation movement. Thirty-four years later, the self-identification of the newest generation of young feminists is different in tone. Rather than focusing on their independence from male activists, young women assume their own entitlement to leadership: “We are the leaders we have been waiting for,” proclaimed Cari Sietstra of Law Students for Choice at the March for Women’s Lives in Washington, D.C., this past April. As a feminist scholar and activist, my response to this announcement is a combination of hope and excitement about the new energy in the movement and concern about the framing of women’s body politics. The inheritance that young feminists have received from their Second Wave predecessors is inarguably one of ingenuity, strength, and persistence. However, the defining feminist demands for “control over our own bodies” and the right to privacy have created their own unforeseen, troubling legacy.

The dangerous policies of the current administration have had one positive effect: awakening the political consciousness of a younger generation previously dismissed as self-involved and apathetic. Although young activists often hesitate to call themselves “feminists,” preferring terms they perceive as more inclusive of human rights and more attentive to the politics of race and sexuality, the movement for reproductive rights and women’s health is gaining their notice. As women who were born post-*Roe v. Wade* come of age and begin to recognize that the rights they have taken for granted—such as legal abortion and accessible birth control—are under attack and steadily diminishing, they are creating a place for themselves in the movement their mothers popularized. The organizers of the March for Women’s Lives—the largest political rally ever in D.C.—were proud to report that one-third of the over one million marchers were college age or younger, and older activists, though disturbed and saddened by the precariousness of their hard-won achievements in the current political climate, are relieved that their mantle has not been dropped. At this crucial point in the



movement for women’s body rights, careful reconsideration of the terms and framework of this movement, and the implications of its language, are in order.

In part, the movement for women’s body rights may be compelling to activists today because its goal feels reasonable and attainable—to maintain rights that have (at least theoretically) already been achieved—in contrast to movements that aim for something that is yet to be, and may never be, accomplished. In addition, despite the heated controversy over abortion nationally, the issue may be perceived as simpler and more straightforward than other global political issues such as race politics or war. Finally, young activists’ notions of freedom are often linked to bodies, self-expression, and sexuality. In a time when nontraditional body comportment and style (i.e., piercing, tattoos, fashion, gender presentation) are widely accepted by college students as a powerful form of activism, individual rights regarding the body are particularly valued.

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We can trace the orientation of the reproductive rights and women's health movements around autonomy and choice not only back to the feminist demands for "women's control over our own bodies" in the late 1960s, but even further, to the sectarian health movements of the nineteenth century and the birth control movement of the early twentieth century. But the value of bodies as a significant site of individual self-expression is also a challenging starting point for the creation of a collective politics. While compelling, these demands for individual control—along with the "right to privacy" argument that is the basis for birth control and abortion legality—are politically problematic.

Consider, for example, a popular slogan such as "Keep your laws off my body." Is this really the political position progressives want to take? It sounds reasonable as regards restrictive abortion laws, but it would undermine feminism's important legal accomplishments in protecting women from rape and domestic violence. (Domestic violence activists have long raised this objection to the reliance on the right to privacy in feminist legislation.) Similarly, in the current era of health care crisis, would we want to prevent legislation that would address the needs of the millions of uninsured Americans? Obviously, this is not what such a slogan necessarily intends to communicate, but we need to be aware of the possible unintended implications of our language and strategies.

The application of women's control over their own bodies in the breast cancer movement illustrates how this demand for autonomy can slip into a troubling focus on individual responsibility and blame, and potentially foreclose possibilities for systemic change. The women's health movement has invested heavily in the importance of breast self-examination (BSE). But while performing BSE gives women authority and control over their own bodies, the discourse surrounding this practice unduly emphasizes women's responsibility in preventing breast cancer (which, of course, BSE can't do) and may distract attention from the larger issues in breast cancer prevention, such as better understanding of the causal role of environmental toxins. If women are not "in control" and self-surveillant, they are at fault and can be held responsible for their disease. The political issues at play in the cause, diagnosis, and treatment of breast cancer are thus reduced to a narrow emphasis on women's individual responsibility. I make this observation not to argue against the necessity for BSE, but rather to point out the ways that the emphasis placed on such methods may reduce the resources and attention devoted to larger political issues. After all, it remains easier to envision individual change than large-scale systemic change.

The language of "choice"—along with "control" and "privacy"—must also come under scrutiny in assessing the direction of women's body politics. We too easily slip from "choice" as a goal to assuming that the legality of abortion makes choice a current reality. In fact, given the restrictions

on public funding for abortion and the rapidly diminishing numbers of abortion providers, choice only exists for those with economic resources. The (hand-made) sign at the April rally in D.C. reading "rich women will always have access" unfortunately conveys an immediate and real truth.

While we fight against the conservative assumption that society and government have a stake in women's bodies and their reproductive potential—pervasive in legislation on drug policy, abuse, and labor, to name just a few—we should also rethink the basis of body politics on the model of private property. The language of self-ownership in reference to the body is mired in liberal capitalist notions of individualism and property rights, originally limited by class, race, and gender. Can this model simply be expanded to include people of all genders, races, and classes, or is a new paradigm required? In addition, the private property model is at best complicated when applied to the body, reducing it to a commodity that can be sold through means such as prostitution, marriage, or surrogacy—issues that remain controversial within feminist and other progressive communities. We also should not forget that the ownership model is based on and reinforces the Western dichotomy between mind and body, which is itself historically gendered, equating the body—that which is to be owned—with the feminine, while the mind is associated with the masculine. In the twenty-first century, we question the distinction between mind and body and view it as an impediment to an integrated sense of self.

This critique is not meant to condemn the current direction of activism about body issues, but rather to raise questions that may help us refine it in this moment of activist upsurge. The size of the March for Women's Lives and the successful alliances behind it suggest the growing power of new coalitions. Although the rally was predominantly white, the NAACP marched with the pro-choice community for the first time. This rally also represented an effort to create a strong coalition of feminists and queer activists. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center of New York City, for example, created a "Causes in Common" campaign to link women's rights and gay liberation and served as co-sponsor of the March for Women's Lives. The members of the delegation representing NOW on the podium at the March were young and multiracial, and they spoke about their commitment to building a broad social justice movement attentive to issues of poverty, race, and sexuality. I believe Sietstra is right: a new generation of leaders has arrived, young women who have been raised to see themselves not as dangerous threats to mainstream society but as legitimate political players. Let us hope that we are able to move beyond the familiar slogans to build a new women's movement that both "fulfills the promises of our mothers' generation"—as Sietstra vowed to do in her speech—and reexamines the limiting terms of autonomy, privacy, and choice in women's body politics. Being a little dangerous wouldn't hurt, either. □

Life's Long Learning

Kim Chernin

Throughout my life I have been an ardent, eager, dedicated student, steadily involved in a serious type of study that is characteristic of many people my age, although it often goes unrecognized as learning and is certainly not celebrated as the type of learning that deserves any sort of degree. A year or so before my sixty-fifth birthday I became interested in a doctoral program at the University for Integrative Learning that gave credit for lifelong learning. Its founder, Mel Suhd, had originated the concept of the University Without Walls. The program required the submission of a thesis, which could be a book I was at all events intending to write, as well as some fifteen essays describing the particular ways in which my life had been my university. The idea intrigued me. It invited me to reflect on my life in a way I had not done before. I am, indeed, a woman who has done most of my life's work without classes, institutions, universities, or degrees. I am a much-published writer without having taken a single writing course. By the time I took an advanced degree in clinical psychology, I had been counseling people about their life's problems for over fifteen years.

For my thesis, I wanted to work on a historical novel about the first neighborhood in Los Angeles to attempt integration, a work based on my own experience growing up in that neighborhood in the 1940s, where I had for many years come to believe that I was a Negro girl. Although my characters would be fictional, my representation of the period culturally and politically would be precise and would follow my characters into the beginning of the Civil Rights movement. This project would be an unusual doctoral thesis, but it seemed to fit in well at this University that encouraged a reinterpretation of traditional forms.

The most fascinating prospect would be the writing of the fifteen essays, ten of which would describe the life-learnings in which I had engaged until the present, while the remaining five would follow the different types of learning I would engage in while writing the other ten essays and the thesis. Mel had encouraged me not to think simply in terms



of book-learning, courses I had taken or formal studies I had pursued, but to spread my conceptual net, so that an opera I'd heard that had been influential could qualify for an essay, especially if it had led to further investigations into music or voice or an interest in singing. The important principle was the integration of the experience with a reflective understanding of its meaning and influence in our lives. I began to think about my four marriage-like relationships and how they had each been a distinct type of initiation, not merely into ways of loving or feeling passion, but into specific areas of book-learning and study. David, my first husband, had opened the doors to European high culture, classical music, and analytic philosophy. He seemed as much instructor as husband, almost as if the marriage itself, now that I came to think of it, had unfolded through its eight years exclusively in the periodical room of the library at the University of California, where I had met him in my freshman year, and where we had gone, on our first date, to read Viennese newspapers together. I thought also about

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PERSONAL ESSAY

how many books on shamanism I had read over the years because I had become curious about the way animals seemed to communicate with me. Had I in fact been studying shamanism on and off all these years? Could I write an essay about it? Soon I wondered how I could possibly limit the essays to fifteen, or how it was possible to divide the flow and movement and intricate connectedness of life into discrete lessons.

At home, staring out at the view while the cats made a mess of the papers on my desk, I began to play around with the categories of learning my essays would cover. There were, of course, things you could learn from books that you could not learn in any other way. I could not have learned about Greek mythology or analytic philosophy or the history of music except by reading. But was this type of homegrown reading different than the reading I would have pursued if I had been taking formal classes or had hired an instructor? I could write an essay about each of these subjects or perhaps a more compelling essay about the strangely cyclical quality of such reading as it had followed me with interruptions and inevitable returns through many years. This reading had an organic quality to it, coming and going at its own pace, establishing its own seasons, creating in my book shelves distinctive areas of concentration, the hoard of books growing and expanding like a garden of vigorous, native plants. Nothing that had ever interested me seemed to have died away. When I moved, my books came with me, when I traveled, new books came home. Over the years new bookshelves were built until eventually whole rooms came to be dedicated to particular subjects.

Obviously, I loved books, but weren't there other kinds of learning I also cherished? I opened my notebook and followed my thoughts. I was indeed fascinated by the type of learning that came from direct experience. I thought that probably a great deal of women's learning fell into this category—the learning of measurement through cooking and baking, the meaning of volume from pouring a glass of milk, an understanding of heat and its transformation from turning on a flame under a pot and so on. One summer when my daughter Larissa was a year old, I took a class in Child Development at UCLA. I never had to open the book, which seemed obvious and redundant to me. I consistently scored 99 out of 100 on the multiple choice exams because, obviously, I had been learning from watching my child. This learning, moreover, would never be forgotten because it had been imprinted along with my child's first words, first steps, first eager groping for a fistful of cereal. Similarly, I had learned a great deal about psychology from having been a psychoanalytic patient for twenty-five years. This particular learning seemed more valuable than what I had come to understand from the clinical and theoretical books I had read.

But there was something even better—a category of learning with which I felt a passionate affinity. I was thinking

about all those things books and teachers could not impart; understanding that could only be gleaned through direct, hot experience. An understanding of love and sex and meditation, a genuine knowing of what they were about, was simply beyond the reach of books, as was the felt experience of what things mean. I might write an essay about music, not in terms of harmony and melody and rhythm and keys, but rather in a quest to understand why music was so meaningful to me that I had spent hours and weeks and months playing a single aria over and over again. My essay might best begin with the first time I was able to convert a compulsion to binge into an ability to take in the St. Matthew Passion and be seriously nourished by it, so that eating a pound of chocolate became, simply, irrelevant. In a reflection on that experience, with its tears and awed trembling, I would come closer to an understanding of music than I could by studying harmony or the sonata form.

My life, thus examined, became more serious, more weighty. It seemed to hop up onto the shelf next to the large books, to acquire a dignity, a kind of leather binding. I began to think of people whose children had left home or whose careers were not yet the self-fulfilling endeavors they might still become. Suppose, at a certain age, it was customary to enter a university to earn a doctorate in our life's meaning? The very idea of middle-age and growing old would be transformed, wouldn't it, by this expectation? At the threshold of supposed diminishment, a serious endeavor would await one, to impart, discover, find or impose meaning on the seemingly random events of life. Would one live life more reflectively knowing this review was ahead, or perhaps with more daring, more spontaneity, in an effort to amass a rich store of experience upon which to reflect?

I imagined a brigade of older people who had earned their doctorates in this way. How much there was still to do with these longer lives we were acquiring. Lives of service, education, consultation, community-building, tutoring, fostering, discoursing, and organizing. That inverted pyramid about which economists and social scientists had begun to worry would be usefully transformed. Instead of generations of young folks earning the money to support the legions of passive, aging elders; instead of retirement meaning isolation and the loss of productivity, "doctored" elders would be ready to form themselves into an Elder Brigade and take on all sorts of work for which they, with their life experience, their capacity to reflect on life, would be uniquely fitted. The doctorate would represent simultaneously a summing up and an opening forward into virtually uncharted advanced-life experiences. It would prepare the way for elders with a meaningful role to play, whose contribution was respected, sought, cultivated, required. We, tomorrow's elders, I thought, are moving on into a culture that has not yet recognized the need for elders or created the forms by which we can usefully contribute to it. Surely that means it is time for us to create them? □

Toward the Revival of Principled Politics in America

Richard Falk

In response to the well-orchestrated neocon onslaught, the Democrats have found themselves caught between the rock of discredited ideas and the hard place of lapsed creativity. This dilemma was epitomized by the costly bipartisan endorsement in the Clinton years of "regime change" for Iraq. Because most Democrats—including John Kerry—had joined with Republicans in urging the overthrow of Saddam, they found themselves disempowered when Bush II pushed the war option from rhetoric to reality. In the end, Democrats could do no better than fall back on a kind of political opportunism, echoing the views of their supposed Republican adversaries while sniping at the margins of Republican actions in a way that reeked of sour grapes. The failed Gore campaign signaled this downward spiral well before the 9/11 threshold was crossed, stimulating, if not provoking, the Nader campaign, which injected a needed touch of integrity about the great issues of the day into the otherwise dreary landscape of choiceless national politics in 2000.

In the presidential campaign now underway, Kerry seems to be drifting ever further to the right of center, especially on security and foreign policy. His refusal, after the Iraq failure, to offer no more than his willingness to work harder than Bush to find an exit strategy that preserves the results of the war is not likely to win support among the bulk of American voters. It may possibly succeed as an electoral strategy if Bush continues to play the fool (for example, by sticking with Dick Cheney as his running mate), to claim victory while Iraqi cities remain combat zones in which Americans are dying daily, and to imply that he has a list of further



countries to invade, beginning with Iran. But, at the very best, Kerry would be backing into the presidency with no mandate whatsoever for change and no recipe, either practical or visionary, for addressing the grave problems that now threaten America and the world—especially the challenge of global jihadism.

Scripting Pale Republicanism: Senator Kerry and his Advisors

Panic at the success of the Dean campaign in the early primaries has in large part shaped the outlook of the "liberal hawks" gathered by the Kerry/Edwards campaign. What seemed most disturbing to these guardians of Democratic conservatism was the excitement Dean awakened among the previously dormant anti-war elements on the Left that had remained within the Democratic Party because

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they had no other place to go. These mainstream stalwarts were not disheartened by the Gore defeat of 2000, but instead feared another electoral debacle of the sort that followed from the presidential campaign of George McGovern in 1972. At the time, the McGovernites alienated many core constituencies in the Democratic Party, including those legions of Democrats that had been ardent cold-war warriors. Many normally Democratic voters refused to throw their support to the doves and their new age allies, who had temporarily wrested control of the party due to the Vietnam backlash. The result of this turmoil in 1972 was a landslide victory for Richard Nixon, with its apparent lesson that moving left, especially on foreign policy, brings electoral disaster to the Democratic Party.

Beyond this prudential concern related to winning elections, the actual policy outlook of these influential Democrats was much closer to Bush I/Clinton foreign policy than to Dean's unconditional repudiation of the Iraq War. In an excellent article in the July/August 2004 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* describing the Kerry braintrust, Joshua Micah Marshall reports that Kerry's closest foreign policy advisors are comfortable with the "similarities" between the international policies of a Kerry Administration and the foreign policy of the Bush I presidency. In this spirit, an alternative worldview to that associated with Dean's version of opposition politics was put forward on October 30, 2003, and signed by many of the well-known "liberal hawks" under the deeply misleading title, "Progressive Internationalism: A Democratic National Security Strategy."

"Progressive Internationalism" is an important document both as an expression of a move by the Democratic Party to the right/center of American public opinion and as indicative of the approach to foreign policy that would be adopted by a Kerry presidency. Its signatories are far from household names at present, being an assortment of Washington insiders who have been playing the political game throughout their career. These writers are not oriented toward building public constituencies by appearing in the media, possibly because their message is so vapid. Among the signatories, Kenneth Pollack, Ron Asmus, Larry Diamond, and Greg Craig are probably the most likely to be appointed to official positions by Kerry as president. In approach and ambition, I suspect that this text hopes to do for a Kerry Administration what the Project for a New American Century did for the Bush presidency—that is, to promote an ideological consensus that sets the leadership of the party on a course for both political appointments and

worldview. The report is likely to be looked back upon by disappointed, genuinely progressive, supporters of Kerry in the event that he wins in November with a shrug "what else could you expect?"

The basic aim of "Progressive Internationalism" is to position the Democratic Party midway between the Bush unilateralists and the Dean doves: "Progressive internationalism occupies the vital center [a phrase that evokes Arthur Schlesinger's summons to Democratic liberals to take a hard line in the cold war] between the neo-imperial right and the non-interventionist left, between a view that our might always makes us right and one that assumes because America is strong it must be wrong." This is same theme that John Kerry articulated in a major talk at the Council of Foreign Relations, the bastion of the American foreign policy establishment, a few months back. The conclusion of the report revives the early Clinton advocacy of "muscular internationalism" (actually abandoned after

the Somali debacle of 1993), which clarifies where this vital center of the party is really located at this historical moment. Jamie Rubin, the prominent former spokesperson for Madeline Albright, now a key Kerry advisor and candidate for high office in a Kerry White House, reinforces the centrality of this pragmatic centrism for the new, new Democrats by saying that we, "can make foreign policy a net plus for us in this election if we can convince the American people that we are both tough and smart" (the clear implication of the Kerry campaign being that the Bush leadership managed to be tough, but dumb, and

Democrats could do no better than fall back on a kind of political opportunism, echoing the views of their supposed Republican adversaries while sniping at the margins of Republican actions in a way that reeked of sour grapes.

that is why it has produced failure in Iraq and elsewhere). That is, the problems are instrumental, not substantive; at the level of implementation, and not at the level of policy.

The report takes pride in the degree to which Democrats put aside partisanship to support the Bush presidency in its response to the 9/11 attacks, including recourse to wars against Afghanistan and Iraq. Although faulting the Republican leadership for its failure to mobilize adequate international support for the Iraq War, its inability to use the United Nations more skillfully, and its even worse failure to handle the Iraqi occupation in a more effective way, the report does not condemn the war itself. In the words of the authors of "Progressive Internationalism," "We backed the goal of ousting Saddam Hussein's malignant regime in Iraq because the previous policy of containment was failing, because Saddam posed a grave danger to America as well as to his own brutalized people, and because his blatant defiance of more than a decade's worth of United Nations

Security Council Resolutions was undermining both collective security and international law.” What is so disturbing about this rationale for the war is that it is dead wrong on every single point put forward, suggesting a complete incapacity (or unwillingness) to learn from the Iraq fiasco, a war as wrongheaded as any American undertaking since Vietnam, and probably far worse in overall consequences for ourselves and the world.

More objectively considered, Saddam’s Iraq was fully contained in 2003, and indeed caught in a spiral of internal military decline that has been confirmed by official U.S. government analyses. By 2003 Saddam posed no danger whatsoever to the American people and only a remote danger to Iraq’s neighbors in the region, and this should have been known by responsible leaders in and out of government. Although the Saddam regime was guilty of numerous crimes against humanity and mass brutalities that bordered on genocide throughout his bloody rule, there was no immediate humanitarian crisis in Iraq during the 1990s, possibly reflecting the increasing feebleness of the regime due to the Gulf War and subsequent sanctions. Beyond this, as former weapons inspector Scott Ritter and others have repeatedly declared, Iraq had, in fact, substantially complied with the UN disarmament requirements despite experiencing continuous violations of its sovereign rights in the twelve years after the Gulf War, which included the most punitive sanctions imposed on a defeated country after a war since the Versailles Treaty after World War I (an approach abandoned, and reversed with positive results, after World War II).

This hawkish statement of Democratic viewpoints goes further by arguing that “we are convinced that the Iraqi people, the region, and the world are better off now that this barbaric dictator is gone.” On one level, of course, it is good to be rid of Saddam Hussein, but, more deeply considered, the question is whether the costs of the war—including the diversion of energy from genuine threats emanating from Pakistan and North Korea, the worldwide dramatic decline in American leadership, the disregard for international law restraints on war making, and the defiance of the United Nations—were worth the result, even supposing that Iraq will end up with some sort of moderate government, which seems less likely with each passing week. Military intervention is generally, although not always, a dysfunctional way to rid a country of oppressive leadership, and is only justified in those circumstances where an imminent humanitarian emergency exists and could likely be avoided or minimized, as was the case in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Kosovo during the 1990s and seems currently true in the Sudan. The intensity and breadth of Iraqi resistance to the American occupation is one more warning that getting rid of even hated leaders should almost always be left to the oppressed people or to the United Nations.

It is discouraging that the Democratic leadership seems

unaffected by the Iraqi experience except with respect to criticizing the means by which it was carried out; this report does not even make a move to doubt the motives of the Bush Administration, which certainly seemed to include oil, regional domination, and increasing global domination. This timidity is not surprising, in one sense, as the signatories of the report were generally favorable to the Iraq War as an undertaking of American foreign policy in the months prior to the invasion, and indeed Ken Pollack, a ranking member of Clinton’s National Security Council, was one of its most ardent and visible advocates, appearing frequently on leading TV news programs and writing op/ed columns in influential newspapers. Pollack published *The Threatening Storm* during the debate on Iraq policy, a book that provided the most persuasive rationale for regarding Iraq as both a strategic threat that needed to be removed and as an undertaking that could be accomplished quickly and at minimum costs. To his credit, but also possibly reflecting his ambitions for further government service, Pollack has partially recanted after the fact.

When it comes to the more general take on the American role in the world after 9/11 and the Bush experience, the viewpoint of the report hovers uneasily between the unimaginative and the imitative. In a language that could have come from a neocon study group formed in 2004, “Progressive Internationalism” calls for an American foreign policy based on four organizing ideas that are supposed to embody a convergence of national values and interests: national strength, liberal democracy, free enterprise, and world leadership. Each is explained in rather conventional terms, with the basic message being a call for a renewal of the traditional realist approach to the world associated with the Bush I/Clinton leadership of neo-liberal globalization. There is no mention of the anti-globalization movement, calls for global equity and democracy in the administering of the world economy, or even lost jobs for Americans, and no consideration of whether the American role in the Middle East and in relation to Israel/Palestine needs revision, or at least, rethinking. These Democrats offer a policy package that should not make Wall Street sweat or the Pentagon weep, but neither will it win many converts overseas or please those who believe that American policy since the end of the Cold War is in fundamental disarray, and that this persistence of bipartisanship represents political false consciousness at its worst and most dangerous.

At the same time, the position taken in this report is not entirely uncritical of the Bush approach, and, if enacted would probably produce enough improvements to warrant support for Kerry despite the caveats above (of course, the balance tilts even further to Kerry once one gives weight to the authentic liberalism of Kerry’s domestic program and the scary dangers of a second Bush term). Unlike 2000, the choice is clear enough in 2004 on international policy alone to invalidate the third party gropings of Ralph Nader.

Progressive Internationalism and Kerry himself are certainly correct to fault Bush's foreign policy for its gratuitous unilateralism and its feckless downgrading of alliances, international institutions, and international treaties. These more hawkish Democrats are also on point when they argue that the Bush leadership exaggerated the threat posed by "rogue regimes" (the "axis of evil") while not appreciating the new potency of non-state actors with extremist, jihadist, agendas and methods, and the distinctive challenge pose. General Wesley Clark, who is likely to be an important presence on national security policy if Kerry is elected, argues that the Bush emphasis on *state* sponsorship of terrorism is "the principal strategic *mistake*" made by the Republican approach to the 9/11 challenge. However, it is impossible to reconcile this powerful insight with the qualified support given even retrospectively by the Democratic hawks to the Iraq War, which seems like the worst possible war from the perspective of anti-terrorism. These self-proclaimed muscular internationalists offer a rather incoherent set of prescriptions for dealing with the central challenges of global security at the present time.

Aside from General Clark, the most prominent adherents of these viewpoints are probably the Clinton troubleshooting diplomat, Richard Holbrooke, who gained worldwide attention for his role in the Balkans (especially Bosnia), and the former chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Joseph Biden. Both are rumored to be leading candidates for Secretary of State in a Kerry Administration. Both present themselves as liberal interventionists, neither militarist nor pacifist, who have been consistently careful in their long careers not to run afoul of either the Pentagon or Wall Street, and both are articulate champions of what Biden has dubbed "reasoned nationalism," which can be best understood as "empire-lite," to borrow Michael Ignatieff's telling phrase. Neither offers anything new in their way of looking at the world, either by addressing the roots of anti-Americanism in the Islamic world or by moving to establish the kind of global governance needed for a hopeful future in the twenty-first century, although both assert their distance from the neocons, but in a friendly Beltway sort of way.

A third prominent presence on the Kerry team is long-term bipartisan civil servant Rand Beers, a former high State Department official and lead counterterrorist specialist on

the Bush NSC until his resignation a few days before the Iraq War. Beers, who runs the foreign policy advisory group in the Kerry campaign, is rumored to be at the head of the line for an appointment as National Security Advisor. He has been sharply criticized for his role during the Clinton presidency in pushing harsh drug enforcement policies in Latin America, particularly the big ticket effort put into operation in Colombia that included major funding to and increased reliance on brutal paramilitary forces. Beers oversaw the use of drug enforcement funding to finance the protection of the oil pipeline from Venezuela, and has the reputation of being an anti-terrorist militarist, similar in outlook to the other prominent Bush defector, Richard Clarke.

Clarke appears to favor interventionist approaches around the world, but correctly understood that the unprovoked war against Iraq was misconceived as anti-terrorism, and was in fact a gift of major proportions to the jihadists.

The Eclipse of New Deal Democrats

The current prospect for another four years of pale Republicanism is distinctly not what the republic, or the world, needs at this stage in its history. There are some genuine structural issues that need to be faced, not evaded, if the Democratic Party is to be more than "a lesser of evils" in the future, so far as the world is concerned. It is admittedly easier to criticize mainstream politics, both Republican and Democratic, than to offer a constructive alternative vision that has some chance of both providing enhanced security, given the gen-

uine dangers that exist in the post-9/11 world, and being acceptable to enough of the American electorate to get a proponent elected. It is also important to reflect upon the context in which the liberal/progressive outlook found itself marginalized in the last decade of the twentieth century.

This marginalization of the liberalism that emerged in the New Deal response to the Great Depression was on one level an inevitable consequence of the Soviet collapse, and the degree to which the ex-Communist countries seemed to emulate the West in all aspects of organized life, from consumerism to constitutionalism. While hardly "the end of history," this American-led victory in the cold war did persuade virtually the entire Third World to jump on the capitalist bandwagon. Even China swallowed its ideological

Military intervention is generally, although not always, a dysfunctional way to rid a country of oppressive leadership, and is only justified in those circumstances where an imminent humanitarian emergency exists and could likely be avoided or minimized, as was the case in Bosnia, Rwanda, and Kosovo during the 1990s and seems currently true in the Sudan.

pride so as to participate fully in the capital-driven world economy even to the extent of seeking and gaining admission to the World Trade Organization on bended knee. It was not for nothing that the new world order of the 1990s became identified with "globalization," in forms specified by Washington and Wall Street. The stock market boomed, while the IMF and World Bank implemented the Washington consensus as governing global economic policy, and organized labor as a decisive force rapidly waned with the passing of the industrial age. This political drift lent a temporary cover of legitimacy—or more accurately a short-term aura of respectability to American hegemony that relied principally upon a novel brand of economic geopolitics.

Already in the 1980s, the Reagan/Thatcher approach had mounted a powerful assault on organized labor, welfare economics, foreign economic assistance, Third World socialism, and strict regulation of the private sector at home and abroad. These policies, combined with a militarist approach to national security and East/West relations were effectively spun by the Republican establishment to an increasingly reactionary media as responsible for the Soviet collapse and American victory in the Cold War. It was this recipe for political correctness that New Democrats here and New Labor in Britain borrowed to produce the impressive victories of Clinton and Blair—a kind of sunset brilliance for international liberalism. But what was opportunistically responsive to the mood of the 1990s strongly risks being uninspiring, virtually a straightjacket in these early years of the new millennium.

Reviving Principled Opposition

I fully endorse the TIKKUN vision of a new foreign policy for the United States that is premised on a coherently alternative approach to national and global security. It is far more promising than what is being offered to the American people (and the rest of the world) by the two parties jousting for victory in the 2004 elections. There is no doubt in my mind that if the United States government shifted sufficient resources from the military to implement a Global Marshall Plan and headed an effort to reverse global warming, it would restore its leadership capacity overnight, and the whole world could breathe far more easily. This does not mean that anti-American violence would disappear overnight, but it does mean that the wider resonance enjoyed by al Qaeda and the jihadist movement would evaporate quickly, except in tiny extremist circles, and hope rather than despair would take hold of politics in many parts of the world. Of course, American political culture has been brainwashed for decades into basing its security on military dominance and war, and the pedagogical challenge of reeducation is enormous, but it must start, and in this crucial sense, radical voices of reason and empathy of the sort being articulated by TIKKUN are more important than ever before in the history of this country.

In addition to the bold program being advocated by TIKKUN, there are some encouraging complementary developments outside of the United States that could help create a climate for the desired transformation within this country. The anti-globalization movement that was morphing into a pro-democracy and global justice movement around the end of the last century provided a hopeful sense that innovative political space existed for a new era of progressive politics. This movement, which began in a major way with the street demonstrations in Seattle at the end of 1999, was building momentum in the United States and throughout the world on the basis of a program of social justice, human rights, and global democracy. It was beginning to find allies in business circles, including such notables as George Soros, and was reinforced in its call for economic regulation by the alarming reverberations of the Asian financial crisis that affected such major countries as Russia, Japan, and Brazil at the end of the 1990s. These developments generated the adoption of slogans such as "globalization with a human face" at Davos (the site of the World Economic Forum), which annually brought together the makers and shakers of corporate and banking globalization. This perspective argues that social justice, human rights, and democracy should be the foundation on which a new "real" progressivism of global scope is shaped. In concrete terms that need not assault the fixed parameters of foreign policy that are now widely accepted in America, such priorities could be translated at least into a concerted emphasis by the Democratic Party on the reduction of poverty and joblessness, urban renewal, immigration and tax reform, a renewal of government responsibility for human well-being, and deprivatization of energy policy.

The more serious challenges to the political and moral imagination concern foreign security policy. There is no doubt that any American government must take the challenge of global terrorism seriously in light of 9/11, and offer the best possible protection to American society, which includes both protection against immediate threats and longer-term approaches to transnational political and religious extremism. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as loose control over existing arsenals of weapons and materials, involve severe dangers given mercenary impulses and jihadist ambitions and resourcefulness. The recent disclosures of proliferation for profit networks centered in Pakistan and North Korea, as well as the uncertainties surrounding the Russian nuclear weapons arsenal, are genuine causes for alarm, especially given the potent mixture of an anti-American political animus that exists at the present time in so many foreign societies and the declared ambitions of al-Qaeda to wage its struggle by acquiring and using weaponry of mass destruction. So far, the Democratic Party establishment has been essentially aping the Bush approach on these key issues, endorsing the commitment to a supposedly

robust non-proliferation regime, and foregoing criticism of the approach being followed by Bush. Part of the harm done by the Iraq War has been to give additional countries incentives to acquire credible WMD capabilities as well as to divert the gaze of anti-proliferation activism from the greatest sources of danger. The bitter irony on these matters is that most of the world increasingly believes that Iraq was attacked not because it *possessed* WMDs, but because it *didn't*—or at the very least, because Iraq had minimal, inconsequential WMD capabilities. In this ironic sense, North Korea is much better off than Iraq because it is widely perceived as having a significant WMD stockpile, and a likely willingness to use such weapons if attacked. Under these conditions, even the neocons are disposed to diplomacy rather than war!

The Iraq War grossly misinterpreted the locus of the proliferation problem. As is appreciated by most experts, it is Pakistan, North Korea, and Russia that pose the greatest danger with respect to weapons and materials falling into terrorist hands, and the possibility of a regime change in Pakistan could put the enemies of the United States and moderate politics in control of a government in a large populous and remote country.

The liberal/progressive approach cannot ignore these dangers, but it must be more creative in addressing them than the mainstream promises to be. It must reconsider the premise of a non-proliferation approach that seeks to normalize a two-tier world in which some states, most notably our own along with the existing nuclear weapons states, rely on nuclear weapons and the rest are forbidden from developing and possessing such weapons regardless of the presence of major threats to their national survival. It is time to think seriously of disarmament instead of non-proliferation as the basis of dealing with WMDs. In this regard, a single regime of prohibition that applies to chemical weapons, biological weapons, and nuclear weapons is the only coherent approach with short and long term promise of meeting the WMD challenge. At present, there exist reasonably strong treaties of prohibition dealing with chemical and biological weapons. These need to be strengthened and supplemented by a commitment to phased nuclear disarmament by *all* states. During the Bush presidency, the U.S. government re-embraced nuclearism in a totally irresponsible manner, actively developing new categories of nuclear weapons

intended to provide the United States first use options to obtain rather minor battlefield advantages. Such reckless conduct undermined whatever persuasiveness could be associated with an ethos of non-proliferation given the refusal of the nuclear weapons states even to entertain a disarmament option. Why should some sovereign states forego a nuclear option helpful to their security if the leading state not only insists on keeping its arsenal, but is intent on developing weapons for use in future wars?

Besides addressing the most crucial dimension of long-term security in a creative and multilateral spirit, American leadership on behalf of disarmament would be enormously popular in most of the rest of the world. Such an initiative would signal a renewed willingness by Washington to work

cooperatively with other states, and exhibit confidence that the rule of law is essential for constructing a global security system fit for the twenty-first century. The essence of law is to treat equals equally, and nowhere is this more important than with respect to weapons of mass destruction.

Taking account of the UN's shaky moral foundations, there is a growing need to endow the United Nations with an independent capability to address humanitarian emergencies, either associated with instances of genocidal behavior (as currently in the Sudan) or in the event of fundamental breakdowns in order that threaten to inflict mass suffering on a particular society. A volunteer UN peace force, under the authority of the Secretary General, funded by a tax on transnational currency transactions (the so-called Tobin Tax) or on international jet travel, could give the

world a much better capacity to deal effectively with such emergencies and to create some distance between a UN response and the vagaries of geopolitics that produced such flimsy responses to the suffering in Bosnia and Rwanda. A better way was needed, and was not altogether provided by the legally dubious, yet materially effective, NATO response in 1999 to the prospect of further ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. To move in these directions would involve building greater confidence that the UN would not be manipulated at either end of the political spectrum—that is, either by the tyranny of irresponsible majorities in the General Assembly or by the suspect machinations of a hegemonic America manipulating the Security Council at its will.

But global security will require much more than this. It

As matters now stand, the United States government sets and enacts the security policy for the rest of the world, and the citizens of affected countries have no way of influencing the process even if the issues are matters of life and death. Is it not time for political globalization to begin catching up to economic globalization?

will also mean a more imaginative approach to conflict resolution, especially with respect to Israel/Palestine and in relation to the political status of Kashmir. It will require serious responses to threatened instances of ethnic cleansing, including in sub-Saharan Africa. We must end the sort of high-profile inattention that is accorded to the worst humanitarian crisis since Rwanda now unfolding before the basically uncaring eyes of the world in the Sudan (although highlighted by prominent state visits and appeals that seem strong in words and empty in deeds). Global security will also include the realization that AIDS and internationally transmitted diseases are humanitarian emergencies, not merely health problems, that can only be addressed by the concerted action of the world that includes making resources available.

When it comes to the jihadist threat that launched the 9/11 attacks, it should be clear by now that war is not the answer, and is certainly not the main answer. The only solid gains of the anti-terrorist campaign have been achieved by enhanced law enforcement, including shared intelligence. If a new leadership exhibited skepticism about wars of choice and renewed respect for international law and the collective procedures of the Security Council, there would be an almost instantaneous recovery of inter-governmental solidarity under American leadership.

The approach to the world economy needs also to be considered in a new light. The transnational movement of resistance to globalization that surfaced a few years ago provides the basis for global reforms. First of all, we need to regain a sense that people count as much as capital in the formation of global economic policy. In effect, there needs to be a softening of the grip of market-dominated approaches that were so dominant in the 1990s, and the adoption of a more socially conscious view of how to balance the interests of capital and the well-being of people. On a national level, it took a rising labor movement in the nineteenth century to bring an uneasy balance to societies experiencing the industrial revolution, the early stages of which exhibited the most predatory sides of capitalism. The 1990s were a repetition of predatory capitalism, but this time with a global reach in an increasingly integrated world economy.

More than this, although without the same urgency, it would be important to democratize the ways in which international institutions deal procedurally with the making of policy. It is necessary to give Third World governments more participation in the formation of policies that bear heavily on their development prospects, as well as to allow the voices of global civil society to be heard in meaningful ways. It is no longer possible for a Davos/Washington/IMF coalition to run the world economy.

Global democracy is an issue made to order for a new generation of liberal/progressives, allowing a commitment to a peaceful, sustainable, equitable, and accountable world

order to take shape in practical ways. It would be helpful to promote American participation in the International Criminal Court as a sign of renewed acceptance of accountability of leaders and the limiting discipline of international law. In a more innovative spirit, the advocacy of a Global Peoples Parliament (resembling the European Parliament) is an idea whose time has come, fostering the spirit of global democracy. Such a legislative body would need to begin slowly without law making authority, gradually building confidence, and widening the scope of participation. It would be important to make sure that irresponsible voting majorities did not emerge to discredit such a Global Peoples Parliament while in its infancy, and this could be guarded against by relying on established procedures of voting and appointment to select representatives.

Even more radically, suggesting a more inclusive system for representation is needed to avoid disenfranchising most of the people in the world. As matters now stand, the United States government sets and enacts the security policy for the rest of the world, and the citizens of affected countries have no way of influencing the process even if the issues are matters of life and death. Is it not time for political globalization to begin catching up to economic globalization? At the very least, visionary views need to be given a hearing if liberal/progressive alternatives are to regain influence, and if this country and the world are to meet the growing agenda of global challenges.

It is obvious that this range of ideas cannot be brought immediately into the main arenas of political debate in the United States, but their percolation in civil society can indirectly energize the Democratic Party to recognize the crucial importance of bringing new personalities into its upper echelons, as well as being receptive to innovative approaches to both foreign and domestic policy. Pale Republicanism will not get the job done in the twenty-first century. The country deserves at the very least the rebirth of principled political debate under the auspices of the Democratic Party. Until this happens, the Republicans and neocons, however badly their policies fail in practice, will seem to have a monopoly on coherent, sincerely held beliefs and values pertaining to the great issues of the day. Such a monopoly is intolerable for a free society, but it cannot be broken by liberal/progressive passivity and mimicry. And so far, neither Kerry nor his high-profile foreign policy advisors seem inclined to mount a challenge based on rethinking fundamental principles. As matters stand, the best that we can now hope for is a national election that is essentially a referendum on the Bush presidency that the incumbent manages to lose mostly by himself. This is worthwhile, as argued, and is likely to give the American polity a breathing spell from its own version of political extremism, but it will not generate the sort of thinking and action so urgently required to overcome mounting challenges here and abroad. □

How the Bush Administration Has Diminished America's Spiritual Capital

Danah Zohar

The upcoming November presidential election is one of the most crucial in American history. The electorate is divided nearly 50/50 for and against the Bush administration along bitter emotional, economic, and ideological lines. America is not at peace with herself. Many people feel a sense of despair or even defeat. The issues at stake are far deeper than any candidate's vision for the nation's economy, job creation, import controls, or even the mess in Iraq. While neither President Bush nor Senator Kerry has articulated it as such, thinking (and worried) members of the electorate know that November 2004 will be a battle for the American soul.

A nation's soul is defined by its spiritual capital: its sense of identity, its fundamental values, its deep sense of purpose, its shared vision, its relationship to the outside world, and its integrity as a nation. Spiritual capital is not connected with any particular religion or belief system, but is instead reflected in what a nation believes in, what it aspires to, and what it takes responsibility for.

In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, capital is defined as "that which confers wealth, profit, advantage, or power." Capitalism, the economic doctrine that underpins America's all-important corporate culture and much of its national identity (thus Herbert Hoover's famous, "The business of America is business"), gives the narrowest possible definition to all these terms. Wealth is taken to mean money, so the wealth that makes the world go round is material wealth, and profit is material profit. Advantage is measured in money or in the power to manipulate people to maximize one's (usually money-based) interests. In this strictly material sense of capital, America is the richest nation on earth.

But lately we have also been hearing about "social capital," which Frances Fukuyama writes about at length in his book *Trust*. It is defined as a combination of a nation's material wealth and the social benefit it gains from having low crime, low drug and alcohol abuse, low divorce and illegitimacy rates, low litigation figures, high literacy, and a high degree of trust. I would also add the benefit gained from a strong sense of social justice and an absence of gross inequality. All of these factors contribute to social stability and

thus to social capital.

"Spiritual capital" takes the broadening of capital a stage further, transcending the usual notion of capitalism altogether. It is the bedrock on which all other kinds of capital rest, defining the "commodities of exchange" in terms of meaning, inspiring vision, and the cherishing and implementation of fundamental human values. As such, nations invested with high spiritual capital act from a much broader context with attention to a wider array of concerns. They realize that when spiritual capital reserves are low, people become ill or stressed more often; there are higher rates of drug and alcohol dependency, depression, and suicide; more family and community breakdown; and more of the kind of alienation that leads to greater selfishness, crime, and vandalism. In other words, without spiritual capital, people lose heart.

America inherited rich reserves of spiritual capital from the vision of its Founding Fathers, which were depleted from time to time by the shame of slavery, the genocide of Native Americans, the witch trials, economic rape by the robber barons of the nineteenth century, Vietnam, etc., but on the whole the balance sheet has remained positive. America has, for the most part, been a good nation among nations. However, the attitudes and policies of the current Bush administration are squandering the nation's spiritual capital so seriously that the deficit risks matching Bush's record-breaking and very dangerous budget deficit. Both could reach a point of no return.

There has always been a deep ideological split in America. In his article, "The America We've Got," for the March 2004 issue of *Prospect*, Anatol Lieven succinctly described this historical division as that between the "Jeffersonians"—who advocated universalist principles of freedom, individualism, liberty, democracy, the rule of law (both national and international), egalitarianism, populism, civil liberties, and laissez-faire economics—and the "Jacksonians," who have represented a more narrow and jingoistic American nationalism. As Lieven wrote, the Jacksonians cultivate "not only specific national hatreds, but also hostility to all ideals, goals, movements, laws, and institutions which aim to transcend the nation and speak for the general interests of mankind." Jacksonians have tended to represent the values of white, Protestant America, but it is the Jeffersonian tradition that has predominantly defined

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America, giving it a foundation of transcendent values that could embrace and give common ground to the many ethnic and religious differences brought to America by its wholly immigrant population.

The Bush administration is firmly rooted in the Jacksonian vision of America. It has promoted a narrow, nationalistic vision of America defined by bellicose self-interest abroad and the narrow self-interest of its own right-wing, largely Southern, white electorate at home. It has acted against diversity and egalitarianism and drawn from the wider Jeffersonian vision of freedom and democracy only when it can manipulate these principles to the advan-

tage of its own, Jacksonian purposes.

A nation's spiritual capital is reflected in the basic motivations that drive its people. Motivations lie behind a people's behavior, but they also determine its thought processes. The Bush administration, through both rhetoric and policies, has encouraged the American people to act from the negative motivations of fear, greed, anger, and self-assertion. It has divided American against American, raised the levels of domestic fear and suspicion, built a culture of fear around the events of 9/11, stoked the nation's anger (both internal and against "the evil men who are against us"), encouraged a culture of greed with its economic policies and loyalty to big-business, and fostered a national self-assertion not seen since the Big Stick diplomacy of Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Riders.

Each of the three kinds of capital held by a nation is associated with one of three kinds of intelligence available to that nation's people and leadership. Material capital (money) is built by using our rational, "how-to" intelligence, or IQ. Social capital requires the availability of emotional intelligence (EQ), which allows us to empathize with the needs and feelings of others, understand and improve our own motivations, and build trust. Spiritual capital requires high levels of spiritual intelligence, or SQ. Our spiritual intelligence reflects our access to and need for deep meaning, transcendent vision, fundamental human values, and an abiding sense of purpose. Just as high spiritual capital is necessary to build and maintain material and social capital, high spiritual intelligence is necessary to use effectively our intellectual and emotional intelligence.

The twelve qualities that define high spiritual intelligence are: self-awareness, spontaneity, vision and value orientation, holism, compassion, celebration of diversity, field independence, fundamental questioning, ability to reframe, constructive use of adversity, humility, and sense of vocation.

The spiritual intelligence of America's Founding Fathers was high. They built the nation's original reserves of spiritual capital with a vision that inspired the whole world, and raised the sights and aspirations of humankind. But how

does the Bush administration rank in the area of spiritual intelligence? Let's put it to the test.

Self-awareness is knowing what we believe in and value, what motivates us at the deepest level, and how these beliefs and motivations affect us and others. Bush has an astounding ability to manipulate American public opinion, but he has shown neither emotional nor spiritual intelligence in articulating what his true motives are, nor in understanding the impact of American success and cultural hegemony on Islamic cultures. An America encouraged to lead through motives of fear, anger, greed, and self-assertion cannot but clash with an Islam reeling from shame, fear, anger, and self-assertion. The Bush rhetoric (protecting and spreading freedom and democracy) is out of step with the Bush reality—either intentionally because he wishes to mislead the American people, or simply because the man does not know himself. In either case, he fails the self-awareness test.

Spontaneity is being able to live in and be responsive to the moment and all that it contains. It means being able to think and act without all the baggage of habit, preconditioning, prejudice, or prejudgment. September 11 represented a new moment in American history. It could have been a great opportunity for America to examine itself and its role and image in the world, to answer honestly deep questions like, "Why do they hate us so much?" But Bush responded to these attacks with assumptions drawn from his father's presidency and with easy mantras about "evil men who hate us because they hate our freedoms." We know from the testimony of Richard Clarke to the 9/11 Commission that it took a great deal of pressure from his intelligence and security staff to dissuade Bush from his belief that Iraq had been behind the attacks, and from his still more lingering belief that there was at least a dangerous and active link between Al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein's regime. Bush was so locked into the Iraq scenario that he ignored persistent warnings that an attack on Iraq would distract from the effort to confront the real terrorists, and that such an attack would actually increase the dangers of terrorism. The Bush administration is filled with dogmatists and neocon ideologues who came to office with set assumptions and agendas about the environment, tax cuts, America's role in the world, who America's enemies are, and how to deal with them. Real events and experiences have not impinged on them. For this reason, they fail the spontaneity test.

Being vision and value led is to act from deep principles and beliefs and to live life accordingly. George Bush and his

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team would certainly describe themselves as visionaries (and indeed we would have to agree with them). They do have a powerful vision of a global American empire that will spread the values they serve ("what's best for America is best for the world"). This vision inspires their leadership and informs their decision making. But the downside is that visionaries can be so caught up in their visions that they lose touch with reality. This can lead to closed-mindedness, fanaticism, and a dictatorial leadership style (the Patriot Act, the Homeland Security Bill, pre-emptive wars, etc.). Adolf Hitler was a great visionary, but he did not serve fun-

damental human values. Bush is no Hitler, but the values he serves are not the values that defined America as a nation, nor those that have kept her great for over two and a half centuries. They are not the universalist values of freedom and dignity for all, of respect for difference, and of support for international law and the right of national self-determination. His administration fails the true spirit of the vision and values test.

Holism is a sense of the system or of connectivity, an ability to see larger patterns, relationships, and connections. It confers a strong sense of being part of a larger whole. Holism is an ability to look at a problem from every angle and to see that every question has at least two sides, and usually more. It is also a perception of, and a loyalty to, a deeper common reality that underlies most differences. Bush is a simple black-and-white man: "You are either with us or you are with the terrorists." He is also a short-term

thinker who does not see America as part of a larger global community nor does he see today as linked to the well-being of tomorrow: "I will not sacrifice American jobs now and endanger the American economy to sign this treaty [Kyoto]." It is as if America were not a part of the world that will suffer as our environment deteriorates. Bush invaded Iraq ignorant of the Iraqi reality, blind to long-term consequences, and with no apparent consideration for what he would do after the war was "won." His administration has refused to consider the consequences of their budget deficit, the weak dollar, the Patriot Act, preemptive wars, or Guantanamo. There is no doubt that they fail the holism test.

Compassion is an ability to "feel with" and to have deep empathy for others, particularly for those different from ourselves. It requires that we feel the common humanity of our neighbors even if their views are alien to, or opposite from, our own. Compassion is not mere pity, nor does it make us weak. We are far better placed to defeat an enemy

we understand than one who has us flummoxed. Americans as a whole have never been very good at feeling with or understanding others who are different from themselves, but the Bush administration has brought this failure to a point where it is a threat to America's (and the Western world's) security. Bush does not understand his enemies and he has made no effort to do so. By defining the Axis of Evil and then branding Islamic terrorists as "evil men" at every turn, he has turned his back on what really drives the hatred for America in today's world. The terrorists do commit evil acts, but that does not make them evil men. They are ashamed, alienated, angry, and desperate men ready to die to destroy what they see as a threat to their culture and values. Bush's "war on terror" creates more of the same, which will inevitably continue for generation after generation. Bush fails the compassion test, and both America and the world will continue paying for it.

Celebrating diversity means valuing other people, lifestyles, cultures, and opinions for their differences, not in spite of them. It is a recognition of and sense of gratitude toward life's differing, even conflicting, possibilities and the ways that these can enrich us and broaden our point of view. It thrives on dissent and difference rather than simply tolerating it. The Western mind has never been good at celebrating diversity. We are the culture of one God, one truth, and one way—of either/or rather than both/and. This thinking runs through both Christianity and Islam, with their vocations to convert or conquer (the Jews recognize that other people have other gods, they just want nothing to do with them). Newtonian science (absolute space, absolute time, universal laws of nature) falls into this pattern, and Bush is a Newtonian leader. American values (or rather his interpretation of them) are the best values, and the American way is the only way and must be exported to all the world, at gunpoint if necessary. Bush does not surround himself with men and women who disagree with him or who make him question his assumptions, nor has he inspired or encouraged a national conversation that would lead the American people to question theirs. He fails the celebration of diversity test.

Field independence is a psychological term meaning an ability to stand against the crowd, to know one's own convictions and to live by them, even if they result in isolation or unpopularity. More subtly, it implies an ability to stand apart from the paradigms, assumptions, or habitual patterns of one's own mind, to see when we are in error or thinking in a box. It requires a high degree of self-awareness and critical thought. Without these capacities, field independence is just self-delusion or bullheadedness. Nietzsche pointed out that "convictions are more dangerous enemies of truth than lies." Men or women of uncritical conviction can be fanatical, unreceptive to reality, obstinate, and closed to other points of view or to diversity. The Bush administration stood firmly against world opinion on Iraq, but that was only

because they did not think world opinion important. Blinded by their conviction that whatever is best for (their) America is best for the world, and that the only opinion that matters is domestic opinion, they have ruthlessly manipulated events for the sake of increasing popularity at home. Bush panders to his electoral base with every word and gesture. Every member of that administration, with the possible exception of Colin Powell, reeks of sanctimonious self-belief. They fail the test of self-critical, disciplined field independence.

A tendency to ask fundamental questions reflects a desire to understand things, to get to the bottom of them. It is accompanied by a tendency to refuse to take anything for granted, questioning the reasons, foundations, and inner workings of everything and asking whether it could be different. Questions are subversive and often undermine smug assumptions and prejudices; asking them requires both humility and an openness to the diversity of truth. Bush is not a man who asks fundamental questions. He knows what he believes and that what he believes is both right and best for everyone (or at least best for his America). He was unwilling to brook any questions about Saddam's complicity in 9/11, nor later the wisdom (and likely aftermath) of invading Iraq. He has given no indication of questioning more deeply what fuels Islamic hatred for America, nor what deeply motivates the followers of bin Laden. He has discouraged the American media (and thus the American public) from asking fundamental questions with accusations of unpatriotic reporting, and has leveled the same charge at members of the American intelligentsia. If not a fanatic, he is at least a zealot and a proselytizer.

The ability to reframe is an ability to stand back from a situation or a problem and to see the bigger picture, and an associated ability to be flexible in one's thinking. Reframing can be both spatial—taking in a larger geographical perspective or a wider set of situations or people likely to be influenced by a decision—or it can be temporal—noticing how different a strategy looks if viewed over a longer time frame. The practice naturally tests assumptions and values rooted in a more narrow perspective and usually takes us into our discomfort zone. Bush won the presidency with less than half the popular vote and his controversial victory divided the American electorate. He promised to come to office as a moderate Republican serving all the people. Yet his leadership has grown more one-sided and extreme during these past four years. He has followed a narrow and short-term vision on energy and environmental conservation, his economic policies have impoverished and weakened state and local governments, his record budget deficit serves the needs of the moment at the expense of future generations, his tax policies favor the well-off at the expense of low-income families, his rush into Iraq failed to consider the aftermath of deposing Saddam Hussein and ignored the likely (and now certain) backlash in the Arab and Islamic

world. His insistence that American-style democracy is the best form of government for all nations shows an ignorance of the social dynamics, complexities, and sensitivities in many of the world's societies, and his commitment to global empire is entirely America-centric, thus thwarting a wider process of global cooperation. Bush seems locked into a narrow perspective on nearly every issue with which he has dealt, and thus fails the reframing test.

The positive use of adversity means an ability to own and learn from mistakes and to turn problems into opportunities. We recognize our limits and work to surpass them. We grow and learn from suffering or failure and make gains from our setbacks. Perhaps the quality is best summed up by a line from Kipling's famous *If*: "If you can meet with triumph and disaster and treat those two impostors just the same... then you will be a man, my son." Lacking a positive response to adversity, we can become self-pitying and bitter, feel victimized, or place the blame for our troubles on scapegoats. Americans have never dealt well with adversity, particularly that which has any tragic dimension. It flies in the face of a national optimism and a faith that every problem has a quick and easy solution. Yet America today is facing greater domestic and foreign adversity than at any time since the Civil War or the Great Depression. Its values, life-style, self-image, and sense of security (both physical and economic) are all being questioned. It needs a great conversation, a great reflection, a great self-examination. The Bush leadership has not led or encouraged this maturing process. Many in the Bush administration encourage the view that weaknesses within American society are due to a lazy and/or immoral underclass, often contaminated by 1960s values, who live dishonestly on welfare, undermine the American way of life, and make life difficult for "good, ordinary Americans" who read the Bible and pay their taxes. None of this has brought any healing to America, nor enabled a positive response to adversity.

Humility requires a sense of being a player in a larger drama, a sense of our true place in the world. A sense of humility gets us beyond the isolation of and preoccupation with our own self-importance. It opens up the possibility of

learning from experience and from others. People or nations who think of themselves as God's gift to the world and of their values as superior to all others have little motivation to listen or learn. Humility is the necessary basis for critical thought and judgment. Its absence can lead to poor strategic thinking. To use a favorite American term, it is a "no brainer" to ask whether Bush or his administration have

a sense of humility. Their arrogance and self-certainty have been overwhelming. Their domineering and grandiose style of global leadership has isolated America perhaps as never before.

A sense of vocation involves being "called" to serve something higher or larger than oneself, called to make a positive difference. It is usually accompanied by a deep sense of gratitude toward those who have helped us, or toward life itself, and a wish to give something back. By their own criteria, the senior members of the Bush administration have a great sense of vocation about building a strong, safe, "patriotic" America that is the center of global empire. But then Osama bin Laden has a strong sense of vocation, too: to destroy the West, to restore the honor of Islam, and to build a global Islamic empire. Both are distortions of true vocation based on self-serving ideology or fanaticism and show poor judgment about their own limitations. Neither is linked to humility or self-awareness and neither serves that larger good that transcends and unifies differences. Both serve a tribal and jealous god. In truth, bin Laden is the Jungian shadow of the Bush vision of America. They are two sides of the same coin, each locked into an exclusive perspective that necessitates conflict with the other. Both fail the vocation test.

From the analysis presented here, George Bush and his administration fail every one of the twelve criteria for possessing spiritual intelligence. This presents a grim picture for both America and the world. But we need not leave the

building of spiritual capital in the hands of politicians. To live our own lives on the scale of epoch making, it is not necessary to be president of the United States, CEO of a vast global enterprise, or even an aid worker in Africa. We just have to stay true to our own deepest ideals and values and make what difference we can, at whatever level we operate in life. □

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The Progressives' Dilemma in the 2004 Elections

A Roundtable with Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, Ralph Nader, Ann Lewis, Danny Goldberg, and David Cobb

TIKKUN is a nonprofit 501c3, which means we are prohibited from endorsing candidates or parties, and we never have. We're concerned with building a New Bottom Line in American society of love, generosity, social justice, and peace—and a progressive middle path for Middle East peace that is both pro-Israel and pro-Palestine. At the Democratic National Convention in late July, we held an educational event about foreign policy and about the need for a changed direction in U.S. foreign policy that would allow the United States to make a more substantial contribution toward healing Israel/Palestine. By listening to delegates, we became acutely aware that there were some voices in the progressive world who perceived themselves as not being heard or represented at the convention. They represent a faction of liberals and progressives who strongly desire to beat Bush, but who wonder if the Democratic Party's strategy is the right one. We've invited both leading Democrats and Ralph Nader and David Cobb to discuss what is the best role for progressives to play in this election. None of the Republicans we invited responded to our invitation to be part of this roundtable discussion.

TIKKUN: First of all, does anyone recognize that there is a problem for progressives in the way that the Kerry campaign has positioned itself throughout the convention (e.g., in support of the war in Iraq and in support of Ariel Sharon's policies) or is that positioning something that sim-

Ann Lewis is national Chair of the Women's Vote Center for the DNC and Senior Advisor to the Kerry/Edwards campaign. Danny Goldberg is CEO of Artemis Records, former publisher of TIKKUN, and author of Dispatches From the Culture Wars: How the Left Lost Teen Spirit. Ralph Nader is an independent presidential candidate and has been recognized as America's preeminent and most successful crusader for health, safety, environmental sanity, and workers' rights. David Cobb is the Green Party presidential candidate. Lynn Woolsey is a Congresswoman from California and Chair of the Democratic Caucus Task Force on Children and Families. She was one of only nine House Democrats to vote against a recent House resolution supporting Ariel Sharon's policies.

ply should be shrugged off and accepted as necessary to win the election this year? Is there some role that progressives can play inside the various political parties? Or do progressives have to stay outside?

WOOLSEY: This issue has been the most difficult issue in my history in the House of Representatives—and I'm in my twelfth year now. The district I represent is one of the best educated, wealthiest, and most progressive districts in the country and they are split down the middle on the issue of how much we should support Israel or whether or not we're being imbalanced in the way we're approaching the conflict. So, I'm going to tell you that I have confidence that John Kerry and John Edwards are going to bring a balance to the discussion that we have not had—and that it won't be an afterthought, but at the forefront of what they're doing when they're elected to ensure American leadership that it's the only way it can work.

COBB: The Kerry/Edwards campaign, and Kerry in particular, is not progressive. John Kerry voted for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and for NAFTA, which is decimating the economy of this country and putting us in a race to the bottom, globally; he voted for No Child Left Behind, which is devastating the educational system in this country; he voted for the Patriot Act, which is devastating civil liberties; John Kerry is on the record opposing universal healthcare and is on the record opposing raising the minimum wage to an actual living wage.

WOOLSEY: So you would prefer to have George Bush as your president? John Kerry will listen to your point of view when he's president instead of who we have in the White House right now and I believe with all my heart that if they're the White House for the next four years we will no longer know the United States of America.

COBB: Of course. I understand that as bad as I think John Kerry is, George Bush is qualitatively worse.

WOOLSEY: Well then say it.

COBB: That wasn't the question that was posed. Of course I'll say it. I'm going to tell the truth. And the truth is also that John Kerry's unwavering support of Israel's current government and the militarization of that region is also part of the problems we face.

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The problem we all face is our voting system, which is forcing voters to vote against what they hate rather than for what they really want. And the solution is to change our voting system—ultimately to proportional representation—but at the very least to instant runoff voting, a preferential voting system that will empower voters. And I encourage progressive Democrats to join with other progressives in support of instant runoff voting so that progressives don't feel like they have to make the difficult choice that so many are currently faced with because of our voting system.

NADER: Why have the Democrats been losing at the local, state, and national level for the last ten years to the worst of the Republicans and the Republican Party? I put that question to John Kerry and his answer was, almost verbatim, "It's because the Republicans have so much money that they can cloud the issues." That's just not acceptable.

The Democrats feel they can get away with anything when it comes to dealing with progressives because they believe that we have nowhere to go but them—so they don't feel they have to deliver anything to us.

—Ralph Nader

The Democrats raise a lot of money, they are an older party, they're all over the country. The answer to my question should have been: "Maybe because we don't have the message, the agenda, the organization, the willingness to go beyond thirty second TV ads into neighborhoods and into communities and have a really powerful registration campaign for the nine million African American voters who remain unregistered, and try to get the eight million Democratic voters who deserted Gore in 2000 and voted for Bush." But if they understand their losses to be attributable primarily to lack of money, then of course they will escalate their efforts to go after the same corporate money and the money of the wealthy that is similarly sought by the Republicans. And to get that money they feel the need to elbow out or marginalize or humiliate progressives, like Dennis

Kucinich, who had all of his proposals—even his phrases—rejected when he put them before the Democratic Platform Committee. Of course, then Kucinich endorsed John Kerry. He and all his supporters got nothing for all this campaigning and for performing as a loyal progressive Democrat for two years on the primary trail. What does that tell you about the Democratic Party and who controls it?

LEWIS: John Kerry has a progressive voting record and agenda. In Congress he fought for clean air and water, he fought to get more police on the street and for a crime bill that took assault weapons off the street. He voted to raise the minimum wage. Kerry is for tax breaks to encourage companies to bring their jobs here into the United States, for raising the minimum wage, and for enforcing the equal pay laws. Those three things would help raise the household income of Americans.



Senator Kerry has a plan to make health care more accessible and affordable—and yes it's going to cost some money—but he says he can pay for it by rolling back tax breaks that are given to the wealthiest Americans. He is for energy independence—which is going to move us in the right direction both domestically and abroad. And, finally, on foreign policy, two principles he made very clear at the convention, as he has throughout his campaign, are that America should only go to war if we have to; and that we should go back to working with other nations to build the respect of nations around the world, and whenever possible, work toward our goals jointly.

That is a progressive agenda that for many, many Americans will make real differences in their lives. And please don't forget that the next president of the United States is

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF CHIU/ASSOCIATED PRESS

likely to choose three or more justices of the Supreme Court. I have confidence that with John Kerry we would have a Supreme Court that would respect civil rights, women's rights, and the Constitution of the United States.

GOLDBERG: I think that the nature of this conversation is based on a false premise: that it's mutually exclusive to care about who is president of the United States on the one hand and be for a progressive movement that is to the left of the Democratic Party on the other. I don't think those two ideas are mutually exclusive. I think as a threshold issue, changing the voting system to include proportional voting and instant runoffs is very important and one which I believe in deeply. It would eliminate the kind of discussion that has bedeviled progressives in the last few election cycles, but I don't particularly know that failing to make a choice between Kerry and Bush for president is the way to raise that issue.

There are many issues where Ralph Nader and David Cobb and many other progressives need to influence this country more, and I want to support that, but I don't think you support it by helping George Bush to get reelected.

I think one can disagree with many parts of the Democratic Party platform and disagree with many of John Kerry's votes, as I do, and still see clearly and unequivocally that it's better to have him appoint Supreme Court justices, better to have him running our foreign policy, and better to have him as president on every single issue that's important to progressives than George Bush. I don't see how someone can be morally committed to these issues and ignore the consequences of who the next president is going to be. Regardless of the way we would like the world to be, the fact is indisputable that either George Bush or John Kerry is going to be president for the next four years and to me it's a no brainer as a progressive to say I prefer John Kerry—without exonerating either him or the centrist Democrats from the list of many criticisms that Nader and Cobb would charge them with and with which I agree.

NADER: Twenty-four hours a day the corporate interests are pulling on both parties. That's indisputable—the lobbies who are placing their executives in high government positions, the PACs, the matrix of corporate occupied territory in Washington, D.C. If you don't have alternative candidates on the progressive side, who is pulling the Democratic Party in the direction of these progressive issues?

The answer is, nobody.

If you look at all of the major Democratic groups—the Sierra Club, the labor groups, minority groups, women's groups—who are supporting Kerry, they're not really pushing him to take stands in support of their issues. In fact some of those groups are making no demands whatsoever. If he gets elected, he'll have no mandate. These groups will not be able to say to him, "You put our issues before the American public and they endorsed that progressive agenda."

But he *is* being pulled—now, during the election, and after he's elected—by corporations who have achieved more

power in the last twenty-five years than any time in history.

Edwards and Kerry have said nothing about reducing the military budget—it's sacrosanct. This is half of the government's operating expenditures. It's full of redundancy, waste, overrun, corruption. It's full of hundreds of billions of dollars of weapons systems designed for the Soviet Union era of hostility. It's full of supporting troops in Western Europe and East Asia, defending prosperous countries who can defend themselves against nonexistent enemies. It's this military budget and the homeland security that is the basic reason we don't have enough money for public works, for good paying jobs, rebuilding and repairing schools, public clinics, public drinking water systems, public transit, libraries. There used to be a time when a Democratic candidate would take on one or two weapons systems. Now they won't touch it at all. And they won't touch the homeland security budget, which is horribly skewed, not smart, not strategic, very wasteful. On NAFTA and WTO, corporate globalization, Kerry and Bush are on the same page.

On issues of corporate crime, Kerry talks better than Bush, but when I proposed a whole series of corporate-crime crackdowns and abolishing corporate welfare subsidies—both of which he's reported as being progressive on in the press—he didn't respond. Then I looked at his website under "crime" ten days ago and he has nothing on crime or on corporate welfare. So in terms of the record, in terms of what he's willing to do, he's pretty similar to Bush on those hundreds of billions of dollars of corporate welfare and trillions of dollars drained or looted from investors, workers, and pension-holders.

On the issue of Iraq, Kerry and Bush are very similar. On the issue of labor law reform, repealing Taft-Hartley, getting rid of all these structural and statutory obstructions for Wal-Mart workers and all the tens of millions of workers who would join or form trade unions, he hasn't uttered a word, nor has Edwards. In fact repeal of Taft-Hartley has been almost verboten in Democratic politics for the last twenty-five to thirty years.

Kerry should be speaking much more clearly on public financing and public elections. He did take the leadership with McCain on fuel efficiency and was defeated 2-1 in the House a couple of years ago, but they did make a valiant effort on that. He's good on the Arctic refuge and some of the forest issues, but on biotech, on chemical/petrochemical industry, on the coal industry, on other industries he has not been as up front as he should have been given his years in the Senate. So, who is pulling the Democratic Party in a progressive direction? It isn't happening that way—the opposite has been happening.

LEWIS: Thank you, Ralph, for pointing out some of the examples of what John Kerry *has* done. And I just want to add one more point on the issue of corporate crime. He took on the investigation of BCCI, which was an international bank that was deeply engaged in doing the wrong

things, and moreover, was directly connected with the Democratic establishment. That was not a small thing and it was, at the time, very courageous. And John Kerry would do far better than Bush on homeland security, e.g., in providing funding to secure our ports and inspect containers that come into our ports. To the question "Who will pull the Democrats in a progressive direction?" Working people are speaking up—unions. You talk about the issues the unions care about, but these unions have leaders, they are not silent. I think they are genuinely representing their constituencies and doing it well.

TIKKUN: Ralph Nader, you ask "Who will pull the Democrats in a more progressive direction?" But some progressives question whether you have helped increase the voices of progressives in the Democratic Party since you ran in 2000. Some of them believe that you had a greater impact before you ran in 2000, and that running for president has decreased, not increased, the impact of progressives in the Democratic party.

NADER: Our citizen groups have been essentially shut out by both parties since the last years of the Carter administration from being able to improve the country as they did in prior years. Even when the Democrats controlled the Congress in 1993–1994, it was just remarkable how reluctant they were to listen to progressives—whether it was Sarbanes in the banking area or others in the corporate crime arena—or how reluctant they were to hold the kind of traditional Democratic Party investigations of corporate irresponsibility that people like Kefauver and Gaylord Nelson conducted in their day.

It's my objective to destroy the two-party duopoly which has redistricted our country into overwhelmingly one-party dominated districts, therefore obliterating any concept of an election, which involves selection. This cannot be denied. The two parties are morally, ethically, and legally responsible for depriving millions of voters—95 percent of the districts in the House of Representatives, as Ann Lewis knows, are noncompetitive, meaning they're either slam dunk Republican (Tom Delay) or slam dunk Democrat (Pelosi). That is a very serious devolution of the very semblance of the two-party system.

LEWIS: But we have a two-party system at the presidential level. You're not denying that. We have a two-party system at the senator level. In fact, on a choice between George Bush, John Kerry, or a third-party candidate, we clearly have a tight election in terms of who will appoint the next attorney general, who will appoint the next Secretary of the Interior, who will make the consumer protection decisions of the Food and Drug Administration and the Agriculture Department. Every one of those will be determined by a presidential election where there is a clear difference between the parties.

NADER: Ann, you're so out of touch. Let's analyze the Democratic Party in terms of defects. They couldn't stop

Scalia. They couldn't stop Thomas. In fact it was 98—nothing for Scalia. Thomas was 52–48 with eleven Democratic senators switching under the eye of Majority Leader George Mitchell. They couldn't stop the tax cut for the wealthy which they say they opposed in 2001—\$1.4 trillion, when they controlled the Senate. They could have filibustered it in 2003. The Food and Drug Administration under Clinton/Gore—according to the estimate of Dr. Sidney Wolf, the leading expert on this for thirty years—was the worst he had seen since he started monitoring it.

LEWIS: Worse than it is right now?

NADER: Yes.

LEWIS: I think what you said about the judges and about the appointments is a pretty powerful argument for why we need a Democratic president in there to make those nominations.

COBB: I think it's important to acknowledge that real systemic change in this country has never come from the two establishment parties. Instead, alternative political parties, so-called third parties, have been responsible for genuine systemic change: the abolition of slavery, women getting the right to vote, the creation of the Social Security administration, unemployment insurance, worker's compensation laws, pure food and drug laws, the direct election of senators. The reality is the entire fabric of what all of us would agree would be the bare minimum for a just and compassionate society was literally woven together by alternative parties. And the two establishment parties fought against those reforms when they were initially proposed. There is a fundamentally important and profound role for third parties to play, at a bare minimum, as an incubator of ideas.

Please understand that the Green Party is not going away. We're getting larger, stronger, and more organized with every election cycle. We're electing more people to local office. We're creating and maintaining ballot lines. By every objective and concrete measure we are growing, and to act as if we will simply kowtow because of this election cycle is a profound mistake.

WOOLSEY: First, with regard to third parties, anytime the Democrats lose because of Green Party candidates I say shame on the Democrats because we ought to be as progressive as the Green Party. Second, you need to be watching Proposition 62 in California. If you're worried about a third party voice, they will be totally disenfranchised if Proposition 62 passes. I think the main problem is how are we going to get middle America—the people in Kansas and Nebraska and North Dakota who love their flags and love their guns and hate to talk badly about their president—to see what's happening to their country and their lives if what they hear is how bad everybody is but the Green Party? It's not going to work. We're going to send them right to Bush or they're not going to vote at all.

There wouldn't be a war in Iraq, we wouldn't be drilling in Alaska, our civil liberties wouldn't have been trampled on

after 9/11 if Al Gore had been in the White House. We know that, and you know that. I'm telling you, if people hear what you're saying, Mr. Nader, they're going to think we're all awful. And believe me, I'm not. And I know a lot of good Democrats who care an awful lot about this country.

NADER: Well, we're going to give your smart proposal on homeland security a lot more energy than your own party will.

WOOLSEY: Well thank you. But actually John Kerry speaks of a smarter way of doing things and I believe that a lot of my smart security ideas have to come forward into the world because we're going to self-destruct some day soon if we don't do something smart about it. But in the meantime, we cannot have those guys in the White House for four



more years. Not because they're Republicans. Not because they're not Democrats. Not because they're not Greens. But because they are evil, and they're going to destroy the United States of America and they don't care. I just hope that you're not going to help them stay on.

NADER: Apparently not evil enough, Lynn, to adopt a progressive agenda that could win in a landslide for them.

WOOLSEY: It won't win in middle America.

NADER: It will win in middle America because middle America wants a living wage, they want health insurance for all, they want their cities and towns repaired and good jobs created. All Kerry says about homeland security, as he ignores your very detailed and sound proposal, is that they're not doing enough of what they are already doing—more money, more this, more that. It's a very blunderbust approach to our military and homeland security budget designed to "me too" him with Bush and take these two issues off the debating table.

TIKKUN: If your analysis is right, Ralph, then I have two

questions for you. One is, why is it that you didn't run in the Democratic Party primaries? If your prediction about the amount of support that exists for this politics is true, might you not have won? Two, why is it that Kucinich, who had many of your same views, and who got the exposure of these nationally televised debates amongst the candidates, picked up so few votes in support?

NADER: First of all, he's fighting an uphill battle with the [Democratic Leadership Council] crowd. Second of all, he didn't raise much money, which immediately rendered him in subclass contention. Obviously he couldn't raise money because he's a critic of major corporations and PACs and trade associations and the whole establishment. The minute you go into the Democratic Primary, you are measured by

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how much money you raise and that's what gave Howard Dean enormous prominence. And then everything flows from that—the publicity, the polls, the whole works—and Kucinich could never really get a foothold. But that doesn't explain why his very sensible proposals to the Democratic platform were stiff-armed, almost autocratically, by the closed-door operation that prevailed.

LEWIS: I was a member of the Democratic Platform Committee and time after time what I heard and saw were Kucinich representatives who came up in an open meeting and said "our concerns have been addressed by the managers. Our concerns are incorporated in the following amendment." And in fact they were quite appreciative, they said, of the way the language had been inclusive. So, they were not shut out and they were not strong-armed and it was a very public process and anyone was welcome to come in and watch. I believe it was on CSPAN.

NADER: Ann, no mention of Global Warming in the Democratic Party platform? Just look at Kucinich's seven de-

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tailed proposals.

LEWIS: I think we do actually talk about global climate change.

TIKKUN: At the meeting we held during the Convention several Kucinich delegates came and said openly that they were extremely disgruntled by what Dennis had done, which was to not provide leadership and push for his positions, but instead tell his delegates that they should "vote their own conscience" which, in effect, meant that there would be no unified presentation of the Kucinich perspective at the Convention.

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—David Cobb



LYNN: It was my impression that it might have been subtle, but the Green Party did carry some weight on the Platform through Dennis.

COBB: As the Green Party's presidential candidate, I think it's interesting to talk about trying to pull the Democrats, but please know that there are millions of us who have simply given up on the idea of the Democratic Party as the electoral arm of the growing movements for peace, racial justice, real democracy, and environmental protection. I appreciate that those of you in this roundtable who are Democrats are trying to move the Party in a progressive direction. But millions of us who are forging a different kind of politics on our own, rolling up our sleeves to do the work to create a citizens' party that is not dependent upon corporate money and does not have to hide its progressive ideals and instead is actually organizing around a new vision of the world.

Homeland security requires a fundamental change in for-

ign policy. The reality is that foreign policy in this country is driven by a transnational corporate empire and is basically being paid for by trillions of American tax dollars, the blood of American servicemen and women, and killing innocents abroad. If we had a foreign policy that was actually based on the American values of liberty, justice, and equality then we would not have this problem with homeland security.

TIKKUN: David, how do you answer the challenge by many Democrats that in fact we're facing a possible repeat of the 1928–32 period in Germany in which the Social Democrats and Communists beat each other up and let the

Fascists win? That in fact this is not a normal election cycle but a moment in which the forces in power are potentially more evil than they have ever been and would be without any further electoral check? That it's time in this one moment to give up the difference and form a "united front" around a candidate who, even though he is far from the progressive ideal, is nevertheless far, far, far less likely to do any of the significantly evil things that a second Bush administration is likely to do?

COBB: Well the first thing that I do is tell the truth. I will criticize John Kerry on his record and will also acknowledge that George Bush and the neoconservative cabal that surrounds him in the White House are qualitatively worse. It is important to understand that George W. Bush is a profound problem. He's an unelected occupant of the White House, installed in what can only be called a judicial coup d'état in this country. So, these are indeed dangerous times. However, we shouldn't kid ourselves. George W. Bush is not *the*

PHOTOGRAPH BY DARREN HAUCK/AP/WIDEWORLD PHOTOS

problem. The problem is a social, political, and economic system that is literally destroying this planet. It's creating a racist, sexist, classist world order and the Green Party is poised to solve the long-term problems by building a full progressive agenda. I trust the American people to be inspired to try to stop Bush and I'm very pleased to see that happening. But silencing our progressive ideals in an effort to get Bush out with this "anybody but Bush" mentality does not advance our shared goals.

TIKKUN: So are you advocating that people in the states that seem to be clearly either for Bush or for Kerry vote for you but that in states where the race is closer they join a united front against Bush and vote for Kerry?

COBB: No, I won't advocate that. I know that many of my supporters *are* advocating that kind of strategic voting—Norman Solomon, Medea Benjamin—but it's not my position. Although I do welcome this kind of support and appreciate it, I'm not advocating it because I can't suggest to people to vote for something that they can't believe in.

TIKKUN: Is there ever a moment for a united front, Ralph?

NADER: First of all, I think your analogy with Nazi Germany is missing a number of things. First of all, we have a check and balance system.

LEWIS: No we don't.

NADER: We have a system where the Senate and the House can block the White House if they want to. It's not a parliamentary system. And a lot of these bad things you've pointed out could have been stopped by the Democrats. The way they fell all over each other except for Russ Feingold to support the Patriot Act. It wasn't even heard in the Senate after a good version was bi-partisanly reported out of the House Judiciary Committee and then replaced by Bush's Patriot Act. The way they anointed George W. Bush as a wartime president with the vote-for-the-war resolution in October, 2002, letting him go around the country beating up on Democrats like Max Cleland without being challenged because, after all, you can't challenge a wartime president. Democrats in their defensive failure bear a very serious responsibility here.

The Democrats have been involved in awful, dirty tricks to try to keep us off the ballot, which I've told Kerry and McAuliffe about and which could lead to a mini-Watergate type scandal for them. Why are they putting so much energy into organizing against me instead of putting their energies into registering nine million unregistered blacks (which Rev. Jackson told me that they are not doing)? Why aren't they going to the working people of this country and talking about daily life issues, like the inadequacy of a minimum wage of \$7 for 2007?

COBB: There may be a real difference between myself and Ralph Nader, though we agree on most issues. I have no belief that one can improve the Democratic Party. I'm working outside to try to build a genuine progressive agenda, rec-

ognizing that the establishment parties will continue to serve the establishment elites. I don't think our task is to nudge the Democrats into a more progressive agenda. The reason to create a genuine independent party is to nurture and inspire a movement that is democratic.

TIKKUN: Why not have both the Greens and Nader join together and publicly make clear to the country that you would withdraw and back Kerry in this election if the Democrats were to publicly and unequivocally commit to backing three or four key policies that you specified and which were clear to the American public? This would not require that you suspend the efforts to build a genuinely independent political party on the local and state levels, but it would show that you could enter into a united front for the sake of defeating Bush if the Democrats were willing to give something concrete in return. And then ask your party members to decide democratically what those demands should be and then vote two weeks before the election about whether the commitment made publicly by the Democrats was credible enough to suspend your own presidential campaign and agree to vote for Kerry?

NADER: You never concede a political movement in exchange for non-binding rhetoric. Last October we sent twenty-five proposals about the common good to the Democrats. What I wanted from the Democrats was that they recognize that our proposals for the common good are vote-getting issues and that they should be taking them up for their own interests without regard to any deal with us. But instead, because of their orientation to serve the wealthy, they'd prefer to "dial for dollars" and be in the grips of the money race rather than in the grip of the people.

TIKKUN: If you and the Greens proposed a set of conditions that were perceived as reasonable and actually in the interests of most Americans and said that if they were adopted you'd drop out of the race and form a "united front" against Bush, that would be seen as an act of incredible statesmanship and you'd earn the respect of millions of people, instead of being dismissed as "spoilers."

COBB: Well, I can't make a deal of that sort. I don't control the Green voters—we are a very democratic group who can't be led into deals of that sort—nor would I try to. In any event, we are not spoiling anything—we are exercising our democratic rights to participate politically.

TIKKUN: Imagine if your demands included a reform of the election system so that it provided either for proportional representation or for a weighted voting system. That would lead many people to think that the Greens were being extremely reasonable, using their potential voting power to push Kerry to endorse and support reforms that in any event the country really needs. And if Kerry didn't do so, he'd face huge pressure from his own constituency.

COBB: Well, the growth of the Greens has not gotten the Democrats to seek such arrangements. And I know that whether or not Kerry wins, we are going to need a strong in-

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dependent political movement in this country actively engaged in taking our country back from the corporate fat cats who are seeking to dominate it. We can have this kind of conversation after this election to keep us from being in this kind of position in 2006 and 2008 and beyond, and we can discuss working on electoral reform together.

TIKKUN: Right now you have a moment of leverage. Why not use that moment to get some serious concessions from the Democrats in the way of important reforms that would benefit the entire country? Similarly, we ask this same question of Democrats: If they are serious about fearing that the Naderites and Greens are going to take something away from them, then why not negotiate with them and offer them something serious, not in terms of personal rewards or deals for the leaders, but something serious in terms of pro-

we saw an increase in health care. By standards that I will argue progressives should measure themselves, we *did* show what a difference we could make. John Kerry's economic policies *would* make a difference because it would produce more and better jobs in the United States. I'm happy to talk about his health care policy—he's got plans that are very specific that would lower the cost of health care for families, increase the number of children getting health care. And energy independence—taking a vow that we will move away from our dependence on Middle East oil is good for us economically and is good for our national security and our foreign policy. He will appoint Supreme Court justices and an Attorney General who support the Constitution—those are progressives goals and I think that's where this debate should go.

We cannot have those guys in the White House for four more years. Not because they're Republicans. Not because they're not Democrats. Not because they're not Greens. But because they are evil, and they're going to destroy the United States of America and they don't care.

—Lynn Woolsey



grams that the Naderites and Greens feel would bring substantial structural reform to some area or other of our political or economic lives? Conversely, you should be offering something real to them.

NADER: Why would we trust such a deal? They make a statement in the midst of the campaign, and we drop out, and then afterwards they would have no trouble reneging on whatever they said they'd do. They do that all the time. These people feel they can get away with anything when it comes to dealing with progressives, because they believe that we have no where to go but them, so they don't feel they have to deliver anything to us.

LEWIS: When we had a Democratic president for eight years, household incomes went up. People's lives got better in this country. We saw an increase in incomes in African American households; we saw more kids going to college;

NADER: When we had boom in the 1990s—that Clinton had nothing to do with; it was the Silicon Valley boom—the majority of workers wages, adjusted for inflation, were less than in 1979 and less than in 1973.

WOOLSEY: When Bill Clinton was fighting for the policies that made our economy much better, we fought to protect people from guns, to raise taxes on the highest wage earners in the country. That's why we lost to Newt Gingrich, because in 1993–94 Clinton was fighting for the right things. So what are we going to do with a middle America that cannot see what's good for them and what isn't? When we did what was right, we lost 78 seats in the house.

TIKKUN: If the Democratic Congress had enacted a fee-for-service health care plan, the election results in 1994 might have been very different.

LEWIS: But please face this election. John Kerry is by far

the superior choice. Electing Kerry will make a difference in people's lives, in economic terms and security terms. This is not about personality and it's not about tactics. It's about what outcome will be best for our country.

NADER: But he has to get things passed through Congress.

TIKKUN: Wouldn't you be able to challenge that more effectively if you were able to offer a quid pro quo of dropping out of the presidential race in exchange for a public commitment to some specific policy?

NADER: Lets bring it into TIKKUN's area. Do you think Kerry would move at all on the issue of Israel? You've excoriated the Democrats for taking positions to the right of Bush on Israel—do you believe that you could actually get him to change his perspective as part of some deal with us? They are not going to move. They are not going to sign up with the Israeli peace movement that is trying to work with Palestinian activists and with people like you to bring peace in the Middle East and a real two-state solution. Both Bush and Kerry have signed up with Ariel Sharon and his policy of continued military occupation.

TIKKUN: They are doing that because they perceive electoral advantage in doing that. If there were a powerful force organized with a different politics, they would change their perspective on that issue.

NADER: But TIKKUN is one of the forces that speaks out strongly on this issue. Yet I imagine that many TIKKUN readers will end up voting for the Democrats. So they know that they can count on your constituency. So what have they given back in return for that loyalty?

TIKKUN: So far, nothing.

NADER: That's what I mean.

TIKKUN: But you're Ralph Nader running for President. We don't have votes to take away from the Democrats in exchange for something in return.

NADER: And if you represented four million votes and were willing to trade them, do you think that they'd budge on that issue?

TIKKUN: Absolutely, yes. Their commitment to Sharon and the Israeli Right, unlike some of the other issues that concern all of us, does not flow from the requisites of defending the interests of the wealthy and powerful in this country. On the contrary, it is arguably the case that the interests of the American elites would be served more by settling the Israel-Palestine struggle, and using the goodwill thereby generated to increase American corporations' capacity to penetrate and dominate Middle Eastern economic markets. This is an issue on which the current policies of the United States run counter to their economic interests, and is dictated by the peculiarities of electoral self-interest and the perception that taking this stand will help win over Jewish votes which may be critical in some swing states.

COBB: For many of us in the Green Party, it's not just a question of the outcome of a particular election, it's rather

about whether we the people of this country can control the institutions that shape our lives. There is a growing awareness that we do not control the institutions of this country, and that even the democratically elected representatives are shackled by a legal and political system designed to protect the property rights of the ultra-wealthy rather than the human rights of individuals. So I'm committed to building a movement that will take this country away from the wealthy and give it back to the people.

TIKKUN: Yet even with all those political limitations, the primary system allowed Governor Dean, who was not in the pocket of the elites, to almost win, which he might have done had he not had such a quirky personality. Ralph Nader might have won had he run in those primaries, despite all the abuse that the media would have directed at him. There is more democratic space in the American presidential primaries than you acknowledge.

GOLDBERG: All the progressive changes that David and Ralph talk about will not be enhanced by the reelection of George Bush. There's a lack of logic and common sense in their position in ignoring the impact and importance of this particular presidential election and doing so under the banner of proposing many other significant changes that our country really does need. Civil rights didn't come about only because JFK was president, but also and importantly because of the movements that were built. I hope the Green Party will be very influential in the future, but I don't see how reelecting Bush could possibly help the progressive agenda. Ralph Nader, your great contribution in the past was not because you ran for president but because you were an advocate for change outside the system and helped develop a new consciousness which actually resulted in some significant changes in our country. The people who get elected president are typically centrists, who then get influenced by movements outside the parties. But I feel that your effectiveness in making change in this country is not being enhanced, but rather compromised, by your presidential campaign. People who idolize and admire you feel less admiring when this becomes your primary focus.

NADER: We've been pushed out of the circles of power for twenty-five years—it was the Democrats' ignoring our agenda consistently through the years that has put me in this position on the outside.

TIKKUN: Well, is there anything progressives can do to influence the discourse inside the Democratic Party, Ann Lewis and Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey?

WOOLSEY: When Congressional representatives think they are going to lose elections because those who support them see them as too centrist, those Congresspeople will move in a more progressive direction. But that's not what they are hearing from their constituents.

LEWIS: Yes, progressives should keep building support for the progressive agenda—and building the infrastructure to give support to people like Congresswoman Woolsey and

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others who really want to do the right thing. After four years of working for Bill Clinton I was more aware than ever of the power of the way that the right wing had built an “echo chamber” that allowed them to have a disproportionate effect on public policy. We are at least as smart and well-organized and we have facts on our side. It’s crucially important for those of us who believe that the real bottom line is measured in the lives of working people to keep building the structures, including building and supporting alternative media.

The decisions being made by progressives in the next few months will have a great importance, so I really appreciate the opportunity to be in this discussion, which I hope will be widely read. We’ve had so many people whose lives

pulled into the web of commercial domination in return for success in a corrupt campaign financing system. They will ally against the dwindling support for civil values that we really care about: tolerance, opportunity, freedom (understood as participation in power), justice, and the proper allocation of public resources. The two parties have proved again and again that if no one is pulling from outside—whether that be powerful civic forces, a powerful labor movement, or third parties and independent candidates at the local and state levels—then in every election we will see both parties moving more and more into that corporate realm. Just watch how Johnny Edwards, now vice presidential candidate, is failing to defend against the corporate assault on trial lawyers and the civil justice system which has

Don't forget that the next president of the United States is likely to choose three or more justices of the Supreme Court. I have confidence that with John Kerry we would have a Supreme Court that would respect civil rights, women's rights, and the Constitution of the United States.

—Ann Lewis



have gotten so much worse over the course of the past few years and I hope all of us will decide to work together in this election.

WOOLSEY: We progressives in Congress don’t need to be dismissed by progressives because we are Democrats. Common sense should teach us in this election that we have a choice between two people—and John Kerry is a decent human being, smart, and if he doesn’t get elected we in the United States are going to be in deep trouble.

NADER: I see the struggle on a broader plane—a struggle between the corporate supremacists with their commercial values and their relentless thrust for controlling everything they can touch in our political economy (including the commercial exploitation of children and undermining parental authority) colliding with our basic civil values that are represented in our Bill of Rights and the Constitution. That conflict will decide how many specific policies will go—foreign and military policies, the allocation of our financial resources. The two parties increasingly allow themselves to be

been protecting wrongfully injured or corporately defrauded ordinary Americans who should have their day in court.

I played inside the Democratic Party for years and years, but there is no leverage inside the Democratic Party anymore for citizen groups. The proof is that the citizen groups that do support Kerry are giving him a free ride, no specific demands to make him confront the corporate interests who are pouring tens of millions into the Democratic National Committee. That’s why we are doing what we are doing. And I believe that my campaign will be speaking to many independents and Republicans, including conservative Republicans, who are furious at Bush for the various ways in which he has abandoned a true conservative agenda but who may not be ready to make the move to the Democrats, and those people may be convinced by my reaching out to them to either stay home or to vote for an independent candidate and not vote for Bush. But I cannot watch passively while the Democrats fail to defend our country from the assaults by the worst elements of corporate domination. □

“Genocide” in the Sudan

Angelia K. Means

[Editor's Note: This essay was completed on July 26. Since the situation in the Sudan is in flux, certain figures may be out of date by the time you read this. Check our website for updates at www.tikkun.org]

In the Darfur region of Western Sudan a war is raging. The Janjaweed, an Arab militia known for fighting on horseback, are attacking and destroying the way of life of the region's non-Arab Black Africans. They are summarily killing men, kidnapping and raping women, and enslaving children. They are poisoning wells to make villages uninhabitable and generally driving the Black African population from the region. This has been going on for the last fifteen months, but until recently it was rarely in the news.

Finally, the world is paying attention. Colin Powell and Kofi Annan recently visited Darfur to tour refugee camps for the internally displaced. There are articles about Sudan (and the refugee camps in Chad) in the paper every day now. At this point, the “facts” are not in dispute. We all know the Sudanese government is lying when its officials deny complicity in the acts of the Janjaweed. (Journalists do not even pretend to be “objective” when interviewing Sudanese officials.) Still, all those with the power to do anything about it have decided to interpret the facts on the ground as “ethnic cleansing” or “appalling atrocity.”

They refuse to say out loud the more accurate name for this wanton killing spree: genocide.

“Genocide” versus “Ethnic Cleansing” versus “Atrocity”

Last week, an article in the *New York Times*, entitled “In Darfur, Appalling Atrocity, but is that Genocide?,” cited officials from the African Union, the Bush administration, and leading NGOs who question whether the Sudanese conflict measures up to the rigorous legal standard set by the Genocide Convention. (Senator and presidential candidate John Kerry is cited as one of the few public officials willing to call the conflict a genocide). The writer comments that the Sudan is a controversial case since, as in Rwanda where some Hutu were perpetrators as well as victims, inter-ethnic

violence also involves intra-ethnic violence. (The Dorok, one Arab group, have been attacked by the Janjaweed along side Black African victims.) I find this “news” piece fascinating, in part because, as an academic, I am accustomed to a certain postmodern discourse that insists that the roles of “victim” and “perpetrator” can never be rigidly defined. Certainly, the postmoderns are right that the dyadic victim/perpetrator logic fails to capture the everyday experience of complex (intersecting) complicity in various “crimes and misdemeanors.” While I accept the analysis of complex complicity, nonetheless, I am deeply troubled by the idea of “postmodern genocide.” In the Sudan, as in Rwanda, there are wrongdoers and those who are wronged.

Unfortunately, now that the U.S. media is paying attention to this “appalling atrocity,” it is focusing on the (obvious) multivalence of violence in Sudan, instead of serving as the fourth estate and holding government accountable for its Orwellian use of terms (and hence avoidance of the legal duty that use of the word “genocide” would trigger). During the Bosnia genocide, Michael Walzer cautioned us to only intervene in cases of “atrocity” and then only to end the atrocity, not to nation-build. In Walzer’s common sense usage, atrocity was synonymous with “crimes against humanity,” including torture, slavery, and, chiefly, genocide. In this case, the word “atrocity” translated a juridical term into ordinary usage, and hence into terms more readily accessible (and perhaps more emphatically relatable) to democratic publics. But contrary to this ordinary usage, the term “atrocity” is now used by officials (and even civil society actors) to avoid the awesome moral and legal duties that are triggered when the word “genocide” is uttered in the public sphere.

For those who want to be more specific and capture the moral outrage associated with “genocide” yet still avoid the word itself, the euphemism “ethnic cleansing” has become the favored term. The terms “ethnic cleansing” and “genocide” may seem equivalent—both indicate that one group of people is being systematically killed by another group. However, the terms—like victims and perpetrators—are not interchangeable. The term “ethnic cleansing” has a long usage. It refers, in continental Europe mainly (though the phenomenon is certainly not unknown elsewhere), to the removal of one group (such as the Huguenots) to achieve the cohesion necessary for state formation and nation-building. The theory is that “one people, one state” lessens internal violence, and actually makes possible the comity of (European) states. “Genocide,” by contrast, is a new juridical term.

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Sudanese refugees
flee fighting in the
Darfour region of
Sudan, January, 2004.

The Genocide Convention, adopted in 1948 and now ratified by most states in the world, defines genocide as the *intent* to destroy, in whole or part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. The *actus reus* of genocide is defined broadly to include not just killing, but also serious bodily or mental harm or even inflicting conditions designed to bring about physical destruction (such as destroying the cultural and sociological preconditions of a people's way of life). Genocide also encompasses the forcible transference of children (through kidnapping and the like) and the attempt to prevent births (through reproductive regulations, an attack on the family, or an attack on women through sexual victimization and dehumanization).

Admittedly, standing alone, the broad language of the Genocide Convention, like the open-ended principles of modern constitutional texts, does not mean much. Like constitutions, this language gains its meaning from interpretation and application in particular cases. In the wake of the Holocaust, the military tribunals in Europe anticipated the Genocide Convention (though these courts were, in truth, mainly concerned with violation of the customary international law norm renouncing "wars of aggression"). The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTFY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) are, however, the juridical institutions that have really given "genocide" its meaning. It is clear from the case law emerging from these two courts that genocide encompasses a range of acts, and a wide family of crimes, including accessory crimes. While the public (and even certain acade-

mics) are obsessed with large numbers of dead people and a transparent distinction between victims and perpetrators, the Courts have indicted and punished for genocide, attempted genocide, and accessory to genocide Serbs, Croats, Bosniac Muslims, Hutu, and Tutsi. Of course, they have indicted some groups more than others because some groups were perpetrators more so than others—this is the limited sense in which numbers matter.

The point is that it is not up to the public—its officials, media, and non-governmental agencies—to decide if X has committed genocide or attempted genocide or a "lesser" crime against humanity (all of which are also indictable by the way). Rather, if there is creditable evidence that the broad definition of genocide is met in a particular case, then the international community, in general (but specifically signatories to the Convention) has a moral and *legal* duty to "prevent" it and "punish" the perpetrators. As with ordinary domestic criminal law violations, evidence of law violation (e.g., forensic evidence and witness testimony) will only be amassed to prove the elements of the crime after the fact. And, as the Holocaust has taught us, this is a crime of such astounding magnitude we never actually want to see a clear case of "genocide" again. Thus, ideally, we would always be in the position of punishing attempted genocide, having preemptively intervened and prevented genocide *simpliciter*.

We can now see that the reason governments split hairs is because official use of the word "genocide" triggers a series of international laws put in place after the Holocaust

to guarantee that this atrocity would never happen again. Specifically, genocide is meant to never happen again *because we have a duty to prevent full-blown genocide and deter future acts by punishing those who even attempt it*. The international community has taken to avoiding the word “genocide” because we prefer moral opprobrium to the actual work of policing international crimes. Samantha Power, in her well-known book on genocide, has argued that governments demote genocide in fact (even as it is elevated in its formal legal status) because states are foremost rational actors. Recognizing “genocide” as a concrete legal duty rather than an abstract moral idea, governments have struggled to turn every possible genocide into *mere* ethnic cleansing, into a *mere* atrocity—or whatever term of moral denunciation that lacks the force of law.

But is it Genocide?

Could there be a less cynical explanation for the international community’s refusal to name the Sudan situation genocide? Is the situation in Dafur actually a case of “ethnic cleansing,” a “natural” outgrowth of a longstanding rivalry between two groups that has gotten out of hand? Is this competition gone awry in the midst of a post-colonial nation-building project or is there a concerted effort by one group to destroy another? More to the point, is ethnic cleansing (when its not used purely as a euphemism) just one motivation amongst many for genocide? Since Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa farmers do have a long history of conflict with the Arab herdsmen in Sudan, the region’s devastation can seem like just another example of ancient differences. This sort of tribalism is familiar anthropology; it “naturally” seems incommensurable, unresolvable.

That argument does not hold, however, in the Sudan. It is true that the rivalry between farmers and herdsmen goes back centuries, but it is also true that it was only in the late 1980s that ethnically diverse rivals (there are thirty-six ethnic groups in Dafur) began identifying themselves as exclusively “Arab” or “non-Arab” and thus using ethnicity as the dominant strategy for political mobilization. (As with many other facts on the ground, the government refuses to acknowledge this sea change, and thus continues to insist that in the Sudan the labels “Arab” and “Black” are meaningless. Perhaps this was once the case. But, as virtually everyone including local “Arabs” and “Africans” attest, this is no longer the case.) Much like the situation in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, the identity differences in Sudan were long a source of conflict without impeding coexistence. At some point, though, long-standing conflict turned into genocidal ideations and then crimes.

In Dafur, Fur-Arab disputes over land and water resources grew more violent as desertification pushed nomadic herdsmen into the territory of sedentary farmers. As a consequence, by the late 1980s nomadic groups responded by uniting to form the Arab Gathering and a paramilitary

consociation, the Janjaweed. In the past year and a half, this consociation—born of ordinary rivalry, everyday prejudice, and an instinct for self-preservation—has evolved into an efficient terrorist organization that is now linked to and supported by the state. (I am aware that, in the current context, the word “terrorist,” like the word “genocide,” is fraught, possibly even racist. However, as with “genocide,” I have in mind a legal definition. The UN has not yet agreed on a definition, but most agree that the term refers foremost to an attack on private persons for political reasons. The concept of “terrorism” thus attempts to further specify the *jus in bello* duty to avoid targeting civilians.)

So, why does the Sudanese state support this terrorist organization, and thus make its violence more “efficient”? One theory is that the government in Khartoum has intervened in an attempt to keep the conflict in Western Sudan from extending the North-South civil war. As has been widely reported, the civil war between the North and the South officially ended with a peace agreement in May. Even though the cease-fire is only theoretical, the agreement between the North and the South has overshadowed the violence in Western Sudan. This agreement, which partitions the country, grants the South the right to exemption from certain Islamist laws and thus grants the South a measure of political autonomy.

As the agreement itself makes clear, the struggle in the whole of the Sudan is over basic rights, like the right to religious freedom. While the Sudan has been divided along North/South lines since independence from Britain in 1956, conflict really intensified in the 1980s when the state came under control first of radical Islamists, and then finally of a religious military dictatorship. Not surprisingly, Animist and Christian populations in the South rebelled against the imposition of Islamist law. Unfortunately, both desertification and theocracy ravaged the Sudan at the same time, escalating longstanding resource competition and producing, for the first time, a balkanized cultural consciousness. The government “responded” to this crisis by supporting the Janjaweed. The result was essentially a “scorched earth” policy, in which the Janjaweed attacked on horseback and the government by air. The end was always the same: village by village, civilians were murdered and their way of life altogether destroyed. As villagers report, the Janjaweed often use racial taunts and clearly aim to disrupt the reproduction of family life by raping and humiliating women (even branding them), and kidnapping and enslaving children.

Preemptive Strike?

In the wake of the North-South agreement, one journalist has described Khartoum’s intervention in the Dafur region of Western Sudan as “a preemptive strike against a possible future partition.” This is Khartoum acting as a “colonial power,” “attempting to assimilate divergent cultural and religious communities into a dominant Islamist

state in order to protect the state from further dissolution." Even though the "state" in this instance is an artifice of colonialism (British then Islamist), the desire to hold the state together is, in some sense, rational. Rational actor motivation, however, is not an excuse for criminal acts. Nor is it an excuse for avoiding the duty to punish criminal acts.

Almost worse than the Sudanese government's rational actor behavior is our complicity in this form of "rationality." Accepting that even democracies are rational actors, Samantha Power believes we must rely on civil society actors to "enforce" international law by holding governments accountable for inaction. I agree that would be best, but I doubt members of mature democratic societies will take up the challenge. The reason, ironically, is that ordinary citizens have internalized the normative discourse of public international law, hence we are opposed to the use of force to resolve conflict. We prefer to see our governments employ sanctions and diplomacy, rather than to literally enforce the law through military intervention.

As exemplified by the hesitance to intervene in Bosnia and Kosovo and the anti-war demonstrations preceding the Iraq war, the citizens of Europe's mature democracies are overwhelmingly opposed to the use of force *whatever the reasons*. In the case of the Iraq war, Tony Blair had argued for (preemptive) self-defense *and* defense of others. He recognized that democracies not only have a duty to defend the democratic way of life, but that they also have a special duty to construct and refine international law and the institutions that support it (which is why Blair treated unilateral enforcement as non-ideal). Still, Blair's argument proved unpersuasive. This is true, in part, because "old" Europe was quite reasonably suspicious of Blair's ally. President Bush's disregard of international law tainted Blair's argument—and, in my view, distracted us from the real debate.

What is really at stake is a peculiar normative paradox: The legal proscription of the use of force that characterizes democracy's development is at odds with the equally compelling (and specifically democratic) duty to enforce the universal rule of law. Much to our credit, we have learned that there is a fine line between conquering others and helping them, which is why many of us would like to heed Walzer's warning and end atrocity without committing ourselves to nation-building. Yet, we have learned that in the course of destroying genocidal regimes, we will *invariably* be entangled in state formation and nation-building, in both constitution-making and the mediation of *kulturkampf*. In other words, if democracies are to take up Power's call to action, we now know that we cannot avoid entanglement in democratization processes that, in the interim, set up old-fashioned protectorates complete with occupation forces that usurp the right to self-determination.

At the end of the day, there is only one way to put an end to genocidal atrocity: establish the rule of law *by the use of force*. And since the perpetrators themselves will often have

engaged in their own rational preemptive strikes, and since democracies will themselves sometimes use preemption in unjustifiable cases, justifiable cases will also be suspect. In the next phase of international law development, we will be challenged to define the difference between "wars of aggression" and "humanitarian intervention," and will have to apply this definition to cases where prevention (and hence preemption) is at issue. This principled disagreement cannot be avoided whatever one thinks of the Iraq War or the earlier (and at the time controversial) Kosovo bombing.

"No More Villages Left to Burn"

As the rainy season approaches, Sudan has been "persuaded" to give aid organizations greater access to the displaced persons of Dafur, and, if necessary, to admit African Union (AU) peacekeepers to the region. After Powell and Annan visited the region, the government even arrested a few members of the Janjaweed. (Approximately forty members of the Janjaweed have now been sentenced for ordinary criminal law violations, such as murder and assault.) Yet, assuming the government's cooperation manages to ameliorate the effects of the humanitarian crisis that it created (and further assuming the world is allowed to witness the token punishment of a few unfortunate Arab horsemen), this does not change the fact that humanity's most basic law has been violated.

In early June, the Blair administration introduced a resolution to the Security Council that would have sanctioned a peacekeeping operation in Sudan. Instead of waiting for the region to react (and thus reinforcing the authority of the AU) or waiting for the Sudanese government to control the Janjaweed (and thus reinforcing the authority of state sovereignty), Western governments should have acted either in concert with the UN or on their own to enforce the law, and thus protect the people of Dafur. We did not do this. Yet, the genocide is subsiding because, as one UN officer put it, there are "no more villages left to burn." (I read this quote in a newspaper with considerably less circulation than the *New York Times*.) The end-state has been achieved. Black Africans have been driven from their ancestral home. Ten thousand are dead. Fifty thousand are unaccounted for. One hundred thousand have fled to Chad. A million are displaced and scattered. We will likely never know how many women were raped or how many children kidnapped.

Will there be no consequences for this crime? Will the world's most powerful and democratic states add insult to injury by refusing to even call this crime by its name? The answer to these questions will depend on whether citizens of democracies take up the duty to recognize and enforce international law. If we do, that recognition will likely influence our assessment of leaders like Tony Blair, who defend the idea of preemption in the face of political controversy, as well as our assessment of those like Senator Kerry, who, although less bold, are willing to call genocide by its name. □

The Best Things in Life Aren't Things

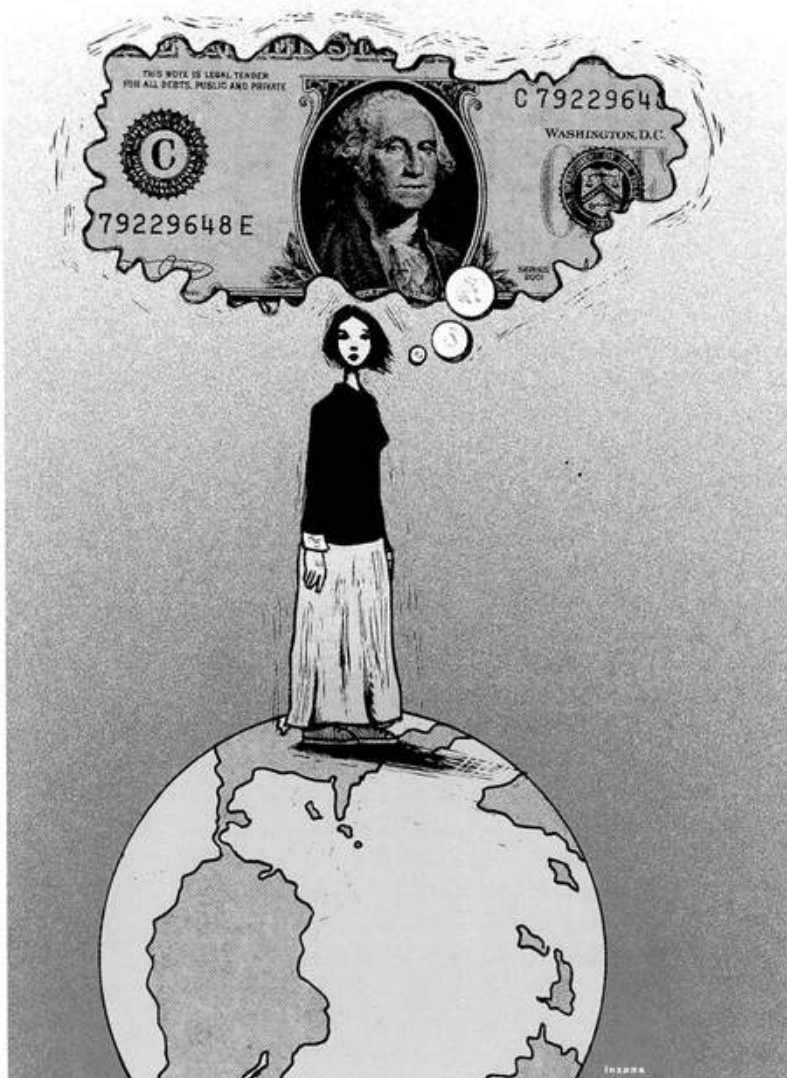
Joann Davis

When Alexis de Tocqueville wrote *Democracy in America* in 1835, he portrayed a nation enthralled by materialism. “I know of no country where the love of money has taken a stronger hold on the affections of men,” opined the young French social critic of his visit to the “New World.”

De Tocqueville's quote came to mind, curiously, after September 11, when President Bush told the nation to “go shopping” to regain a feeling of normalcy. “Go shopping?” I said in disbelief to my husband when I heard our leader's suggestion. Nothing could have been further from our minds. Call me unpatriotic, but in the months that followed, I was mired down in a period of profound reflection. My husband and I felt pulled to the larger questions that often get lost in our day-to-day hustle to make ends meet and blindly get wherever we are going. What really mattered to us? Did we keep our priorities in sight as much as possible and count our blessings? Trying to regain our equilibrium led us to reflect upon how we spent our time and energy.

One day, as we were pulling out of a parking lot near our country home in Dorset, Vermont, my husband pointed out a bumper sticker on the car ahead that bore the words, “The Best Things in Life Aren't Things.” I sat in silence for a moment, contemplating the sentiment. Yes, I thought. Stripped of all pretense, life isn't about what we acquire and own. It is a spiritual exercise rooted in virtue, principle, experience, community, and faith. It is a loving collaboration involving our family, friends, and dearest intimates. It is about the beauty and glory of the natural world in its infinite variety. These are the most meaningful components of our life on earth. At once, these simple words—The Best Things in Life Aren't Things—struck me as words to live by.

Stopping to consider what makes life worth living forced



me to recognize that a spiritual economy—a good will economy, if you like—exists beyond the material economy. The currency in this spiritual economy isn't dollars, euros, or yen. Neither is it stocks, bonds, treasury notes, or investments. It has nothing to do with the financial news or the crawl at the bottom of our television screens indicating stock values. The capital in this spiritual economy is love, caring, and sharing. It is about appreciating our individual and collective gifts.

While the material economy thrives on “scoring the best deal,” “cut throat competition,” and “making a killing,” the

PERSONAL ESSAY

spiritual economy savors the experiences that bind us together. Its focus is on lending a helping hand and being neighborly. On practicing generosity and extending forgiveness. It's about showing compassion, offering comfort to those in distress, and having the courage of our convictions. It's about being willing to stand up and take an unpopular position when the reward may be nothing more than a stronger backbone.

Easier said than done, some might argue. And I would agree. Full of trials and tribulations, life can be a difficult path to walk, fraught with hard choices and moral dilemmas. Throughout this period of deep introspection that my husband and I embarked on, I wondered what there was to guide us as we navigated the treacherous twists and turns in the road.

Worth bearing in mind, I decided, is that the best things in life are life affirming. Thoughts, words, deeds, and experiences that increase our personal well being, individual potential, quality of life, and sense of fulfillment without harming another individual or group are life affirming. The best choices we can make always support life, helping it to unfold and flourish, while bad choices cause destruction and harm, sucking away our life force and dragging everything down around us.

Each day that we rise from our beds, we have a decision to make—what will we choose to do with the life we are given? Will we choose to safeguard our health, develop our gifts, enrich our community, speak and act kindly, and leave the Earth better than we found it? Or will we neglect our bodies, waste our potential, destroy the natural world, and squander the opportunities that come our way? It is each person's prerogative to decide.

I believe the opportunities to practice "life support" fall into four basic areas. These include the choice of life-affirming words, life-affirming thoughts, life-affirming deeds, and life-affirming experiences.

Starting with words, it is important to acknowledge that we influence the world every time we open our mouths. Will we speak life-affirming words that demonstrate respect, love, and kindness? Or will we speak disparaging words of contempt, condescension, and aggression? Sometimes it is scary to witness the verbal contempt that has become common in everyday life. Nowhere is it acknowledged that lowering the bar of civility makes it tolerable to keep lowering the bar until we are all wallowing in the mud of incivility. Harsh words penetrate the spirit, while gentle words signal our desire to eliminate the slings and arrows of outrageous conduct.

And what of life-affirming deeds? Actions really do speak louder than words. Do we push to be first in line, drain the last cup of coffee from the pot, and slam the door on the person in the rear? Or do we pay a visit to a friend sick in bed, share our lunch with the person who forgot to bring his own, and give our seat to the pregnant woman on

the crowded bus? Life on Earth is about living in a community made happier by the spirit of kindness and sharing. As John Donne so poetically noted, "No man is an island...." Self-centered, egotistical, and narcissistic actions that disrespect the group in which we dwell are not life affirming.

A third important category is made up of life-affirming experiences. These are the ones that touch our spirit and make us feel alive. Walking on the beach, reuniting with an old friend, seeing a sunset, holding a newborn—each of these experiences offers a natural high that makes us feel alive and part of a larger and invisible whole. They also expand our awareness of who we are and carry us away from the pedestrian and workaday lives that can weigh down our spirits, giving us some much needed refreshment.

Finally, life-affirming thoughts are an important component of a rich and meaningful life. After all, thought is the seedbed of action. Thoughts of jealousy, anger, revenge, rage, and hostility can give rise to actions of the same nature. Thoughts of love, generosity, and caring can lead to productive and helpful actions. Instead of brooding, worrying, fretting, resenting, and being anxious, how much better to bathe our thoughts in fairness, kindness, consideration, affection and generosity? To be constructive with our thoughts and use them as a staging area for a better tomorrow is an important first step toward changing the world, which must always begin with changing ourselves.

To affirm life or destroy it. In the final analysis, I decided, little else matters. Though American society may be built on the principles of consumerism, though the marketers and advertisers may tell us we need a new gold watch or SUV to be complete, much greater riches are to be found in our relationships, in nature, in virtue, emotion, and faith. None of these intangibles is for sale at the mall where the sign may say that, "Happiness is available—if you find the right store." True peace and contentment have never been for sale. Despite the American love affair with money, despite de Tocqueville's observation, far greater riches can be found in the pursuit of life-affirming values.

Going forward, then, we need only to heed the words of the enlightened ones who have spoken throughout time. It was Jesus who said, "For what has a man profited if he gains the world and loses his soul?" Five hundred years before Jesus, Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu cautioned, "There is no calamity greater than lavish desire." And was it not Proverbs that instructed, "He that trusteth in his riches shall fall"?

Dare we consider that the best things in life aren't things? Along with our spiritual life and connections to one another, are we not wise to elevate and honor the invisible virtues and values that tie us together? Embracing sacrifice and service. Understanding the great importance of moving from the "Me" generation to the "We" generation. Valuing who we are as people instead of what we stuff in our closets.

In the acceptance of these truths, I truly believe, the way forward is forever made clear. □

Gay Orthodoxy Revisited: The Constrained Halakhic Solutions

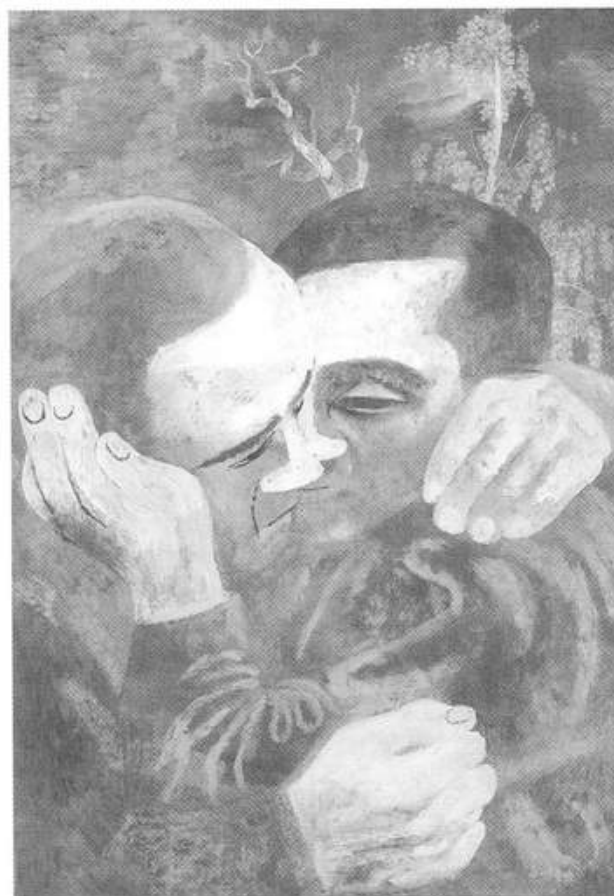
Steve Greenberg

In the fall of 1993, an article entitled, "Gayness and God: Wrestlings of a Gay Orthodox Rabbi," appeared in *TIKKUN* under the pseudonym, "Rabbi Yaakov Levado." I plucked that name out of the biblical account of Jacob's return to Canaan. Jacob is returning from Ur to face his brother Esau. He crosses back over the Yabbok river and there, alone and defenseless, encounters a stranger who wrestles with him until the morning light. At the end of this dark confrontation Jacob pins his attacker and makes an unusual demand: I will not let you go until you bless me! The blessing that Jacob receives at the break of dawn is one of paradoxical power. His mysterious assailant calls him by the name Israel, which he says means "he who has wrestled with God and men and has survived."

Since my early venture out of the closet under the cloak of a pseudonym, I have been "wrestling with God and men." Ten years later, a book by that name is finally finished. *Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition* was published by the University of Wisconsin Press this past spring.

While much has changed in my life and in the world since 1993, the Orthodox community is just beginning to seriously address the question of gay and lesbian inclusion. The most important catalyst for change has been the documentary film, *Trembling Before G-d*, released in the fall of 2001, in which seven characters struggle with their homosexuality and their love of Jewish tradition. I was among the rabbis interviewed in the film and once the film was released, I accompanied the filmmaker, Sandi Simcha DuBowski, to hundreds of post-screening dialogues across North America and around the globe.

The film did for the Orthodox community what the throngs of out and proud gay people have been doing in the larger society. It told our stories to people who had never heard them, and it told them in a familiar way. It articulated not only the pain of its exiled subjects, but also their love of the tradition and their deep faith in God despite it all. Wisely, the film resisted the temptation to provide any answers to



the dilemma that it posed, and in doing so lodged a profoundly disturbing question in the hearts and minds of many.

Nonetheless, the film flirts with despair in its refusal to provide any halakhic resolution. Without a way to put together a socially and religiously integrated life, the subjects of the film can seem naïve if not downright foolish for their persistence. Why stay if the system will never respond, much less change? How does one ally with the tradition and not become a participant in one's own degradation? Four years before work on the film had begun, these same two questions gnawed at my soul and pressed me to begin thinking and writing.

In the book I offer two distinct sorts of resolutions. The first is a midrashic reading of the condemning text in Leviticus 18:22, "And with a male you shall not lie the lyings of a

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woman, it is an abomination.” Basing my interpretation upon rabbinic traditions I suggest that this verse in Leviticus ought to be read in a way that prohibits sex used as a tool of domination and humiliation. I develop and support this re-reading of Leviticus in order to demonstrate that it is not the biblical verse in Leviticus, per se, that stands in the way of sanctioning a life of intimacy and companionship for gay people. We might be quite vigilant in our fulfillment of the Torah by abominating the use of sex to abuse, debase, or humiliate and still celebrate the love between two men or two women.

However, having demonstrated that such a traditionally based yet permissive reading is possible, I then admit that for the foreseeable future, few in the Orthodox community will be willing to accept such a radical departure from the normative code. If I intended in my writing to provide gay Orthodox Jews with some realistic hope for inclusion, a midrashic rereading of Leviticus would not be sufficient.

In the latter part of the book I accept the possibility that even if the law were to remain unchanged, its application could still be reconsidered. Increasingly, this approach is finding appeal in Orthodox settings as people struggle to balance respect for the millennial tradition alongside real care and concern for lesbian and gay individuals who want to remain inside the community.

Presently there are two Orthodox responses to homosexuality offered by halakhic authorities that could ground policies of welcome for gay and lesbian members. The two solutions are similar in strategy though different in emphasis. While the first has been around for some time it has not really been given broad communal attention until recently. The second is just beginning to be considered by rabbis and congregants. They are both thoughtful attempts to transform what is still considered by many to be an abomination into a simple and somewhat ordinary human failure. These halakhic arguments may be able to slowly nudge communities toward understanding and tolerance, albeit within rather constrained frameworks.

O'ness–Duress

The first of these halakhic resolutions employs the legal principle of *o'ness rabmana patrei* (literally: the Merciful One absolves anyone who acts under duress). Individuals under duress are not considered culpable for their actions. According to the law, no person can be held responsible for an act over which she or he has no control. Deprived of free will by a psychological condition, gay people could be supported to do the best that was in their power to do.

Rabbi Norman Lamm, the former President of Yeshiva University, wrote an article on homosexuality in 1974 for the Encyclopedia Judaica Year Book in which he proposed the idea that at least some homosexuals might be considered “under duress.” Since the Talmud considers freedom of will to be a prerequisite for legal and moral culpability, ho-

mosexuals under the “duress” of their sexual orientation would be exonerated. The act would remain an abomination, but individuals afflicted with homosexual desire would garner extraordinary pastoral compassion and communal tolerance.

Lamm excluded what he termed “ideological” homosexuals from his ruling. Gay people “who assert the legitimacy and validity of homosexuality as an alternative to heterosexuality” would not be deemed “under duress” according to Lamm. Only those homosexuals who had attempted to overcome their desires and failed and who “readily admit [homosexuality’s] pathology could be considered under the ‘duress’ of a psychological condition.” For Lamm, the defense of duress requires an acknowledgment of both the negativity of the sexual behavior and the pathology of the compulsion.

In 1993, in an article in the *Jerusalem Post*, Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, a prominent Modern Orthodox rabbi now heading a community in Efrat, Israel, suggested that an even broader application of the principle of *o'ness* might be possible. While homosexuals are portrayed in a rather negative light in the beginning and end of the essay, in the middle of the piece Rabbi Riskin waxes passionate in their defense:

But how can we deny a human being the expression of his physical and psychic being? If there’s a problem with the kettle, blame the manufacturer. Is it not cruel to condemn an individual from doing that which his biological and genetic make-up demand that he do? The traditional Jewish response would be that if indeed the individual is acting out of compulsion, he would not be held culpable for his act.

Rabbi Riskin was obviously troubled by the theological bind that so torments faithful gay people and others who empathize with their situation. He implies that if homosexual desire is an innate feature of a person’s physical and psychological make-up, then the category of *o'ness* might legitimately apply, beyond the discrete circumstances of action, to a whole sexuality.

Until recently the *o'ness* proposal didn’t make much of a dent in the rabbinic community’s approach to homosexuality. The characterization of sexual passion as beyond freedom of choice has met with significant halakhic and moral criticism. Nonetheless, there are growing numbers of rabbis who have been willing to use the category of *o'ness* as a hook for a policy of “special consideration.” While not suffering from a full-fledged mental illness, the homosexual transgressor should be spared the full consequences of his sin on the grounds of a basic innate desire that is fundamentally not chosen.

O'ness provides Orthodox rabbis with a platform for distinguishing between toleration and social transformation, between sexual orientation and sexual liberation. Those physically and emotionally capable of functioning heterosexually would be duty-bound to marry and to fight

temptation. Those who have no desire at all for the opposite sex and who are powerfully sexually attracted to members of the same sex would be considered “under duress” and given the opportunity to make the best of the situation. On the basis of *o’ness*, Orthodox rabbis could ground policies that formally accept out gay people as full fledged synagogue members.

Notably, the category of *o’ness* contains within it a claim about celibacy. While limits on sexual expression are part of the fundamental framework of human civilization, the life-long closing of all avenues of sexual expression would be understood as unrealistic. Rabbi Dr. Nathan Lopez-Cardozo, an Orthodox rabbi interviewed in DuBowski’s film puts it this way: “It is not possible for the Torah to come and ask a person to do something which he is not able to do. Theoretically speaking it would be better for the homosexual to live a life of celibacy. I just would argue one thing—it’s completely impossible. It doesn’t work. The human force of sexuality is so big it can’t be done.” *O’ness* is the halakhic category that best portrays the unrealistic demand of life-long celibacy. While falling short of the ideal, monogamous gay partnering could be seen as the most holy life choice available to gay and lesbian people.

O’ness provides the halakhic grounding for Hillel’s common sense adage, “Judge not your neighbor until you stand in his place.” Homophobic remarks are painfully common in traditional synagogues. Understanding homosexuality as *o’ness* helps rabbis to become public advocates of the protection of homosexuals from persecution and abuse, in the synagogue, in the local community, and in the larger political arena as well.

The halakhic category of *o’ness* is perhaps the most creative frame available to Orthodox rabbis through which they can open their doors to gay couples without changing the fundamental rule on homosexual relations. Until recently, it was the only frame.

Tinok Shenishbah—*The Captured Child*

The second halakhic solution has been proffered by Rabbi Chaim Rapoport, an Orthodox congregational rabbi and a member of the Cabinet of the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain and the Commonwealth. He recently published a scholarly book entitled *Judaism and Homosexuality: An Authentic Orthodox View* that treats the relevant halakhic and pastoral issues.

Rabbi Rapoport rejects the notion that practicing homosexuals are formally under the duress of a psychological condition. Instead, he relieves homosexuals from full agency and culpability by portraying them as victims of cultural mis-education. Rapoport describes the sexually active gay Jew as falling under the category of a *tinok shenishbah ben bakum*, a Jew captured and raised from infancy by gentiles.

The halakhic category was created in Talmudic times in response to real abductions of children who later needed to

be integrated into Jewish communal observance. Such individuals, it was taught, could not be held accountable for their lack of belief or observance. The unruly behavior of people not reared in a Jewish environment or instructed in Jewish law and lore should be taken in stride. They should be embraced and moved gradually from ignorance to knowledge and from disregard of the law to respect for it.

The Talmudic category was expanded by Maimonides as a broadly applied leniency when dealing with the children and grandchildren of heretics. The original Karaites, a sectarian group rejecting the rabbinic oral tradition, were to be harshly rebuked for having actively broken away from normative Jewish belief and observance. However, “their descendants are like children who have been taken captive among them. The status of this second generation is comparable to that of an individual who has been coerced.... Therefore it is proper to influence them to return in repentance and draw them near with words of peace until they return to the ever-flowing Torah.”

In the nineteenth century Rabbi Zvi Hirsh Chajes denounced the Reform movement but limited his condemnation to the leaders of the movement. Rank and file Reform Jews were to be considered like “captured children.” Writing over a century later in the aftermath of the Holocaust, Rabbi Shimon Schwab, a leader of German Orthodoxy, maintained that even “those who have been brought up in a Torah-true atmosphere” but have become disillusioned as a result of despair and nihilism, ought to be treated as “captured children.” The lack of faith and observance due to the “total eclipse of Divine Providence” during the Holocaust was not to be considered a willful choice. Such rejection of traditional religious life, no matter how angry and insistent an individual might be, was deemed to be a consequence of religious trauma rather than rebellion. The contemporary Orthodox community has generally adopted this approach to all non-observant Jews, preferring to consider them, halakhically speaking, more like “captured children” rather than rebellious sinners.

Rabbi Rapoport derives from these sources that sexually active homosexuals who have been seduced by the permissive strains of Western cultural values might very well be considered captured children. He writes,

A careful appraisal of the “conditioning” of an individual sexually active homosexual may well lead to the conclusion that the person in question ought to be granted the status of *tinok shenishbah*, with its attendant ramifications.... We ought to apply to him the verdict of Maimonides, who declares that “he is to be regarded as victim of compulsion” to whom we must reach out with “words of peace” and “thick bonds of love.”

In a sense, the category of *tinok shenishbah* is a sociological application of a psychological principle. *O’ness* refers to a psychological condition of individuals that diminishes their agency and so their culpability; *tinok shenishbah* refers

to a social condition that miseducates people, and so likewise diminishes their agency and culpability. *O'ness* treats gay people as psychologically deficient while *tinok shenishbah* treats gay people as uniquely vulnerable to a morally deficient society.

For some Orthodox gay people *o'ness* and *tinok shenishbah* are perfect ways to sustain the tradition as it has always been, while replacing hatred and fear with understanding and tolerance. For others, these solutions fall painfully short of providing an adequate solution to the dilemma. Orthodox gay people who have come out of the closet tend to feel that these characterizations of their experience simply do not ring true. They feel neither under duress nor captured by a gentile consciousness. They do not experience their sexual orientation as either a psychological illness or the result of libertine social values. Personally, I find myself both moved by these rabbinic attempts at compassion and also deeply troubled by them.

Rav Noah

My first encounter with conditional tolerance happened when I was in the last few months of my closeted existence. A gay friend asked a favor of me. He wanted to know how his Rav would respond to the issue of homosexuality. His Rav was Noah Weinberg, the founder and director of *Aish HaTorah*, a *yeshiva* for returnees to Orthodox Judaism. Since its beginnings in 1974 Aish has grown into an international enterprise, counting thirty branches worldwide with teachers conducting classes for business people and seminars for young seekers. From Aish International in Jerusalem, Rav Noah continues to run his local yeshiva along with his expanding franchises.

He is a rough and tumble man from Baltimore, Maryland, where his father and then his brother once headed the *Ner Yisrael Yeshiva*. Rav Noah's American ease, his football coach manner and his sense for the spiritual and psychological troubles of the baby boomers and their children have made *Aish* one of the most successful religious renewal efforts in North America and Israel.

Before I went to the meeting with Rav Noah I sent ahead the *TIKKUN* article, "Gayness and God," so that we would save time. Self protectively, I introduced myself as Rabbi Yaakov Levado.

The meeting began with Rav Noah's warm assurance that there was no way to know the weight of God's judgments. "We all sin. You, like everyone else, struggle with the *Yetzer Hara* (evil inclination). You win some, you lose some. You try to do the right thing, you fight it. That's all you can do. Do your best to fulfill the *mitzvot* (commandments). That's all God asks of you."

Orthodox gay people do not experience their sexual orientation as either a psychological illness or the result of libertine social values.

He did not attack or condemn. He compared a Jew who has gay sex to a Jew who violates the Sabbath. He had no taste for the vilification of either sinner. In comparison to other rabbis I had spoken to, Rav Noah was remarkably sympathetic. In the beginning of my journey I would have been very comforted and encouraged by him. However, being where I was in my journey, I was no longer so impressed.

"Rav Noah, if you read the article you understand that I do not fight it anymore, I embrace it. Gay desire, like straight desire, surely demands measures of discipline and control. But the desire and its fulfillment are no longer fundamentally sinful for me."

"Well, it's understandable," he replied. "Once you have accustomed yourself to live with a sinful behavior that you cannot overcome, it no longer feels like sin. Ok, so if you must sin, then do so. I just insist that you keep it to yourself, that you not turn sin into pride."

He was trying very hard to be as generous as he felt he could be. Still unsatisfied, I told him that I wanted a life of love and of sexual fulfillment that would somehow fit into a Jewish framework. He appeared agitated at my refusal of his kindness. "I want a community where I can have a partner, not a private obsession." No longer suppressing his frustration, Rav Noah insisted. "Look, you can't openly come into the shul with a lover. No, no! Let's

say a single man masturbates to pornography—hardly an attractive quality, but he's single and he can't help himself. OK. So, that's where he is. But would you think it appropriate for him to announce it, to wear an 'I masturbate to pornography' button in Shul? Would you publicly claim to be a proud masturbator?"

I sighed. How could I explain to Rav Noah how his example so utterly misrepresented my life. I was angry at the reflection of my desire for a shared intimate life with a partner as shameful or pornographic. I wanted to ask him why my presence with a partner at a synagogue dinner would be any more sexually explicit than his presence with his wife? I calmed myself and thought for a moment how to communicate to him on this point. I asked him if I might speak a bit personally and he told me that I should speak my mind.

I asked him to imagine a circumstance. Suppose your wife goes to bed exhausted one night and the following morning she will have to wake up unusually early. When you get up she is still fast asleep, so you go to the kitchen and prepare her a cup of coffee just as she likes it. You set the cup down on the night table and then you wake her gently with kisses. Imagine how you might feel when she opens her eyes, when she reaches for your hand, when she sees the cup of coffee on the night table and smiles at you tenderly.

Without waiting for his response I said to him, "Imagine

now being told that these ordinary expressions of love, intimacy, and affection were pornographic, sinful, abominable? Could you live with such a representation of the most tender and loving center of your life?" By this point Rav Noah had become agitated and upset. I too lost it, not in anger, but in humiliation and tears. The meeting concluded badly soon afterwards.

Rav Noah did not explicitly talk about *o'ness* or *tinok shenishbah*, but his approach was intuitively grounded in both of them. He freely admitted the difficulty of overcoming a sexual obsession, and this one in particular. Whether the forces working against observance were psychological or social, he grasped that these were formidable personal challenges. He could understand how one might succumb to such powerful sexual pressures, but the possibility of an alternative sexuality was simply unimaginable for him. He especially could not abide the possibility of integrating gay love into a coupled life, a familial life, a communal life, and ultimately, a holy life ... and of course this is what people most genuinely need and desire.

The bottom line for Orthodox communities is not whether a full-fledged halakhic solution is possible now. The real issue is whether religious communities can employ Lamm, Riskin, Rapoport, or any other halakhic authority to become truly welcoming of gay and lesbian people and their families. As constrained as these two solutions are, they do provide rabbis with a hook for toleration and understanding. While neither approach would automatically make people comfortable with openly gay couples in the synagogue, they could reasonably be applied that widely.

Were we to require absolute agreement, we would necessarily fail. From a gay perspective, the underlying assumptions of *o'ness* and *tinok shenishbah* are very problematic. Gay people cannot reasonably be required to internalize the claims that we are either mentally ill or victims of a debased social milieu. However, gay people can be expected to understand that their hard won self-acceptance cannot be imposed upon the community either.

Instead, everyone could be encouraged to adopt a policy of inclusion, grounded upon divergent rationales. Many concrete realities have been born of a shared policy constructed on the basis of divergent reasoning. Gay Jews will understand that rabbis just cannot go further than these leniencies and rabbis will understand that gay people cannot actively internalize the assumptions upon which they are based. What they will both agree to vigorously is the inclusion of gay people in the life of the traditional Jewish community.

Some authorities will not want the leniency of these positions to generate increased social comfort with gay people and especially with gay couples. Such rabbis are invested in the stigma of homosexuality above all else. Others I hope will be willing to truly welcome gay and lesbian people into their communities and forgo the degrading conditions of si-

lence and self-negation. As well, gay couples in Orthodox shuls will need to exercise a modicum of care not to turn their honesty into grandstanding.

What will happen over time no one can tell. But it is likely that deeper and more thoroughgoing solutions will appear in the context of communal sharing and under the sway of the human relationships that will result. One might hope that over time we will come to fear each other less and enjoy each other's company more. Solutions often lie not in imposing ideologies from one side or another, but in nourishing our curiosity about one another and then living with the ambiguities. It is my fervent hope that in time congregations will find various ways to set aside their discomforts and that gay and lesbian people will find the courage to risk their hearts for the sake of coming home. Many of us are ready to be woven back into the life of our communities, to share its joys and sorrows, its burdens and delights—if only a door is left open and a light is left on. □

Peace in a time of war

A puddle of amber light
like sun spread on a table,
food flirting savor into the nose
faces of friends, a vase
of daffodils and Dutch iris:

this is a evening of honey
on the tongue, cinnamon
scented, red wine sweet
and dry, voices rising
like a flock of swallows

turning together in evening
air. Darkness walls off
the room from what lies
outside, the fire and dust
and blood of war, bodies

stacked like firewood
burst like overripe melons.
Ceremony is a moat we have
crossed into a moment's
harmony, as if the world paused—

but it doesn't. What we must
do waits like coats tossed
on the bed, for us to rise
from this warm table
put on again and go out.

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The Privilege Gap

Sidney Schwarz

I do a lot of talking about social justice. It is my job. But there is often a significant distance between the Jewish community's talk around the issue of justice and its walk. I am not innocent of the indictment. I often find that the time to practice what I preach is all too limited. Pirke Avot (1:7) teaches: "it is not the teaching but the doing that is the essential thing." I have this passage posted prominently near my desk as a reminder. It is necessary because the walk is so much harder than the talk. It is easy to despair.

I reflect on this reality because of an experience I just went through trying to "adopt" and rehabilitate a homeless African American man. After a year and a half and countless hours of effort, David Bratton is no better off today than when I started. And yet, I don't regret a single hour of the time I spent trying to help him.

During Christmas week, 2001, I brought David Bratton to a Friday night Shabbat service at Adat Shalom, the Reconstructionist synagogue which I helped to found in 1988. He captivated all those in attendance with his magnificent voice and soulful presentation. He also touched our hearts with his story, which led to a kind of communal adoption of David, an effort which I tried to coordinate. I engaged significant numbers of members of the congregation in the effort. Week after week in shul, people would ask me: "How is David doing?"

I've come to think of David's story, and my community's attempt to help him, as a modern day parable on what I call "the privilege gap." It points to the challenge faced by those of us who both promote and engage in "mitzvah work" because it is evidence of the deep structural flaws that exist in our society that conspire to frustrate well-meaning attempts to rectify social inequity. But even more importantly, it is a valuable piece of Torah on how we measure "success" as we try to reach out to the most vulnerable members of society. It makes my encounter with David Bratton a story worth telling.

Chapter 1

It is Christmas Day, 2001, and my son Danny and I are spending the day volunteering for Food and Friends, a social service agency in downtown Washington, D.C. that brings food and companionship to shut-ins throughout the

city. We get trained, receive our home visitation assignments, and drive off with baskets of foodstuffs and addresses to neighborhoods where middle-class Jews would normally fear to tread. The stops are, in and of themselves, an education.

Get closer to the pain

One of my activist rebbes is Harold Moss. A black scientist who worked as a researcher at the National Institute of Health, he walked away from his comfortable middle-class life to become a homelessness activist. As Danny and I made our visits, one of the lessons I learned from Harold Moss kept ringing in my head: "You can't begin to help until you start to understand; and you can't begin to understand until you get closer to the pain."

Jews have an enviable track record of compassion for the downtrodden. We express it in a variety of ways. Yet for most of us, it is done at arm's length, several steps removed from the pain. Check writing has taken the place of *chesed* work, face-to-face acts of compassion. It is certainly safer that way. But the Talmud tells us that if we are looking for the Messiah, we will find him by the gates of the city, bandaging the wounds of the lepers. The lesson the Talmud is teaching is that there is no global salvation until we engage in one to one acts of lovingkindness. Or, perhaps more accurately, saving the world is secondary to personal acts of *chesed*, of compassion. If enough people give priority to the latter, we will have done the Messiah's work ourselves.

Danny and I made our last drop off in the neighborhood where Harold Moss established a house he calls the Olive Branch. It is a place for his wild assortment of lieutenants for the war he wages against homelessness in D.C.—from guys he has pulled off the street to young people who have dropped out of college or run away from their middle-class homes to save the world. We stopped in. I found Harold, and we enjoyed catching up with each other's lives. He invited us to Zachaeus Soup Kitchen, run by the Olive Branch out of the basement of First Congregational Church. It was Christmas Day and the Olive Branch was throwing a party for the homeless in addition to providing a Christmas dinner. It was only after we spent some time talking with the homeless at the soup kitchen and were getting ready to leave that one of the homeless men stepped up to the stage where a band had been playing. He took the mike and sang a song called "Dance like David Danced," an African American spiritual with which I was unfamiliar. It was a song

Rabbi Sidney Schwarz is the founder of PANIM: The Institute for Jewish Leadership and Values. His latest book is Judaism and Justice: Values, Community and Identity, co-authored with Josh Perry (Behrman House, forthcoming).

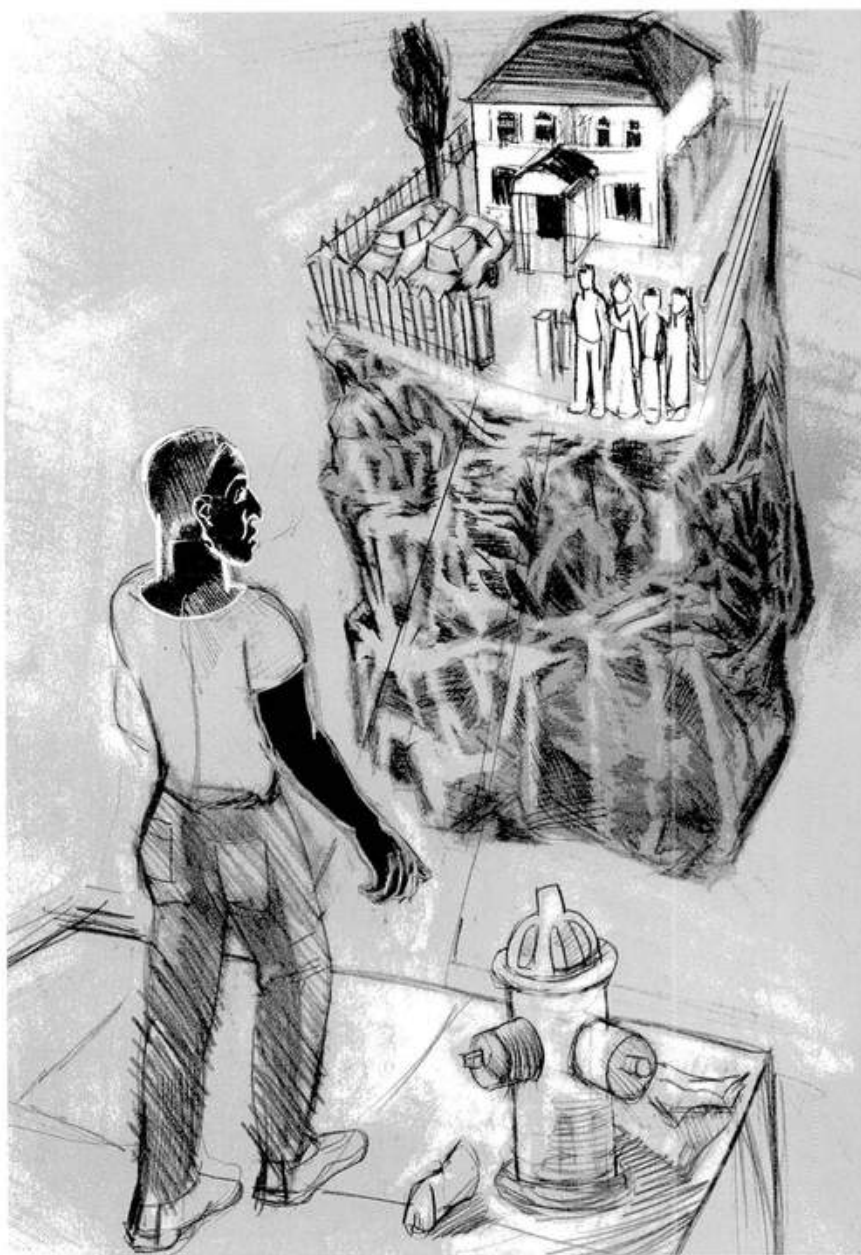


ILLUSTRATION BY STEVEN RUSHEVSKY

about King David and the joy of prayer. I was mesmerized.

The homeless man was David. I approached him and complimented him on his singing, and he beamed. He proceeded to tell me a little about his life. Raised in D.C., he got into some trouble with drugs and did jail time for robbing a bank. He found Jesus in prison and then, with the help of a prison chaplain, spent some time at a seminary in St. Thomas after serving his sentence. He came back to D.C. to care of his ailing mother but had not yet found work and was living on the street. Moved by his story and drawn by his personal charisma, I invited him to come and sing a couple of songs at an Adat Shalom Friday night service that I was to be leading two nights later. David was ecstatic and game. I gave him twenty dollars and my phone number, and told him to meet

me at a metro stop near my home at 4 P.M. on Friday.

David arrived exactly on time, reinforcing the trust that I had placed in him over the skepticism of some of my closest "advisors." I brought him to the house to wash up, offered him some clothes, and then we planned how he would plug into the kabbalat shabbat service. At the service itself, David sang two songs, "Dance like David Danced" and an original composition he wrote about the challenges of growing up in an urban ghetto. I encouraged David to say a few words about himself between songs and he was characteristically candid. At the oneg, David attracted a crowd of admirers and well-wishers. The next week when I posted a summary of the story on the Adat Shalom listserve and made the suggestion that we set out to help David get back on his feet, I was flooded by offers of money and job leads.

Chapter 2

Truth be told, I am not new to the enterprise of adopting the homeless. The organization that I lead, PANIM, brings groups of Jewish teenagers from around the country to Washington for leadership seminars on Jewish values and social responsibility. Some years ago I started to bring them onto the street to bring clothing and food to the homeless. But the handouts were only an excuse for the conversations that I encouraged the teens to have. Week after week I would see middle-class Jewish teens sit

on the ground next to a homeless person asking them to share their story. They heard from people whose lives were far removed from their own experiences: men who fought in Vietnam and came back, broken in spirit with no real job skills; people whose dependency on drugs or alcohol made them unemployable; people who were raised in broken homes and dysfunctional communities and who never had the support or the opportunities that these Jewish kids took for granted; scores of individuals who actually worked at minimum wage jobs but who did not earn enough money to pay for both housing and food.

This experience was Economics 100, Sociology 100, and Psychology 100 all rolled into one. Even more importantly, the experience allowed the teens to put a face on "the

homeless," to personalize them. They came to appreciate the humanity of those who had fallen to the fringes of our society. They empathized with their stories, felt more than a tad self-conscious about their own privileged status, which they had neither earned nor appreciated, and were motivated to do something to help. Because of these critical lessons I called the program, which we still do to this day, "Street Torah."

Having orchestrated hundreds of encounters between Jewish teens and the homeless, I suppose that with David Bratton I was attempting to take the experience one step further. What would happen if someone like me, a person with significant resources, contacts, and commitments, took a person who was born into totally different circumstances and had none of the opportunities that I enjoyed, and helped him turn his life around? Don Quixote, watch out!

Our family got close to David Bratton. Some might say too close. We didn't leave the oneg shabbat until 10:30pm. I didn't have the heart to send David back downtown to spend the night on the street in the dead of winter when just an hour earlier he stood on our bimah and inspired us. With my wife's permission, we brought David home for the night. We learned a lot more about David that night. With our kids around the blow-up mattress in the family room, David told us about being raised by a single mom. With no father in his life, he joined a gang with strong male role models, and all the wrong kinds of lessons. He was party to numerous crimes well before he was caught and convicted for bank robbery. He fathered a son he hadn't seen in years. His siblings were knee deep into criminal activity as well. He began taking drugs but went clean when he found Jesus in prison. Not your typical house guest! By the time we brought David to the metro the next morning, we had gotten a crash course in urban America and an introduction to the life experience that is the lot for tens of thousands of Americans who live within a few miles of our homes.

Over the next few months, I became David's sponsor and friend. He came to call me "brother Sid." With money that our congregation contributed, I co-signed a lease for an apartment in Northeast D.C. and put down a month's rent and a security deposit. We moved him in. We got a half-dozen job leads and he got a job as a classroom assistant at a private school in Virginia specializing in troubled kids that the D.C. school system couldn't handle. Several of our members spent time with him, helping him negotiate and access D.C. social services, a procedure that is mystifying

and daunting to many who are most in need. We gave David money for transportation and food, asking him to sign a note promising to pay it back, following Maimonides' dictum that a loan is preferable to an outright gift to the poor as it helps to preserve their dignity. During this time, David reconnected with his 15-year-old son and took him on some outings. While I had my share of frustration working with David, I thought we were making some progress in getting his life together.

Chapter 3

I believe that the privilege gap is the central moral question of our time. In 1960 the income of the richest 20 percent of the world's population was 30 times greater than the income of the poorest 20 percent. Today it is more than 80 times greater. Over 1.3 billion people in the world live in abject poverty, earning less than \$1 a day. Every day, some

30,000 children under the age of 10 die of hunger or hunger-related diseases. That is more than 1,000 children per hour!

In America, one in four children grows up in poverty. Over the past twenty years, the social safety net—long a commitment America made to those at the bottom of the earning spectrum—has been devastated. With much of the responsibility turned over to the states, it is now harder than ever for poor people to qualify for food stamps, low income housing, health care, aid for families with dependent children, and subsidized day care. The list goes on. The rare state that is not facing looming budget deficits today dares not be more generous to the poor lest it become a magnet for

In America, one in four children grows up in poverty. Over the past twenty years, the social safety net—long a commitment America made to those at the bottom of the earning spectrum—has been devastated.

more poor people. A person working 40 hours a week at the minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour cannot afford to both feed and house a family in urban America, so we have the working poor in shelters or on the street. The minimum wage today is 21 percent lower relative to costs than it was in 1979. At the behest of the current Bush Administration, our Congress just passed the largest tax cut in history, primarily favoring middle- and upper-income individuals.

America, a country that prides itself on equal opportunity, has, over the past thirty years, become less and less equal. The bottom 20 percent of Americans earn 4 percent of the national income. The top 5 percent of Americans earn 21 percent. In 1973 the top 5 percent earned 11 times more than the bottom of 20 percent. Today they earn 20 times more.

Yet despite the growing affluence of the privileged few, any candidate who suggests that we use taxes as a way to redistribute income and narrow the gap between rich and

poor cannot win an election. What we have learned over the past thirty years in America is that when middle- and upper-income Americans are given the choice between being able to shelter more of their long-term capital gains so that they can buy a second home or an upscale car, or take a more exotic vacation, versus allowing poor people to live with a modicum more dignity, most of them will choose the more self-serving alternative. The ongoing statistic that poor people give a higher percentage of their income to charity than the wealthy is the most conclusive evidence that there is no more stubborn addiction in America today than our addiction to money.

Let me now bring this a bit closer to home. Jews, as a group, are in the top tier of wealth and income in the wealthiest country in the world. We have traveled a long distance from the pain that Harold Moss taught me about and which is so critical to raising consciousness and effecting moral behavior. Not surprisingly, most Jews are happy that this distance is there. And I worry for our Jewish collective soul.

This year I gave a group of Jewish teens a hypothetical problem in a talk that I was giving. Assume that you are a first-year attorney in a Wall Street law firm earning \$90,000 a year. After your first three months on the job, the janitors in your office building go on strike and form a picket line. They are asking to be paid a living wage because they can't support their families on the minimum wage they are bringing home. What do you do? So I wait for some socially conscious and Judaically based answers to spew forth: take up a collection to support the workers and their families during the strike; offer pro-bono legal advice to the union; approach the firm's partners with a plan for everyone to reduce their compensation by 1 percent so that the janitors can be paid a living and livable wage. The first hand goes in the air. The student's plan: fire all the strikers and find others to take their place for the same wages, if not less!

Exercising more than a little self-restraint, I stayed calm, and other students in the room took on my first respondent. But increasingly, I find Jews callous not only to the growing privilege gap between themselves and the rest of humanity but also unwilling to even acknowledge that it is a moral problem. If most of the world suffers from not enough—not enough food, not enough water, not enough health care, not enough literacy, not enough adequate shelter or housing—Jews suffer from too much of everything. We have become the poster children for American consumerism.

I think that the rabbis were onto something when they designated chapter 58 of the book of Isaiah to be read as the haftarah on the morning of Yom Kippur: "It is not the fast that I, God, desire. Rather it is freeing those who are oppressed, breaking the yoke of servitude, sharing your bread with those who are starving, bringing the cast off poor into your house, clothing those who are naked, not hiding yourselves from those who are in need." Not enough of us have been paying attention to those words.

The first covenant we, as Jews, entered into was via Abraham. God predicts, in Genesis 18, that Abraham will "extend the boundaries of righteousness and justice in the world." We now welcome young teens into that covenant—the Bar/Bat Mitzvah—with lavish parties, booty dancing, and an extravaganza of consumerism. Ironically, the party has become the greater indicator of the teens' future lot than is any lesson that the hapless rabbi and teachers try to impart to the child. Is it any wonder that we have lost our way?

David Bratton: When Failure Breeds Success

All of which brings me back to David Bratton. If Hollywood had gotten their hands on this story, David would have gone back to college, earned a Ph.D., and discovered a cure for cancer, or gone on to win the Nobel Peace Prize for his work turning inner city kids around. But Hollywood is not real life. David has been dismissed from three jobs in the time that I have known him. He was thrown out of the apartment we moved him into when the other residents complained that he was stealing their food. He never paid back any of the money we loaned him, and still calls me for money periodically, a request that I now deny because of his lack of accountability. He alternates between sleeping in shelters and in the streets. A few months ago he was stabbed and spent some time in the hospital. He still calls me, and while I don't offer him any money, the call ends with him telling me that God still loves me anyway. I tell him that God loves him too.

Was I a fool? Naïve? A do-gooder? A hopeless idealist? Probably a bit of each of these. But I refuse to conclude that I failed. David is probably more or less where he would have been without me or Adat Shalom, except that for a time, maybe even until today, he experienced someone who cared about him and wasn't trying to hustle him or rip him off. He has had too little of that in his life and it may one day form a bridge that he will use to get himself to a better place.

Maybe all of this was part of some larger plan, the hand of God which needed me to have this experience, if only to tell the story. Every day I ask myself: "by what grace of God was I born into a middle-class family with a strong set of values instead of being born as David Bratton, a person of color in an urban ghetto from which there are few, if any exits."

Judaism teaches us that life is about sharing and giving and reaching out to those who don't enjoy the privileges that we enjoy. It is about working to change the policies of a society that has turned its back on the poor because they don't make campaign contributions or vote. It's about recognizing that every human being is made in the image of God and deserves to experience a warm bed, a good meal, and human love and caring.

David Bratton is certainly no angel. But he was an angel for me, a messenger, reminding me yet again about who I am and what I must do. □

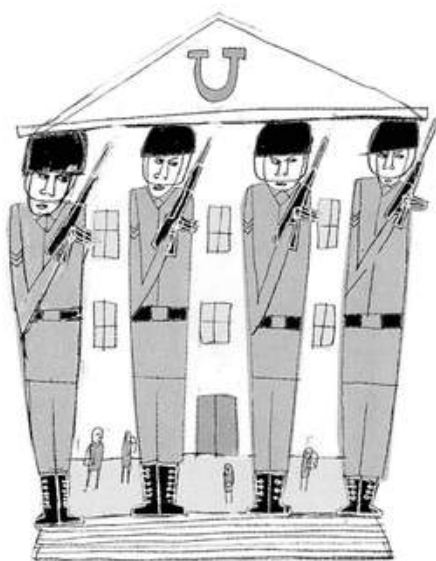
Who's Afraid of American Studies?

Michael E. Staub

- *The Futures of American Studies*, edited by Donald E. Pease and Robyn Wiegman. Duke University Press, 2002.

An ominous trend of attacking academic freedoms has escalated in ways most would have considered unthinkable only a few years ago. Consider the following:

- In 2002, a conservative group brought a lawsuit against the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) when freshmen were assigned a book about the Koran. And after UNC adopted Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* as assigned reading for its incoming freshman class in 2003, conservative pundits and politicians roundly assailed the choice as unpatriotic.
- In late 2003, the House of Representatives passed the International Studies in Higher Education Act, H.R. 3077. If passed in the Senate, H.R. 3077 will establish a national advisory panel to "monitor" how international studies are taught on university campuses. It takes special interest in Middle East studies programs, and might also review funding decisions for grant proposals.
- In November 2003, students and faculty at Drake College in Des Moines, Iowa, gathered for an anti-war forum called "Stop the Occupation! Bring the Iowa Guard Home!" Afterwards, four organizers of the forum received subpoenas issued by a federal grand jury. The subpoenas demanded that the organizers turn over all records



from the forum. (After the news hit the national media, the subpoenas were withdrawn.)

- In late 2003, the Ford Foundation revised the rules for its grant application procedure after neo-conservative groups (like the American Jewish Committee) accused Ford of funding a Palestinian organization with alleged sympathies with terrorism. Now several leading universities—including Harvard, Yale and Princeton—have protested that the new guidelines inhibit academic free speech.

- In March 2004, an "Academic Bill of Rights" swept through the Georgia State Senate. This bill permits Republican legislators to keep close tabs on how state university professors teach. Citing data that Democrats far outnumber Republicans on faculties nationwide, supporters of the bill suggest that it may require universities to correct this ideological imbalance in the name of "diversity." A similar bill has been proposed in Colorado.

With these examples in mind, it is a matter of no small importance that the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has steadfastly and courageously opposed attempts to abridge academic free expression. Similarly, it is also significant that the American Studies Association (ASA), whose five thousand members come from numerous programs and departments (e.g., history, literature, anthropology, sociology, popular culture, ethnic studies, folklore), has hosted plenary sessions at its annual meeting devoted to the emergencies currently facing American universities and U.S. society. It is surely no coincidence that these sessions are packed to capacity.

In her presidential address at the ASA annual meeting in the fall of 2003, University of Pennsylvania professor Amy Kaplan opened with a dedication to the memory of her late friend, Palestinian-rights activist and Columbia University professor Edward Said. She continued: "I write with a sense of urgency and bewilderment—urgency because I believe that our work must speak to the current crisis as the United States occupies Iraq and marshals violent force around the world and the government increases its authoritarian incursions against civil liberties, the rights of immigrants, and the provisions for basic human need." Yet Kaplan also noted self-critically that the analytical method so often employed by American studies scholars—"a method of exposure," as she named it—may have been rendered "irrelevant" by a Republican administration whose "lies and acts of violence appear hidden on the surface." Kaplan added that U.S. leaders no longer find it necessary to speak behind closed doors about their imperial ambitions. As Kaplan

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Michael E. Staub is the editor of *The Jewish 1960s: An American Sourcebook* (2002) and author of *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America* (2002). He teaches American Studies at Bowling Green State University.

reflected, the proponents of a new American empire have fashioned their own "coming-out narrative." Whereas "the E word" (Empire) could once only be whispered in private, now it is spoken openly—and proudly.

Is Kaplan's address guilty of partisanship? You bet it is. Is her speech protected by the Constitution of the United States? Of course—though some neocons are suggesting that speech like this may actually represent an abrogation of professional responsibility.

For the moment, however, such talk remains idle. And neoconservatives are left to gnash their teeth. Even so, no doubt there are some who would love to see professional groups like the AAUP and the ASA silenced—or sanctioned. Not that they would confess publicly to such views; some things are still best kept quiet. (Though as UC Berkeley professor Judith Butler also observed at the 2003 ASA annual meeting, if proposed modifications to the Patriot Act are approved, all this might change for the worse.)

Which brings us to the fascinating case of sociologist Alan Wolfe, contributing editor at *The New Republic*. Last year, while the United States made final preparations to invade and occupy Iraq in order to dismantle those phantom WMDs (and while an anti-war movement spread worldwide), Wolfe saw it as his responsibility to alert *TNR* readers to that genuine threat to our American way of life: American studies programs.

In his disturbing essay, "The Difference Between Criticism and Hate: Anti-American Studies," Wolfe writes that professors in "the third and fourth generation of scholars in the field [of American studies] not only reject the writers who gave life to the discipline, they have also developed a hatred for America so visceral that it makes one wonder why they bother studying America at all." He labels American studies scholars "bitter rejectionists," and repeatedly mourns the intellectual tenor of times gone by—before gays and lesbians, Marxists and multicul-

turalists, came on the scene and pissed in the pristine waters of Thoreau's Walden Pond.

What is remarkable is that the anthology Wolfe cites as Exhibit A for the appalling decline in the quality of American studies scholarship into "a lazy, catch-as-catch-can approach to the study of whatever it touches" is *The Futures of American Studies*, edited by Donald E. Pease and Robyn Wiegman. It is remarkable for two reasons. First, it is simply inaccurate—not to mention obnoxious—to describe the rigorous academic labor that went into the Pease and Wiegman anthology in this way. Many of the essays are acknowledged classics in the field, including contributions by Janice Radway, Dana Nelson, George Lipsitz, Michael Denning, Lisa Lowe, Paul Lauter and, yes, Amy Kaplan. It is also a misrepresentation of Pease and Wiegman themselves. Both have had distinguished careers balancing innovative analysis of canonical texts in teaching and writing with nurture of junior scholars working on a wide range of topics, fostering scholarship that offers both critical and self-critical reflection on the connections between literature and American and world realities. Here Wolfe crassly panders to the current vogue for anti-intellectualism, and in so doing he does one further disservice to the fine tradition for which *The New Republic* was (so long ago) renowned. But the second reason is more telling.

Despite its title, *The Futures of American Studies* most resembles a message found in a bottle. It reflects the preoccupations of American studies scholarship before the Patriot Act and the occupation of Iraq, and before 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan. None of these phenomena receive mention. Nor is there mention of Bush, Cheney, Ashcroft, or Rumsfeld. It's a fin-de-siècle America we revisit in these pages. Many of the essays grew out of papers initially presented in the late 1990s at the Dartmouth Summer Institute on American Studies directed by Pease.

The puzzle, then, is why this book was especially highlighted in Wolfe's critique. Not even the introduction by the editors makes mention of contemporary politics. True, the anthology reflects on the globalization of the American economy and situates American studies in a transnational and international perspective. It makes a strong case for the continued relevance of our imperialist past to the contemporary practice of American studies. It offers a sequence of intriguing and often brilliant models for thinking about labor, immigration, race, sexuality, and gender in twentieth-century American history. And it excavates an alternative genealogy of the field of American studies itself. Certainly the implication of the anthology is that what is most to be appreciated in the American tradition are precisely those values of free expression and critical thinking about structural inequities that are currently being undermined. Still, nothing in this anthology justifies Wolfe's vituperative reaction.

So what is going on? Who's afraid of American studies? And why? On the one hand, of course, this may be a straightforward if pitiful instance of sour grapes. Perhaps the patrician of an old order bemoans the current state of a discipline due to his own precipitous loss of influence in it. On the other hand, it is also imperative not to underestimate how the adversaries of free speech now choose to operate. They have new and refurbished weapons in their arsenal—and they are not afraid to use them. The over-the-top and patently misdirected quality of Wolfe's remarks about a book that isn't even about the current political juncture is in itself indicative.

It's time for your extra-credit question. Please identify who said the following: "The academy is attempting to close down debate of key issues, making it less open to free exchange than the media, the government, think tanks, and even corporations." Who is this? (The correct answer is Daniel

(continued on page 80)

Hollywood's Blacklist

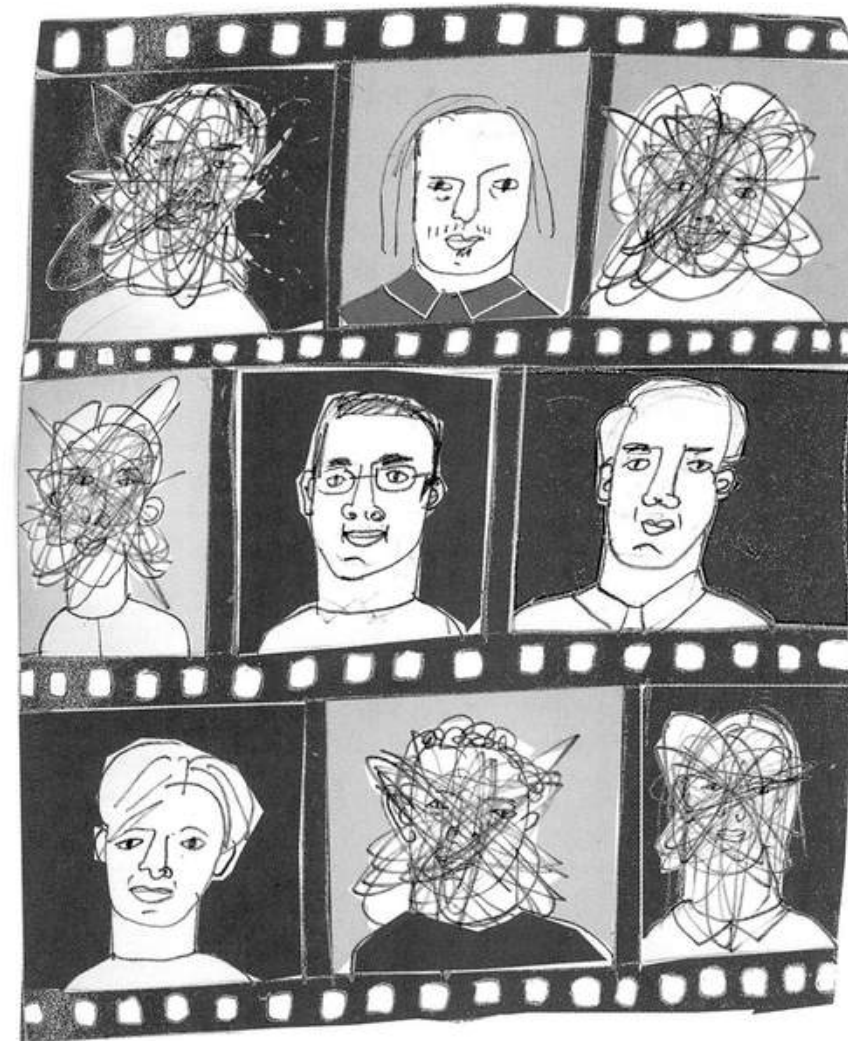
Restoring Credit Where it Was Denied

Bernard F. Dick

- Paul Buhle and Dave Wagner.
Hide in Plain Sight: The Hollywood Blacklistees in Film and Television, 1950–2002. Palgrave, 2003.
- Paul Buhle and Dave Wagner.
Blacklisted: The Film Lover's Guide to the Hollywood Blacklist. Palgrave, 2003.

While there have been a number of books about the 1950s blacklist of supposed left-wing actors, writers, and directors, the emphasis has tended to be on a lily-livered Hollywood, where studio heads ran scared, First Amendment takers went to jail, Fifth Amendment pleaders lost jobs, and victims of guilt by association were forced to look elsewhere for employment—many returning to the stage, where they were welcomed, but not at the salaries to which they were accustomed.

Such was the Time of the Toad, as Dalton Trumbo christened it, also known as Inquisition II. In *Hide in Plain Sight* and *Blacklisted*, Paul Buhle and Dave Wagner traverse a less trodden path: the labyrinth of fronts and aliases that blacklistees soon learned to negotiate, if not with ease, then with resignation. *Hide in Plain Sight*, an extraordinarily comprehensive study of a complex period, is even more impressive when one realizes that the Hollywood blacklist was supposed to have ended in 1960, when Dalton



Trumbo was formally acknowledged as the screenwriter of both *Exodus* and *Spartacus* (although for more than a decade he had been writing under assumed names). The genius of Buhle

and Wagner's book is to show how the Old Left continued—not so much in film as in television—injecting elements of social consciousness (while avoiding sermonizing) into such series as *All in the Family*, *M*A*S*H*, and *Maude*. Although many of us thought at the time that such programs were “liberal,” we had no idea that the term

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ILLUSTRATION BY LAURIE LUCZAK

was really “progressive.” And the progressives were not always the writers. Who associated politics with *Maude*’s Bea Arthur? Yet what *Maude* herself represented was the Left at its best.

Buhle and Wagner also argue that socially conscious television existed even in the 1950s. Taking their cue from Martin Ritt’s *The Front* (1976), an authentic recreation of television’s reaction to the blacklist when the HUAC-spawned virus infected the networks in the early 1950s, Buhle and Wagner explore the politics of television’s Golden Age. After Hollywood abandoned social realism for gloss, TV reclaimed it, with writers such as Paddy Chayevsky and Reginald Rose who enjoyed the freedom to dramatize social concerns and domestic matters, some of which seemed minimalist compared to “big” issues like the Cold War. If viewers of that era tuned in to the live drama available almost nightly (e.g., *Studio One*, *Robert Montgomery Presents*, *Kraft Television Theatre*, and later *Playhouse 90*), it was because they discovered something that was unavailable at their neighborhood theater: not just the real, but the living real, complete with flubbed dialogue, shaky sets, and an occasionally visible camera. Yet it did not matter: Theatre, the medium of the elite, had entered the American living room. And little did Americans know how far to the left the scripts often were—not enough to engender suspicion, yet sufficiently compassionate to make the viewer part of the human family.

Buhle and Wagner ignore the standard simplistic triad of blacklisted, informers, and graylistees, concentrating instead on the enormous number of progressives who may not have paid for their politics but who kept the liberal spirit alive in ways too subtle for a mass audience to understand; for example, by inspiring empathy or recognition, if only for the duration of the program. What Hollywood did in the 1930s in such films as *Wild Boys of the Road* (1933) and *Dead End* (1937), television did in the 1950s: it made art

out of the ordinary. One might laugh at Paddy Chayevsky’s “kitchen sink” teleplays (and frankly I’m not sure that a sink was always a Chayevsky fixture); but we always knew that when a sink appeared, it was not just a prop. A human being did the dishes in it.

For a work of such scope, *Hide in Plain Sight* is relatively error free. (*Rashomon* (1950) is misspelled and the discussion of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* confuses elements of the original musical with the film, but that’s about it). In sum, *Hide* is an impressively researched work, free from vindictiveness, that weaves together such seemingly unrelated strands as early TV drama, method acting, the 1950s science fiction film, and innocuous (or were they?) sitcoms into a coherent pattern, which confirms the continuity of American liberalism.

The same kind of meticulous research also informs *Blacklisted*, Buhle and Wagner’s A-Z film directory, which, even if casually perused, reveals the astonishing number of films involving blacklisted (writers, directors, and actors); the “friendly witnesses” who were eager to name names; and finally those who initially refused to cooperate with HUAC and later recanted. Naturally, not all of these films are masterpieces, nor are they honeycombed with leftist sentiments. What does come through, however, is the way in which the writers approached their material.

For example, *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948) is arguably the team’s best film; however, there is not the slightest trace of the left-wing politics of two of the writers, Robert Lees and Frederic I. Rinaldo, who were later blacklisted. Their task was to blend slapstick comedy and horror in such a way that neither overwhelmed the other. The inclusion of *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* in the Library of Congress’s film registry of historically significant films is proof that Lees and Rinaldo succeeded.

However, when writers had a chance to deepen characterization or unobtru-

sively address the human condition, they often did so, perhaps because they felt more deeply about issues and people than their right-wing or apolitical colleagues. If *Love Affair* (1939) is superior to the 1957 remake, *An Affair to Remember*, it is largely because screenwriter Donald Ogden Stewart, later blacklisted, emphasized the social disparity between the two lovers (Irene Dunne of the middle class, and Charles Boyer of the upper class), turning a familiar distinction in screwball comedy into the plot peg of a romance that nearly ends in tragedy.

Left-wing screenplays were not always blatantly antifascist; they could be extremely subtle when the material lent itself to understatement, particularly in terms of human relationships, as was the case in *Love Affair*. Anyone who bases his or her knowledge of the blacklist on such iconic names as Dalton Trumbo, Lillian Hellman, and Joseph Losey is in for a shock. There was, as the old movie ads used to say, a cast of hundreds.

In Arthur Miller’s play, *A View from the Bridge* (1955), Eddie Carbone has become a pariah by turning informer. “I want my name,” Eddie cries, knowing that it has now been sullied by his act of betrayal. One wonders how many blacklisted writers felt similarly when they were forced to resort to aliases or were relegated to “anonymous,” as Michael Wilson was, when *Friendly Persuasion* (1956) was first released without crediting his exemplary screenplay, making it seem as if the film were self-generated.

With *Blacklisted*, Buhle and Wagner have achieved one of the noblest goals in the history of popular culture: they have identified the victims of the blacklist, restoring credit where it was denied. And by placing a dagger (†) alongside the names of the friendly witnesses, they have identified those who profited at the expense of others. Rarely can two books be called not only complementary but also indispensable. *Hide in Plain Sight* and *Blacklisted* are both. □

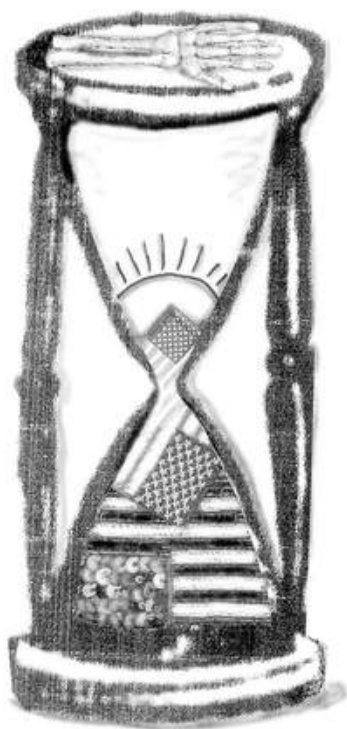
Twilight of Empire

Fred Bransman

- *Twilight Of Empire: Responses To Occupation*, edited by Jodie Evans and Pilar Perez. Perceval Press, 2003.

“Iraqi Hospitals on Life Support—Babies Dying Because of Shortages of Medicine, Supplies,” read the *Washington Post* front-page headline on March 5, 2004. The story explained that “babies die of simple infections because they can’t get the proper antibiotics. Surgeries are delayed because there is no oxygen. And patients in critical condition are turned away because there isn’t enough equipment.” And this is after the United States has spent over \$180 billion on an invasion and occupation justified by concern for the welfare of the Iraqi people.

Twilight of Empire, edited by Code Pink’s Jodie Evans and Pilar Perez of Viggo Mortenson’s Perceval Press, makes clear that this unforgivable lack of basic health care is hardly the exception in an ill-planned and inhumane U.S. occupation of Iraq that should shame the conscience of anyone in power in this nation. However one feels about the war, the past year has clearly produced incomparably more suffering for the Iraqi people—in thousands of lost lives, tens of thousands of lost livelihoods, mass crime, rape and guerrilla attacks, lack of basic services like health care and electricity, and ongoing destruction—than if the administration had delayed long enough to plan an effective and humane international occupation and ensure a post-Saddam



Iraqi army and police force capable of maintaining order. (Such a policy would have also made possible more “humanitarian interventions” to save people from despotic regimes, rather than making them less likely because of administration bungling.)

Twilight of Empire presents the most comprehensive critique of the U.S. occupation to date because it looks at the war from the perspective of the Iraqi people rather than from those occupying their nation. The *Washington Post* report, however important, is an exception to most of the mass media’s war coverage, which focuses on “top-down” issues like the latest activities of the new “Iraqi” government, military activities of American troops, inter-

national maneuvering, and other top-down issues.

Life in Iraq looks very different from the bottom up. Some of the most moving passages in this book are from a “Baghdad Journal” kept by Evans during her visit there in the summer of 2003. Visiting a poor suburb in Iraq, she reports on a conversation with a local resident: “There is no water, no electricity, sewage in the streets, our children are suffering, can you not see what a disaster this will become?” Evans writes about an Iraqi interpreter for the Coalition Provisional Authority named Rajaa and her life in Baghdad during the bombing: “For two months she couldn’t leave her home because she was too afraid. Now she doesn’t care if she lives or dies. Rajaa explains that ‘many ex-policemen who had been fired in a fit of “de-Baathification” after the invasion have formed armed mafias, taking over neighborhoods, stealing, and extorting protection money.’” Rajaa also tells of the kidnapping of two girls—“one thirteen, the other fifteen, in her neighborhood. They were returned after ten days, but they’d been raped, so their families threw them out and left them in the street to die.” Rape and “honor killings,” in which raped women are killed by male relatives to maintain family “honor,” have so increased under the U.S. occupation that women are terrified of going out on the streets after sundown.

During a return visit in February, 2004, she reported that “every Iraqi I have met has a story of torture, a missing person, a house being raided, someone injured or dead from random shootings, stress or disease. I have yet to meet a person that thinks it was worse under Saddam. That includes the Chief of Police, the women on the governing

Fred Bransman directs For Generations to Come and Gifts of Death Awareness Project, and works on a variety of other spiritual and psychological issues. In a previous lifetime he exposed the secret U.S. Air war against Laos.

council, the rich woman, the displaced person, the business man, the students, the women's groups, the hospital administrator, the artists, the communists. They are happy Saddam is gone but not this way."

Twilight of Empire also includes enough reporting of conversations with U.S. personnel and analyses of overall U.S. policy toward Iraq to make clear that the needless suffering of the Iraqi people under the U.S. occupation was not just the inevitable result of the "chaos of war." The Bush administration sent a legion of unqualified people to run the occupation. Most of the U.S. advisors in Iraq have had no background or training that would prepare them for their jobs, do not speak Arabic, and are in it for the money. A U.S. aide, who described himself as a Bremer aide on intelligence about the Shiites, told Evans that "we're going to take a page from Saddam's book. Fear is the foundation of any government. If you make a dog hungry, he'll follow you anywhere."

This book has not been outdated by the ascension of a new "Iraqi" government. The suffering of the Iraqi people has, if anything, increased since June 30. And since the new government depends upon American support for its very functioning, let alone survival, and since its leaders are almost unknown to Iraqis, it enjoys little indigenous support. The media has colluded in giving the impression that this government is more authentic than that of Paul Bremer. But, as South Vietnam shows, the mere fact that the United States appoints native leaders of a country does not win them legitimacy in the public eye.

The lack of hospital supplies is the result of deliberate policy choices designed to maximize U.S. interests at the expense of the well-being of the Iraqi people. Bremer's biggest mistake was disbanding the army, police, and much of the civil administration overnight, which created a crime wave, an ineffective anti-terrorism policy, and ongoing chaos that continue up to the

present moment. The incompetent U.S. occupation that has so alienated much of the populace has not only promoted terrorism against Iraqi civilians and U.S. forces, but also increased the chances for civil war as Bush begins reducing the U.S. presence to help his re-election chances at home.

One of the most serious developments described in the book relates to the Iraqi economy. Much of the current suffering and unrest in Iraq is due to the simple fact that millions of people cannot make a living. Rather than focusing on creating jobs for people, however, the administration's major focus has been on increasing opportunities for U.S. corporations, notably Bechtel and Halliburton, to profit from the U.S. occupation. Evans notes the small but telling fact that U.S. forces are sending their laundry to Kuwait rather than having it cleaned in Iraq where it could provide needed jobs for unemployed Iraqis. The occupation has done little to promote the indigenous economy and local firms.

Naomi Klein argues that U.S. policy exploits Iraq's economy by executing three basic neocon strategies: privatization, downsizing the public sector, and deregulation. Whatever one feels about such doctrines in theory, the application of these policies in Iraq will mean handing over not only the oil and other resources of Iraq, but its markets and buying power, to U.S. multinationals. While this might seem desirable to many U.S. policymakers, growing resentment at the exploitation of Iraq's economy can only increase terrorism and anti-U.S. sentiment, reduce support for the post-occupation Iraqi government, and increase hatred of the United States throughout the Middle East and the rest of the world. And one thing is sure: such policies will only prolong the suffering of the Iraqi people, further discrediting the administration's claim that the invasion was meant to improve life in Iraq.

A thought-provoking essay by Mike Davis detailing the brutal early-twentieth-century effort by the British to con-

trol Iraq—which included Winston Churchill's enthusiastic support for bombing villages and committing mass murder for failure to pay taxes—illustrates the long-term fallacy inherent in the logic of brutal occupation. The failure of British colonization, also justified on the grounds that it improved life for "the locals," was one of the great issues of the twentieth century. It seems unlikely that the Bush administration's efforts to reinvent it in Iraq will outlive this century.

Twilight of Empire is also noteworthy for almost being two separate books—the first in words, the second in pictures. Lavishly published on glossy paper, the striking photographs tell their own story: Bremer in a business suit and cowboy boots embodying economics founded on military force; Iraqi citizens with bags over their heads; an Iraqi man on the ground pleading with a U.S. soldier for his life after he was found with a gun; Iraqis scrambling for propane; broken buildings; mass graves; sewage on the streets of Baghdad.

A moving essay by Viggo Mortensen entitled "Back to Babylon," includes these words: "Lie down, lie down; sleep is the best thing for being awake. Do as we've always been told and done. Sleep now, dream of children with their heads still on. Ignore boneless, nameless victims that venture out on bitter gravel to claim remains while we rest."

Much of America has indeed gone back to sleep since the official end of the Iraqi war. Why not? Robert McNamara has revealed that 3.4 million people died in Indochina. Any country that can ignore its role in murdering several million human beings, wounding millions more, and turning over ten million into homeless refugees, has no problem ignoring its role in murdering a few thousand Iraqis and spreading chaos in its wake.

The problem for Americans is that while we want to forget, much of the rest of the world—and the Iraqis themselves—can or will not. *Twilight of empire*, indeed. □

Journeys into Jewish Sacred Music

Miles Krassen

■ *Life of the Worlds: Journeys in Jewish Sacred Music* by Richard Kaplan. Five Souls Music, 2003.

One of the most wonderful qualities of Jewish culture is that it encompasses elements from so many of the world's traditions. As a people dispersed through virtually all corners of the world, Jews have been unusually privileged to develop a culture of broad diversity that nevertheless manages to express a uniquely Jewish vision. This is nowhere more apparent than in the vast treasury of Jewish sacred music. In recent years, many fine artists have enriched our appreciation of cantorial music, klezmer, Hasidic and neo-Hasidic *niggunim*, Sephardic ballads, Yemenite chants, and Yiddish songs. Rarely, however, has an artist appeared who could integrate so great a range of Jewish cultural expression as Richard Kaplan.

While he was still in his teens, a friend opened up Kaplan's musical horizons by playing him recordings from around the world. "I don't think there is a traditional music on this planet that I can't take in," says Kaplan, "but then, I could argue that all of them are part of everyone's aural DNA."

Kaplan spent many years as a professor of music at Skyline Community College, teaching a course called "Sacred Musics of the World." Over time, he was inspired to embark on the cantor's path, absorbing the traditional liturgy during an apprenticeship with Hazzan (Cantor) Mark Dinkin. In 1997, Kaplan was named Cantor of Temple

Beth Abraham, a Conservative synagogue in Oakland, California, a position he still holds.

Life of the Worlds lives up to its title by presenting an expansive "world-centric" view of Jewish spiritual expression. Kaplan, with his sensitive and soulful singing, extensive repertoire, exquisite taste, and meticulous production treats us to melodies from Afghanistan, Morocco, Yemen, Spain, Salonica, Jerusalem, and Eastern Europe. Most of the selections are traditional and Kaplan is faithful to the aesthetics of each source. Not only does he sing each melody in its native style, he has gathered a group of exceptional musicians who accompany him in an authentic and transporting manner. Kaplan seems to have found just the right musician and instrument for each melody and rhythm, whether Afghani or Gypsy. Take, for example, the incredible musicianship of Stuart Brotman and Daniel Hoffman accompanying the Yiddish classic, "Outpouring of the Soul," attributed to the Hasidic master Menachem Mendel of Vitebsk. No less impressive is the remarkable accompaniment of kanun, oud, and saz master Mimi Spencer on the Middle Eastern and Central Asian selections and the beautifully nuanced playing of violinist Jeremy Cohen on "Ve'erastikh Li" ("I Will Betroth You to Me").

Life of the Worlds is no mere journey through diverse traditions. It is also an expression of the inner spiritual vitality that sustains all worlds and a guide to the One within Whom all worlds arise. Most of the texts are drawn from familiar Jewish liturgy and biblical verses. Several of the most beautiful

pieces set verses from the "Song of Songs" to supporting melodies, including a particularly lovely version of "Bati LeGani" ("I Came to My Garden"), composed by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. Reb Zalman is also the source for a very rare Husyatim Hasidic musical rendering of the mystical hymn "El Mistater" ("The Self-Concealed One"). Kaplan also takes us with him on deeper contemplative journeys via wordless *niggunim* by Rebbe Nachman and Chabad Rebbe Schneur Zalman of Lyadi. Complementing the introspective and devotional selections are rhythmic hymns of praise that arouse whole-body devotion, like the irresistible Afghani "Navah Tehilah" ("It is Lovely to Praise") in 7/8 meter.

Of special note is an "eco-lament" (a term Kaplan coined for an "ecological lament"), which is based on traditional Eastern European melodies for *Tisha b'Av*, a festival which commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem and other tragedies in Jewish history. Kaplan here expands the concept of "temple" to represent *Gaia* (Mother Earth), and weaves the ancient tunes into an emotionally powerful dirge entitled "Lament on the Destruction of the Garden of Eden."

Life of the Worlds is a remarkable recording. The production includes Hebrew and Yiddish texts as well as transliterations and creative translations. The performances by Kaplan and his accompanying master musicians are consistently stellar. This is a collection of sacred music of the highest order, guaranteed to delight and move in so many different ways. It is a recording that one may turn to for inspiration, to learn new ways of expressing old prayers, or just for fun. □

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Religion and Ecology

Roger S. Gottlieb

- *Worldly Wonder: Religions Enter Their Ecological Phase*, by Mary Evelyn Tucker. Open Court, 2003.
- *Faith in Ecology*, by Martin Palmer. World Bank 2003.
- *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, edited by Bron Taylor and Jeffrey Kaplan. Continuum International, 2005.
- *The Paradise of God: Renewing Religion in an Ecological Age*, by Norman Wirzba. Oxford University Press 2003.
- *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*, edited by Richard C. Foltz, Frederic M. Denny, and Asisan Baharuddin. Harvard University Press/Center for the Study of World Religions 2003.
- *Christian Environmental Ethics: A Case Method Approach*, by James Martin-Schramm and Robert L. Stivers. Orbis Books 2003.
- *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology and Natural Selection*, by Lisa H. Sideris. Columbia University Press 2003.



Fund convened a meeting of five major world faiths to discuss their relation to ecology. Comprehensive statements and an organization, the U.K. based Alliance for Religion and Conservation, emerged. The member faiths have since grown to nine, and the organization—often in partnership with local governments, environmental groups, developmental programs, and even (surprise) the World Bank—has projects throughout the world. In recent years the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has committed resources to a special campaign linking children's health and environmental pollution. The Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL) has worked to save redwoods in California and researched environmental racism in Boston. The Interfaith Climate Change Network, an ecumenical working group concerned with global warming, has chapters in eighteen states. And all this is just the tip of the iceberg. Dozens of single-religion and interfaith organizations, proclamations, letter-writing campaigns, and public demonstrations have focused on virtually every key environmental issue—from species extinction and urban sprawl to toxic waste and the economics of sustainable development.

Similar developments are happening in academia. The Forum on Religion and Ecology and Harvard University have co-sponsored a comprehensive series of conferences, subsequent publications, and an enormously rich website (www.environment.harvard.edu/religion/) on the connections between ecology and virtually all of the world's religious traditions. An academic journal (*Worldviews*) focuses on the topic; courses, conferences, and lectures on the subject have grown exponential-

a leading voice of the new ecotheology, wrote in 1988 that "After dealing with suicide, homicide, and genocide, our Western Christian moral code collapses completely: it cannot deal with biocide.... Nor have church authorities made any sustained protest against the violence being done to the planet."

All this has changed. Indeed in 1986, two years before Berry's own groundbreaking book *The Dream of the Earth* was published, the World Wildlife

"A comprehensive collection on religion and ecology," I said to the owner of a small bookstore when she asked about the subject matter of a book I was working on in 1994. "How interesting," she replied, though her skeptical tone suggested that rather than "interesting" she might have said "arcane" or "obscure." More significantly, Catholic priest Thomas Berry, himself

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ly; and the University of Florida now offers a Ph.D. concentration in religion and ecology. My book, *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment*, which came out in 1996, was used in enough courses to warrant a second edition in 2003.

The books discussed here show that in a time of darkening environmental prospects, frightening religious fundamentalism, and moribund liberalism, the remarkable and historically unprecedented rise of religious environmentalism is a profound source of hope. Theologians are recovering marginalized nature-honoring elements of traditional religions and forging bold new theologies that connect devotion to God with love for God's creation. And these innovative ideas are giving rise to far-reaching political action.

For those who feel a bit like my bookstore-owner friend, the books by Mary Evelyn Tucker and Martin Palmer provide excellent starting points. Tucker is the cochair of the Forum on Religion and Ecology mentioned above, and along with her own expertise on East Asian religions, has been internationally active in a host of contexts helping, as in the subtitle of her book, "religions enter their ecological phase."

Tucker's *Worldly Wonder* focuses on the three basic questions posed to ecological religion. First, in her words, "Can religions situate their stories within the universe story? Can religions open up their traditions to embrace the planet as home and hearth?" For Tucker, as for Thomas Berry, Sallie McFague, Holmes Rolston, and many other ecotheologians, cultural historians, and ethicists, religious narratives must now integrate themselves with scientific accounts of cosmology, ecology, and evolution. We should see ourselves as part of a 14-billion-year-old universe, a 3.6-billion-year-old earth, a marvelously creative process of the development of life, and an intricate and finely tuned ecological balance. The grandeur of this story will help us see

its divinity—whether as the product of a God who is both transcendent and immanent, or as an autonomous process inspiring awe and reverence. Second, our newfound (or newly recovered) sense of the value of life will lead us towards new ethical values: a sense of responsibility to the earth and the joining of environmental concern with more familiar concerns such as equal rights and poverty. Third, ecological religion enters the public sphere as a "liberal," pluralist faith committed to dialogue with other faiths and human rights for all. The transcript of a lecture, including commentary and Tucker's response to questions, *Worldly Wonder* is a marvelously clear and highly intelligent introduction to this area, written primarily from the standpoint of what religion is and what it should be.

Martin Palmer, long-time chair of the Alliance for Religion and Conservation (ARC), has written another short introduction to this subject, addressed less to the religious community than to environmentalists who are doubtful that religion can be of much help. Religion, he forcefully argues, has deep cultural roots, widespread legitimacy, enormous financial clout, and a long-term view of what it is doing. It can motivate the faithful, influence politicians, and shape the policies of the financial institutions in which its hundreds of billions of dollars are invested. Promoting the same pluralist, liberal view as Tucker, Palmer not only argues against dogmatic religious fundamentalism, but against dogmatic secular fundamentalism as well. He believes, correctly in my view, that human beings have not lost the need for religion's sense of the sacred, myth, and rituals. Religious environmentalism, in other words, is not just the handmaiden to secular environmentalism, but has its own distinct contributions to make to the movement.

To me, the most interesting parts of Palmer's book are his many examples that show the power of religion to aid environmentalism in tradition-

al societies. In Madagascar, fishermen were convinced to stop dynamiting the ocean for fish—a practice with disastrous long-term results—when local Islamic authorities ruled that the practice violated the Qur'an's injunctions against wasting God's creation. In ecologically devastated Lebanon, Maronite Christian authorities agreed to protect a sacred forest for perpetuity when the argument was made to them in religious terms rather than terms based on concerns for "biodiversity." The world's Sikh communities have committed themselves to focusing on environmental issues for the next 300 years. Palmer's strongly articulated arguments and fascinating examples—as well as his inclusion of the lengthy statements on religion and ecology from the nine faiths that work together in the ARC—makes this book a sparkling addition to the literature.

If Tucker and Palmer make good bird's-eye starting points, *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature* covers the entire field with, well, encyclopedic scope. Comprising two very large volumes, 1.5 million words, and a hefty price tag, the ERN is not the kind of thing most people will pick up and read from cover to cover. However, it is a breathtakingly valuable, truly multicultural reference work, indispensable for libraries, religious institutions, and environmental organizations. In it you will find nearly one thousand detailed, scholarly, and surprisingly well-written essays on everything from "Abbey, Edward" (one of America's premier fiction and nonfiction radical environmental writers) to "Zulu Culture." The ERN's editors have cast a very wide net, interpreting "nature" to include all aspects of contemporary environmentalism and ecology and "religion" to encompass a wide variety of moral, political, social, aesthetic, and traditional perspectives. Many of the contributors are themselves highly distinguished (in the interests of full disclosure I must admit that one entry, or about 1/20 of 1 percent of the work, is my own). Authors of the many selec-

tions on Christianity, for instance, include pioneering ecotheologians and ethicists Jürgen Moltmann, H. Paul Santmire, Jay McDaniel, and James Nash, environmental journalist and activist Bill McKibben (author of the classic *The End of Nature*), and a brief excerpt from John Calvin.

Norman Wirzba's *Paradise of God* summarizes and extends ideas developed over the past two decades—ideas all the more important because they pose a positive response to the often made (and in many ways accurate) claim that Western religions, by making God transcendent and giving human beings dominion over the earth, have provided a religious warrant for environmental destruction.

Wirzba's response is that traditional biblical religions offer powerful resources for environmentalism. "Viewed in terms of the popular scientific understanding," he tells us, "nature is simply matter in motion guided by impersonal laws. Viewed economically, nature is a resource ready for us to be appropriated at will." As *creation*, however, which is how Western religions have traditionally seen it, it is "an expression of God's joy and love." Further, the oft-maligned passages in which humans are given "dominion over the earth" can be read as conferring on us not special privileges, but special responsibilities—to function, as God does, by caring for creation. Wirzba develops his case with a judicious and well-organized use of Jewish and Christian resources—including humanity's charge to "dress the garden and keep it" in Genesis, Holmes Rolston's image of constantly dying and constantly reborn nature as "cruciform," Abraham Joshua Heschel's anti-consumerist idea of Sabbath, and the New Testament claim that in Christ all things, including nature, are reconciled.

What Wirzba does for biblical religion, *Islam and Ecology*, one of a series of books stemming from the Forum on Religion and Ecology conferences,

does for Muslims. Like the other books in the series, its essays are sophisticated, clearly written, and deeply committed to wrestling with important issues. The most important of these issues for anyone doing ecotheology from within an established religion, is that while the world faces an environmental crisis of unprecedented proportions, up to the very recent past religions have ignored or contributed to the crisis. However, much of the world, and the Muslim world in particular, is unwilling to jettison its religious traditions. Therefore a delicate balance is needed between recovering ecological resources that are clearly in the tradition and reforming a tradition which was created before industrialization, science, the modern state, consumerism, and fossil fuels existed. Many of the essays in *Islam and Ecology* reveal a strong basis for environmentalism in Islam—including the basis of a serious stewardship ethic and the recognition that nonhumans have their own purpose and community. Yet as two authors point out, the "vital and accessible Islamic ecological tradition" has been overridden by "intoxication with modern technology and the received imperatives of the nation-state system."

The recovery efforts of Wirzba and the authors of *Islam and Ecology*, however admirable, face a difficult question: If the original tradition has what we need, why did it fail to prevent the crisis? If the tradition as it stands is not adequate to the crisis, then we must admit that something new—in how we read texts, in which texts we find authoritative, in our actions in the world, and in the alliances we form—is needed. We will need to make changes dictated not by a familiar revelation, but by the contemporary social, political, and ecological realities.

The question of practical ethics—or, we might say, politics—is only briefly touched on by Tucker, Palmer, Wirzba, and *Islam and Ecology*. This defect is remedied by *Christian Environmental Ethics*, a superb account of the techni-

cal, political, and moral dimensions of nine environmental problem areas. The Protestant religion scholars who have written the book situate each problem—e.g., storage of nuclear waste in a Native American reservation, the potential phase-out of chlorine production, logging old-growth forests—in a narrative structure, imagining how a particular person might respond to a variety of opposing beliefs and interests. While scripture or resolutions by religious groups are appealed to occasionally, the authors' positions center on values which can be widely shared: justice, sustainability, participation (a broad democracy), sufficiency (modesty in consumption), and solidarity across races, genders, and nations. Their "ecojustice" perspective integrates concern with nature and concern for human beings, an integration often lost in the early years of ecotheology.

Along with the accessible but highly detailed factual information, the sensitivity to a variety of social perspectives in each area makes this book particularly valuable. Is it environmental racism, for instance, for white society to ask Native Americans to store nuclear waste on their reservation? Or is it racist to expect them to turn down the money from such storage when white society produces and profits from the nuclear industry already? Is the increased safety we'd get from phasing out all chlorine based products worth the potentially painful economic consequences to the people who work in the chemical industry? As a staunch, not to say fanatical, environmentalist, I know that I (like many of my comrades) often act as if there is only one sensible answer to such questions. I am indebted to *Christian Environmental Ethics* for its ability to combine a solid and sophisticated environmentalism with a real respect for different perspectives about concrete problems.

Yet ethically and politically oriented ecotheologians like Martin-Schramm and Stivers (as well as Tucker and

Palmer) face a question they have not adequately addressed: whether capitalism, in anything like its present form, is compatible with ecological sanity. While *Christian Environmental Ethics* raises some critical points about capitalism in its introduction, and both Tucker and Palmer question consumerism, raise issues of justice, and would lessen corporate prerogatives, for the most part, all these authors seem to think political reform, economic moderation, and ethical exhortation can bring capitalism to its senses. Given the absence of any large-scale challenge to global capitalism at this point in time, their position may be the only realistic one. And given the fact that the majority of religious believers are not flaming socialists, it may make sense to soft-peddle the degree of control of capitalism that is needed. Yet to this unreconstructed radical, the question must sooner or later be faced head on. Ecological sanity is not, I believe, like the eight-hour day and social security. That is, it is not a reform which capitalism (at least in certain parts of the world) can live with. The dominant trend of capitalism is destructive—ask any devastated rainforest tribe or native fisherman whose traditional catch was wiped out by huge mechanized trawlers. And even if capitalism could learn to be ecological eventually, by the time that happens I wonder if anything will be left to save.

Lisa Sideris's excellent book raises a different kind of question: the moral meaning of nature itself. For Tucker, as well as many of the writers who have created the movement, the beauty, complexity, and interdependence of nature are a foundation for human ethics. For example, since we depend on nature, we are obligated to treat it with care. Since all things are balanced in ecosystems, we should not unbalance our own. Since ecosystems have a place for every type of organism, we should model social relations accordingly. Sideris's criticism is that this position ignores the realities of

evolution, pain, predation, parasitism, and death. Nature is not all panda bears, dolphins, and birdcalls. It is millions of species made extinct through the course of evolution, predators ripping their prey to shreds, and parasitic wasps eating their hosts alive from the inside. When writers like Tucker see ecological interdependence as the source of a religious environmental ethics, what they see as nature is too often unrealistically selective.

Many of Sideris' criticisms are well taken. It is not nature as we know it that we will be seeing if we expect to find the lion laying down with the lamb, even though a number of Christian ecotheologians believe that the best way to establish the value of nature is to show that our collective redemption in Christ leads us to a state beyond competition, conflict, or violence.

Yet while there is clearly death in nature, there is also birth; if species eat each other, they also feed each other. Part of the essential point of ecotheology is that no scientific account will tell us what all this means, for part of the *meaning* of any fact is determined by what we *decide* to make of it. Just as earlier members of our species had to respond to the power of thunderstorms, the regularity of the seasons, and the inevitability of death, so we have to decide what to do with our vast scientific knowledge and our vastly polluted environment. Evolution, which creates and eliminates species by the million, can be seen as murderous competition and profligate waste, *or*, as Gary Snyder puts it, as a process in which different forms of energy call other beings into existence. Nature, so long a thing of unqualified awe, is now revealed as surprisingly fragile.

Sideris also argues that many ecotheologians too cavalierly assert that "everything in nature is of equal value." While this claim is meant to counter the arrogant anthropocentrism of religious and secular society both, ecotheologians typically find some reason why people are worth

more than ants; or reflect, in their ethical discussions, that when they talk of the "value of nature" they typically mean species or ecosystems, but "the value of human beings" involves individual rights as well.

Which brings us back to politics, for it is social institutions that will decide when the sacrifice of a particular piece of nature is justified; how to distinguish between human need and human greed; and whether militarism, consumerism, and globalization are what we need or what threaten us the most. As in civil rights and feminism, the new values of ecotheology and ecojustice will have to be won through political struggle. We can now see that a significant part of world religion has committed itself to that struggle. This fact should give us, at a time when the resource is in terribly short supply, a little hope. □

Who's Afraid of American Studies?

(continued from page 71)

Pipes, the neocon mastermind behind Campus Watch, a website that tracks so-called anti-Americanism or anti-Israel bias on university and college campuses. Though David Horowitz—author of the aforementioned Academic Bill of Rights so popular recently in Georgia—has made similar statements.)

My point is that the Right and its allies have chosen brazenly to style themselves as the real defenders of academic standards and freedoms. If not for them, or so they say, academia would fall into the wicked hands of a tenured, radical, anti-American elite. As absurd as it sounds, this line of argument has thus far proven effective with legislators. And the appropriation of liberal and left-wing lingo—like "diversity" or "pluralism"—has been a key to the furthering of agendas that are anything but diverse or plural. This is not to conclude that assaults on academic freedom cannot be stopped. Certainly they can. And they must. It does not take a Ph.D. in American studies to grasp who wins if we lose. □

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