Tikkun

POLITICS+SPIRITUALITY+CULTURE

(tē·kün) To mend, repair, and transform the world. SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2008

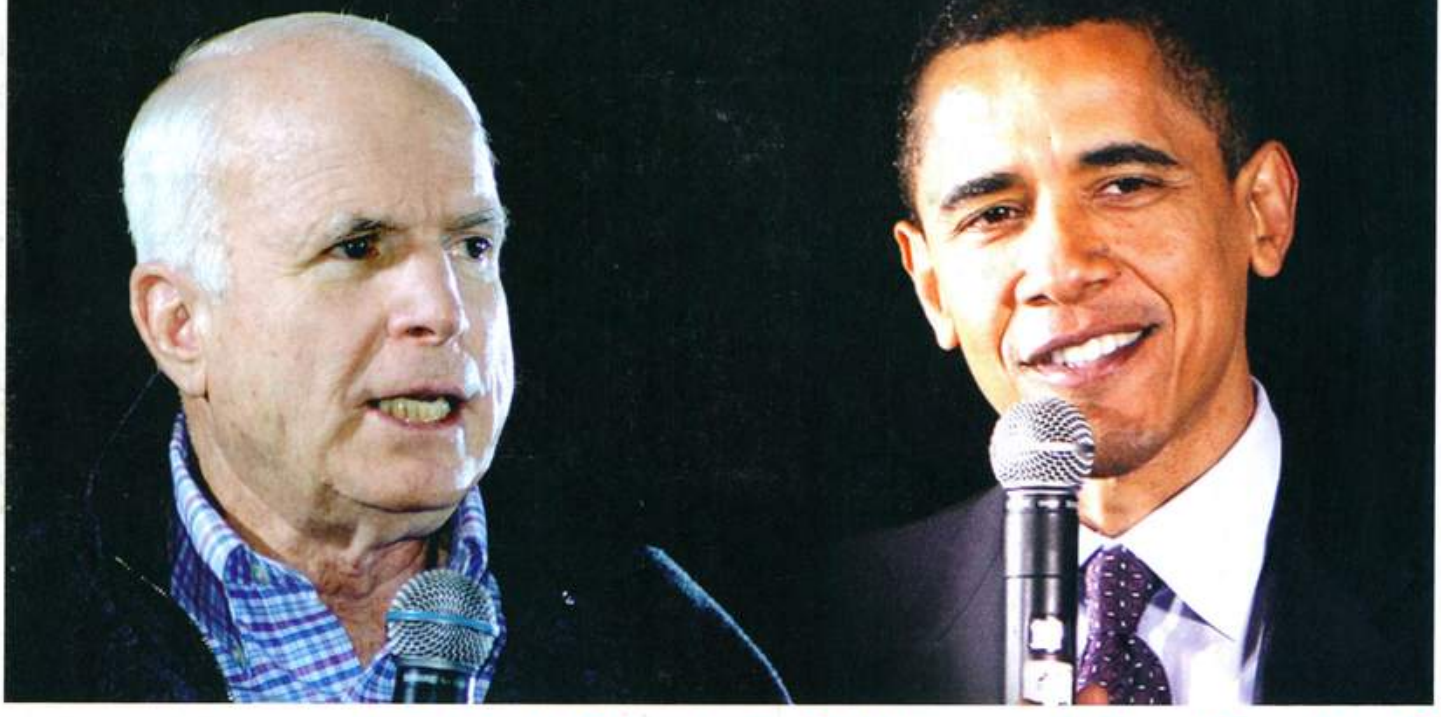
HIGH HOLIDAY SUPPLEMENT
THE U.S. NEEDS TO REPENT

TIBET
ROBERT THURMAN

RECLAIM YOUR SPIRITUAL CENTER

ADVICE TO THE CANDIDATES

from Tony Campolo, Peter Gabel, Obery Hendricks, Tim Kelly, Glen Stassen, Eboo Patel, George Vradenburg, and Michael Lerner



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America's Economic Collapse | A New Populism?
Nonviolent Activists: Palestinian Sami Awad + Jesuit John Dear | A Woman Rabbi Visits Iran | Muslim Men Supporting Afghan Women | Conflict Resolution Stories



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DEMONSTRATE AGAINST the School of the Americas


LINDA PANETTA


AP PHOTO/MOISES CASTILLO

FORT BENNING, GEORGIA NOV. 21-23

Teodora (left) carries a photo of her late husband Francisco Javier Tuyuc in San Juan Comalapa fifty-three miles west of Guatemala City, Guatemala, Nov. 2, 2003. Widows and realtives of those who disappeared during Guatemala's civil war marched to remember more than 100 victims who were exhumed from an old military base in san Juan Comalpa. (AP Photo/Moises Castillo).

The School of the Americas (SOA), located at Ft. Benning, GA, played a key role in the training of Guatemalan military personnel and the military intelligence apparatus that orchestrated the genocidal campaign against Guatemala's Mayan civilian population. This "Scorched Earth" policy of kidnappings, torture and murder left 200,000 dead during Guatemala's thirty-six year civil war. The SOA has in fact trained over 60,000 Latin American soldiers in counterinsurgency techniques, sniper training, commando and psychological warfare, military intelligence and interrogation tactics. These graduates have consistently used their skills to wage a war against their own people. Among those targeted by SOA graduates are educators, union organizers, religious workers, student leaders, and others who work for the rights of the poor. Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, raped, assassinated, "disappeared," massacred, and forced into refugee by those trained at the School of Assassins.

The names on the crosses and Star of David in past demonstrations against the School of the Americas, pictured here, each commemorate an individual who died in the reigns of terror promoted by the school.

Join the Network of Spiritual Progressives in an interfaith demonstration as we bring in new people to join the long-standing annual demonstration organized by the School of the Americas Watch. More info on location, accommodations, etc.: www.soaw.org


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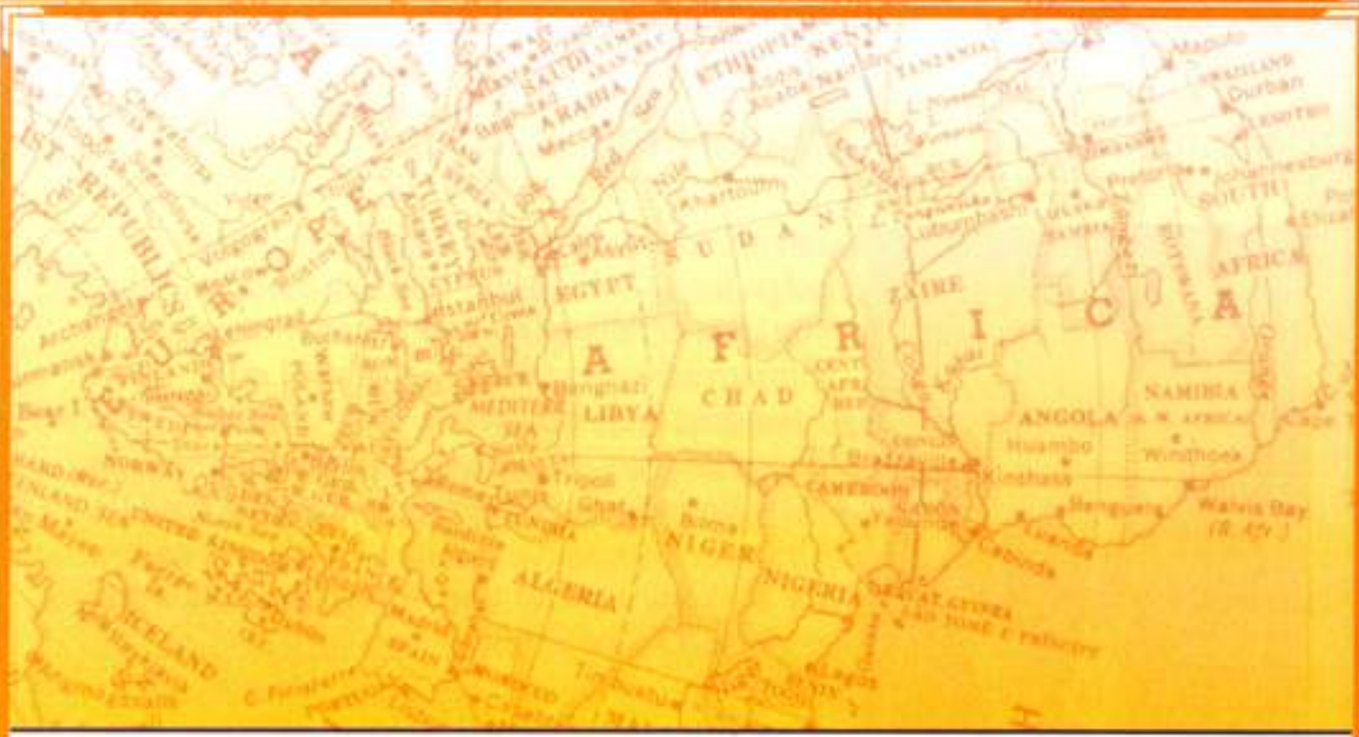
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Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP)

THE GLOBAL MARSHALL PLAN

A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY OF GENEROSITY AND CARE

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. ON THE WEAKNESS OF VIOLENCE:

The ultimate weakness of violence
is that it is a descending spiral,
begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy....
...Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

Dear Network of Spiritual Progressives:



Hon. Keith Ellison (D-MN)

I'm proud to be working with you to build a campaign for a Global Marshall Plan along lines that you have developed on your website www.spiritualprogressives.org. Rabbi Michael Lerner and I have great respect for each other, and frankly I'm happy that this initiative comes from cooperation between me, the first Muslim elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, and a rabbi well known for his commitment to peace, social justice and ecological sanity for our planet.

I have introduced into the House of Representatives House Resolution 1078 endorsing the Global Marshall Plan. I'm also glad to have been joined in this effort by those Members of Congress who have signed on as co-sponsors in the House (see sidebar). With your help, many other members of the House and Senate may join as co-sponsors as well.

Sixty-three years ago, the United States emerged from world war determined to rebuild a devastated continent and to sow the seeds of lasting peace and prosperity, even for people whose governments had been our enemies. The Marshall Plan was a great success: it helped Europe recover and dramatically increased the goodwill of the world toward the United States, generating increased U.S. influence for two generations. The Marshall Plan demonstrated the transcendent power of America's political and financial generosity.

Today we face challenges at home and abroad that rival the scale of that time, and I believe the circumstances call us now to meet moral obligations beyond what our current system of public diplomacy and foreign aid are designed to handle.

Foreign aid to poor countries in Africa, Asia and South/Central America, whether considered as a proportion of the Federal budget or as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP), has never reached close to the amount of money that we used in the first years of the Marshall Plan. Meanwhile, more than 1 billion people on our planet struggle to survive on less than $1 per day, and another 1.6 billion people on less than $2 per day.

House Resolution 1078 recognizes that lasting security for America will be best achieved through policies of generosity and caring toward the rest of the world. It points out that the way to achieve these goals is through a new Global Marshall Plan in which the U.S. dedicates 1%-2% of the GDP each year for

the next 20 years toward once and for all eliminating domestic and global poverty, homelessness, hunger, inadequate education, inadequate health care, and repairing the environment of the planet.

The resolution also calls for creating international non-governmental mechanisms for receiving and distributing such funds in ways that ensure that the money is safeguarded from corruption and protected from manipulation to serve elite interests, but instead is distributed in ways that are respectful of native cultures, are environmentally sensitive, and reach the people who need it. It calls for the revising of existing trade agreements in ways that would improve the lives of the poor of the world, providing training in environmental sustainability, family and parental support, emergency health techniques, and non-violent communication.

The campaign for a Global Marshall Plan will require years of work to help change the dominant way people think about homeland security. That campaign is being led by Rabbi Michael Lerner and the Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP). I hope you will join with him and the NSP in this badly needed effort, and I, for my part, will do what I can to bring this way of thinking into the conversation in the U.S. Congress.

Hon. Keith Ellison (D-MN)
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

CO-SPONSORS OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 1078

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Rep. Emanuel Cleaver [D-MO]
Rep. John Conyers [D-MI]
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Congressman Ellison and the others who have endorsed House Res. 1078 (the NSP version of the Global Marshall Plan) have not seen and do not necessarily endorse the specific arguments and analyses put forward in this booklet, which go further than HR 1078 in explaining the intellectual and spiritual foundations of the NSP approach.



Which works better, a global martial plan...

Security Through Domination: The Current Paradigm

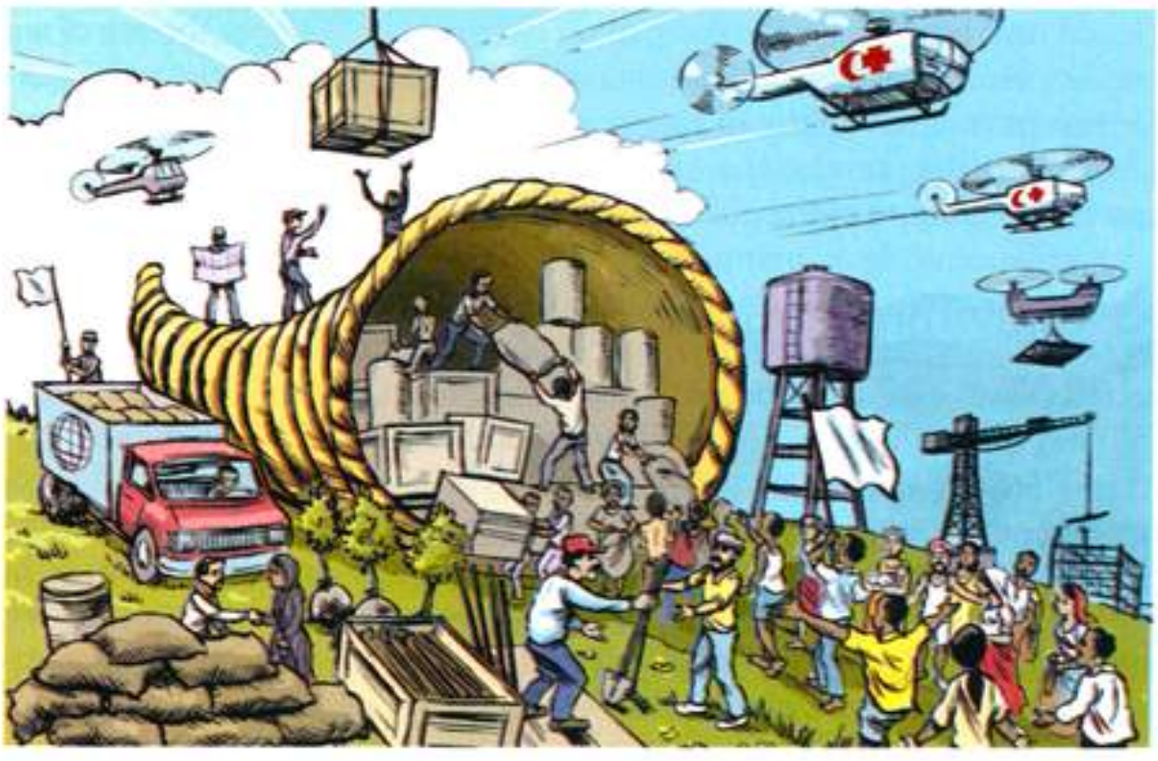
Most people on this planet want to live in a loving and compassionate way. The problem is, we've been taught by our culture that to live that way would put us in danger of being taken advantage of by everyone else. The dominant assumption of our culture is that we live in a world filled with hurtful people who care only about themselves, people who are likely to take advantage of us unless we protect ourselves by getting power over them before they get power over us. For thousands of years much of the human race has been living with the notion that the only way to achieve personal and collective security is through domination of others. That notion is dramatically reinforced by our daily experience in the competitive marketplace and the world of work where we frequently experience ourselves as surrounded by people who seem to be only "looking out for number one." Many people develop a cynical and fearful attitude about others that carries over, and often influences, our personal lives.

Though the levels of fear in the West were dramatically escalated post 9/11, these dynamics have been growing steadily for hundreds of years, with profound psychological and spiritual consequences for our daily lives. People have increasingly withdrawn from loving contact and emotional openness to each other into cocoons of imagined safety. We assume social roles that keep us trapped in isolation and loneliness while yearning for real contact and yet denying to ourselves and others that yearning for genuine recognition and loving community for fear of being humiliated and rejected. The desire to transcend these crippling dynamics is omnipresent, and the need for recognition and deep connection to each other and to a larger

TOM CHALKLEY

framework of meaning and purpose for our lives beyond "making it" in terms of money or power or sexual conquest or fame is ever-present and ready to break through to a world of genuine connection to other people, to our own deepest feelings, and to joyous celebration of the universe. Yet simultaneously our fear of being humiliated by expressing these needs openly and then finding ourselves made vulnerable while others fail to respond often leads us to repress our own deepest desires or to deny them as "utopian." In that state of mind we may respond to calls for community that only extend to the people of our own race, religion or nationality, while assuming that "the others" do not share our desires and would, if given the chance, frustrate our needs.

Nurtured by the media, by nationalist or fundamentalist dominated education, and by politicians who constantly adopt that "us vs. them" rhetoric in order to show that they themselves are "responsible" and "realistic," many Americans accept the notion that the world is fundamentally unsafe and that the goal of American policy should be to advance "American interests" by dominating the world, either militarily, or, through one-sided global economic arrangements and diplomacy. Democrats and Republicans differ on the relative balance between military and diplomatic power, but many in both parties share the mistaken assumption that the only way to achieve security for America is to build a world in which we get "our way." And "our way" usually ends up being defined in terms of the well-being of the most powerful corporations and their allies. National security is frequently defined in terms of their interests, so we end up spending vastly more on the military than on social programs.



TOM CHALKLEY

... or a Global Marshall Plan?

These next two decades are likely to be the last in which US economic and military power decisively shape the world. As China, India and other countries become more powerful, they will likely draw upon the precedents we've set as a world power. If we could dedicate our next two decades to showing how a world power could transcend "Us" vs "Them" thinking, we could be proud of the American legacy.

To do that, we have to stop talking about keeping America "number one" and stop ignoring the suffering of billions on this planet. We should show that world power can act in ways that seek the advantage of al people on the planet.

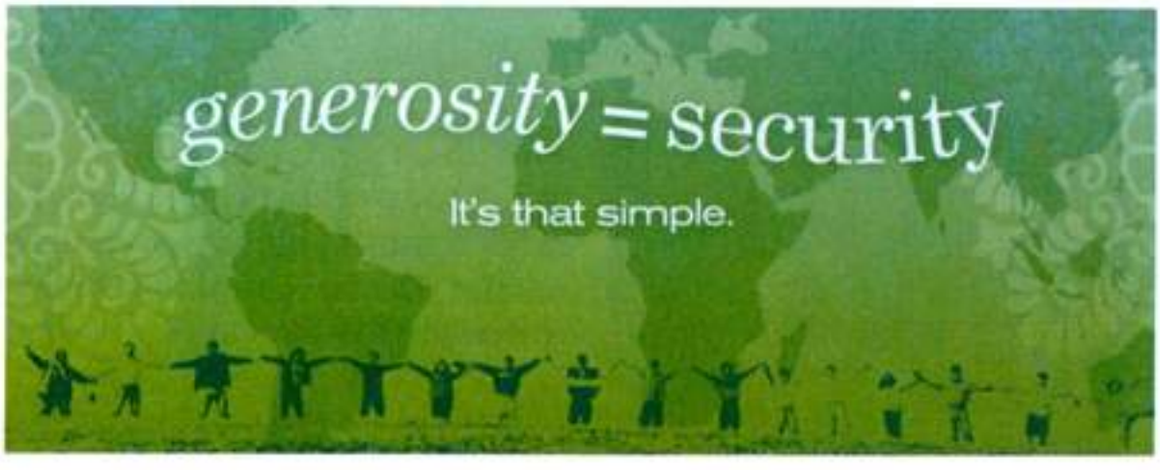
Too many otherwise decent people shrug their shoulders in despair about achieving this kind of consciousness in America. They tell themselves that to be "realists" they must accept the current way that the capitalist system functions and the way that elites of wealth and power shape our system while so many others simply "go along to get along." As a result, they end up participating in a society that continues to promote a global ethos of materialism, selfishness, and "looking out for number one." They even put-down those who advocate for more fundamental change, changes that they themselves actually really want, because they've been convinced that the world that they really want is unattainable. But it is this belief itself, shared by hundreds of millions of very good human beings, that makes it unattainable.

Even those who preach "change" in politics have allowed their vision to be constricted. To prove that they too are tough and "realistic," they buy the very distorted militarist assumptions that brought us to the idea that we could beat terrorism by making more wars or issuing more threats of war and violence. To change these dynamics in American politics, we need a social movement that can unequivocally assert that our well-being as Americans depends on the well-being of everyone else on the planet and on the well-being of the planet itself.

Security Through Generosity, Respect, and Caring: The New Paradigm

The Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP) rejects a reality based on fear of others. We believe it is time for a fundamentally new approach to security and foreign policy. We suggest that generosity and genuine caring for others can be a much more effective and morally coherent approach to human safety, peace and development. We call this approach the "Strategy of Generosity."

Building the Strategy of Generosity and caring requires that we reconnect with the human capacity to recognize others as embodiments of the sacred, or, in secular language, as fundamentally worthy because of who they are and not just because of what they can do for us. This profound and intuitive connection among people must become the center of our campaign for peace and environmental sanity. The bonds of caring among human beings can and must be fostered and nurtured by our policies, because otherwise they are often undermined by economic and political arrangements that make these fundamental human ties seem "unrealistic" and even threatening.



The key to our alternative, what we call the Strategy of Generosity, is our commitment to cultivate trust and hope among the peoples of the world so that we might begin to reflect and act effectively to end world poverty in our lifetimes and save the global environment from almost certain destruction.

An essential element in this strategy is to recognize that terrorism is generated by a global system that demeans the values and the lives of many on this planet. While we in the West tell ourselves that our globalized corporate culture, our sex- and money-crazed media, and our political domination of the world are bringing enlightenment and rationality to a "backward" world, many people experience it quite differently. They see the extreme individualism, materialism, and deterioration of families and religions in the West as a sickness that threatens to overpower through force or through media indoctrination the values and communities upon which they have built their own self-esteem. The demeaning of their cultures by the West coupled with the imposition of global economic arrangements that impoverish many in the economically underdeveloped world is experienced as a humiliation which threatens to destroy their own sources of meaning and higher purpose in life. This combination of poverty and humiliation drives many people into frenzies of rage and into

re-interpreting their own religious or cultural traditions to emphasize the need to drive out the foreigners or the imposers of a form of secularism that threatens to engulf and destroy their last vestiges of self-esteem. The Global Marshall Plan provides an alternative which maintains a strong national defense but nevertheless reaches out to others and siphons off their rage and brings them into connection with a world of people who actually do have respect and caring for them. A strategy that provides this kind of recognition of their humanity, coupled with generous help to provide for economic well-being, is a better alternative, more likely to make us secure, than driving them mad through military, economic, political and cultural forms of humiliation.

What is the Global Marshall Plan?



ISTOCK PHOTO

The Global Marshall Plan is a plan for all the world's people to work in solidarity to eliminate poverty once and for all and to heal the environmental crisis.

The Global Marshall Plan takes its name from the post-World War II Marshall Plan, a massive and successful project to provide aid to Western European countries—including Germany, which had been our antagonist in the war. Historians have debated how altruistic the plan was. Some argue that a large part of the motivation for the original Marshall Plan was to strengthen capitalist economies in Europe to prevent them from becoming Communist. A similar motive to prevent the world from devolving into terrorist-generated chaos might inspire some who will join our efforts for a Global Marshall Plan. But other historians point to the strong strands of generosity that were tapped when Americans embraced rebuilding the devastated lives of the defeated nations against which they had just waged war. This was enlightened self-interest, and it can ally with strong altruistic tendencies that persist in Americans and many others around the world, this time mobilized to combat the suffering of humanity that leads to destructive wars, violence and ecological irresponsibility.

Over the past 25 years, various ideas have emerged for a similar massive relief effort for developing nations. They are called "Marshall Plans" because





Posters from the original Marshall Plan.

there are tens of millions of Americans still alive today who remember with pride that moment in American history when our country acted generously to help others, and the program actually worked! Unlike subsequent "foreign aid" which was scant and given frequently in the form of military assistance to undemocratic elites and not for the purpose of ending poverty, the Marshall Plan, precisely because it was massive and aimed at the well-being of the majority of Europeans, has retained its favorable status in the memories of the American people and others around the world. That's why in 2008, when calling for a global effort that had many elements in common with what we are proposing, U.K. Prime Minister Gordon Brown called for a "Marshall Plan." The idea is growing, and the NSP is dedicating our efforts to build public support for the underlying Strategy of Generosity, caring for others, and humility that are at the heart of this effort, even as we continue to advocate for our larger Spiritual Covenant with America (please check it out at www.spiritualprogressives.org).

The spirit of generosity that is needed for a Global Marshall Plan has fallen victim to the rise of fear and looking out for number one that has dominated American politics in the last thirty years. Today, while other wealthy countries do poorly enough by giving only 30 cents in aid per $100 of income in their countries, the U.S. does even worse: it gives only 17 cents per $100 of income. The Right has successfully convinced many Americans that we are giving a huge part of our budget to aid—but the facts are quite the opposite.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Here are the essential elements of the plan as developed so far by the Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP):



An Indian villager participates in a "People's Summit Against Poverty" in New Delhi, India, Saturday, Sept. 3, 2005.

AP PHOTO/MANISH SWARUP

- **Provide enough funding to eliminate domestic and global poverty, homelessness, hunger, inadequate education and inadequate health care, plus repair the global environment.** The most modest estimates for this would be to dedicate 1-2% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the world's developed nations toward funding this goal each year for the next twenty years. We do not want to wait until all of the G-8 nations are involved in this project; *we believe that the U.S. must lead by example, dedicating at least 1% to 2% of its GDP toward this goal starting as soon as the American people can get Congress to fund it.*

- **Create an international, unbiased, nongovernmental agency for receiving the funds (from both foreign aid and alternative sources of financing) and distributing them in a way that is environmentally sensitive, respectful of native cultures, safeguarded against corruption, protected from manipulation to serve elite interests, and empowering of the people in each region.** *This agency or mechanism should be governed by a board of ethicists, religious leaders, artists, writers, social theorists, philosophers, economists, scientists, and social change activists, all of whom have demonstrated in the ways that they have lived their lives and conducted their public affairs that they give higher priority to the well-being of others than to the well-being of corporations or wealthy elites.*

- **Revise trade agreements in which the U.S. is currently involved so that they no longer privilege the most powerful and economically successful Western countries and the elites of other countries at the expense of the poor of the world.** Global trade must be both multilateral and equitable. New agreements must provide support and encouragement for working people to organize, receive a living wage, and work under adequate safety and health conditions and environmental



World trade policies frequently harm farmers. This poster commemorates South Korean activist and farmers' leader Lee Kyung Hae, who died protesting World Trade Organization policies.

safeguards. Trade agreements must also protect farmers, both at home and abroad, encouraging food prices that make it possible for farmers to make a living and poorer people to buy adequate food, and encourage land use that is environmentally sustainable.

- **Ensure hands-on involvement from peoples of the world through an International Peace and Generosity Corps** which would provide ways for people with useful skills to volunteer two years (at any age) toward the goals of the Global Marshall Plan. High school graduates would receive college tuition and room and board following their service, and older Americans would receive a yearly salary equivalent to their average salary for the past five years of work, as well as a guaranteed job after service is completed.



A Peace Corps volunteer (right) learns to cook traditional food in Ghana.

- **Fund trained, unarmed, civilian peace teams such as the Nonviolent Peaceforce to intervene in areas of conflict.** Retrain the armies of nations around the world to become experts in ecologically

FAVIANNA RODRIGUEZ (TOP), PEACE CORPS (BOTTOM)

sensitive construction of those aspects of their own societies that need relief and reconstruction, including agriculture, health care, housing, infrastructure, education and computers, and other appropriate technology.

- **Train everyone on the planet in techniques of nonviolent communication, diversity, environmental sustainability, family and parental support, stress reduction, emergency health techniques, diet and exercise, and caring for others who are in need of help.**

- **Empower girls.** A major focus of our program will be the empowerment of girls through literacy, education and skills-training, plus opening up of work for young women. This process requires building support in the local villages and families for this kind of switch in the role of girls, so that too becomes part of the education process.



Women in India manage markets, mines, farms, fisheries and other businesses which got financial startup funds (microfinance) through Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Here an SHG member mixes concrete.

MARK SAPPENFIELD/THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR VIA GETTY IMAGES

- **Ensure that the local village communities feel empowered by the programs being introduced,** that they have and experience "ownership" of the programs, and so feel a real stake in the success of the programs. The involvement of people on the local level is critical. At the same time, we will consciously take steps to make sure that government bureaucrats do not feel under-recognized or "dissed" by the programs we introduce. The goal must be to achieve ongoing "buy-in" and involvement by all the stake holders, rather than passivity and resentment.

- **Empowerment is a central goal.** We seek to promote active involvement of the recipients of support in developing their own skills to the point that they can enter and strengthen local economies.

- **Vast improvement of health care systems globally,** including: giving primacy to health promotion rather than only treating illness; dramatic



An Interfaith Convocation on Hunger was held at the Washington National Cathedral in 2007. Organized by Bread for the World, it attracted nearly 1,000 worshippers from 45 states. Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim and other leaders urged an abiding commitment to bring "bread to those who are hungry, and hunger for justice to those who have bread."

reduction of the role of private insurance companies and health care profiteers in the delivery of health care; recognition of quality health care as a fundamental right to be provided without regard to the capacity of individuals to pay for such services; free availability globally of vaccines, antibiotics, food supplements, training in health care promotion and prevention in every school system and every village; and free medical school training. Health care is a form of caring, and caring should shape every aspect of the way we deliver medical support.

- **Recognize that the private sector, the public sector, NGOs, private foundations, academia, social change activists, and religious and spiritual communities all have important elements to contribute to our Global Marshall Plan.** Each sector should be involved in providing their special capacities in the development and implementation of the Global Marshall Plan. The public sector can contribute monies to funding basic scientific research that will help in developing alternative energy sources, medical advances, and environmentally-friendly forms of production of goods and agriculture; the private sector can provide help in implementing programs and in providing funding; NGOs can help with finding the appropriate people to provide leadership in the conceptualization and implementation of local, regional and national plans; academia can support both the scientific research and graduate students with the skills and capacities (ethical, intellectual and emotional) to develop and sustain widespread support for a Strategy of Generosity and/or to participate in the hands-on work of an International Peace and Generosity Corps; and religious and spiritual communities

READ FOR THE WORLD/ JIM STIPE



"World Harmony" by Salma Arastu. Born a Hindu in India, Arastu embraced Islam through her marriage. See www.salmaarastu.com.

can provide careful monitoring to ensure that the program does not become drowned in bureaucracy and spiritual deadness and hence capitulate to the ethos of looking out for number one or making unnecessary compromises in focus to accommodate the interests of economic and political elites, and they can join with social change activists both to ensure that the program does not lose its central ethical focus and spiritual goal to elicit in people of the world a new sense of caring for each other and to ensure that genuine involvement of the recipients becomes the hallmark of this program.

- **Environmental goals will be central to GMP funding.** These must include ways to: slow or stop deforestation; reduce by 80% the carbon emissions from our factories, furnaces, automobiles and energy sources; achieve a global limit on overall greenhouse gas; adapt to the likely damage already done to the global environment (which will impact most disastrously on many countries that are already suffering from extreme poverty); secure safe drinking water and sanitation for all; reject privatization of water; increase water efficiency in agriculture; protect biodiversity; dramatically reduce the consumption of meat in order to shift croplands to more efficient food production; protect global fisheries from pollution and excess fishing; promote family planning and stabilize the world's population.

- **Engage the loving life energies of the universe, to re-instill hope and generosity in people involved in this program** whether as donors, recipients, trainers or in any other capacity. We will judge our program successful to the degree that it makes people feel safe and cared for by others, less alone, more trusting and more willing to personally engage in acts of caring and generosity toward others and more capable of caring for the planet earth and responding to the majesty and mystery of the universe with awe, wonder and radical amazement at the grandeur of all

SALMA ARASTU

that is. It is this spiritual outcome that is our bottom line. If done with this intention, we believe we can construct a set of programs that will nourish and excite the souls of everyone alive on the planet, so that they burn with passionate intensity for life, and embody a new level of inner calm and gentleness that can help repair the planet.

We estimate that this program, if fully implemented, could cost as much as 3-5% of the GDP of the world. Our commitment is to start with the 1%-2% of U.S. GDP and move from there.

People will be tempted to dismiss this plan as "too unrealistic." We must break through our entrenched assumptions about what is realistic so that people can look at the Strategy of Generosity not through the frame of existing inside-the-beltway assumptions or the "common sense" thrown at us daily by a corporate-dominated media, but rather through the frame of what the human race and the planet earth urgently need in order to survive the 21st century. Don't ask what is possible, since possibilities change as people's awareness changes. Ask, instead, "What is necessary?"

A Global Marshall Plan for Domestic Needs as Well

- **Part of the NSP version of the Global Marshall Plan aims at eliminating poverty, inadequate education, inadequate health care and repairing the environment in the advanced industrial societies,** particularly in the U.S. where wealth disparities are so extreme and environmental responsibility so underdeveloped. Some of these funds, then, will be used to finance social welfare programs for health, education, job training, alternative forms of energy and transportation, and support for our elders and for the unemployed. Caring for our own is not a first step but a simultaneous step with caring for others and has equal ethical validity. It has political wisdom as well. As economist Jeffrey Sachs points out, "social welfare spending not only reduces inequities and uncertainties within a



JOSH MACPHEE

rich society but also bolsters the confidence and trust within the society to be more generous on the international stage. Countries treat the world's poor and vulnerable as they treat their own. U.S. policies, by pursuing a constricted notion of social insurance, foster a society of fear and vulnerability that lacks the readiness to contribute more to global cooperation. Mainstream Americans feel increasingly unnerved by widening income inequality at home, and are themselves less likely to support assistance for the poor abroad."

- **Learn to bridge the divisions that keep us apart.** Economist Jeffrey Sachs points out that people are more willing to pay for programs that help people like themselves, so they are less likely to support programs for the disadvantaged if the socioeconomic divisions coincide with racial or ethnic divisions. Unlearning racism and dismantling its economic, political, ideological and institutional manifestations is a critical need if the Global Marshall Plan is to succeed. The poor—of our own or another race, ethnicity or religion—are not "other." They are all "us." Similarly, strengthened unions can play an important role in mobilizing support for both domestic and global aspects of the Global Marshall Plan if their leadership elites can think beyond the narrow forms of self-interest that have sometimes paralyzed the best instincts and deepest spiritual truths that undergird the imperative to organize and defend the interests of working people.

The current economic woes facing the U.S. are in large part a product of the absence of the consciousness of mutual solidarity and generosity that the NSP version of the Global Marshall Plan seeks to develop. The dramatic increase in oil prices is not just a result of increased demand but of the desire on the part of speculators to make super-profits without regard to the social consequences of their greed. Similarly, the home mortgage crisis is largely generated by reckless encouragement of debt by the large banks and selling of those mortgages in a global banking system detached from concerns about providing affordable housing for middle income people. It is the lack of connectedness to human needs, which are being played with irresponsibly by our advertisers, speculators and financial institutions, which underlies our current economic tensions. Because funding for our plan does not involve new taxes on middle income people (see below), the GMP will not add to our economic burden, while the values of solidarity and caring for others that it will foster are precisely what is needed to stabilize the world economy and purge it of the striking irrationality that happens when an economic system is ruled purely by a drive for profit and selfishness without the balance of generosity and caring for others and for the planet.

A Spirit of Humility

We offer this plan with a commitment to humility and a conviction that it cannot work unless it is understood as deriving from our own commitment to the well-being of everyone on the planet and not primarily as a self-interested plan to advance American or Western world power and influence, though of course we know that this is actually a far better way to achieve homeland security than the trillions that the Western world spends on arms, military assaults, and "defense."



We must also insist that the plan be implemented with a clear message that although the West has superior technology and material success, we do not equate that with superior moral or cultural wisdom. On the contrary, our approach must reflect a deep humility and a spirit of repentance for the ways in which Western dominance of the planet has been accompanied by wars, environmental degradation, and a growing materialism and selfishness.

We have much to learn from the peoples of the world, their cultures, their spiritual and intellectual heritage, their ways of dealing with human relationships. That insight must guide the kind of Global Marshall Plan that the NSP supports, so that this doesn't end up being a new installment of "the Ugly American" pushing our agenda around the world. On the other hand, we will also avoid the manipulation that sometimes takes place when elites of the third world tell us that we in the West have no idea what their people need and that only they can



ISLAMFROMINSIDE.COM (TOP), TODD TUTTLE (BOTTOM)

represent their own people. We do know that people need an end to poverty, homelessness, hunger, inadequate education, inadequate health care and environmental degradation, and we want to work only with people who are truly dedicated to those goals. We are not going to be manipulated by those who demean as "a form of cultural imperialism" all ideas that come from the West, from whites, from men, or any other of the categories that are sometimes used to make people in the West feel guilty. We are all in this together, and people in the West have reason for humility, but not self-abnegation.

"Realistic" and Right

It is in our own interests as humans to recognize that our individual and societal well-being depends on the well-being of everyone else on the planet. The Global Marshall Plan could save the planet from nuclear and conventional wars and jump-start the process of global environmental planning.



But there is an even more crucial reason to adopt it, and that is because it reflects our deep need to care for each other as momentary embodiments of God (or whatever name you use for the goodness and love and generosity of the universe at its current stage of evolutionary development). We wish to foster an ethos of caring and love for others because it is ethically and spiritually right to do so, not only because it is instrumentally the only sane policy for saving the planet and saving the lives of our children and grandchildren.

The Global Marshall Plan (GMP) can only work if it is perceived not as a new way for the West to dominate the world or fund further penetration of Western corporate and media dominance around the planet, but if it is perceived primarily as manifestation of a new awareness that has grown in the Western world of our interdependence with and caring for everyone on the planet. Even domestic support for the NSP version of the GMP will grow to the extent that people perceive it as a manifestation of genuine caring rather than primarily as a smart and savvy way to protect the United States (which it also is) or as a way for some smart liberal and progressive politicians to gain greater public support (which it also is).

For us, the Global Marshall Plan is worthy not only because it serves the biblical imperative to care for the poor and the down-trodden, but also because the very debate around the idea of a Strategy of Generosity will be empowering. If the campaign for a Global Marshall Plan adheres to the approach we present here, it will help many people recognize their actual deeply held (but sometimes denied) desire for mutual recognition, genuine caring and love. Insisting on values like generosity, repentance, humility, and transcending selfishness and materialism provides a language to challenge the one-dimensional technocratic rationality that presents itself as the only form of respectable thinking. Our language seeks to support the re-emergence of a heart-centered rationality that involves responding to others with overflowing generosity and to the universe with awe and wonder and radical amazement at the grandeur of all that is. Though it's likely to take a long time before the NSP version of the Global Marshall Plan is adopted by the US and other world governments, the campaign for it has an intrinsic value because of the way it will place into public discourse the fundamental human needs that have been too long ignored, and will challenge notions of what is realistic that have constricted our imaginations and crippled our politics.



A young girl in Dasilami, Gambia, walks past a storage house stocked with grain to help tide local families over during times of environmental or economic crisis.

REBECCA BLACKWELL / OXFAM AMERICA

How Our Global Marshall Plan Differs From Other "Aid" Plans

Where aid has failed to work as expected or hoped, it is not only because funds have often been siphoned off or misused, but also and primarily because they have not been part of a comprehensive plan to once and for all end both domestic and global poverty. Imagine that you wanted to end malaria, but instead of draining all the swamps in your area, you drained a few at a time, often with inadequate funds to even do that effectively. Then, after some time, people in your society said, "lets stop draining the swamps—after all, that hasn't had much of an impact on malaria, but meanwhile it's costing us higher taxes." They'd be right—the partial steps have not worked and will not work.

But we don't mean to suggest that our vision of the Global Marshall Plan should be seen as an alternative to other partial programs that are doing important work. We fully support the One Campaign, Oxfam, Bread for the World, and dozens of other enterprises that are motivated by the same desire to end the suffering of people around the world. In fact, there's a good chance that as more people rally around the Global Marshall Plan, more of the corporate interests and conservative elites that run the Western world will suddenly discover that they have found ways to raise the funding for these other more partial plans as a way to head off too much support for a more comprehensive plan. We welcome that—because we don't want to suggest that people should wait till a Global Marshall Plan is funded in order to take significant steps to relieve the burdens imposed by

debt, poverty, and exploitative trade arrangements and environmental insensitivity. We believe that the campaign for a Global Marshall Plan is likely to bring even more people into support for these other campaigns which we view as allies. At the same time these campaigns have been educating the public in ways that are critical to building support for a huge national effort. Would it not be a great flowering of their work to see a GMP come into being? And it is clear that a GMP will need all of their expertise to make sure it works as intended.



Albina du Boisrouvray, French founder of the organization FXB International, whose goal is to fight poverty and AIDS, and support orphans and vulnerable children left in the wake of the AIDS pandemic, meets families in Thailand. They are taking part in a program to help them gain income and tackle AIDS.

SIPA VIA AP IMAGES

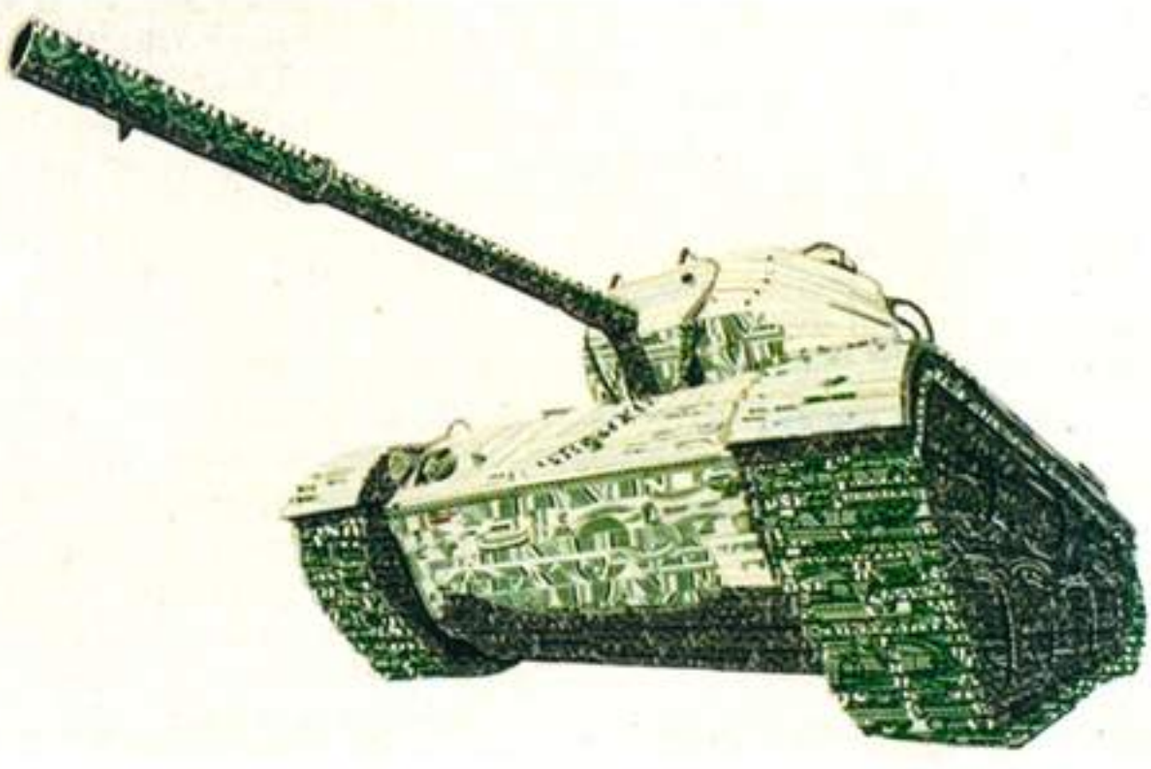
On the other hand, we think a major reason that many people don't want "big government programs" is because they have watched for decades as their taxes have risen to support programs for the poor that never ended poverty, but seemed to be sinking people's hard-earned monies into a bottomless pit. This feeling is reasonable and not always a reflection of selfishness. So a comprehensive plan that can be seen to be viable in actually achieving the One Campaign's great goal to "Make Poverty History" might generate more public support and more willingness to raise taxes than less comprehensive programs that—despite their good and sometimes amazing work—in sum only put bandages onto a world that is bleeding more heavily than the bandages can contain. People will be more willing to make sacrifices for a larger goal that would actually make a huge difference than for smaller goals that will only perpetuate the world as it is, with all its obvious pain and suffering.

The NSP is working closely with other groups moving toward the same aim, including the Centre for Global Negotiations, the Global Marshall Plan Initiative, and Global Commons.org.

Where Will the Money Come From to Pay For a GMP?

Please note that the militarists and political centrists who have funded our wars and foreign policy misadventures never get pushed to answer this question for their strategy. When Congress voted a blank check to the President for the war in Iraq, it didn't include a plan for how to fund the

war. Close to a trillion dollars later, the Democrats who ran in 2006 with the promise of ending the war continued to vote for hundreds of billions to continue it instead. Why? Because for them as for the militarists and centrists, the question of where the funding comes from and what other programs have to lose their funding is never asked by the media or by the society as a whole, it being "obvious" to everyone that when it comes to national security there is no relevance to the question and that the government will find a way to fund it. The same approach is appropriate for the Global Marshall Plan, since it is in fact the best possible approach to national security. Once we've been able to convince people about that, the rest of the funding issue will recede in importance.



"Sluggo" by Chad Person. Medium: U.S. Currency on Canvas.

One source of money will be the military budget itself. The GMP will be a primary part of that budget. In turn, huge savings of hundreds of billions of dollars will be possible each year that we implement the GMP by reducing other useless military spending.

In addition, a tax of one percent on all international financial transactions of over $1 million could generate the rest of the funding. This Currency Transaction Tax can also be supplemented by a tax on world trade: goods would be subject to a 0.5% tax, which would have only a tiny impact on

CHAD PERSON

consumer prices. A tax on carbon emissions, on international and domestic sales of arms and ammunitions, ocean fishing, maritime freight, offshore oil and gas might also contribute to the sources for funding the GMP.

Eliminate The Military Entirely?

Though the success of the GMP might lead to a world in which the elimination of a military becomes conceivable, we are not yet there. In this historical moment, a GMP will only win mass approval if it is seen as one leg of a two-legged strategy, in which military defense is still intact and powerful.

A rational defense policy coupled with the GMP will provide far better defense than the U.S. currently has been able to muster by depending primarily on military interventions around the world. The direction we propose would involve withdrawing U.S. forces to our own borders, closing our military bases around the world, and strengthening international institutions that could provide nonviolent interventions, but if necessary military interventions in the case of clear and present danger of genocide or ethnic cleansings. Although we believe that nonviolence is the only path for the future of the human race, we understand that convincing Americans of the viability of a nonviolent defense will take many years, and that one of the steps in that direction will be the success of a Global Marshall Plan which proves that generosity can actually work to increase security. Nevertheless, in implementing the two-prong strategy, we will be able to achieve huge savings in the military budget by a new balance that focuses military defense on our borders.

The GMP is the most appropriate weapon for the war on terror. It replaces the failed strategies of military interventions with the Strategy of Generosity and caring for others. A strong national defense requires the GMP, and those politicians who refuse to move in this direction should be seen as stuck in the 19th and 20th century mentality and as a result as "weak on national defense." It's as if they are spending money on muskets from the 18th century, whereas we need to use the power of kindness and generosity. There's no point in being wimpy about this—love, generosity, real respect, and caring should be advocated for in a strong way, not defensively or as if we suspect that they are really "secondary measures that would be nice to integrate if we could afford to, but we cannot." The truth is that the advanced industrial societies of the world can't afford to anything less than the GMP.



Tube well stranded by rising flood water in Bangladesh.

The GMP and the Environmental Crisis

Solving the global environmental crisis will require the active cooperation of all the people of the world. We will need a global plan for preserving natural resources, preventing wasteful production and consumption of unnecessary goods, allocating increasingly scarce food and water, and a coordinated plan to reduce the rate of population growth. This kind of cooperation is impossible as long as the U.S. or other countries rely on the strategy of domination to achieve our goals. Here's why:

The Western world holds a vastly disproportionate amount of the wealth of the planet. Talk of reducing consumption to save the environment is inevitably heard by many in the poorer countries as a way to freeze this inequality. "Why," people in the third world argue, "should we condemn our citizens to a lower level of material well-being than the West already enjoys? We have the same rights to excessive consumption as they have had for the past 200 years." It's useless in that situation for the West to preach about "the greater good" when the West hordes its wealth.



GETTY/STOCKBYTE (TOP), WWW.GMB-AKASH.COM (BOTTOM)



Catching every drop, girls share the task of pumping their water by hand from a well in North Darfur, Sudan.

EVA-LOTTA JANSSON / OXFAM AMERICA

Moreover, consider the situation of an individual in the third world. She might be told that cutting down the trees in the Amazon or increasing the number of her children in India or Pakistan or Indonesia or Uganda might be a long-term threat to the environmental sustainability of the world. But her immediate situation is that living on less than $1 a day, she faces malnutrition, inadequate health services, and inadequate education to allow her children to do better than she. She has an immediate survival need to act in ways that might be unsustainable but which might achieve survival for her family. If she has enough children, she could reason, some of them might survive and provide her with the minimum material needs to physically survive when she is too old to work. Saving the global commons can only be done when people feel that their own personal survival is also part of the plan. Otherwise, we are likely to see both individual and national struggles, even possibly world wars, fought in the 21st century over water, food, and other declining resources as one group or country after another tries to take for itself without regard to the well-being of the rest of the world.

A Global Marshall Plan provides a direction to solve these problems. Done correctly, the Global Marshall Plan will put into place health care and educational systems and a more functional economy. The revision of world trade agreements so as to protect small farmers and allow for local production of organic goods will not only save on energy resources but will also allow for the development of local sustainable economies that will raise



Adelina Ortiz signs official documents for a new women's organization in Ahuachapan, El Salvador, whose mission is to teach women about their human rights and help them train for work to support their families. The organization was established by Ortiz and other women in her community.

ADELINA ORTIZ, CAMEXCA

the material well-being of people in the third world and give them an alternative to environmentally unsustainable and destructive practices.

Because the NSP version of the Global Marshall Plan puts so much emphasis on a change of consciousness, its impact on environmental issues will be profound. When people in the advanced industrial societies see the world through the framework of generosity and caring for others, it becomes possible for them to take seriously the immediate dangers to survival that their own profligate spending and misuse of the world's resources constitute. The significant reduction in the accumulation of material goods and the transformation of energy, transportation, and production of goods necessary to preserve the planet will no longer feel like an impossible burden to be resisted, but a gift to be given to the planet and to the peoples of the world whom we in the advanced industrial societies have learned to embrace. A life of simplicity can feel like a rise in one's standard of living even as it is a decrease in one's level of consumption, if it is accompanied by an end to domestic and global poverty, the resulting decline in crime, full health care for all, a growing sense of community and connection to the people around us, and a reviving global environment.

Most important, the NSP version of the Global Marshall Plan insists on implementation that respects and honors the wisdom and cultural specificity of recipients as well as environmentally sustainable projects. The shift in global consciousness from domination to generosity within the more advanced industrial societies will eventually generate a new level of trust around the globe, and it is that level of trust that is the indispensable precondition for the development of rational global environmental policies. The GMP is thus the necessary first step toward saving the planet from environmental destruction. All the more reason why we must make the GMP an immediate priority for our public attention and action.



What You Can Do

Jump into this project with all your heart and all your energies. Make this a major focus of your non-work activities.

1. Talk about these ideas with everyone you know. Don't allow them to tell you it's unrealistic, when the world as it currently has developed is unsustainable and leading to endless wars, poverty, suffering and environmental destruction. Perhaps they don't yet really allow themselves to know that the UN estimates that between 15,000 and 40,000 children under the age of five die every single day of diseases related to malnutrition or because medical care and drugs are not available to them that could have saved their lives—approximately 12 million per year. Only a Global Marshall Plan at the level we are proposing could change this.

2. Invite people to your home and have them watch a video from the NSP about the Global Marshall Plan. Then engage them in discussions about what they are willing to do to help get this idea the support it needs.

3. Join the Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP) and give us the financial support we need to reprint this brochure and develop other educational tools to promote this message. With your annual membership comes a free subscription to *Tikkun* Magazine.



4. Approach local and national religious organizations (such as your own church, synagogue, mosque, ashram, zendo, etc.), trade unions, professional organizations, civic organizations, colleges and universities, elected officials and people or political parties seeking your support during elections—and ask them all to officially endorse the Global Marshall Plan and lend their names to our campaign.

The NSP is not only for religious people—it's for anyone, including atheists and agnostics, who give some credence to the spiritual dimension of life and hence refuse to subordinate the struggle for a world of love, kindness and generosity to the narrower goals of those who look at nature or other human beings primarily through an instrumental framework of "what's in it for me and my family?" If you can identify with our goals of a world that seeks a New Bottom Line of love and kindness, caring for others and generosity, ethical and ecological sensitivity, recognizing others as embodiments of the sacred and responding to the universe with awe, wonder and radical amazement at the grandeur of all that is, you are a spiritual progressive and should be working for something like the Global Marshall Plan. And at this time, 2008-2010, we are the primary organization advancing this particular conception of what a Global Marshall Plan needs to be to actually succeed.

5. Educate your own elected officials about the importance of the Global Marshall Plan and ask them to teach their colleagues about the importance of supporting this plan.

6. Donate, create fund-raisers, approach people you know who have money or contacts in foundations, and ask for them to support the NSP in this project.

7. Get your local city council, state legislature and elected representatives in the House and Senate to enthusiastically and energetically back the NSP version of the GMP. If they won't, collect signatures to put it on the ballot if your state allows that initiative process, or collect signatures on a petition to elected officials.

ISTOCK PHOTO (TOP AND BOTTOM)

8. Challenge the media to cover this campaign and to represent the perspective of those who believe that this is the best path to homeland security and national defense.

9. Build a local Network of Spiritual Progressives, composed of people who want to build support for the Global Marshall Plan. Once they join as members, they'll receive our information and our latest tools for building public support. Create your own leaflets or circulate our petition and get names of supporters who endorse it (and send that to us). Create a videotape. Spread our message on the web. Write op-eds or do videos on YouTube and other parts of the net. Create a movie, a song, a novel, a dance, a poem, about this movement!

10. Change your WILL and give a generous donation or bequest to NSP (tax-deductible non-profit name: The Institute for Labor and Mental Health). Write an ethical will for your children, sharing with them your wisdom and ethical vision, and urge them to support NSP.

11. Volunteer in our office, and encourage children and/or grandchildren to spend a year with us as an intern for the Network of Spiritual Progressives. Do acts of spontaneous generosity in your own life—by sharing with others, open-heartedly forgiving people who have offended or hurt you, and taking care of others who are in need without expectation of a "return on your investment" of time and energy and money. Be generous also in accepting the foibles and weaknesses of those who join you in this campaign—accepting that everyone on this planet is somewhat wounded and somewhat inadequate, but since that's all there is on the planet, we have to work with our own and each other's problematic parts. And do this work with joy at the opportunity that it gives you to do "tikkun"—the fundamental healing and transformation of the world. It's an amazing privilege to have time give back to God and to the universe in this way—so use the opportunity you have to the fullest! Don't ever say, "Nobody told me how I could be of help." This is the way to be of help—please JOIN US!

Why Bother?

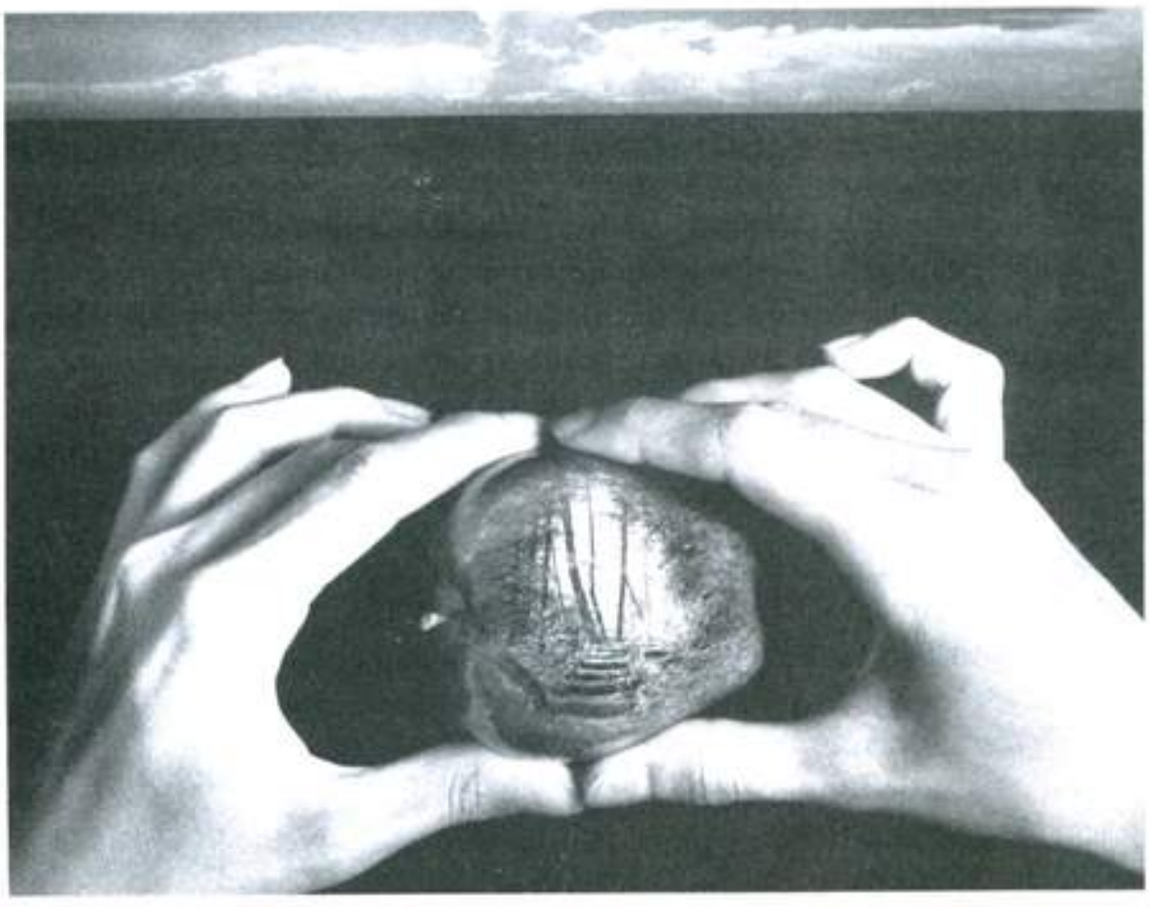
The future of the world is at stake. Our survival physically. Our spiritual health. The quality of human relationships on the planet. The survival of many other species and their ecosystems.



RUSS ANDO

Some people believe that once good people are in place in the government, these problems will go away. Yet our own conversations with elected officials teach us that they are faced with massive pressures to keep going in the same old directions and to keep funding and relying upon the strategies of domination. The media will show massive cynicism toward any leader who talks about genuine caring and generosity. Members of Congress will respond to their funders and to the calls for being "realistic." Even the most idealistic of them will feel constrained by their own advisors and their allies in Congress, unless they can point to a huge political movement that is equally determined as the lobbyists and the special interests, equally capable of getting its message heard, and equally insistent when meeting elected officials, media, or other public-opinion shapers on the urgency of giving the NSP version of the Global Marshall Plan a solid commitment.

This is not the task of someone else. Even if you are a full-time student, or raising your children, or working two shifts or in a professional job that takes all of your time, or an aging senior who is confined to bed, you can still help. You can make a phone call a week to an elected official or to a journalist. You can invite people to your home to show them an NSP video about the Global Marshall Plan. You can write a letter a week. You can talk about these ideas to everyone you know. And you can donate 1% of your annual income to supporting our campaign for the Global Marshall Plan. **Whatever you do will make a difference.** ■



JERRY UELSMANN

YES, I'LL JOIN THE NSP CAMPAIGN FOR A GLOBAL MARSHALL PLAN (GMP).

Sign me up as an endorser of the NSP version of the GMP. I commit to doing all I can to support your efforts and publicize these ideas. Use my name as one of the supporters of your efforts.

Name: _____

Organizational Affiliation: _____
(for identification purposes only and does not imply that the organization endorses the GMP or other ways that you'd wish to be identified)

Email *(absolutely essential, so write carefully)*: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ **Business Phone:** _____

YES, I'LL DONATE TO HELP THIS GMP CAMPAIGN.

❑ Enclosed is a check made to the Network of Spiritual Progressives GMP Campaign.

❑ You can deduct the following amount from my credit card:

❑ $2,500 Patron
❑ $1,000 World Transformer
❑ $500 Pillar of the GMP Campaign
❑ $150
❑ $100
❑ $60
❑ $100 each month till I tell you to stop: Maximizer of Generosity
❑ $50 each month till I tell you to stop: Sustainer of Global Caring
❑ $35 each month till I tell you to stop: Basic Supporter
❑ Other: $_____
❑ I can't afford anything at this moment, but I still want to make the following commitment to help build this movement (please write clearly, and if you want to attach another piece of paper describing what you will do more fully, please include on that page as well as this one all your relevant contact information).

Signature: _____

Credit Card #: _____ **Exp. Date** ____ **Security Code:** ____

Return to: **Network of Spiritual Progressives, 2342 Shattuck Ave, Suite 1200, Berkeley, Ca. 94704 info@spiritualprogressives.org**

or Call 1 **(510) 644-1200** to donate and give credit card info by phone

Or sign up and donate on the web at **www.spiritualprogressives.org/GMP**

TEAR OFF

What is the Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP)?

NSP is a project of the Institute for Labor and Mental Health, a non-profit organization seeking to provide education to the public around issues of the relationship between health/mental health, on the one hand, and on the other hand, how we structure our economic and political lives. Our research has taught us that the world deeply needs a framework of meaning and purpose that connects to the highest spiritual aspirations of the human race for a world of love, kindness, generosity, ethical and ecological sensitivity, and awe and wonder at the grandeur and miracle of the universe.

We created *Tikkun* magazine as a voice for that message, and the Network of Spiritual Progressives as an education arm to promote these ideas in the public sphere. We do not back any particular political party or candidate for office. We are a 501-c-3 to which contributions are tax-deductible. If you wish to make your contributions directed primarily to lobbying efforts, you should indicate so by making your check or credit card to the Spiritual Progressive Fund, a 501-c-4 which has the legal right to do lobbying work. Send those donations to us as well, because for the moment we are hosting them in our offices.

NSP National Co-Chairs: Rabbi Michael Lerner, Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister, Princeton University Professor Cornel West.



www.spiritualprogressives.org

DETACH AND SAVE

A Note to our Non-Jewish Readers on How This High Holiday Workbook Can Be of Use to You

Tikkun is not just for Jews—it is interfaith as well as Jewish. And the High Holiday Workbook has many elements that could work for you and for all people in the world, though the element of repentance is particularly needed in the United States at this historical moment, given our society's problems. The Hebrew word for sin is *cheyt*, a word that indicates "missing the mark," as though we were an arrow heading toward our deepest God place, and sin is really going off course. Repentance, then, is a getting back on course, and that is precisely what America badly needs, as do each of us. The idea here is not one of "evil" but rather one that indicates the fundamental goodness of people created in God's image, and the need for a mid-flight *tikkun*, or healing and transformation, of our direction.

We've written the High Holiday workshop to emphasizes its universal themes, in the hopes that you might consider adopting it in your own life. Although we invite you to register and come to High Holiday services led by Rabbi Michael Lerner in San Francisco (details at www.beyttikkun.org), and though each year some people fly in for these services from as far away as Israel, U.K. and Australia, we know that most of you will not be attending any such High Holiday service. But we do invite you to try this process of repentance, either on your own or with a group of your friends or spiritual soul-mates. Allocate a time each day to work on one of the items in the workbook, meditate on one topic each day, and read the "For our Sins" part, translating those parts that apply specifically to Jews into a language that makes sense to your own community and its experiences. If possible, get a repentance/*teshuva* "buddy" as described in the workbook. And let us know how it worked for you.

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יִכָּתֵבוּן. וּבְיוֹם צוֹם כִּפּוּר יֵחָתֵמוּן.

High Holidays 5769 | Tikkun

America Needs Repentance

An invitation to all North Americans to join with the Jewish people in using the period September 30 (Rosh Hashanah—the Day of Remembering who we have been this last year) through October 9th (Yom Kippur—the Day of At-one-ment) to rethink our personal and communal reality and engage with the process of *teshuva* (returning to our highest selves and away from the ways we've missed the mark in this past year) as outlined in the pages of this workbook.

In the United States, Israel, and most other advanced industrial countries, this year's High Holidays come at a period of massive hypocrisy, nationalist chauvinism, repression of civil liberties, and denial of the most critical issues facing our planet. We continue to ignore the basic problems that plague the global human community (starvation, disease, impending ecological crisis), choosing instead to persist in the "war against terrorism" to justify military aggression against countries whose regimes we abhor. Even while many are hopeful that all this will change with the election of a new president, the reality of where we have been as North Americans needs to be critically confronted. There will be little talk about the 2.8 billion people on the planet living on less than two dollars a day, or the 850 million people who are hungry, or the 20-30,000 children who, according to UN estimates, die every single day of starvation or of preventable diseases related to malnutrition.

Few American leaders will use this period to ask what America can do to rectify the damage done to the social, ecological, and spiritual environments of the world's peoples. Meanwhile, hundreds of billions of our tax dollars will continue to be allocated to fighting a misguided and useless war in Iraq or to prepare for a possible war with Iran.

Many of us have been too timid in demanding that those whom we support politically give us the concrete details of their plan to once and for all end global poverty, homelessness, hunger, inadequate education, inadequate health care, and to repair all the damage done to the global environment. Too often we capitulated to media and politicians' demands that we be "realistic" and thus confirm ourselves in the idolatry that governs the contemporary world ("don't demand what the planet and the human race needs to be healthy; demand only what the politicians and the media tells us is "realistic"). Yet in being realistic in this way we abandon the God of the Abrahamic faiths, the Force of Healing and Transformation that will act through us (if we allow that to happen) to build a world of love, compassion, justice, peace, and spiritual connection.

Too many of our synagogues will condone Israel's behavior toward Palestinians and once again deflect the conversation to the sins of the Palestinian people. They will rightly decry the violence of Hamas and the intransigence in not unequivocally recognizing the right of Israel to exist.

But they will neglect to say that Israel has kept the Palestinian people occupied and encircled for forty-one years, that three times as many Palestinians as Israelis have died in the ongoing struggle.

You may hear laments about the Israeli soldiers who have been "kidnapped" by Hamas or Hezbollah, but you'll hear very little about the thousands of Palestinian civilians who have been "kidnapped" by the Israeli army and brought to detention camps where they have been held for months, sometimes years, without charges or trial, often subjected to torture (a claim validated by the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem as well as by international organizations like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International).

It's unlikely that you'll hear anyone talk about the distortions in Jewish life and in American politics generated by the Israel Lobby, the suppression of honest debate, the labeling as "self-hating" those Jews who criticize Israeli policy and as "anti-Semites" those non-Jews who raise public criticisms. We Jews, stuck in the Holocaust trauma of the past, are suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. With compassion and kindness, we need to encourage our people to recover, to recognize that they are no longer powerless but powerful, and then to strive to make Israel a country that becomes

internationally famous not for its arbitrary power over others, but for its generosity and caring for the Palestinian people and for all the people of the region in which Jews have chosen to live.

Nor will you likely hear many rabbis or speakers in our synagogues challenging the prevalence of the "old bottom line" that equates success with material prosperity. Thus they implicitly embrace the materialism and selfishness in American society and allow it to shape many of the dynamics in the Jewish world (as do many of other faiths and no faith—this is not just a Jewish problem, but it's also a Jewish problem).

You'll hear the Haftorah on Yom Kippur in which Isaiah recounts God's message: "Is not this the fast that I desire: to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and unloose the bonds of oppression"; and yet, you'll find few synagogues organizing their people to help promote the Global Marshall Plan or anything similar.

We at *Tikkun* want to support you in challenging this hypocrisy. We encourage you to stand up for the vision of the prophets for a world of peace, justice, and love. And yet to do it with compassion for our fellow human beings, fellow Americans (yes, those in the Red States as well as the Blue States), and our fellow Jews (even the ones who demean and slander us) because they, like we ourselves, are flawed and yet also beautiful embodiments of the spirit of God. Our righteous indignation, so very necessary, must be mixed with compassion and love.

It's easy to feel righteous indignation about the distortions of the United States or Israel, but don't let that keep you from facing your own personal issues as well. Just as we advocate compassion for the United States and Israel, and celebration of the good parts of them while strongly critiquing what is wrong with them, so also we urge you to use this period from the evening of September 29th, 2008 (eve of Rosh Hashanah, 5769) to nightfall on October 9th (end of Yom Kippur) to do your own inner work with compassion for yourself, while still being honest enough to really evaluate and then form plans for how to change those aspects of your own personal being that need transformation. We at *Tikkun* know full well how much we ourselves need to do this work as well.

This workbook serves as an aid in the process of *teshuvah* (repentance or returning to our highest selves). The great message of these High Holy Days is that change is possible—we are not stuck. That's why the Network of Spiritual Progressives and *Tikkun* celebrate these holidays the way the Hasidic world has done for the past many hundreds of years, with great joy, because we recognize that the ultimate power of the universe is YHVH, the force of healing and transformation, the God that makes it possible for us to overcome our own stuck places and come back to our highest selves.

You are invited to make copies of this and share it with friends, neighbors, and people in your community, and to bring this workbook to Rosh Hashanah services, use it throughout the intervening days of repentance, and bring it with you to review on Yom Kippur. In each case, write down what part of a problem you might have contributed to, and how your behavior in each relationship might have been part (not the entirety) of the problem. Begin to work on that part during this ten days of repentance/teshuvah period!

The goal of these days is not to allocate responsibility fairly, as in "well, they did this and that wrong, so I shouldn't take all the blame." On these days, our focus is not on what others did to us, but on what we ourselves did to lessen our connection to our highest possible selves and to our highest manifestation of the God energy of the universe!

What is spiritually out of alignment in my relationships with...

PROBLEM	WHAT YOU CONTRIBUTE TO IT
Parents	
1.	
2.	
Spouse or Partner	
1.	
2.	
Friends	
1.	
2.	
Children	
1.	
2.	

How spiritually nourishing is your work?

What have been the problems you've faced here? Have you had good relationships with co-workers? Have you felt fulfilled in your work? Have you been involved in collective efforts to change the workplace, or the union, or tried to organize—or have you felt powerless and unable to envision changing anything? If you were in a supervisory position, did you treat your supervisees with the respect that they deserve? Did you discharge anger from work by punishing yourself (e.g., through alcohol or drugs) or by dumping on friends or lovers—or did you express that anger at the appropriate targets or through collective action? Have you taken any of the steps to fight for "a new bottom line" at work ? See www.spiritualprogressives.org for ideas on how to do this.

DETACH AND SAVE

How spiritually nourishing is your work? (continued)

PROBLEM	WHAT YOU CONTRIBUTE TO IT
Relationship with coworkers.	
Relationship with supervisors or supervisees.	
How healthy were your coping mechanisms with stress at work?	
Did you inappropriately blame yourself, or dump anger inappropriately on others?	
What kind of political action did you take in relationship to work?	

Did you show adequate respect for your body?

Did you care for your body this past year? If not, what didn't you do that you should have done?

Eating

Exercise

Vacations

Clothing and Appearance

Self-Presentation

Quiet Time or Meditation

Are you taking enough time to nourish your soul?

Did you care for your soul this past year? If not, what didn't you do that you should have done?

In what ways did you care for your soul this past year?

In what ways did you neglect your soul?

Did your soul give you any messages that you ignored? What were they?

Did you take time to read the books that would have expanded your awareness of spiritual life? If not, what do you want to read this next year?

Did you take the time to read other books that would have given you pleasure and joy? If not, what do you want to read this next year?

What courses (evening schools in liberal arts or a new profession, art programs, Hebrew, Jewish studies, studying a new musical instrument, learning about another culture or philosophical tradition) did you take to expand your horizons? What would you like to take this next year?

What pleasures did you give to yourself this year? Which do you want to expand or initiate this coming year? Did you allow yourself to go to art exhibits, plays, musical concerts, poetry readings, discussion groups, community political action activities, or other events that would have given you pleasure? What do you want to do in this regard in the next year?

In what ways did you explore your relationship with God this past year? In what ways did you ignore that dimension of life? Did you read any books or attend lectures or courses or dedicate time to exploring the spiritual dimension of your life?



DETACH AND SAVE

Are you giving real energy to Tikkun Olam, to healing and repairing the world?

Which of our society's political, economic, or social institutions have destructive consequences to the environment, social justice, or our capacity to be loving and compassionate human beings?

What concrete steps have you taken to be involved? What will you personally do to change the status quo?

If you haven't been involved, what were the reasons you gave yourself? Which of those reasons presupposed a "surplus powerlessness" (a way in which you were actually assuming yourself less able to initiate things or take leadership than is "objectively" true)? In what ways did you buy the message that "They will never listen," or "I can never get things to happen," or "I'm not powerful enough to start something so I'll wait for someone else to do it," or "Other people are too untogether or too immoral or too passive, so there's no point in me trying to mobilize them," or other similar messages?

If you tried to be involved, and had hassles or disappointments with other people in the process, what were those and what part did you have in making or sustaining them? What did you do to confront the problems directly? Would you be open to working with the Network of Spiritual Progressives, the One Campaign, the School of the Americas Watch, the B'Tselem (Israel Human Rights Organization) or some other national organization doing work with ideals in which you can believe; and which one will you commit to now and stick with the commitment?

Did you help build a connection to Judaism and the Jewish world?

How much did you seek to deepen your knowledge of Judaism, Jewish history, Jewish texts, or the culture of the Jewish people or of Israel? What opportunities were there and what were the reasons you gave yourself for why this year wasn't the right time? Or if you are not Jewish, how much energy did you give to whatever spiritual or religious tradition attracts you?

Did you allow yourself to take 25 hours out of your busy schedule to observe Shabbat or some similar weekly spiritual practice in a traditional way? How fulfilling or spiritually deep did you allow it to be? If it wasn't, what explanations did you give yourself for why it wasn't working? What could you personally do to make that spiritual practice or some spiritual practice work for you on at least a weekly basis?

Did you allow others to convince you to separate the religious from the social/political transformative aspects of Judaism? How did that happen in your life?

Did you involve yourself in any activity with, or help financially support, Tikkun, *New Israel Fund, Peace Now, J Street or some other Jewish group in which you believed? Or another group in your religious or spiritual world that has embodied both spiritual and politically progressive values (e.g. Pax Christi, Evangelicals for Social Action, Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Sojourners, etc.)? If not, what held you back?*

If you oppose the Occupation, or support the return of the settlers to the pre-1967 borders of Israel, what have you done to make that known to your own government and media or to the Israeli government and media? If you oppose torture, demolition of Palestinian homes, denial of water and medical care, what have you done to make that known? If you want the Palestinian people to shift to nonviolence, while still pursuing their rights, what have you done to make that known to them?

לשנה טובה

DETACH AND SAVE

וְעַל כֻּלָּם אֱלוֹהַּ סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מְחַל לָנוּ, כַּפֶּר לָנוּ.

Teshuvah "partner" or support group

We encourage you to get a teshuvah partner—someone who can support you to be serious about the process and someone who doesn't have a personal stake in the decisions you make about how you will live your life this coming year.

The partner's task is not to make concrete suggestions, but to encourage you to explore all the possibilities that you might face as you consider how you might wish to transform your life. After you've done this exploring, switch roles so that you become the facilitator, and you encourage your teshuvah partner to face the possibilities of change.

Do not convey the impression that you know that a particular road is the right one for this person. Instead, keep asking about a wide variety of options, and help the person consider these options through asking, whenever a stumbling block appears, whether that person can think of any ways to get around it. After Yom Kippur, check in with each other once a month to see how you are doing on keeping to your current intentions.

Partner's name or names of people in the support group:
(Use a separate piece of paper if necessary)

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

CHECKING IN WITH EACH OTHER

During the week, arrange to talk to your teshuvah partner every day (yes, every day). The phone call can be as short as, "Did you get to work on your Teshuvah work today? If not, do you want to do it now on the phone? If not now, is there some time later today we can discuss it?" On Shabbat, arrange for a time to get together (one hour, half of which goes to one person, half to the other, to explore their issues and the steps they are taking).

For Our Sins

A Supplement to the High Holiday Prayerbook

We invite you to use the following along with the traditional confessional prayer, Al Cheyt, recited on Yom Kippur. Bring your own list to Yom Kippur services—don't just go through the rote of reading the traditional "sins" that don't actually speak to our contemporary reality. If you are not Jewish or not going to any High Holiday service, use this at your home or with your friends any time during these ten days of repentance!

FOR OUR SINS

On the Jewish High Holidays, or whenever we are doing repentance work, ***we take collective responsibility for our own lives and for the activities of the community and society of which we are a part. We affirm our fundamental interdependence and inter-connectedness.*** *We have allowed others to be victims of incredible suffering, have turned our backs on others and their well-being, and yet today we acknowledge that this world is co-created by all of us, and so we atone for all of it.*

While the struggle to change ourselves and our world may be long and painful, it is our struggle; no one else can do it for us. To the extent that we have failed to do all that we could to make ourselves or our community all that we ought to be, we ask God and each other for forgiveness—and we now commit ourselves to transformation this coming year, as we seek to get back on the path to our highest possible selves.

Ve-al kulam, Eloha selichot, selach lanu, mechal lanu, kaper lanu.

For all our sins, may the Force that makes forgiveness possible forgive us, pardon us, and make atonement possible.

For the sins we have committed before you and in our communities by being so preoccupied with ourselves that we ignore the larger problems of the world in which we live;

And for the sins we have committed by being so directed toward outward realities that we have ignored our spiritual development;

For the sins committed in the name of the American people through our invasion of Iraq and the violence we used to achieve our ends;

And for the sin of not rebuilding what we have destroyed in Iraq;

For the torturing of prisoners around the world and in American detention centers and the denial of Habeas Corpus and other fundamental human rights;

And for the sin of allowing morally challenged and spineless politicians to reject the electoral mandate of 2006 to end the war in Iraq, and instead to find justifications for how "difficult," "politically dangerous" or "unrealistic" it is for them to speak and then act in an unequivocally peace-oriented way;

For the sin of those of us in the West hoarding the world's wealth and not sharing with the 2 billion people who live on less than $2 a day;

And for the sin of supporting forms of globalization that are destructive to nature and to the economic well-being of the powerless;

For the sin of electing leaders who undermine ecological safeguards and accelerate the destruction of our natural environment;

And for the sin of not caring enough to get involved in social change movements or electoral activity;

For the sin of allowing civil liberties to be undermined;

And for the sins of blaming all Muslims for the extremism of a few and ignoring the extremism and violence emanating from our own society;

For the sin of being cynical about the possibility of building a world based on love;

And for the sin of dulling our outrage at the continuation of poverty, oppression, and violence in this world;

For the sin of not doing enough to save the environment;

And for the sins we have committed by allowing our food and our air to be poisoned;

For the sin of not being vigilant stewards of the planet and instead allowing the water resources of the world to be bought up by private companies for private profit;

And for the sin of not fighting much much harder for universal single-payer government sponsored health care for every person on the planet;

For the sin of not doing enough to challenge sexist and homophobic institutions and practices;

And for the sin of turning our backs on the world's refugees and on the homeless in our own society;

For the sin of not sharing responsibility for child-rearing;

And for the sin of not taking time to help singles meet each other in a safe and emotionally nurturing way, and instead making them fend for themselves in a marketplace of relationships;

And for the sin of allowing media indoctrination to convince us that others are motivated solely by money, power, or narrow self-interest;

For the sin of accepting a world in which the "bottom line" is money and power, and not fighting for a new bottom line of love and caring;

For the sin of being so concerned about our own personal tax benefits that we failed to oppose tax cuts that would bankrupt social services;

For the sin of not opening the emails of those who tried to inform us of what was going on in the world that required our moral attention;

For the sin of spreading negative stories about people we know;

And for the sin of being passive recipients of negativity or listening and allowing others to spread hurtful stories;

For the sin of being "realistic" when our tradition calls upon us to transform reality;

And for the sin of attachment to our own picture of how our lives should be—and never taking the risks that could bring us a more fulfilling and meaningful life.

For these sins we ask the Force of Healing and Transformation to give us the strength to forgive ourselves and each other.

For the sins we have committed by not forgiving our parents for the wrongs they committed against us when we were children;

And for the sin of having too little compassion or too little respect for our parents or for our children;

For the sin of cooperating with self-destructive behavior in others or in ourselves;

And for the sin of not supporting each other as we attempt to change;

For the sin of being jealous and trying to possess and control those we love;

And for the sin of being judgmental;

For the sin of withholding love and support;

And for the sin of doubting our ability to love and get love from others;

For the sin of insisting that everything we do have a payoff;

And for the sin of not allowing ourselves to play;

For the sin of not giving our partners and friends the love and support they need to feel safe and to flourish;

And for the sin of being manipulative or hurting others to protect our own egos;

Ve-al kulam, Eloha selichot, selach lanu, mechal lanu, kaper lanu.

For the sins we have committed by not publicly supporting the Jewish people and Israel when they are being criticized or treated unfairly; or for not challenging unfair singling out of Israel for criticism by our allies in the anti-war movement;

And for the sins we have committed by not publicly criticizing Israel or the Jewish people when they are acting in opposition to the highest principles of the Jewish tradition;

For the sin of not taking anti-Semitism seriously when it manifests around the world or among our friends or in our community;

And for the sin of seeing anti-Semitism everywhere, and using the charge of anti-Semitism to silence those who raise legitimate (though painful to hear) criticisms of Israeli policies;

For the sin of allowing the Jewish community to portray itself as the innocent victim and for allowing Holocaust trauma to legitimate oppressive treatment of others;

And for the sin of being so disheartened that we stopped paying attention to the details of what is happening in the West Bank and Gaza;

For the sin of blaming the entire Palestinian people for (inexcusable and murderous) acts of violence by a handful of terrorists—and then cutting off water, food, and access to medical care to over a million people;

And for the sin of bulldozing Palestinian homes, killing Palestinian children, torturing, assassinating, and oppressing the Palestinian people;

For the sins that Israel committed by creating the checkpoints that make travel an unbearable hassle for many Palestinians, and by allowing Israel to create a separation wall that effectively grabs up more portions of Palestinian land;

And for the sins that American Jews have committed by giving blind loyalty to the Israel Lobby and believing that the critics of that lobby must somehow be disloyal or alienated from the Jewish people or from Israel;

And for the sins we have committed by not wanting to hear the details or denying that they happened;

For the sin of teaching hatred about Palestinians and Muslims, and then claiming that it is only they who teach hatred;

And for the sin of portraying every Palestinian or Muslim as a hater;

For the sin of condemning their extremists as typical, while "understanding" our own and claiming that they are exceptions to our normal generous and kind attitudes;

And for the sin of tolerating our own teaching of hatred and ignoring the ways that our communities too frequently teach our young to demean Palestinians, Arabs, and sometimes even all who are not part of our particular religious community, anti-religious community or national or ethnic group;

For the sin of insisting that there is no "moral equivalence" between the deaths of innocent Israeli civilians and the deaths of innocent Palestinian civilians;

And for the sins of tribalism, chauvinism, and thinking our pain is more important than anyone else's pain;

For the sin of allowing religious and communal institutions, colleges and universities, theatres and museums, legislatures and Congress and parliaments, movies and book publishing and television, and even the Internet to be governed by those with the most money rather than those with the most spiritual and ethical sensitivity;

And for the sin of not putting our money and our time behind our highest ideals;

For the sin of not learning the Jewish tradition and not studying Jewish history, literature, and holy texts and not learning the depth and wisdom and meaning for our lives that can be found in Jewish spirituality, prayer, and in a Jewish path;

And for the sin of thinking that our path is the only path to spiritual truth;

For the sin of allowing conservative or insensitive leaders to speak on behalf of all American Jews;

For the sin of not providing public support and financial backing to the few Jewish leaders, organizations, and publications that do actually speak our values;

For the sin of not recognizing and celebrating the beauty and grandeur of the universe that surrounds us;

For the sin of not seeing the spirit of God in others;

And for the sin of not recognizing and nurturing the spirit of God within ourselves;

For the sin of not praying, meditating, or giving adequate attention to the needs of our soul;

And for the sin of focusing only on our sins and not our strengths and beauties;

For the sin of not transcending ego so we could see ourselves as we are: manifestations of God's loving energy on earth.

Ve'al kulam Elohai Selichot, selach lanu, mechal lanu, kaper lanu.

For all these, Lord of Forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

In some congregations the service stops after this is read, and people divide into small groups of four or five to discuss what particular aspects of this prayer make most sense to them, what they are going to do differently in the coming year, what support they need from others to help make changes in their lives, and what they are going to do to secure that support.

Repentance is not meant only to be an exercise to feel better, but also the beginning of organizing our personal and communal lives to begin the process of changing. To join with others in this sacred work, connect with the Network of Spiritual Progressives, www.tikkun.org; 510-644-1200; RabbiLerner@tikkun.org. (Composed by Rabbi Michael Lerner, editor, *Tikkun* magazine, for Yom Kippur 5769; September/October 2008.)

DETACH AND SAVE

Readers Respond

A NOTE ON LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:
As Tikkun *increases its web presence both at www.tikkun.org and at www.spiritualprogressives.org and by sending out e-mailings (free) to anyone who indicates an interest to be placed on our list (requests to Generosity@Tikkun.org) we are increasingly publishing in our LETTERS TO THE EDITOR section of the magazine, as well as on the web, responses not only to the articles printed but to our web and email articles as well. We welcome your responses to our articles. Send your Letters to the Editor to Letters@Tikkun.org. Please remember, however, to not attribute to* Tikkun *views other than those expressed in our editorials. We send out on the email, post on our website, and print in the magazine many articles or responses with which we have strong disagreements, because that is what makes* Tikkun *a location for a true diversity of ideas.* Tikkun *reserves the right to edit your letters to fit available space in the magazine.*

COWBOYS

CALLING BUSH AND HIS CRONIES "cowboys" is a dire insult to cowboys. I come from a cowboy family and take great offense at this mischaracterization. They have no cows. What does Bush even grow on his ranch other than the brush he's always clearing? I even heard he can't ride and is deathly afraid of horses. Him, a cowboy??? Oh, please!

NORA CORYELL
via email

BASEBALL AND DARFUR

GOD BLESS *TIKKUN* FOR POINTING to the other "Blood Diamond" story: the connection between Major League Baseball owners Charles Johnson and Sue Burns and their investments in Franklin Templeton Funds, which is helping underwrite the atrocities and jaw-dropping violence now occurring in Darfur, Sudan.

A point that needs to be stressed is that Mr. Johnson and Ms. Burns are affirmatively making a choice, and that choice is to give "the big wink" to a twenty first-century genocide.

Perhaps such people have always been with us—the Swiss bankers who dealt in ingots made from the gold smashed out of human teeth come to mind. But Ms. Burns and Mr. Johnson should realize that 65 years after that horror, we are still talking about it, and unlike Switzerland's bankers, America's baseball moguls cannot hide behind the veil of anonymity. Nor can they now claim ignorance. To save face, they can only divest, and do it soon.

The world is watching.

PATRICK BURNS &
CAROLYN SARGENT-BURNS
Arlington, Virginia

Editor replies:

THE GIANTS STORY IS AN important one, but we must remember that investors like the Giants' owners have been encouraged by our society precisely NOT to see their involvement in supporting social violence like that occurring in Darfur. They have been taught that they are merely making private investment decisions in a mutual fund with a good rate of return, like millions of others who invest in Franklin Templeton and other funds and companies with flawed portfolios. Think of all the U.S. investors from the very wealthy to those who just own a few stocks and bonds who don't even know what their money is invested in, much less think that they are personally responsible for the social consequences of each investment.

What's good about Peter Gabel's and Jack Ucciferi's articles is that they bring out the role of baseball as an aspect of a city's public life and link that public dimension of the sport to a duty of social responsibility on the part of a team's owners. But instead of denouncing them, we should have compassion for the ideological conditioning that has obscured these owners' understanding of their true responsibility for the social consequences of their investments, and call upon them now to see themselves as having a unique opportunity to set an example for sports teams around the country by divesting altogether from activities causing human suffering.

OBAMA THE NOMINEE

EVER SINCE CLINTON DROPPED out of the race, I have been increasingly disturbed by Obama's movement to the right. In light of his pandering to AIPAC, refusal of public financing, support of the recent FISA legislation, and statements last week that he might slow the pace of troop withdrawals from Iraq, I find my enthusiasm for Obama waning. Pundits like Daniel Schorr say a presumptive nominee has to move toward the center to get elected. But isn't McCain moving generally to the right to appease the right wing of his party? Why must progressive Democrats always settle for centrist candidates? Is Obama a true progressive? I would love to know other Tikkun members' opinions.

Here's hoping for a candidate we can feel proud and excited about!

MELISSA MUELLER
Ithaca, NY

FOR MONTHS I HAD BEEN REALLY getting into the Obama campaign. All that came to a screeching halt as I read one line (one line!), to wit: that Obama believed that Jerusalem should remain undivided and in Israeli hand. I could not believe it! To make matters worse, a day later, under pressure from outraged Palestinians and liberals, Obama gave some idiotic "clarification" to his stance, namely that it was more

practical that Jerusalem be in Israeli hands, and anyways, it's up to the parties involved, blah, blah, blah... Totally unconvincing. I feel hurt and betrayed.

MARCO ERMACORA
via email

THERE IS SOMETHING TRULY transformational about picking two nominees (McCain and Obama) and a very close third (Hillary) all of whom are not the familiar requisite mainstream. Our society is in desperate need of a transformational leader (a Lincoln or an FDR), and it seems to me that all three display ingredients of such a person.

Your reference to the prophet Jeremiah is very apt. I regret the fact that the Reverend Jeremiah Wright did not study his namesake more closely. He would have found out that the biblical Jeremiah loved his people and his country deeply, and his scoldings were cries of pain, not of anger or hate. Anger and hate cannot possibly heal. We may disagree with others' viewpoints, but as a nation we must come together. Let us hope that the next president will be truly transformational and a unifier.

RABBI MORDECAI SCHREIBER
via email

SWAMI / ANTI-HINDU PREJUDICE

I'D FIND YOUR SWAMI Beyondananda's humor a little funnier if he named himself Rabbi Mambi or something similar. Some Hindus might feel slighted when you make fun of THEIR tradition.

MICHAEL LAKE
via email

Swami replies:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN. I've been doing the Swami act for more than 20 years, and never once have had a complaint from any East Indian. At first, whenever I would spot one in the audience I would feel self-conscious and a bit embarrassed. Inevitably, that individual would come up after the show to tell me how much they liked it, I guess because they could see I wasn't making fun of their religion but rather using the character to impart wisdom and comedy. I've performed at ashrams, and even at Swami Satchidananda's 80th birthday celebration. My Swami character is popular in India, and I've been interviewed by their top personal growth magazine. I can only conclude that these people are remarkably spiritually mature in that they can discern between laughing at and laughing with. I only wish "politically correct" Americans could have more of this discernment.

STEVE BHAERMAN

ISRAEL / PALESTINE / AIPAC

YOUR "ISRAEL AT 60" COLLECTION of 48 articles [May/June 2008], particularly when read in conjunction with the additional articles you published on your website, is a real public service—and I believe it will be a classic for those who want to understand the diversity of opinions on Israel/Palestine in the contemporary world. Your willingness to print people who strongly critique *Tikkun's*

Tikkun

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Tikkun (Vol. 23, No. 5, ISSN 0887-9982) is published bimonthly by the Institute for Labor and Mental Health, a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Tikkun*, P.O. Box 460926, Escondido, CA 92046. Periodical-rate postage paid at Oakland, CA and additional mailing offices by the Institute for Labor and Mental Health, 3137 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA 94609. Publications mail agreement number: #1549111. Canada mail distributor information: Express Messenger International; P.O. Box 25058; London BRC, ON N6C 6A8. Subscription price for 6 issues: U.S. residents $29.00; U.S. institutions $40.00; Canadian residents $39.00; all others $43.00. Payment in U.S. dollars required. Printed in USA. ♻ Printed on recycled paper.

positions, your obvious attempt to include Palestinian voices as well, shows me that *Tikkun* is a liberal magazine in the sense that *The Nation* is not—that you truly believe in the marketplace of ideas including those with which you disagree.

I was most moved, and shaken, by Art Green's piece. Rabbi Green was once the president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical School, now the moving force behind the rabbinical school at Hebrew College in Boston, and I know him to be a scholar of Jewish theology with great depth to his published writings. I've heard him lecture and he comes across as someone with great humility, seriousness, and careful nuances in his thinking. So when I hear him calling on Jews to "repent our sins before it really is too late" I take that very seriously. And when he named the sins, "Arrogance, Deafness, Greed, High-handedness, Intransigence, Land-hunger and all the rest," I was stunned at how deeply I agreed with him. I only wish more of my friends read *Tikkun*, because they'd be amazed that some of their own criticisms of the Jewish world, far from making them outside the community, actually are part of the conversation in *Tikkun* magazine!

What Green said then made it far easier for me to go along with Rabbi Irwin Kula's statement in that same issue of *Tikkun* that Israel's current mess is "a sacred messiness worth celebrating with extraordinary joy, great gratitude, and deep humility." I guess that, like *Tikkun*, I want to honor all that is incredibly wonderful about Israel that I experienced myself in the two years that I studied in Jerusalem, and yet simultaneously to not allow my love for Israel to soften my moral outrage at the way it has lost its path and the way that its supporters in this country have insisted on blind loyalty, in the process undermining the ethical values that have always been central to Jewish life.

Jennifer Stern
Los Angeles, CA

It makes me a little bit ill to read how Obama, Clinton and McCain tried to outdo each other sucking up to the Israel Lobby. Are they really that out of touch with Middle East reality? Or are they just trying to curry favor with a powerful lobby? I think it's the latter. The Republicans scare me and the Democrats disappoint me. This time I think I'll vote Green. At least Ralph Nader tells it like it is.

Norm Ewers
Irvine, CA

I was at the AIPAC convention when Senator Obama spoke about his commitment to Israel. What I observed was that the audience gave standing ovations the night before and that morning whenever anyone talked of providing military support to Israel, but response was more tepid when anyone, including Israeli Prime Minister Olmert, spoke of peace efforts. Emails had circulated alleging that Obama was overly sympathetic to Muslims. Various people in the audience were already wearing McCain buttons.

Obama needed to counter the perception that he would sell-out Israel or force Israel into negotiations with Hamas. His tone did not appear to be pandering, but rather a forceful recitation of his affinity for the Jewish people, for Israel and for the history of Jews and Blacks working together for civil rights. The biggest applause came when he talked about the history and potential for Blacks and Jews to unite for civil rights.

Jeff Kline
Washington, DC

I lived in Israel from 1980-1986, and was gifted with a wide variety of experiences:

• I was greeted with hospitality while waiting for a ride in the Arab village of Faradis—by four little Arab girls and their mothers. I was invited to dine in the tents of our Bedouin neighbors when I lived in Arad; their grace and hospitality were unparalleled (and included a donkey ride into the dunes at sunset.) One of the cousins—still a teenager—had learned English and was reading Buber's *I and Thou*. When the Israeli driver of the last bus from Upper Nazareth before shabbos refused to take me on the bus because the money I handed him (all I had on me) had a little rip, it was an older Arab in a *keffiyeh* and *galabiyah* who beckoned me and gave me an unflawed bill, refusing mine in return.

• The women from Bethlehem and Hevron, selling figs and grapes in my neighborhood, used to stop into my apartment for a cool drink and a rest.

• Ibrahim, z'l, in his shop below the street in the Old City, cared less about business than about serving us tea and talking about G-d.

• And there was Ibrahim, of the Mount of Olives, who brought cartons of fruit into West Jerusalem as a gift to those of us engaged in creating a Peace Seder.

• Also—I was in a bus station when someone found an unclaimed paper bag. The place emptied in two minutes flat, the police sappers came, and a bomb was disarmed.

• (Another time, the same scenario, police disarmed someone's egg-salad sandwich.)

• Once, I remembered an important item I had left at home just as I arrived at a bus stop, and returned to fetch it—thereby missing being on the bus when explosives were lobbed at it.

• The most important and unique encounter I remember was with a man who found out about the Peace Seder we were to lead, and insisted that he must be there to tell his story: his family had lived in peace with Arab neighbors in Hevron for eight generations. In the riots of 1929, their neighbors hid the whole family in their home, and would let no one harm them or their property. Later, when those neighbors had fled and could not return, his family arranged for the daughter to get to Hadassah Hospital for the birth of her child, and restored the entire family to their own home and property in Hevron. By that time, the father was directing these things from his deathbed. He predicted that

the family would want to give them large gifts in thanks, and said: "You must not take a thing from them. We owe them this. They saved our lives." So instead of goods, the family gave the man who told this story a document naming him a Sheikh of their family.He went on to explain that his father had been an early advisor to the first governing bodies of the forming State. He had told them that if the new Jewish immigrants would learn the language and the culture of their Arab neighbors, they would find them the best of cousins and allies.

Alas, the refugees from Europe had exhausted their store of adaptability, and were incapable of this.

Now, I listen to the stories of the women, Israeli, Arab, Palestinian, and I know only one thing:

The recounting of who did what and why that required such-and-such a response has no end—and no solution.

The only thing we can do is to learn how to hear each other's stories as human beings, with an open heart.

This is not easy to do.

And then to ask: what can we do from here on?

Blessings on you, and good shabbos.

EVE ILLSEN
Boulder, Colorado

AT THE MOMENT *TIKKUN* decided to support the two state solution instead of "peace and justice" (one-state or two-state), I no longer saw *Tikkun* as valuing other human beings (Palestinians) with equality to Jews. *Tikkun* lost its idealism to me, and instead I see a pro-Jewish agenda that can turn against equality, peace and justice.

I believe the two parties can show historical claims, family history and village ties to the same land. Both parties feel wronged and/or justified in their claims and actions. I personally feel that one country, "one person one vote" is the best solution. Segregation (black, apartheid) did not work. Reservations create economic poverty and lack of access to the best land and jobs. "Maquilladoras" create perpetual economic slavery.

The two-nation approach will face these problems; but I would support whichever solution the parties negotiate. In the end, I believe that justice will prevail and the entitled, the arrogant and the self-righteous will die out. There will not be a Mason-Dixon Line in Israel/Palestine.

DAVID GINSBERG
via email

Editor Responds:

THE CURRENT REALITY IN THE Middle East is that here is a State of Israel and it is unjustly occupying the West Bank and Gaza. We challenge that, but we don't challenge Israel's existence, anymore than we challenge the existence of the United States or many other countries whose origins were deeply unjust, genocidal and immoral. There is barely a country on the planet whose original peoples were not displaced by others, who in turn were displaced by yet others. Our task today is to find ways to heal the accumulated pain of the past in the best possible ways. And for us, that means that the world should insist on the immediate creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza and reparations for the Palestinian people all around the world and the right of return of Palestinians to that Palestinian state, but it does not involve dismantling the Israeli state. Similarly, we support the end of the Russian occupation of Chechnya, the end of the Chinese occupation of Tibet, etc....

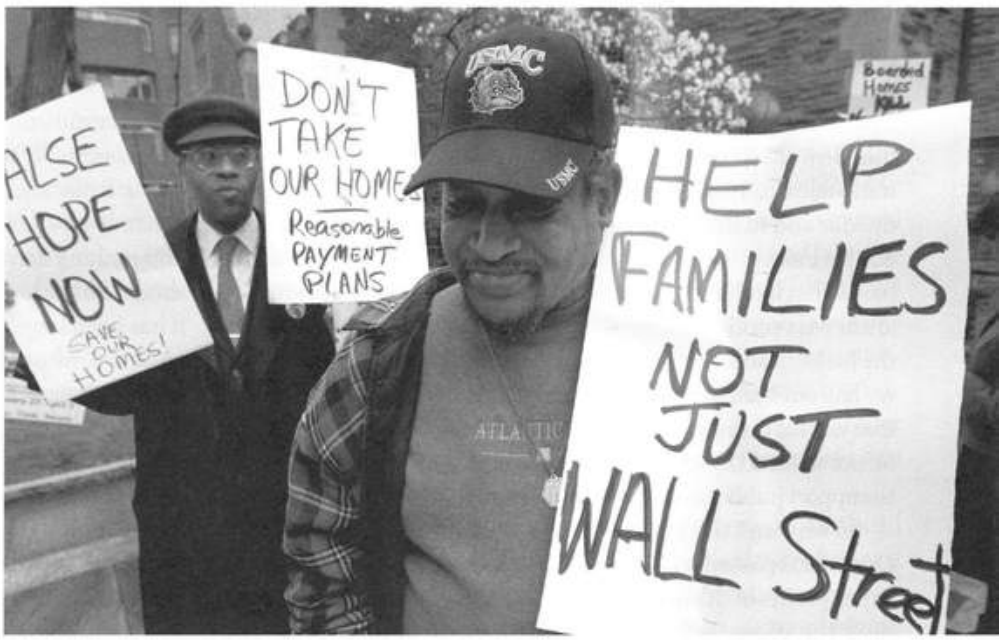
Much of the discussion of these issues of who has "a right" to any given piece of the earth assumes the notion of ownership, particularly as articulated by John Locke and Western thought. The Torah has a different notion when it quotes God as saying "The earth belongs to Me" as a way of chastising people who are saying "I own this piece of land, so why should I share it with others?" The implications that we spiritual progressives could derive from that Torah consciousness is this: Forget about your alleged "right" to any piece of land, because the entire earth belongs to God who gave it to human beings to tend and cultivate and protect, and we have an obligation to share the land in a way that promotes the well-being of all humans, all animals, and the well-being of the planet. If the human race ever comes to accept that Torah-based view, then we'll start talking about things like "how do we make sure that every person on the planet gets to live some of their life in the most desirable places on the planet and some of their life in the least desirable places on the planet so as to make sure that we all have equal opportunities to share what is terrific and what is not?" When that question emerges on the human agenda, probably some time after class societies have been transcended, we'll see an immense effort to make sure that the least desirable places are made more desirable, given that each of us is going to live there for some part of our lives. But those messianic speculations are for a different historical period, and for now it would be best if we could just get nations to overcome their nationalism enough to create regional bio-districts to govern how we use the resources of the planet for the well-being of all living beings including the well-being of the planet. And one step in that direction is to end the Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and allow the Palestinian people the same rights to national self-determination that Israelis rightly claim for themselves.

We do not oppose a one-state solution if both parties want that. But they do not, and we believe that the cost to both sides of trying to impose that solution by force against a population that opposed it would be too high for both Palestinians and Israelis. Our short-term solution is two states. Our long-term solution is the no-state-solution for the whole planet.

Economic Collapse?

BY MICHAEL LERNER

THE FEAR IS PALPABLE. Those of us in the non-profit sector feel it deeply already. With predictions of collapse surrounding us, many magazines are reporting drops in subscribers, and many change-oriented organizations are suffering from a drop in membership or donations. And it's likely to get worse. There are predictions that even with the hundreds of billions likely to be spent to ameliorate some aspects of what we face, there might be as many as five million people who will be losing their homes in the mortgage crisis, and millions more losing their jobs as small businesses collapse. And if the price of oil remains high, there will be tremendous suffering next winter when many people can't afford home heating oil.



On April 1, 2008, Joseph Barratt, 55, and others demonstrated outside a HOPE NOW home ownership preservation workshop at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Demonstrators hoped to draw attention to the subprime mortgage crisis. The nation's psyche is battered and bruised, the sense of pessimism palpable.

AP PHOTO/MATT ROURKE

Unfortunately, none of the major political candidates has been willing to speak honestly about why all this is happening, if they even know. They often seem to be speaking the same language as the media—discussing the economic crisis and gas prices as though they were acts of nature or God, out of our hands completely. They are not.

Acting as though these economic realities had fallen from heaven obscures the source of the problem: materialism and greed which have become a run-away epidemic in the contemporary capitalist world in general, and in the United States in particular. The oil crisis may be partly rooted in the desire of the Chinese and Indians for standards of material well-being comparable to that in the West, but it's mostly rooted in the speculative trading of oil futures that has artificially and wildly jacked up prices. The oil companies have not sought to use their super profits to lower the cost of oil, but like the bandits they are, have managed to bank some $11 billion in profits in one quarter of 2008! Without a media or politicians to articulate our legitimate rage at these profiteers, people feel helpless and alone and are willing to grab at phony solutions like offshore drilling and tapping into the national oil reserves despite the widespread environmental destruction those acts will cause.

The collapse of the mortgage and banking industries has largely been a product of speculative investments as banks and mortgage companies sought to make super profits on their mortgage loans by turning them into monetary forms that could be traded and against which others could borrow money. It is this speculation that has been a major source of the problem. (For a fuller discussion, check out our website at www.Tikkun.org/current.)

For decades we've watched passively as poor people and people of color have lost jobs, and faced a weakened net of social protection in the United States as the conservatives seemed to convince the majority that the marketplace was fair, and that hence people who were not doing well had no one to blame but themselves. It was wrong to over-tax rich people, we were told, because they had taken the risk of investing in projects that could fail, so the public had no claim on their huge profits when they succeeded. The bailouts that the marketplace have required in the past, and now once again with the bailout of Fanny Mae and Freddy Mac and Wall Street investment firm Bear Stearns, demonstrate the emptiness of this argument. The reality? When poor people fail to flourish economically, the government shrugs its shoulders and gives a pittance of relief. But when super-giant firms fail, and the wealthy are endangered, the government, with the votes of many erstwhile conservatives, jumps to the rescue. It reminds me of an old saying: "When is it a 'recession'? When you lose your job. When is it a 'depression'? When I lose MY job!" Too many of the middle class people who are suffering today were all

TIKKUN'S NOV/DEC ISSUE: ***In order to discuss the results of the election in November, we are postponing going to press till a few days after the election. Assuming that there is a result and not a set of recounts as in 2000, you should be getting your next issue of Tikkun in early December, and then our next issue will come out in early January.***

too willing to allow others to suffer when it was "just" in a community of "people of color" or people with a "lower class status." Now, they are upset when it is they whom the larger society is abandoning.

What can be done? Well, although there are many short-term solutions (check our website www.Tikkun.org for some of the recent discussion about such solutions), the real answer is this: when a private firm or enterprise fails, and it's socially valuable to keep that firm alive, then the U.S. government should take it over and nationalize it. That's what should happen to Fanny Mae and Freddy Mac and to the investment firms and banks that have needed our tax monies to bail them out. Or, let the firms remain in private hands, but let the taxpayers automatically get a share of the annual after-tax profits commensurate with their contribution towards the bailout. And we should bail out individuals at the same time as we bail out banks and energy corporations. And the corporations that extract U.S. gas and oil should not be allowed to make a profit off our natural resources except if all of those profits are 100% used to support public investment in alternative energy supplies.

So why isn't this at the center of the campaign? Why haven't Democrats passed laws to prohibit this speculation or to share the super profits of the oil and gas companies with the ordinary citizen? The answer is that all our thinking is constrained by the fear that if we talk about returning profits to our government or allowing government to set a "fair price" that we will be creating a socialist system. Well, I know that socialism "won't sell" in the United States, so instead let's call it shmoe-cialism or even fairness-ism. But be sure of this: if the speculators were in jail instead of running the economy, if super-rich people and institutions were fairly taxed instead of making out like bandits while so many of our fellow citizens suffer, we would get out of this crisis very quickly.

We are told that our fellow citizens would never support even shmoe-cialism, because they imagine that someday they will be rich themselves (do disabuse them of the fantasy) and that they can't feel empathy for others who are suffering (patently false). The truth is not that they don't feel identification with others, but that that part of themselves, their most generous and caring part, has been put down and made to feel "abnormal" so frequently throughout their lives that they don't feel ready to trust their own desires and think that they would just be making a fool of themselves to imagine a world in which people really took care of each other.

Here we get to the fundamental contradiction of antagonism to "big government." The whole point of having a democratic government originally was to provide a way for each of us to coordinate our activities and have this institution available to provide the kind of hands-on-caring that we couldn't do if we want to keep working and making a living. "Government" then, is the institution that should be the manifestation of our caring for each other. Instead, it has been largely shaped by the interests of the wealthy and the powerful, who use government to protect their own interests and honestly believe that their own interests are the public good. And as more and more people begin to see government failing to give a real priority to being an instrument of mutual caring, they get more and more incensed at having to pay taxes for this kind of reality. Unable to imagine any other reality as "realistic," many people decide that their only refuge is to resist taxation and support candidates who promise to lower their taxes.

Yet the underlying desire to be a caring person doesn't go away. Frustrated by the lack of any obvious way to be caring in the public sphere, millions of Americans flock to churches, synagogues, mosques, ashrams and civic institutions where they get an opportunity to actually act on their caring for each other. But these institutions lack the finances to make up for what government fails to do: protect the common good by taxing the super-profiteers like the oil-gas-military-industrial complex and criminalizing the behavior of the speculators that have ruined the mortgage market.

Until these dynamics are presented to the American people, the special interests (no, not workers organizing into unions to try to defend themselves from losing their jobs but the super-rich corporations and their corporate dominated mass media) will predominate and most people will feel powerless to do much. But the way to present this is by emphasizing the positive: that so many Americans really do care about each other, and that they are stunned when they watch the profiteers undeterred as they lead the society into economic crisis. But that stunning can eventually lead to cynicism and despair, to psychological depression, and even to an openness to fascistic solutions if they are not presented with the vision of a really comprehensive progressive vision.

That's one reason why we should be asking our elected officials, at least the ones we trust, to make this kind of analysis more central in the way that they discuss what is happening and what needs to be done, rather than keeping that discussion in vague and technocratic terms that avoid the central ethical issues that are always at the heart of the economy. ■

✶ SDS IS BACK! ✶

Well, not the super-militant organization of 100,000 young people that played a major role in energizing the anti-war movement in the middle and late 1960s, but a much smaller version with the feel of SDS's first years from 1962-65. *Tikkun* staffer Will Pasley is a member, and you can find his account of their summer 2008 conference in D.C. at our website www.tikkun.org

Feel free to contact him at will@tikkun.org

Election 2008
Why Is it Close?

BY MICHAEL LERNER

MANY PUNDITS ASSUMED THAT THIS WOULD BE clearly a "Democratic Year": the Democratic candidate for President would lead a landslide victory for himself and for a more substantial Democratic Party takeover of the Congress than was achieved in 2006.

Their reasoning made sense. George Bush has had job approval of about 28% for the last few months—a testament to the intelligence of the American people who have come to understand that: his policies in Iraq, the Middle East, and more broadly around the world have largely failed; his invasion of our privacy and the use of torture against suspects are significant threats to civil liberties and human rights; his opposition to serious ecological reform has increased health and safety risks for all of us; his failure to heed the calls for alternative energy sources and his endless pandering to the oil companies contributed to the current high price of fuel; his tax cuts, which serve the rich and destroy much of the safety-net security for middle class Americans, have contributed to the economic woes of the country; and the list could go on for quite a while.

Why wouldn't people, these pundits reasoned, be open to a dramatic change?

The answer here is complex. And the situation could still be changed.

In the Letters to the Candidates section of this edition of *Tikkun* we present a variety of perspectives. Our magazine is a non-profit: it does not and cannot endorse any one political party or candidate—that's what is legally required to make it possible for your donations to be tax-deductible. I hope you'll read all of the letters published there, some of which point to how dramatic change might still be possible.

Yet there is another factor operating that dares not speak its name: RACISM. The simple reality is that many Americans are no more ready to let go of their racism than of their sexism or homophobia. The fear of Blacks is very deep in American culture and goes back many centuries. That fear is easy to understand: the recognition on the part of Whites that we as a society and a people have significantly contributed to the suffering of Blacks and never fully rectified the pain that we caused makes us scared that at any moment Black people will erupt with the anger that they justifiably might feel at this history of oppression and denial. This justifiable anger is not just based on historical memory; the reality is that Blacks continue to be the last hired, first fired in much of this country, that they are far more likely to be harassed for no reason other than their skin color, or arrested and jailed by police for crimes like drug possession that many Whites have committed without consequences. So even when a candidate like Obama tries to reassure Whites that he doesn't have a retributionist attitude toward the past, many Whites still retain the fear that in voting for Obama they might be opening the door to other Blacks who do share that anger and who will be given more of an opportunity to vent the anger.

There's no way to get around racism except to confront it head on. But angry charges of "You are racist" often elicit more fear and then more distancing by Whites. On the other hand, the acknowledgment of Black suffering while simultaneously acknowledging White working-class suffering, as Obama did in his post-Rev. Wright speech on race in March, seems a more plausible direction. Yet talk can only go so far. There needs to be a way for people suffering from the fears that generate racism to be cured, not just acknowledged.

Some people in the Obama camp say, "Well we can do that by providing class-based solutions which help overcome the deprivations faced by economically oppressed Whites and Blacks

RABBI LERNER AND THE SAUDIS

If you didn't read his email describing the amazing experience he had at an interfaith conference called by the Saudis and aimed at changing some of the dynamics in the Islamic world, it's not too late. If you did read it, you can now read a letter he wrote to the Saudis with whom he met, which he didn't send out to you. Catch it now at **www.tikkun.org**









How come the polls don't (yet) show a landslide for the other party even after government sponsored torture, an unpopular and disastrous war, a tanking economy and out-of-control gas prices? Above: U.S. torturers at work in Abu Ghraib prison in 2003; the 82nd airborne in Iraq in 2007; a job fair in Los Angeles in 2008; and our local pump.

together. We don't have to dwell on race—it's too disruptive." But actually that strategy is not working well enough to overcome the covert racism that Obama is facing in this election.

What is needed, and what has never been tried before in American politics to the best of my knowledge, is the training of a political movement to become agents of healing, not just organizers moving people to the polls to vote for the candidate.

What kind of healing? Well, to start with in this campaign, healing from racism, with all the distortions that it imposes on the psyches of Whites, Blacks, Latinos, Chicanos, Asian Americans, Arabs, Jews, and the list goes on.

Tikkun author Cherie Brown, in her work in Re-evaluation Counseling and with the National Coalition Building Institute in Washington D.C., has pioneered techniques of healing around race, and so too have many other organizations. Techniques are available to teach the Obama advocates ways to provide support for people ready to explore these issues. It is true that it is far more complicated to get people into groups that use these techniques than it is to change people once they are there. But imagine the cultural impact if tens of thousands of Obama activists were to volunteer a month of their time in October to go door to door in the contested states and ask people to discuss the issue of racism! That could have more impact than getting people to say, "Yes, I'll vote for him," only to find when they get into the voting booth that racism has suddenly reared its ugly head.

It may be too late for this campaign to do that kind of training and that kind of mass work, but if liberals and progressives want to build a firmer foundation for their own future, they ought to give this a high priority in the next years, rather than concluding that they should not have "taken the risk" of nominating a non-white. And this kind of anti-racist work is just as important if Obama wins as if he doesn't.

But in the meantime, in this election, the issue of race has to be discussed in more detail than merely pointing out the most venal expressions of it (as in the John McCain TV ad that described Obama as a "celebrity" and then linked him with Paris Hilton and Britney Spears, which on the face of it was saying he was a celebrity with no more substance than theirs, but which various commentators saw as carrying more sinister undertones: *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert wrote that it was "designed to exploit the hostility, anxiety and resentment of the many white Americans who are still freakishly hung up on the idea of black men rising above their station and becoming sexually involved with white women." The venal intent, presumably, is to elicit in the unconscious of many racist White men their fear that Blacks' involvement with "their women" will show the White men to be powerless or less sexually potent—a fear that is pervasive among many men anyway).

What is needed in the short run is to have an open and deep discussion of how racism operates in this society. That should not have to fall only on the shoulders of Barack Obama, though he too should teach about it. It should be at the center of the activities of the Democratic Party, MoveOn, and other organizations that have resources and large public reach. But it's unlikely to happen as long as liberals and progressives are in denial about the depth of racism or if they mistakenly believe that this is an illness that cannot be cured. ■

AP PHOTO (LEFT). FLICKRCC/SOLDIER MEDIA CENTER, SENIOR AIRMAN STEVE CZYZ (TOP CENTER). AP PHOTO/RIC FRANCIS (TOP RIGHT). FLICKRCC/SVADILFARI (BOTTOM)

Everybody has a Name

by Donna Schaper

My congregation puts up the numbers of the Iraq War dead on our front sign and our web site. We update them weekly. They include the Iraqi dead and the American dead. Often there is a bit of controversy about our numbers. They are either too big or too small. We aren't completely sure that our numbers or our fact checkers are right. We get the numbers from two sources: U.S. military dead and wounded are taken from the "U.S. Casualties in Iraq" page of the *antiwar.com* website and reflect the official U.S. military announcement of casualties; Iraqi civilian deaths are found at *iraqbodycount.org*—this is the more controversial listing, as estimates vary not by 10's and 100's, but by 1000's and 100,000's. A man whose name we do know—Peter Gaitens—does this work for us.

As of June 3, 2008, our front sign holds the following numbers: U.S. soldiers killed—4087; U.S. soldiers wounded—30,333; Iraqi civilians dead—91,889. (Ed: The most recent count before we went to press appears in an image of the church website, www.judson.org, on the next page).

We can't list all the names because there are too many, so we just list the numbers. Last week our web site added another nameless number, that of Christian Cotner. He is the 40th military member with ties to our state, Connecticut, who has died in Iraq and Afghanistan since U.S. operations began in those countries in 2003 and 2002, respectively. Two civilians from the state have also died. He graduated from high school in Waterbury and was a member of the First Congregational Church there.

I knew Christian Cotner as a child. He attended the same UCC and Unitarian summer camp as my children did, year after year, a magical place called Star Island, seven miles out to sea from Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Year after year, he batted in the kid's softball game, slid down the slide that faced the ocean, fought to ring the bell for dinner, cross-dressed on Thursday nights when all the girls became guys and the guys became girls. I know it's unusual for a Christian youth camp. But you should see the pictures: they are quite splendid.

The Rev. Dr. Donna Schaper is Senior Minister of Judson Memorial Church in New York City and former chaplain at Star Island.



Message Board

"Racism is the gravest threat to humanity,
the maximum of hatred
for the minimum of reason,
the maximum of cruelty
for a minimum of thinking."
~ Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

- In Memoriam -
Casualties of the Iraq Occupation
since 3/3/2003:
(last updated on 07/14/2008)

4,119 U.S. Soldiers Dead
30,349 U.S. Soldiers Wounded
93,778 Iraqi Civilians Dead

The latest casualty figures on Rev. Schaper's church website (www.judson.org) when this issue of Tikkun *went to press.*

Christian is now dead. He is not a number to me. He is the first person to have died in this war whose name and past I know. Week after week, those numbers on the front of the church have been lifeless to me in more ways than one. They didn't have slides or baseball bats. They didn't have stories you could tell about them. Maybe, their lifelessness implied, the war wasn't really happening and if it was, it was just a little thing. A non-thing. An impersonal thing. A thing without a name.

I knew Christian well enough to know that he believed in this war. He was a marine. Christians by faith, like him and like me, can disagree about war. We have for centuries. I am too sad about his death to use it to argue against the war. I've already done that every which way I know how to—and am hoarse with hopelessness about anyone listening. The country seems to be with me on this matter. We know there is a war going on but we are pretty sure it's not real.

My point is that I was listening to Christian Cotner's life. I knew it as a heartbeat. And now I know it as a silence. One that I could never have imagined on those summer evenings when the children all made too much noise and told stories about who was teasing who and why and what we parents, lolling in our porch-side rocking chairs, were supposed to do about it. Yes, our children quarreled. No, we were not able to "fix" things. Still in all, you just can't look at a child growing up and year after year say, "My how you have grown" and imagine that the child could become a war casualty. No one has the heart for that. You don't let a child into your life and that of your children and then not protect the heart. If war is real, children are not safe. But you don't mention things like this on a summer evening after the lobster fest and before the hymn sing. You have to act like war is unreal in order to tell a child, "My, how you've grown since last year."

I know how much Christian's family loved him. I am just now letting in the fact of his silence; later I will find some useless words to pen to his family and his congregation. For now, his name has broken through the numbers. ■

HOW WE CAN LOBBY FOR THE GLOBAL MARSHALL PLAN

SPF: THE SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE FUND

We've registered the Spiritual Progressive Fund as a 501-c-4 that can lobby on issues related to the education we do through the Institute of Labor and Mental Health's most famous projects: *Tikkun* magazine and the Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP). The upside of this: we can hire staff to do explicit lobbying work. The downside: we must raise money independently of NSP or *Tikkun* to fund such positions, and the donations to make that happen are NOT tax-deductible. So if you want your donations to go specifically for lobbying, make them to the Spiritual Progressive Fund (SPF). The Spiritual Progressive Fund will share our offices with *Tikkun* and NSP at 2342 Shattuck, Suite 1200, Berkeley, CA 94704.

PUT US IN YOUR WILL OR ESTATE PLANNING

No, we don't want you to die. But as a recent book title puts it, the point about life is that you are going to die. You and me both! But not necessarily *Tikkun* or the Network of Spiritual Progressives, if we could ever get the funding to make us financially secure. So think about your own Will or Estate Planning. What might seem like a little gift from your perspective could make a huge difference to us. For more information on how to do this, you can contact Rubian Moss at Rubian@mosscpa.com.

A Rabbi's Journey to Iran

by Lynn Gottlieb



The beautiful Yusef Abad synagogue in Tehran, Iran.

TWILIGHT CASTS A MYSTICAL GLOW UPON THE MOUNTAINOUS desert of Qom as Shia worshippers stream through the gates of Jamkaran Masjid where the twelfth hidden Imam is said to have appeared a hundred years ago by "the well of requests." Pilgrims tie prayer knots around the iron grid covering the well to express humanity's urgent prayer for an end to suffering. The mosque takes a more active role, serving a free meal to thousands of people every Tuesday evening. Tears overflow as I walk toward the sky-blue dome and soaring minarets, trembling with the call to prayer on the last stop of our journey to Iran.

Allah hu Akbar
Allah hu Akbar
Allah hu Akbar
Allah hu Akbar. God is great. Come to prayer.

I pause at the reflecting pool that mirrors above and below, dip my pilgrim hands into the water and wash my hands and face in preparation for Muslim prayer. In Iran, everyone knows the words of the poet Saadi by heart: "Are we not cut from the same jewel? If one member is struck, do we not all feel the blow?" Only someone who cares for the pain of others can take the name "human being."

The seventh Fellowship of Reconciliation delegation to Iran, whose purpose is to promote civilian diplomacy, is ushered to the interior courtyard of the *masjid* where men and women separate for prayer. Muslim sisters offer plastic bags for shoe storage and pass out optional *chadors*. Suad wishes she had not polished her nails as this place evokes piety and simplicity. Our brilliant, emancipated Persian rose, who is the delegation's interpreter of language, culture, and history turns off her cell phone, wraps herself in white and hands me a clay stone, cool and smooth, upon which I will rest my forehead during *salat*. The Prophet, peace be upon him, used to say that the best spot for prostration is the earth (Kanz-ul-Ummal Part 4. p.113).

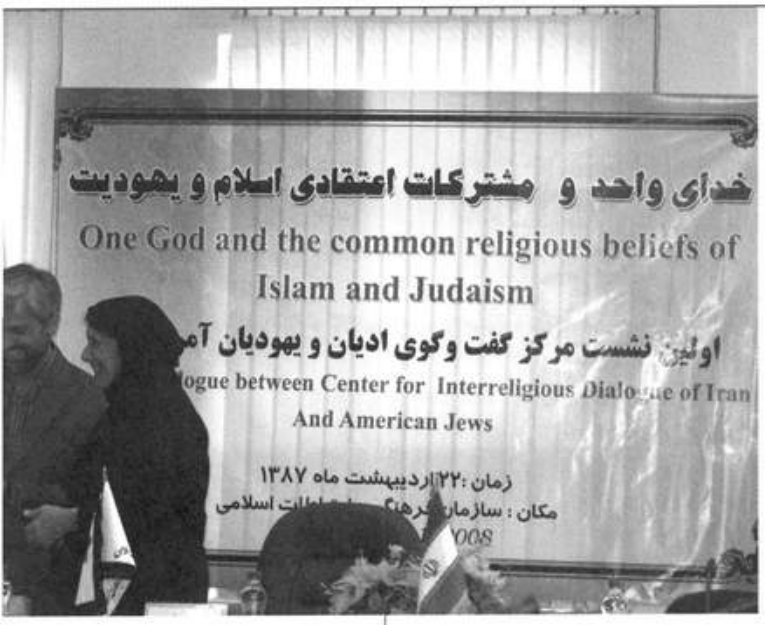
The insight that wisdom arises from the earth is ancient and universal.

The previous evening a few of us meet Jewish, Muslim and secular youth in an apartment in northern Teheran. Here *hijabs* are removed and people are free to reveal their true thoughts. The conversation drifts to the widespread Iranian belief that we are one humanity and should not let religion divide us. Michelle Cook, a Navajo woman on the delegation, shares the core principle of indigenous thought. The earth is our common ground, the soil of our existence, the place our dreams arise. As we reflect on indigenous wisdom, I mention this region's oldest written story. Inscribed on earthen tablets, it recounts the myth of the Goddess Inanna who initiates her quest for wisdom by placing her ear on the earth and then descends

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Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb is director of Shomer Shalom Institute for Jewish Nonviolence, cofounder of the Muslim Jewish PeaceWalk and a performing artist.

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Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb with her delegation's host in Iran, Rasoul Rasoulipour, the director of The Department of Interreligious Dialogue.

into the interior rather than climb the heights to seek knowledge. Iranians love poetry and stories and the youth request the entire tale. Because I am a storyteller, I am delighted to oblige them.

Now I am here, bending my head to the earth in order to touch the clay stone, like my ancestor Yaakov, whose first divine awakening occurs when he places his head upon stone in a place he does not know. Our ancestors taught, "The Creator formed the first human from brown, yellow, red and white clay so that no one can claim, 'My ancestor is greater than yours.'" Everywhere I travel in Iran, people repeat the same sentiment. We are one religion, one people, one family, bound together in one all-embracing destiny upon the earth, mother of us all, as Michelle would say.

The Qur'an teaches there shall be no compulsion in religion. I willingly bow my body in thanksgiving for the invitation that has brought me unexpectedly to this place at this time. I kneel, prostrate, rise, kneel, prostrate, rise in the rhythm of *salat. Bismillah HaRachman HaRachim.* May we have the courage to turn away from fear. May we embrace each other as brothers and sisters. May we learn to see each other as one family striving not in war, but in righteousness. May we behold the tapestry of difference as a beautiful gift emanating from divine abundance given to us in order to enrich our spirits. May we take the great leap of faith and place our trust in the path of peace. *La ila hu il'allah.* There is no god but god. *Ein atar penui minei.* There is no place empty of Presence.

Evening prayer comes to a conclusion, as does our two-week journey to Iran. I stand and kiss my American and Iranian sisters in Persian style on each cheek, an expression of affection. No words are necessary. We are filled with gratitude for the remarkable opportunity to travel as peacemakers in a time of hostility. The twenty-one members of our delegation have experienced Iran as a place of welcome. We are quite aware, of course, of the challenges that various communities and individuals face in relation to the Islamic Republic. However, despite cultural and linguistic differences, almost every Iranian we meet as we wander unsupervised through the streets and mountains of Teheran, Shiraz, Esfahan, Persepolis and Abyaneh, greets us warmly.

In response to the many stares of incomprehension when we are first noticed, I place my hand over my heart (a gesture I first learned from my dialogue and peacewalk partner, Abdul Rauf Campos Marquetti), smile and say, "Salaam, salaam!" People stop. "Where from?" "America." "America?!!" Many people tell us, "We love America!" They ask, "Bush?" Once we say, "No, not Bush. We believe in peace with Iran," we are showered with appreciation. People smile, hold our hands, invite us to dinner. Given the hostile messages that infuse the American press about Iran, along with George Bush's characterization of Iran as an axis of evil, and given the messages we read on murals throughout Teheran that call for death to America, I am not prepared for the overwhelming hospitality we receive from strangers on the street. They say, "We, too, have problems with our government. That should not stop us from being friends."

I have found Iran to be a land of poets and mystics, both secular and religious, whose idea of a good time is to meet at the tomb of the poet Hafez in Shiraz to recite mystical verse, or at the bridge in Esfahan to sing in harmony as the river rushes underfoot, or at tea houses in Teheran to discuss politics while smoking flavored tobacco from a hookah. Among the hundreds of people we have met, almost everyone speaks of the need for co-existence and interreligious understanding.

Iranians mention Cyrus the Persian as author of the world's first document of human rights and protector of the Jews. They express pride at being home to an ancient community of Zoroastrians and Jews, who, although minorities, are regarded as national treasures. As Jewish Persians remind us again and again, they have lived in Iran for thirty centuries. Jews are allowed at present to travel to Israel and the United States to visit family. They pray in synagogues, sell Judaica visible from the street and remain in contact with the tens of

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thousands of their Iranian Jewish relatives who left Iran after the fall of the Shah. "We cannot separate our Persianness from our Jewishness, we are one body," says the editor of the Jewish magazine *Binah*. "Please, do not bomb us. You will jeopardize our safety and our very existence. We are happy here," he tells us as he drives Charles and me past a kosher restaurant on the way to a Jewish day-school.

I am here on behalf of the Department of Inter-religious Dialogue, which is trying to organize a Jewish delegation to Iran. Because my primary concern is keeping the doors of communication open, I am careful not to put anyone in a precarious position. I know there are many challenges facing this ancient community, some of which are being addressed by the Jewish parliamentarians, such as restrictions around inheritance. Other issues remain a source of tension such as the extensive anti-Israel stance of the Iranian government. The larger question is how to best support Jewish Iranians who want to stay in their own country. Bombing Iran will surely not contribute to their safety.

As the delegation reassembles in the interior courtyard of Jamkaran, stars cover the night sky. The *Mahdi* (a redeeming force) is said to be hidden but active in the world, helping the needy. This seems like a fitting place to conclude our trip. We stand in a circle, men and women together, and pray for the people of Iran and the miracle of this amazing journey behind the veil. I am standing next to the only other Jewish delegate, Charles London, a young journalist who has written a book about Ugandan children called *One Day the Soldiers Came: Voices of Children in War.* In the place of Shia messianic longing, he offers his first Hebrew prayer in public. We recite the *Shehechianu*.

We don't want to leave, but our time is short. We have to catch a plane back to the United States and begin the next phase of our work: the difficult task of organizing people to take action against a possible attack on Iran, either by Israel or the United States, which would be a disaster of untold proportions. Iraq has been on my mind the whole time. Will the United States destroy yet another ancient civilization? Why do we place our faith in the terrible violence of war when war only makes life ten thousand times worse? There is no such thing as a surgical strike. If struck, Iran will respond with full force. Whom will they target, if not Israel? And they will feel justified. Any possibility of internal reform will be swept away. Jewish Iranians will suffer the consequences and the world Jewish community will lose another ancient treasure. Why is this acceptable? Surely, we have the imagination for other alternatives.

Our guide leads us toward the exit. Before we cross the threshold into mundane time and space, he stops to explain the custom of leaving string knots on the grid over the well of requests. He turns to me. "Rabbi," he says, "this question is for you: Is it not true you have a custom of placing paper in the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem? Is this a comparable custom to the strings of prayer over the well?" And I answer, "Yes." He continues, "Western journalists misunderstood the symbolic nature of this practice and that is why they are barred from entry. Because you come in peace, we allowed you to enter. You see, no place is intrinsically holier than any other place. The whole earth is holy, and every place and every person, every moment and every action is a reflection of the divine. If only we could open to each other in this way, peace would finally appear on earth."

I feel like I am standing in the presence of a Hasidic master and I respond in kind. "Yes, this is true for us as well. No place is intrinsically more holy than any other. Like Jamkaran, Jerusalem is simply the place we collect and offer prayers in public so all of us can see and hear the truth uttered by our prophets and sages, may their memories be a blessing. The whole earth is holy. The purpose of Torah is to be a messenger of peace. If Torah is not being used to seek peace and pursue it, it is not being used correctly." We continue to speak to one another of holiness and peace. A large crowd gathers around us listening to our religious dialogue. I am being translated into Persian, and our host into English. I see the moon hovering over us, on its own journey toward the fullness of reflected light. Here I am, in Jamkaran, under the same sky that illuminates Jerusalem, surrounded by Muslim worshippers nodding their heads in respect for our message of peace and my heart bursts open, once again, to the truth that one can create peace anywhere—if only we will it, it is not a dream. ■





The delegation visited this synagogue in Shiraz, in southwest Ira (above). Two young men from the Shiraz Jewish community (below).

CHARLES LONDON

Afghan Women Find a Partner for Justice

by Wil Morat





Azim Mujadidi sits in his UNIFEM office in Parwan. He began working in women's development as an English instructor before becoming field coordinator in 2005 (top). Mufti Seddiqie Musleem is a judge on the Dar-al-Fatwa, *a religious council that advises the Afghan Supreme Court. He also serves on the Elimination of Violence Against Women Commission and aims to educate both sexes about the rights of women guaranteed in the Qu'ran (bottom).*

SERENITY CLERK (TOP). WIL MORAT (BOTTOM)

"THE NEXT TIME YOU RUN AWAY, THIS WILL BE YOUR GRAVE," MARIAM'S HUSBAND warned her, pointing at a hole he dug behind their house in northwestern Afghanistan.

"Mariam" (some names have been changed) is seventeen years old and didn't really have anywhere to run. She has been repeatedly beaten, humiliated, and caught trying to escape. Now her husband is ramping up the abuse. He treats her worse than a disobedient dog; he once urinated in the corner and forced her to sleep in the puddle.

But Mariam is not resigned to her fate. Accompanied by her aunt, the young bride has approached an unusual resource for women facing violence in the same country that spawned the Taliban.

Mariam obtained the assistance of a Muslim man.

In a mud-walled compound north of Kabul is a law office run by the Afghan Women Judges' Association and funded by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). It provides free legal aid to women hoping for an alternative. The lawyer who will assist Mariam is "Atayee," a salt-and-pepper haired man with empathetic eyes and a dark stubble covering his jaw. He sits in a cold, unassuming room, potentially risking his life to defend women. It is visibly evident he has earned their trust: none of his clients keep their faces hidden under the *burqa* in his presence.

"According to Islamic and Afghan law, men have to support women," Atayee says with a soft voice. His fight is as much about eliminating violence against women as it is standing up for his own personal and religious values.

In post-Taliban Afghanistan, women seeking a brighter future are turning to an often overlooked and underutilized ally. It is a clandestine society of sorts, made up of hundreds of educated, progressive and devout Muslim men who are helping to change women's roles in Afghan society. These men freely choose their occupation, knowing they or their families may be killed for taking a stand against extremism.

In nearby Kapisa province, a ninety-minute drive north of Kabul, is another young male lawyer in a similar legal aid center. A recent law graduate, "H.F." says his old classmates know what he does, but few others. He doubts his family fully understands that he risks his life to help women escape gender violence. In the post-Taliban environment, something as simple as publicizing your name can be suicidal, and many Afghan men who work for women's rights keep their occupation a secret. But despite the risk, H.F. says he needs to help because "it's too difficult for a woman to defend herself."

Illiteracy and the lack of female education in Afghanistan make it nearly impossible for women to progress without help. Islam was intentionally perverted by the Taliban to justify keeping women covered in the *burqa*, deny them an education, force them into marriage at pre-pubescent ages, and permit physical and mental abuse. Violations continue, and tradition has become inextricably tied to religion.

Wil Morat is an American freelance writer living in Mumbai, India. He welcomes any comments, critiques, or discussions at wjmorat@gmail.com. Hasib Seddiqi contributed to this article.

Faced with this distortion of his religion, the head of the Afghanistan Islamic Scholars Council, Fazel Ahmad Manawi, is pushing for a new strain of religious identity within Afghanistan. Partly at his urging, the mosque he worships at now has about thirty women who attend Friday prayers. Sunnis, the majority of Muslims in Afghanistan, typically do not allow women into the mosque; however, Manawi says involving women in religion will help change attitudes in even the most conservative minds.

"The mosque is the best place to guide the people," Manawi explains. He is a man publicly known for supporting women. Friday prayers are a chance for the imams to inform both sexes about the rights all Muslims are entitled to enjoy.

When women first attended his mosque three years ago there were some disgruntled worshippers who disagreed—and a few angry debates. Manawi savored those debates as a chance to spread new ideas supported by his extensive knowledge of *sharia* law (laws based on the Qu'ran and the example of the Prophet Muhammad's life).

There are now an estimated twenty mosques that have women members. Manawi believes the practice is finding wider acceptance and the number will increase with time. But with the Taliban resurging from the south, publicly opining about a lack of women's liberties can carry a heavy price.

"I'm not afraid of my people, just the Taliban," Manawi says defiantly. His day job with a private telecommunications company in a wealthy Kabul neighborhood—protected by razor-wire fences and armed guards—affords Manawi a freedom that most men in Afghanistan don't have.

Only a mile across town but a world apart, in an oversized and yellowed building in Old Kabul near the canal that was once the Kabul River and is now an open sewer, Mufti Seddiqie Musleem and his colleagues in the Dar al-Fatwa discuss what Islam requires of its followers. As advisors to the Supreme Court Justices of Afghanistan, this assembly of mullahs can issue a religious decree, or a *fatwa*, that can condemn an apostate to death, or—more to Musleem's liking—it can help free women from the bonds of tradition through a more accurate interpretation of the Qu'ran and *sharia* law.

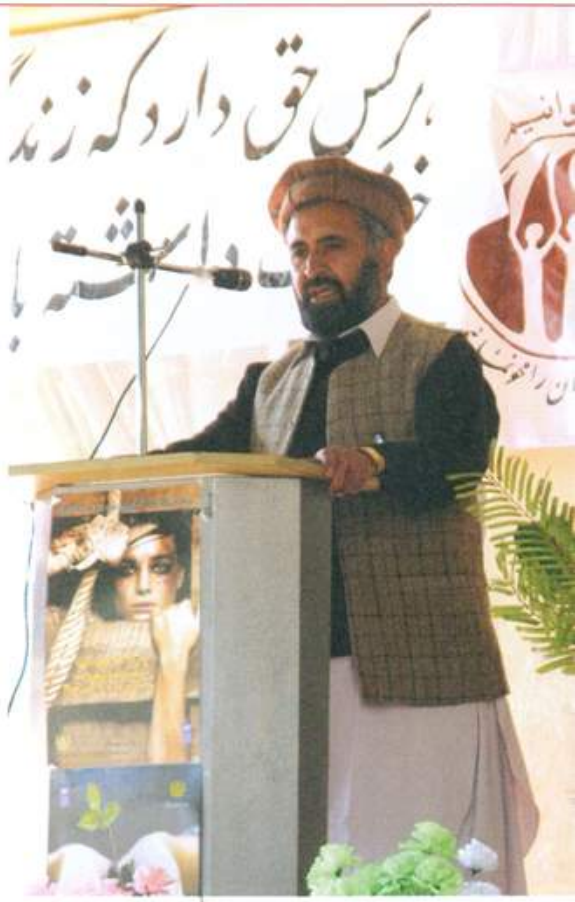
"Islam calls for men and women to have equal rights. The country will not be developed without it," says Musleem, a member of the Elimination of Violence Against Women Commission. Musleem is no feminist by western standards, but his influence is critical to changing the customs and institutions that have relegated women to a substandard class. He believes that education in the schools, and especially the mosques, is the best way to raise women's status.

"Men should have more respect for women," Musleem says, noting that Islam requires men to be "an example." Nothing is said casually; he meticulously analyzes everything down to the syllable before he speaks. He pulls quotes from the Prophet Muhammad from memory to support his claim that "men who violate women's rights are oppressors."

His support doesn't come without risk. On a late summer night in 2005, Musleem and his five brothers were abducted from their home and held for twelve days. Facing possible execution, a ransom was paid to secure their release. Musleem insists he was concerned only about his family, not himself. Assuring the safety of family members is the biggest concern of every Afghan man who works with women's organizations. None of them take any chances with their wives and children.

Zia Moballegh, a national program officer for UNIFEM, keeps the details of his job a secret from his neighbors. He suspects that they may cooperate as informers for the Taliban or Al Qaeda if faced with threats to their own families. When he rented his house, the owner asked what his occupation was. Moballegh told him only "UN administration"; he specifically hid the fact that he worked for women's rights.

With a trimmed goatee and a black sport coat, Moballegh doesn't fit the stereotypical profile of a religious Afghan man, yet the motivation for his work comes from his own internal struggle to understand sharia law. He is sometimes accused by conservatives and traditional mullahs of "importing westernized issues and concepts." Moballegh dismisses their



One of the Kabul neighborhood's Attorneys General, Mesor Shah Ehsan, makes a speech at the AWRC's event telling the women present that his office will support women in their struggle for equal rights.

WIL MORAT





The Afghan Women's Resource Center (AWRC), a Kabul-based NGO, has agricultural projects that teach women to grow, harvest, and preserve fruits and vegetables for profit. Several men work alongside women to organize the project. Pictured (left to right) are three agricultural trainers, Haji Ahmedulla, Feroz Hotak, and Ms. Aquila (top). The AWRC's event also included an awareness campaign on HIV/AIDS prevention. Three high school girls perform a skit teaching the audience about the dangers of HIV infection from a dentist that does not use sanitized equipment (bottom).

WIL MORAT

accusations. "In deep ideology and discussion, their claim is baseless. Women's rights are guaranteed in sharia law," he says.

Interpretations of sharia law vary; but within the circles of men working in women's development in Afghanistan, an increasing number have spent years studying the law in universities in Iran, Pakistan and Egypt. Many of these legal theologians have a liberal interpretation of Islamic doctrine and sharia law—one they hope to spread upon their return to Afghanistan. The idea that religion is an answer to extremism is a popular view among Afghans, and many see sharia law as a guarantor of women's rights and equality that doesn't carry the cultural barriers that western-imposed ideas often do.

Having devoted all his time in the post-Taliban era to women's development, Moballegh has watched reconstruction firsthand and is most worried about security. He describes a suicide bombing two days earlier that killed six people at a reconstruction project in an outlying neighborhood of Kabul. Six months earlier in the same area, the Taliban posted a printed decree warning that any girl attending school without a burqa would be killed.

"Now if you go to that neighborhood, all the girls are wearing burqas." Moballegh shakes his head solemnly. "They are getting closer."

For every father, husband or brother who is careful with his identity for fear of reprisals by extremists, there is a rebel who enjoys the spotlight. Azim Mujadidi is a field coordinator for UNIFEM in Parwan province. Just twenty-four years old, he started with UNIFEM teaching English to women's classes.

Young, charismatic and blessed with an infectious smile, Mujadidi regularly stands on the corner of a crowded roundabout, waiting to liaison with the white UN Landcruisers. In Afghanistan, being seen talking to someone in a UNIFEM vehicle could be a death sentence, but Mujadidi isn't fazed.

"The people in Parwan know me as a supporter of women," he says over hot tea in his bubblegum-pink office. While talking to the elders and leaders of villages was difficult at first, now many members of the community participate in ceremonies and openings of other projects because "they see the benefits of UNIFEM's projects." Mujadidi is proudest of a poultry-raising project; years after it ended, the women are still raising and selling chickens, an example of sustainability that he says is sorely needed.

Mujadidi thinks extremism is caused by economics, not dogma. He is looking for more long-term projects that will lift women from poverty, and believes that economic development coupled with an accurate interpretation of sharia law can eliminate extremism.

"The big reason anyone becomes a Talib, or Al Qaeda, or any other group is for economic reasons," Mujadidi says. "Anyone who wants to help Afghanistan, they send soldiers. We don't want soldiers. We want something to eliminate poverty."

After the discussions on politics and religion have been exhausted, a way to eliminate poverty is really what all Afghans are looking for: men like Mujadidi and women like Mariam, who hopes the legal aid center can offer her an escape from the husband who has already dug her grave.

As she sits in the lawyer's office, her blue burqa pulled back over her head, revealing her frosted blue eyes, Mariam knows poverty is limiting her options. With no education or job skills, running away from an abusive husband might be the easiest part of surviving as a woman in Afghanistan.

Yet men like Musleem, Atayee and Mujadidi are changing the future. They are men with a strong Islamic faith that demands they fight for women's rights when tradition dictates otherwise. They risk their lives for a future that includes Islam and women as part of the solution. They are not the mainstream but neither are they an aberration; their numbers are growing, and each man who takes action lends courage to another to do the same.

Musleem, the *mufti* who spends his time contemplating what Islam requires of the faithful, leans back in his chair and sips his tea. The threat of assassination hasn't deterred him from spreading the message that true Islam teaches men to protect the rights of women.

"I'm not afraid of dying because I am working very honestly," Musleem says with a peaceful smile behind his long and bushy beard. "We can't avoid our destiny." ■

The Tikkun Interview

Sami Awad
Palestinian Activist for Nonviolence



Sami Awad

THIS IS A CONVERSATION WHICH TOOK PLACE IN TIKKUN'S *office in California in May 2008. Sami Awad (SA) is the chair of Holy Land Trust, a not-for-profit Palestinian organization established in 1998 in the holy city of Bethlehem. Michael Lerner (ML) is editor of* Tikkun *magazine.* Tikkun *and the Network of Spiritual Progressives have been working with Holy Land Trust to support their campaign for nonviolence.*

SA: The Palestinian community in the last three or four years has become more and more aware that engaging in armed resistance has not achieved anything on the strategic level as a pragmatic approach to ending the occupation. More and more Palestinians are seeing that engaging in armed resistance is not doing anything.

ML: I am going to ask a few of the questions that will pop into the minds of people who don't share *Tikkun's* perspective, thus "playing devil's advocate" in this interview. Here goes: "What do you mean, more people? Didn't they just vote Hamas into power, and Hamas says that the armed struggle is the way to go forward."

SA: Many Palestinians chose Hamas to protest the corrupted Palestinian Authority (PA) government dominated by Fatah. The PA government has existed for so many years and has not achieved anything since it was put in place in the mid-90s. The campaign that Hamas actually ran on was not a campaign that was dealing with the methods of organized resistance but rather a campaign of reform of the PA government. And people chose Hamas because they supported that focus. Another set of people chose Hamas as a protest vote against Fatah, but the biggest reason why Fatah was defeated and Hamas won was that there was a split within Fatah. Fatah had open primaries before the election, and in this primary the grassroots members of Fatah elected people who were on the ground and not part of the Fatah establishment. So when people were chosen to run who were not part of the establishment, the establishment declared a cancellation of the primary and put in place their own candidates, so now you have two sets of candidates from Fatah running against each other. Those chosen in the primaries did not step down, because they said they were chosen by the people, and the establishment said no, we want our people to run. And you can see the split voting that happened within Fatah in the elections. In Bethlehem for example, for every two candidates who ran for Hamas there were four candidates for Fatah. And that really split the vote. In terms of the numbers of votes that Hamas got it is assumed that they only got between 25 and 30 percent of the vote. This is the level of their popularity, and how it has been for many years. They have never been a majority in the Palestinian political environment.

ML: And how do you understand then why Hamas, if they didn't represent the majority, decided that they could and should take over Gaza?

SA: They did not take over Gaza. They did not represent the majority of the people, but they ended up with the majority of seats in the Parliament which gave them, in our

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constitution, the legal right and responsibility to form the government. They did form the government and it was made up of people from Hamas and outside Hamas. It was the first technocrat government in Palestine, with experts from different fields who were involved in forming the government. It wasn't just party people.

The world came down harshly on Hamas after this election, and said, "We will only allow you to operate and function as a government if you accept our conditions, which are the end to violence and terrorism and recognition of the State of Israel." Very similar to what had happened to Arafat a few years back. While I believe there was a real possibility and openness for Hamas to engage in a process that would lead it up to that, for it to jump into accepting those conditions immediately was something that it could not accept, because it would mean that it would have to renounce and deny all of its history. Which means it would have to show itself as a failed movement. There was a real openness to negotiate and to slowly bring them into that discussion, but the world pushed Hamas in a corner and said that if you don't do this in the next ten days we will boycott you. And when you push a cat into a corner, it starts crouching. That's what happened with Hamas.

Of course, the PA (meaning Fatah) did not help in that situation, they wanted an opportunity to get back into power. This was the first time they had been out of power for so many years. So they helped to create the pressure on Hamas that led to the explosion that we saw last year in Gaza. The situation in that area then totally collapsed and Hamas found itself in a position that it had actually declared that it did not want to be in, which was taking over the Gaza Strip.

ML: Well, if it doesn't want to be in it, why doesn't it cede back the power to Fatah?

SA: Hamas still won the election, so it isn't handing over the power to Fatah. They have been talking about and requesting negotiations with the PA about how to go back to the pre-revolt period and to create a unified government with both parties in it and to move forward from there. Fatah is demanding that they would have to go back to the pre-election period, and just hold new elections.

ML: And why would that be bad?

SA: Well it is not an issue of bad or good, it is an issue of legitimacy. Hamas won power, and they should be given the chance to run the PA. One of the things that has happened throughout the whole process is growing sympathy for Hamas, so they would probably win new elections if they happen. But even if they knew they would win new elections, they feel that the process needs to continue and that it is up to the next elections when people can decide to go a new direction.

ML: Here we have Hamas and two factions in Fatah; are those two sides reconciled in any way? Have the old guard and the younger reformist elements reconciled, or are there still two different voices?

SA: Part of what Fatah has also done in the past year is to engage in a rebuilding process. I am from Bethlehem. There were party elections there in April 2008, and those who were elected to represent Fatah were very much part of the growing, new, younger movement of the party. In a very peaceful manner, the old guard of the Bethlehem district was asked to step aside and allow the new leadership to rise. So I think within Fatah there is a start of reform.

ML: In all the different factions, or in a reconciled Fatah and in Hamas, is there any significant organized group that is saying "we would be better off going with nonviolence"?

SA: The big problem we have now, there has been very little attention paid to the resistance movement by the political parties. They are so entrenched in this political struggle between the parties that they have both ignored the real big problem, which is the occupation and land confiscation and settlement building by Israel. You will find rhetorical language, but on the ground the parties are more concerned about elections or how to gain power again. Meanwhile, nonviolence activity is emerging within the grassroots movements, with some involvement from the political parties, including Hamas. Hamas is not denouncing nonviolence. There are Hamas people who see nonviolence as a useful tool. But there are plenty of Palestinians involved in the grassroots movements who are not involved in the

party establishments.

ML: How much of an impact are they able to have?

SA: I want to be realistic. There is not a significant nonviolent movement happening now against the occupation. What we are seeing are growing communities who view nonviolence as the option to solve the problems they are facing, and most of them are communities that are dealing directly with land being confiscated and settlements and the wall that Israel has been constructing. There are villages today that are engaging in nonviolence while a few years ago many of them couldn't imagine how to resist the Israeli confiscations of land and the construction of the Wall and so just surrendered to that reality. In the Palestinian community in general, there has been less criticism of nonviolence, and there has been more acceptance of the terms of nonviolence. It is not perceived as it was before, as treason or collaboration, as non-resistance. The term "nonviolence" can be used on the streets and people will understand it. There is now a theoretical understanding of it, but that has not grown into a practical popular movement yet.



Palestinians pray before a protest against the construction of part of Israel's separation barrier in the town of Al-Khader south of the town of Bethlehem, Friday Jan. 18, 2008. Israel says the barrier is necessary for security, while Palestinians call it a land grab.

AP PHOTO/TARA TODRAS-WHITEHILL

ML: Could you have a public meeting on nonviolence as a strategy in Gaza?

SA: Yes, anywhere, on nonviolence as a strategy.

ML: And Hamas wouldn't attack it?

SA: Actually, Hamas has been the least critical of nonviolence as a strategy. Not that they have endorsed it, or that they are engaging in it, but they are the least critical because for them they see it as a failed strategy; not a strategy that is opposing the aspirations but one that just doesn't work.

ML: They don't feel the need to prove their commitment against the occupation, while Fatah does?

SA: There is often a misrepresentation of nonviolence, and this is something we have tried to address: the linking of nonviolence to negotiation. Fatah has not chosen nonviolence. They say "nonviolence" when they talk about negotiations so everyone assumes that they are inherently linked. And the negotiations that Fatah has done have not produced the ends desired. What we are trying to show is that there are three ways of dealing with Occupation. There is the way of violence, the way of negotiations, and there is the third way, which is the way of nonviolence. This is part of the challenge for us, presenting nonviolence as resisting the occupation, not just engaging in dialogues and negotiations. These are some of the misrepresentations that we are trying to address.

ML: Let's go to your work for a second. Do you oppose negotiations?

SA: I oppose negotiations as they are being conducted right now, under the current frame and conditions put on the Palestinians. I believe that it will ultimately come down to negotiations, but there is a big gap right now in the relative power of each side and hence in how negotiations are being conducted. Negotiations will only work when the Palestinians are welcomed to the table as equals. Right now the Palestinians are being forced to give compensation and there is very little returned, even as a sign of good faith, like a freeze on the building of settlements. There is a big imbalance. I am not for these types of negotiations because we will fall into the same trap as Oslo. It isn't going to produce anything positive.

ML: And the trap of Oslo was?

SA: The trap of Oslo was that the occupation continued and intensified. The Palestinian

Fear and Nonviolence: China and Tibet

by Robert Thurman



(above) Tibetan refugees shout slogans during a demonstration in Katmandu, Nepal, Monday, March 10, 2008: the anniversary of a failed uprising against Chinese rule in Tibet that forced the Dalai Lama into exile in 1959.

(facing page, top) A Tibetan Youth Congress activist shouts slogans during a demonstration to mark the 48th National Uprising Day of Tibet in the eastern Indian city of Siliguri, Saturday, March 10, 2007. Thousands of Tibetans rose against Chinese rule in the Tibetan capital Lhasa on March 10, 1959.

(facing page, bottom) A Tibetan youth shouts anti-China slogans in Bangalore, India, Sunday, April 10, 2005.

AP PHOTO/BIKAS JOSHI

The Beijing Olympics has brought new attention to Tibet, as people, groups, and nations across the world have taken the symbolic running of the torch as an opportunity to protest China's imperialism. However the media's simplistic reporting and reliance on Chinese sources of information has clouded the issue rather than clarified it. In the wake of supposedly violent uprisings in Tibet, there is even a misconception that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has lost the support of his own people. Yet in looking past propaganda to better understand what has occurred in Tibet over the past months, it is clear that the Dalai Lama offers the brightest possibility for a lasting solution in the region.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has not wavered from his fifty-year commitment to nonviolence in seeking an arrangement with the Chinese Communist government that will free his people from genocidal oppression at its hands. His "Middle Way" approach is well thought-out, strong, and realistic. His long-standing offer to the Chinese government, which he has extended for at least twenty years, is based on principles enshrined in the Chinese Constitution concerning the treatment of what that document calls "Minority Nationalities" within their Republic.

The essence of the Dalai Lama's offer is this: to have the Tibetan people consent legally by plebiscite to accept Chinese sovereignty over the Tibetan plateau, on the condition that all the Tibetan people in all Tibet Autonomous areas are left to be genuinely free to live on their own plateau, run their own affairs, govern themselves, control their own economy, and preserve their own culture and environment. Defense and foreign affairs would remain under China's control, and China could still invest in and profit from a Tibetan economy run sustainably by Tibetans, as long as mining and other extractive industries were conducted in a thoroughly green and clean manner. So all Tibetans would regain their practical freedom under genuine autonomy in exchange for granting China legitimate sovereignty, which in the post-UN Charter world cannot be gained by force of invasion and occupation.

A key point, sometimes hard for Americans to understand, is that the Dalai Lama's spiritual role is one he shares in general with other Tibetan reincarnate lamas: to represent a living exemplar of the Buddha, inspiring Tibetans that they too can evolve into enlightened beings, if they cultivate their good human qualities to a high degree. This role particularly in his case mandates that he take an active concern in social and political realities, since his

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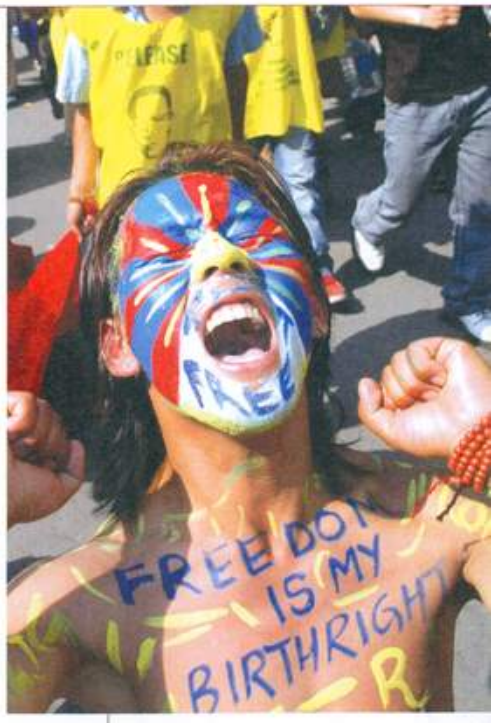
Robert Thurman is the Jey Tsong Khapa Professor of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University. He is Co-founder and President, Tibet House U.S. and author of Why the Dalai Lama Matters.

incarnation carries the responsibility to safeguard the Tibetan Buddhist culture, which is designed as the arena wherein the Tibetans are guaranteed the maximum opportunity for the self-cultivation they aspire to. That culture is not just a by-product of the three-mile-high altitude, but is the heroic creation of thirteen hundred years of self-restraint, altruistic development, and intellectual achievement on the part of millions of Tibetans. That is why he always talks of the Chinese committing a "cultural genocide" rather than a physical genocide. It is his spiritual duty to protect the cultural matrix within which Tibetans can feel that they are making their human lives count for something meaningful—in the context of their evolutionary belief that they are close to their goal of buddhahood if they can invest most of their time in spiritual, contemplative, and intellectual cultivation. He has carried out this duty with great success with the community in exile, wherein among the approximated 150,000 Tibetan exiles worldwide, there are more than thirty thousand monks and nuns. This is an astonishing proportion of a population living as refugees in difficult circumstances. The key to his never giving up his struggle to get a hearing from the Chinese leadership and people is that he feels it necessary to restore this precious spiritual opportunity to all the Tibetan people, who absolutely depend on him to do so.

The media has made much of late about their idea that Tibetans are fed up with the Dalai Lama's "Middle Way" offer to accept autonomy within China, and want complete independence, going to war with violence if necessary and reducing the Dalai Lama's role to only a spiritual one. But this is totally inaccurate. Tibetans continue to love the Dalai Lama heart and soul and body and mind. They are only at odds with China's stubborn refusal to even talk about a solution. Even when they go against the Dalai Lama's advice and protest publicly at risk of life and limb, they strive to remain nonviolent and show their Buddhist heroism by not retaliating violently to the most extreme abuse. They are tired of being brainwashed, occupied by a harsh military, economically cut off from their own natural wealth like any colonized people, treated as racially inferior as in any apartheid-like system, and deprived of their religious and spiritual focus on Tibetan Buddhism and its practice. In expressing their anguish over their loss of spiritual teachers and dear family members going back three generations now, and over their own personal injuries and deprivation, they might say they wish they could fight more concretely in some way. But so far the vast majority have stuck to Gandhian types of protests. It is not that they are somehow exceptionally holy. It is that they are intelligent, and the Dalai Lama appeals to their intelligence. Any act of terrorism, any kind of serious violence, would only give the Chinese "hardliners" the excuse they are looking for to complete their genocidal extermination and assimilation of the Tibetan people.

In an August 14th article written for the *New York Review of Books*, Orville Schell seems to justify China's current treatment of Tibet as a part of a long time struggle against humiliation by the West. I found the following sentence particularly amazing: "In the past, feelings of injury have arisen from such events as the Opium Wars and the Japanese occupation; and most recently after the Tibetan demonstrations this spring and during the run-up to the Beijing Olympic Games." How can a military invasion by European imperialists in the nineteenth century to impose a debilitating treaty on the Imperial Manchu regime, which led to long term occupation of parts of China by Europeans, or the infamous imperial Japanese invasion and occupation in the 1930s and 1940s, which caused huge loss of life in the Chinese population for years, be listed in the same sentence—and thereby compared as if in same category—to a 98% nonviolent protest over several months by the aggrieved Tibetans who themselves were invaded and have been occupied by Chinese military forces for sixty years with tremendous loss of Tibetan lives and a documented huge cultural devastation?

Schell sets the stage for his apology for China's murderous reaction to the Tibetan protestors by favorably reviewing a film about a Chinese graduate student whose American academic advisers were disappointed with his dissertation and required him to do further work on it; instead of doing the work he bought a pistol and murdered the advisers and some university administrators! Schell notes that the script of the film is "surprisingly





AP PHOTO/TAMAL ROY (TOP). AP PHOTO/GAUTAM SINGH (BOTTOM)



Updated map of Tibetan protests as of March 25, 2008



Bodies of Tibetans who were killed by Chinese soldiers during the peaceful demonstration were carried to Kirti Monastary for prayers. March 16, 2008.

sympathetic" to the murderer, which he explains somewhat by the fact of the director's own ambivalent experience as a grad student in America. He gives the impression that "Westerners" are arrogant about Chinese and so they have some justification in being upset. But the Tibetans are not arrogant, and they are not Westerners, and so the parallel doesn't work.

Schell brings the Tibetans' "Western supporters" into the picture as perhaps the real causes of the hurtful humiliation. Interestingly, this is just what the Chinese themselves do, when they try to pretend that the Tibetans on their own are just so happy with the Chinese colonization of Tibet and all the trouble is caused by what they call "the Dalai clique" of supposedly Westernized Tibetans and their supporters. The Dalai Lama also seems to be aware of the Chinese people's sensitivity, which is why he has supported their right to host the Olympics from the beginning, and why he himself did not call for any of the protests, either by exiles or any of the oppressed Tibetans in Tibet. But the fact that they occurred and were misinterpreted by the Chinese as acts of unjustified humiliation does not come from some psychic complex of theirs. All Chinese are not like the one psychotic physics student who shot his thesis advisers. Schell's whole argument simply repeats the common Sinologists' argument "Don't criticize China because they have a very fragile psyche, and are likely to go nuts; they can't take "loss of face" the way we Westerners can"! This is a highly patronizing attitude to the Chinese, as it amounts to saying they are somehow psychologically deficient, and it also exhibits denial about our own problems with "loss of face," i.e. admitting mistakes or guilt. In point of fact, the Chinese over-reaction to the Tibetan protests comes from the fact that they are completely misinformed and confused by their government's restriction of accurate information and by their active propaganda. They have been taught that they have always owned Tibet, and that Tibetans are a type of Chinese, therefore have no right to complain or ask for their freedom. They have been taught that the Tibetans were backward and "feudal," etc., and that the Chinese occupation liberated them and improved their lives.

Schell himself participates in this misinformation when he talks about the Maoist "dream of reunifying China as a multiethnic state composed of Han (central Chinese), Man (Manchurians), Meng (Mongolians), Hui (Muslims), and Zang (Tibetans)." But none of the last four ever did or do now consider themselves Chinese, nor do Chinese people encountering them face-to-face in the street consider them fellow Chinese. The Manchurian Empire (Sinicised as the Qing Dynasty) was an imperialist construct, and the Manchus oppressed the Chinese terribly. In their revolution of 1911 the Chinese rose up to throw out the non-Chinese (and also non-Western) foreign Manchu overlords. Only after independence for the Chinese people in China did both Nationalists and later Communists decide they wanted to restore the conquest empire of the Manchus with themselves as the overlords. This is the history that the Chinese masses have not been allowed to learn. When they look at the Chinese red flag with the five yellow stars, one big one (the Chinese) and four little ones (Manchus, Mongolians, Hui or Uighurs, and Tibetans), they don't know that not one of those little stars wants to be there, not one of them gave their consent. They are not like the thirteen stars on the first American flag, for example, which represent the states that voluntarily joined the union.

Schell is more on target when he gets off the theme of humiliation by "Westerners" and touches on how the Chinese people are misled by their own government, tracing their confusion and malaise to the radical switches it has inflicted on them. "China's restless search for a more self-confident, less-aggrieved persona has paradoxically been made more complicated by other wounds not directly related to foreign attacks: for much of the past hundred years Chinese themselves have also been engaged in a series of assaults on their own culture and history." Here is a critical point: If China assaults its own persona by withholding accurate historical information from its people, and rewriting its own culture and history to suit current needs, then this cannot be blamed on the West or on Tibet. And this leads to a conclusion that Sinologists, or Sinological journalists are very loath to draw: The real humiliator of the Chinese people at the moment is the Chinese communist government itself, which is enriching its own elite with total abandon, and trying to preserve its control by letting some wealth accrue to a small percentage of the people (the new "middle class")

WWW.MIKEDUNHAM.BLOGS.COM (TOP), PHAYUL.COM (BOTOM)

while ruthlessly suppressing the vast majority. It then seeks to divert the resentment for this ruthless pressure downward by directing attention outward to the "foreign enemy," which is primarily America but also Japan and "the West." So its tight control of the education system and the media, including the Internet, indoctrinates its people both on the "humiliation by foreign enemies" theme and on the "rabid nationalism" theme. This is a tactic we have seen invariably used by dictatorial and oppressive regimes: and it usually leads them eventually into war, if allowed to go too far.

Getting back to Tibet, Zhang Qingli, the current Communist Party Secretary in Tibet, is known for his harsh attitude toward the Dalai Lama and his hard line treatment of Tibetans. In Xinhua, he said, "We must have a more vigorous will to fight, a more tenacious style and do a more solid job of uniting and leading the region's various ethnic groups and throw ourselves into the struggle against splittism." His attitude is unremitting. "From beginning to end ... we must deepen patriotic education at temples, comprehensively expose and denounce the Dalai Lama clique's political reactionary nature and the religious hypocrisy of the Dalai clique," concluding that "The (mandate of) heaven in Tibet will never change. The Dalai Lama clique's pipe dream (of independence) will never prevail ... the country's rivers and mountains will remain red."

In an interview with Der Spiegel in August 2006, Zhang stated that, "Tibet is the home of the 14th Dalai Lama, but China is his motherland." His regime has intentionally goaded at least a few Tibetans in Lhasa to break out into violence in a riot setting, and he has since used that as an excuse for what they openly call "merciless repression." In a document, "Tibet Communications," circulated within the Chinese Communist Party membership and leaked through Hong Kong to Michael Sheridan of *The Times* of London, Zhang has promised that once the Olympics are over, the crackdown in Tibet—a further intensified extension of the ongoing cultural revolution—will go on unabated, in order to achieve the "final solution" of eradicating the Tibetan identity.

Last October, when H. H. the Dalai Lama received the Congressional Gold Medal Award, this same Zhang Qingli called the Dalai Lama a "devil" and said he was going to prove it to the world.

His forces were thus prepared in Lhasa at an emotional time for Tibetans: March 10th, 2008, the forty-ninth anniversary of the Tibetan uprising in 1959 against the Chinese invasion and military occupation of the Tibetan plateau. The Chinese politicization of the Olympics heightened the tension of this time by their extravagant routing of the torch, including a climb to the top of Mt. Everest. Tibetan exile groups planned to use the visibility of those moments to publicize their demands for freedom. The other intensifying factor was the collapse of the five-year long "dialogues" between the Tibetan Government in Exile Representatives and the Chinese United Front officials in charge of handling Tibetan affairs in Beijing. It became apparent that the Chinese side had never been serious about making any compromises, and the whole process had been merely a delaying tactic to get the Tibetans to try to stop all human rights demonstrations when Chinese leaders traveled around the world.

Zhang's plan was carefully thought out. His paramilitary People's Armed Police (PAP) arrested some monks well ahead of March 10, for the crime of having whitewashed the monastery building in the previous October to celebrate indirectly the Dalai Lama's Congressional medal. The PAP beat up the next group of monks who marched to demand the release of those arrested. Then the Tibetan lay people got involved in defending the monks. At that point, Zhang ordered a retreat of all his overwhelming forces, as if they were intimidated or confused, and he sent in plainclothes police, Tibetan *(continued on page 71)*



A woman from Tibetan Youth Congress shouts anti-Chinese government slogans, during a demonstration in New Delhi, India, Thursday, March 10, 2005.

AP PHOTO/MANISH SWARUP

Torturing Our History

by Gary Kowalski

The 8th Amendment to the Constitution prohibits cruel and unusual punishment. Thanks to the founders (and especially to James Madison, who conjured the Bill of Rights), U.S. citizens need not fear judicially sanctioned impalements or being drawn-and-quartered in the public square ... at least not yet.

The framers were especially sensitive to the issue of torture, since they were living in its shadow. Benjamin Franklin was born in 1706—just fourteen years after the trials at Salem, where for the crime of refusing to plead either "guilty" or "not guilty" to the charge of witchcraft, one of the accused, Giles Cory, had been crushed to death beneath a series of increasingly heavy stones, dying slowly over the course of two days.

So if the founders were careful to build into our legal framework safeguards against self-incrimination, as well as the rights to confront one's accusers in open court, counsel, jury trial, and protection from being burned alive or torn apart on the rack, it was for good reason. The Dark Ages were not so far in the past.

Humane treatment of prisoners has deep roots in the United States, especially in wartime. During the War for Independence, enlisted men or captives lacking ransom value were frequently killed without tribunal on the field—regarded as the equivalent of insurgents by the English, who didn't recognize America as a sovereign nation or its soldiers as lawful adversaries. After capturing a thousand Hessian mercenaries at the battle of Trenton, George Washington vowed to behave better than the enemy and ordered his subordinates, "Treat them with humanity, and let them have no reason to Complain of our Copying the brutal example of the British Army," who were notorious for maltreating POWs aboard their prison ships, where more Americans died than on the battlefields.

The following year, John Adams, as chair of the Board of War and Ordnance, complained of hearing "continual accounts of the barbarities, the cruel murders in cold blood, even by the most tormenting ways of starving and freezing, committed by our enemies"—reports that left him harrowed. Adams abhorred every form of cruelty, even toward animals and still more toward defenseless inmates. The British excused their abuse as a matter of military policy. But in a letter to his wife Abigail, Adams resolved to exercise "Yankee virtue" toward prisoners in American hands. "Piety, humanity and honesty are the best policy," he advised.

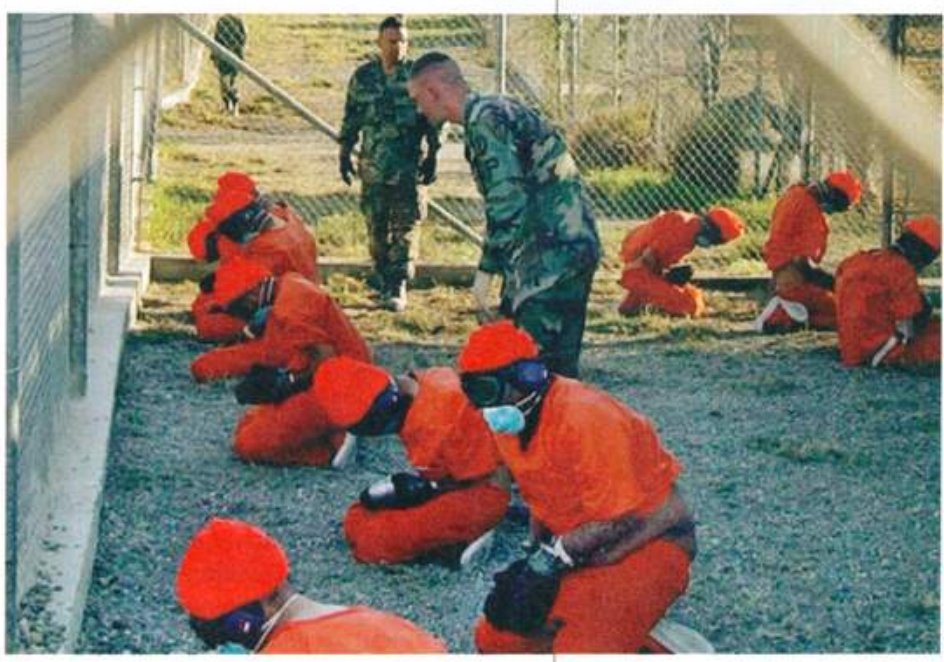
What would the founders say of George Bush, whose contention that he can strip any citizen of constitutional protections, simply by the executive fiat of designating them enemy combatants, has now been overruled by the courts? As Madison wrote in the *Federalist No. 47*, "The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and Federalist judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny."

Despite the President's insistence that our country "doesn't torture," hundreds held in

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Iraq, Afghanistan and at Guantanamo have died or been abused in U.S. custody, with fresh revelations pouring forth. Typical was the testimony of Murat Kurnaz, a former Gitmo inmate, who told Congress in May of 2008 not only of being punched in the stomach while his head was held under water, but also being shackled by his arms to the ceiling of an airplane hangar, shocked with electric prods, and subjected to temperature extremes. The ends—gathering information—are said to justify the means.

That's what the authorities argued in Massachusetts, when Giles Cory was crushed. Around 1688, children near the town of Boston began behaving strangely, experiencing fits. A respected physician concluded that "nothing but an hellish Witchcraft could be the Original of these Maladies." Then, as now, extreme measures were needed to resist the plague and, naturally, confessions flowed under duress. The finger-pointing didn't end until the judges themselves were in danger of going to the gallows.

Torture produces falsehoods—from consorting in midnight covens to participation in terrorist plots. And if Americans resort to thumbscrews, what's to stop our foes from doing likewise? As revolutionary patriot Thomas Paine reasoned in his *Dissertation on First Principles of Government*, "He that would make his own liberty secure must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he violates this duty he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself."

The founding fathers' opposition to torture became established military doctrine under Abraham Lincoln, who in 1863 signed the first articles codifying the laws of war. The 157 rules contained in Lincoln's "General Orders No. 100" were crafted by the legal scholar Francis Lieber of Columbia University. With two sons in Union ranks and his eldest boy enlisted in the South, Lieber wanted to ensure decent treatment for detainees, whatever their uniform. So Article 16 of what became known as the Lieber Code affirmed that "Military necessity does not admit of cruelty—that is, the infliction of suffering for the sake of suffering or for revenge, nor of maiming or wounding except in fight, nor of torture to extort confessions." Lincoln's enlightened policy became a model for other European nations and ultimately for the Geneva Conventions.

Toward the end of his life, Thomas Jefferson predicted the dawn of a more civilized age, envisioning a generation "as much wiser than we have been as we than our fathers were, and they than the burners of witches." How can we even be debating the propriety of torture in this day? The question that ought to be discussed is, who should be held accountable? In a message to the nation delivered during the War of 1812, President Madison called torture an "outrage against the laws of honorable war and against the feelings sacred to humanity." Our history has been hijacked—the latest case of extraordinary rendition. ■

(top) George Washington captured 1,000 Hessian mercenaries at the Battle of Trenton. These enemy combatants were treated with dignity and respect, despite the harsh conditions and torture that Americans received when captured by the British. (bottom) Prisoners at Guantanamo Bay are subjected to torture and abuse by Americans, practices which were roundly condemned by George Washington despite our country's significantly more precarious situation during the Revolutionary War.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (TOP); AP PHOTO/U.S. NAVY, SHANE T. MCCOY (BOTTOM)

The Voice of God vs. the Voice of Pain

Julie Oxenberg talks with Michael Lerner about Jewish History, Israel/Palestine and the Psychodynamics of Healing

On recently rereading Rabbi Michael Lerner's book Jewish Renewal, *clinical psychologist Julie Oxenberg wrote him her reflections under several headings, to each of which Rabbi Lerner responded, below. Julie Oxenberg then wrote this introduction to the exchange.*

Introduction

"CRUELTY IS NOT DESTINY," DECLARES RABBI LERNER IN HIS SEMINAL WORK *Jewish Renewal*. "The world we inherit is deeply flawed yet, according to Judaism, its flaws are not part of its essence." In fact, the central message of Torah, Lerner proclaims, is that "This world can and should be transformed."

If so, then what is the purpose of Judaism and what role are Jews called to play in the world?

If you haven't read *Jewish Renewal* you may not fully appreciate the theological worldview that animates Rabbi Lerner and underlies the Network of Spiritual Progressives' mission of "tikkun." After all, why is "tikkun" (a Hebrew word meaning to mend, repair, heal) the mission of our social justice organization and what, at the root, are we working to "heal" anyway?

The two voices in the Bible

IN THE BOOK, RABBI LERNER INFORMS US THAT TWO VOICES CAN BE HEARD IN THE BIBLE: the "voice of God" and the "voice of accumulated pain." He also describes God as "the Force in the world that makes possible the transformation of that which is to that which ought to be."

Jewish Renewal begins with a description of Abraham's traumatic childhood drawn not from the Bible, but from the "Midrash" (Midrash Rabbah 28:13) and also alluded to in the Qur'an. Idol worship was the predominant religious practice of young Abraham's society. It served to reinforce the established power structure. As a spiritually precocious youth Abraham saw through the logic of worshiping material items and thus rejected the practice of idolatry. In response, his father, a *manufacturer* of idols, delivered Abraham to his community's ruler, Nimrod, for what we today might call "re-education." When, despite Nimrod's best efforts at persuasion, Abraham continued to reject idol worship, Nimrod threw the rebellious child into a fiery furnace. Although Abraham's exceptional spiritual strength (rooted in his conviction that a power beyond the material realm governs the world) allowed him to survive this ordeal, Lerner argues that Abraham's psyche was left badly traumatized.

In his adult life Abraham demonstrates both a capacity to serve as a powerful witness to the prophetic message of God, and a tendency at other times to behave in hurtful ways influenced by the unhealed wounds he continues to carry from his childhood history of accumulated pain. In this sense, Abraham's struggle is humanity's struggle: to resist reacting to life's new challenges from the perspective of our "voice of accumulated pain," and instead pump up the volume and influence of our "voice of God" within.

In psychological terms, our task is to heal the "repetition compulsion" cycle—our

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Samuel Bak
Isaac's Dream, 1999
Oil on Canvas
40 x 50"
Image courtesy of Pucker Gallery, Boston

tendency to repeat traumatic patterns from our past in new relationships—patterns we're often drawn to recreate in the unconscious hope of mastering situations in which we originally felt powerless and victimized. But, how do we accomplish this demanding task of "breaking the cycle"?

How Abraham transcended the compulsion to repeat

One hint is given to us in the Torah's "Binding of Isaac" story.

"The greatness of Abraham," according to Rabbi Lerner, "is *not* that he takes his son Isaac to Mount Moriah" to be sacrificed in burnt offering (an act Lerner suggests was motivated by Abraham's response to the "voice of accumulated pain" within, or his compulsion to pass on to his son his own trauma of being thrown into fire as a child). "The greatness of Abraham," Lerner tells us, "is that he doesn't go through with it.... This is the moment of transcendence." The pattern of passing on to the next generation the pain and cruelty we have suffered can be broken. "It is this moment of breaking the chain of necessity—transcending the psychological repetition pattern which makes us do unto the next generation that which was done to us—that makes Abraham the father of our people."

How exactly did Abraham achieve this capacity for transcendence?

We see in the "Binding of Isaac" tale how the repetition compulsion itself can actually help us to achieve transcendence. If we can recognize the impulse toward healing that drives this "compulsion" we can learn how to take advantage of its transformative potential. For, by "compulsively" recreating "the scene of the crime," our psyche keeps setting up the conditions that can ideally allow us (now, from our more conscious adult vantage-point), to finally recognize and feel the emotional impact of hurts we've endured, and to reclaim and heal

SAMUEL BAK, IMAGE COURTESY OF PUCKER GALLERY, BOSTON

parts of ourselves that got exiled, frozen, or shamed long-ago as a result. Thus by "compelling" us toward dynamics which hold the potential for healing, something deep within the human psyche *knows* that the way we are (too often emotionally numb to our own pain and the pain of others), is *not* the way we could or should be.

Had Abraham not, according to Lerner, "heard the voice of accumulated pain" (or the gods of his past) tell him to take his son Isaac to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him in burnt offering, he wouldn't have set up the opportunity to "look into the eyes of the son he has bound for slaughter" and, in that moment, overcome the emotional deadness that had plagued his life ever since childhood, when he himself had been thrown into fire by the leader of his community. Only at that moment of staring into his son's eyes, Lerner tells us, is Abraham finally able to hear the true voice of God.

However, lacking insight and skill, we all too often end up merely *repeating* the hurts of our past and passing this harmful behavior onto others, rather than healing and transcending the repetition cycle itself.

Fortunately, according to Rabbi Lerner the Torah informs us that there is a "Force of Healing and Transformation" toward which we can turn that can make transcendence of this cycle possible. In fact, Lerner indicates that by receiving the Torah and entering into the covenant, Jews agreed "to serve as a witness to the *possibility* of healing and transformation, and to be part of a vanguard people working to heal and transform the world."

Jews have often run away from the most revolutionary implications of the revelation they received at Sinai.

The radical political implications

UNFORTUNATELY, ABRAHAM DISCOVERED FIRSTHAND JUST HOW THREATENING TO entrenched powers this Jewish message proclaiming the human potential for transformation, and responsibility to work for transcendence, can be. In fact, Lerner labels this message of *possibility* to which Jews are called to bear witness, "radical," due to its inherent threat to established power. Indeed, fear generated by this threat to power, Lerner suggests, helped provoke the extreme persecution Jews have faced episodically throughout their history. In response, he notes, Jews have often run away from the most revolutionary implications of the revelation they received at Sinai.

Before rereading *Jewish Renewal* I didn't fully appreciate the extent to which, according to this "Renewal" interpretation of Judaism, the project of life through history centers upon growth, with our task being to heal our consciousness (through diminishing our tendency toward harmful repetition) and subsequently, to transform our world—thus the impetus for "tikkun." This perspective allows us to be deeply self-accepting since we are, after all, a work in progress, subject to conflicting internal "voices" and so often in need of healing and discernment. However, it also calls us to be ambitious and visionary as we realize that our world (including ourselves) can and thus must be transformed from how things are to how things could and should be.

As I consider our project of "tikkun," I find myself asking questions like: "How can we engage the 'Force of Healing and Transformation' to help us with our internal and external work of 'tikkun'?" "Can we appeal to this Force collectively, in the service of our collective healing?" "How do we cultivate 'faith' in this Force and sustain such 'faith' during times of trial and adversity?" and "Why isn't this Force more evident in our world?"

Reflections on Jewish Renewal

JULIE OXENBERG: THE ONGOING HISTORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE, INCLUDING OUR suffering and our perpetration of harm, could be viewed as part of an evolving, profound psychospiritual story of healing, transformation, and growth. From this spiritual perspective on the growth of consciousness, the different chapters of Jewish history could be seen as purposeful, if not necessary, despite the significant pain they've engendered for us and for others.

1. The Special Role of the Jews?

You, Rabbi Lerner, note in *Jewish Renewal* that: "There is no solution to the Jewish problem that isn't simultaneously a solution to the world's problem *(continued on page 73)*

Introduction

We asked many spiritual progressives to write their "advice" or "concerns" to the candidates, some of which we have sent directly to the relevant campaigns and some of which we are printing here.

We are not writing as political consultants, but as people connected to a spiritual vision. Tikkun Magazine and The Network of Spiritual Progressives are non-profits to whom contributions are tax-deductible, but for that very reason we are prohibited from endorsing any candidate for office or any political party.

We were distressed to discover that the people we asked to write to the Green Party or to Nader and the women we invited to write did not get their articles to us on time for this issue. We are embarrassed to have only men writing these particular letters and we will do everything we can to ensure that this never happens again.

We start with some reflections by our editor Rabbi Michael Lerner on the strategies being followed by Obama and McCain, and then some letters by a few of our most thoughtful writers.

Presidential Strategy 2008

by Michael Lerner

Is it Smart For Obama and Other Democrats to Run to the Political Center?

"HEY, WE DON'T NEED ANY PHILOSOPHIZING OR IDEOLOGICAL RHETORIC—WHEN YOU ARE A FEW WEEKS from the actual voting, the only thing that counts is getting elected, and then you can do all your philosophizing afterwards. Winning is what counts."

We have learned to expect that argument both from alleged "centrists" in the Democratic Party like Majority Leader of the House of Representatives Stenny Hoyer, who managed to keep the funding for the war in Iraq moving smoothly through a Democratic controlled Congress, and from the "liberal wing" of the Democrats, who imagined that they had won a great victory when they got Nancy Pelosi elected Speaker of the House (before she became an enabler of Bush's militarism, pro-torture policies, and invasion of domestic civil liberties, while strenuously insisting that "impeachment was off the table").

But now we are also hearing it from many progressives: particularly those who correctly feel that they made a mistake in 2000 in backing Nader not only in the states where it was "safe" to do so (namely, where it was so clearly either Bush or Gore who would win that a protest vote was not going to impact at all) but also where it was not so safe—Florida and Ohio.

In fact, the majority of delegates to the Democratic National Convention seemed so overwhelmed by the allure of victory that they would barely give a moment to think seriously about the issues being raised about how smart it is for Obama or other Democrats to run to the political center.

And yet, at the grassroots level nothing was more hotly debated in the summer of 2008 than this very question. It started the day after Obama clinched his nomination, when the Senator made a speech to the American Israel Political Affairs Committee (AIPAC) that seemed to compete with the best of the right-wingers in the Bush Administration about who could be the most militaristic in defense of Israeli hard-liners (he actually topped them with his use of the phrase "Jerusalem must never be divided"—code words for the notion that the 250,000 Palestinians living within Israel's ever-expanding definition of Jerusalem could not be part of a Palestinian state and that state could not share Jerusalem and locate its capital in the city where one of the three most important Mosques of Islam was built). It continued with the good Senator chastising the Supreme Court for forbidding capital punishment in the case of child rape and congratulating them on supporting gun rights, and then voting for a bill that would absolve the major phone companies of their violations of our civil liberties by joining with the Bush Administration in illegally tapping over a hundred thousand phones in the United States, and then seeming at times to run away from his stance of withdrawing troops every month from Iraq till they were all gone in 16 months. Instead of challenging the militarism and pro-business slant of American politics, much of the summer Obama seemed to be showing the militarists and Wall Street how "responsible" he would be. When he seemed to be saying that he was not against war, but merely wanted to move the location from Iraq to Pakistan and Afghanistan, when he endorsed offshore oil drilling, and when he failed to critique the profit-oriented ethos of our society that had led to the gas and home mortgage profiteers speculating in ways that were destructive to the economic well-being of the entire society, it seemed to many of his previously red-hot supporters that Obama was not really who they thought him to be.

And progressives began to wonder when this race to "the Center" would ever end? Conservative columnists began to move away from their previous characterization of Obama as a starry-eyed idealist who had no practical sense and started to worry about him precisely because they saw him as a "realistic" and power-oriented candidate who might do

precisely the pandering necessary to get the votes he needed. (They pointed also to his commitment to right-wing Cubans to continue the economic boycott that has kept Cuba from flourishing under the Castros and his alleged statement to the Israelis that when he would "negotiate" with Iran it would only be to deliver personally an ultimatum which, if rejected, would be followed by potentially war-inducing sanctions.)

But the political "realists" who dominate the media and who surround Obama from the Democratic Party and from many of his corporate donors have it all wrong. Over and over again they've tried the same strategy, and it is almost always both a strategic and moral error, based on a faulty understanding of human beings and a major struggle that goes on inside almost all of us.

The struggle to which I refer is between two worldviews that contend within our consciousness, at least for the past ten thousand years. On the one hand is the worldview of fear or domination or "power over." Briefly stated: "We live in a world in which others are interested only in themselves and their immediate families and are motivated solely by the desire to maximize their own self-interest regardless of how it impacts on others. You have been thrown into this world all by yourself, a world filled with self-interested others who will seek to dominate and exploit you—unless you find a way first to dominate and exploit them. The only rational way to live is to be on your guard, continually alert to the possibility that they will take advantage of you. This fearful reality can only be made safer if you get power over others before they get power over you, so you need to put major energies into accumulating power to protect yourselves. This is the only path to safety and personal/homeland security."

The other worldview has a quite different message: "You didn't come into this world all by yourself, but rather through a mother, and that mother (or whoever fulfilled that role for you) provided you with good enough mothering to keep you alive and allow you to experience unselfish love (i.e. your mother had no reasonable expectation of a 'return on her investment' of kindness, generosity and attention that she gave to you in your first few years of life). No matter how many conflicting motives and neuroses may have emerged later, you could not have survived without that first massive dose of love. And from there you have good grounds to realize that there is another strategy for survival in this world which you have actually experienced—maximizing love, kindness, generosity, caring for others. If you reach out to others with this approach, you will develop relationships that are the best path to safety and security in this world."

Most people on this planet have both voices in their heads, and at any given moment are somewhere on the continuum between hope and fear, between love and domination. Where exactly depends on their own childhood and life experiences (how much loving versus how much hurtfulness and disappointments with love they've experienced), the ideological or religious ideas that they've internalized (because every religion has within it those who hear their God's voice primarily through the framework of fear and those who hear it primarily through the framework of hope, so depending on which variant of their religion or their worldview they've accepted they will give more or less credence to the voices of fear or hope, domination or love), and their own assessment of where the social energy is going at any given moment (because when it's moving more toward fear, then those voices and worldviews within one's own consciousness seem more "real"; and when it seems as if more people start moving toward hope, then one's own voices of hope and the possibility of a world with love and generosity suddenly seem more plausible).

The central issue in politics, then, is not about left, right or center, but about hope vs. fear. If you want a world based on justice, peace, ecological sanity, human rights, civil liberties, and economic well-being for all, you have to elicit in people their capacity for hope and for love, caring and generosity. Conversely, to the extent that people think that love, caring, generosity and hope are all pipe-dreams that have no chance in "the real world," they become attracted to politicians who speak to their fears and tell them that the ideologies of "domination over the evil others" is the sophisticated and grown-up way to understand the world.

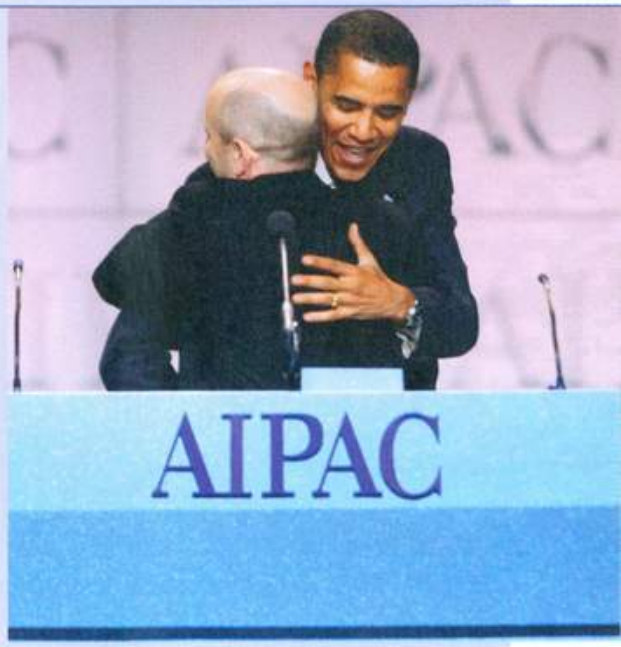
In contemporary America, these two voices do not have equal power in the public realm. The voices of cynicism are not contained in the political Right—too often the mobilization of cynicism has been a central part of the discourse of the Left in the post-modernist period following the 1960s. Yet that cynicism has only strengthened the hold of the Right in American politics. To the extent that people become cynical about the possibility of generosity and caring-for-others as a motive for "the other," they become certain that it is pointless and self-destructive to champion nonviolence and demobilization of American militarism and economic/political domination of the world, ridiculous to think that the majority will ever be willing to reduce their material standard of living in order to save the planet from endless exploitation, and pure fantasy to believe that their own efforts toward living a life of caring for others will ever be matched by others.

Given this cynicism, anyone who actually wishes to build a politics of peace, social justice and ecological sanity has to place his or her major focus on validating the scenario of hope and undermining the "fearful realism" that dominates the consciousness not only of the media and the opportunists, but of all of us. Even the progressives and liberals. Everyone of us has such a strong tendency to fall right back into our despair about the possibility of a different kind of world.

It was Obama's ability to stay true to that message of hope that gave him his victory in the Democratic primaries. And

it is likely that if he can convince people that that is what he is really about, that he really believes in a world of love and kindness, generosity and caring, awe and wonder at the grandeur of creation, what we in the Network of Spiritual Progressives call The New Bottom Line, then what will happen in November will confound all the cynical media realists and the Democratic Party advisors and the experts of every variety: because people who believed themselves to be "on the Right" or conservative will be so touched by this appeal to their own internal (and subordinated) voice of hope and love that many will defect from their own fears and vote for Obama.

Conversely, if Obama continues to do more of what he did in going to AIPAC, etc., the voices of fear and cynicism, even within those who supported him previously, will reappear. That doesn't mean that they will vote for another candidate, but that they will feel less impelled to convince their friends and neighbors that something really new is happening in American politics. And without that sense that love and generosity are making a comeback in America, those who have been stuck in the fear and domination worldview will not have much of an incentive to give it up. And at that point, all that the Right has to do is manufacture some new terrorist incident or some attack on U.S. interests abroad to get the fear juices really rolling and the openness to Obama really closing.



Obama at AIPAC on June 4, 2008.

AP PHOTO/CHARLES DHARAPAK

In fact, it is the fear and domination caucus of the Congressional Democrats, pushed on by AIPAC, who are already setting the stage (probably unconsciously) for precisely this set of circumstances. These Democrats have championed a resolution to encourage what most in the international community define as an act of war: an imposed blockade of Iranian shipping. If this, or any of the other provocations the Bush Administration puts or has already put into place, actually work to push Iran to assert its right to survive by retaliating, or if Israel takes a yet more bellicose stance or attacks Iran, the fearful voices will come to the fore in the majority of Americans.

There is a way to counter that, but it cannot be started only at the last moment when the bullets and bombs are flying.

Obama needs to articulate and defend a full-scale endorsement of a new approach to foreign policy: what we call the Strategy of Generosity. He has got to say, and then keep saying, that the best path to Homeland Security for the United States and for Israel does not lie in the strategy of domination, but in our capacity to care for other people and make them feel cared for. He needs to endorse the Global Marshall Plan and explain to the American public why its underlying philosophy points to a new direction in what values should govern our society. He needs to explicitly commit himself to immediately banning torture, closing Guantanamo and other places like it, and absolutely rejecting a war with Iran and vigorously opposing it should the Bush/Cheney people manage to create the pretext for one in the next months or even after the election. He needs to talk about a single payer health care system and a New Bottom Line for judging when we are being successful as a society and when not. Only if he has laid the ground work for a strengthening of our own internal voice of hope and generosity can he resist the reemergence of fear that might bring McCain into office despite all the sins of the Bush Administration that McCain has so energetically endorsed.

Of course, if Obama does win, the "realists" will tell us that it was "inevitable" because all people really care about is their own economic well-being, and that hasn't been flourishing in the Bush years. The deeper reality will be that if Obama doesn't manage to maintain a principled stand on the issues, faced with a worsening economy people may in fact revert to a domination and fear view of politics, and that might nevertheless lead them to vote for Obama. But if fear is the basis for his victory, he will have no mandate to pursue policies that could generate a surge of hope once in office.

In my next editorial I'll recount some of what happened to Bill Clinton after an election in which he frequently quoted from the ideas he was reading in *Tikkun* (Hillary told me that she and Bill read every issue very carefully in the years leading up to 1992) but then abandoned those ideas and fell back into the realism that his Democratic Congress pushed for, a realism that quickly led to the reemergence of a right-wing dominated Republican Congress in 2004, effectively ending any chance of the Clinton Administration becoming a sustainer of liberal or progressive politics. You can read more about this in my books *The Politics of Meaning* and in *The Left Hand of God*, or wait until the next edition of *Tikkun* (which will not be coming out until the beginning of December, so that we can include election results in November).

Some people have told us that it's not fair to expect a political leader to have the clarity of a moral prophet. But we say the contrary: it's only when moral prophecy shapes public policy that America and indeed the entire world can be saved from the suffering otherwise certain to dominate the American agenda for the coming decades: environmental destruction, more wars, less freedoms, more anger and fear and cynicism.



Will Obama end the Iraq war ... only to ramp up war in Afghanistan and perhaps Iran?

AP PHOTO/SSG. LORIE JEWELL, HO

But isn't this editorial itself a manifestation of that cynicism? Not at all. It is precisely because we believe that Obama and McCain both are human beings who have the capacity to respond to their own highest voices that we can urge them to come back to those voices of love and hope that sometimes get clouded by what they perceive to be the realistic necessities of politics. Equally important, we believe that it is possible that you, their constituents, could still have a very important part in shaping what they will say in the public sphere and in what policies they follow. Obama does not have to be in bed with AIPAC to win the majority of American Jews, or in bed with the Cuban hardliners to win the majority of Latinos, or in bed with the militarists to show that he will be a tough fighter for American interests. You can remind him of what he already knows, and let him know that the voice of hope and love and generosity is precisely the "realistic" path for him, and precisely the ethical path that you need to hear from him in order to become his champions. (And for those who are supporters of McCain or Nader, you too can play a similar role for your candidate, though we are not here going to spell out how.)

Our task as human beings is to transform and heal (tikkun) this world. It is precisely in staying true to our highest vision that we can be most effective in politics, and every other realm as well. Obama, McCain, and Nader will succeed in their own ultimate purpose on this planet to the extent that they too can stay true to their highest mission and help other people to stay true to their own highest mission. That is what a spiritual politics must ultimately be about.

Is it Smart For McCain to Become a Hard-Line Right-Winger?

Senator John McCain's victory in the Republican primaries was primarily a function of his ability to combine loyalty to the Bush Administration with a reputation as a maverick whose creative thinking made him the kind of person who might capture independents and wayward Democrats. Yet ever since winning the nomination, that appeal to independents has been potentially undermined by a series of flip-flops that made even John Kerry's pitiful 2004 performance look like the platform of a consistent peacenik.

The reasoning about McCain and his prospects follows a similar line to that articulated in the above editorial on Obama, so I won't try to make each point again. Suffice it to say that McCain has given the Democrats lots to challenge as he switched from the Senator who opposed torture to a strong defender of water-boarding and other forms of torture, opposed wire-tapping ordinary citizens and then flipped just like Obama on that one, championed the environment but then went for the cheap shot of drilling on our seashores while knowing full well that such an approach would have negligible impact on rising oil prices but dramatic negative impact on the environment, and the list goes on.

McCain may be saved in all this if Obama, under the guise of being a "new kind of politician," ends up never really challenging these and other distortions in the right-wing worldview that McCain embraces. Someone needs to explain to Obama that being a passionate advocate for a fundamentally different worldview is not necessarily rude and disrespectful, and it certainly is NOT the "old politics" because the Democrats have been running away from liberal ideas since the 1980s thanks in part to wimps in the Congress and the neo-liberalism of the Clinton Administration. The other unknown is whether the big money liberals who work through organizations like MoveOn.org can get the political sophistication to launch attacks on McCain's positions that are psychologically smart, rather than childish like their infamous "General Betray-us" ad. If both Obama and the liberal outsiders fail to really educate people about the fundamentals of what has been wrong with a pro-business and pro-militarism worldview, McCain might just pull it off even with all his ethical inconsistencies and flip-flop politics. But if he wants to win, he'd be smarter to start talking to the vast number of Americans who are fed up with the way the economic marketplace has favored the rich over the poor, favored freedom for corporations over ecological responsibility, and favored militarism over compassion and generosity around the world. ■

To McCain: Advance the American Dream

by The Contrarian—George Vradenburg

As befits a "Contrarian," I do not call myself a progressive. Growing up in Colorado, I used to say I was a libertarian conservative from the Rockies. Now I live in Washington, DC, and say I'm a moderate Republican.

Senator McCain, I urge you to help Americans experience the American Dream as a reality in their lives. The American Dream has the power to mobilize Americans of every background and income level, even as its embrace will take political courage because a true execution of what is needed will anger some in your "base."

The American Dream reflects the belief that, through working hard and playing by the rules, one's life and the lives of one's children will be progressively better. While the belief in the American Dream is fresh, it is not clear how our government is doing anything to help. Senator, you should mobilize American voters around that Dream, commit to implement efforts to help Americans realize that Dream, and hold America accountable by setting a national goal of more than doubling the rate of economic and social mobility of lower-income Americans.

The American Dream is not an unbounded abstraction, but a very real promise for most Americans. It is a robust political organizing concept with a clear policy agenda.

Education. The American Dream requires a powerful and high-performing education system that instills in our children the academic and social skills they need to succeed. The Federal government must force urgent and effective reform of our dismally-performing, locally-managed, union-dominated K-12 educational system. That reform will be advanced, as you have rightly advocated, by the ability of lower-income families to have the same choice as wealthier families to choose the school that works best for their children. Research demonstrates the power of universal pre-K as an element of education reform. And reality dictates that an education agenda requires workforce readiness, job training and vocational education specifically geared for the twenty-first century economy, including clear, demand-driven career pathways to higher-paying jobs.

Equal Opportunity. America must become the most disciplined country in the world in ensuring that minorities, women and immigrants are not prevented by discrimination in achieving their dreams. Equal opportunity must also mean that gay marriage, gays in the military and increased resources for Federal anti-discrimination enforcement should be a prominent part of your agenda, and currently it is not.

Immigration. The promise of the American Dream draws enterprising, risk-taking immigrants from around the world. This country should deliver on its promise by becoming the most welcoming country in the world to newcomers. You have rightly fought for comprehensive immigration reform, and you should not backslide or compromise one inch in that fight.

The Economy and Taxes. Free markets and a mobile labor force are the best engines for individual prosperity and freedom; and the burdens a large government creates through taxes on the earnings of American workers should be reduced, wherever consistent with prudent fiscal policies. You are rightly maintaining those principles, but where in your program is there a response to the daily struggle of low-income, working Americans? Growing income inequality in America today should be a matter of deep concern since it means that lower-income Americans and new immigrants are challenged in moving up the income ladder. Seekers of the American Dream need a firm foundation to build for their futures, so a realistic safety net for low-income workers—including an honest solution to impending Social Security and Medicare deficit—is essential in order to keep the American Dream a reality for all.

Foreign Policy. The American Dream is in truth a Global Dream, and I applaud your promotion of a foreign policy based on the principles of universal education, equal opportunity (e.g., women's rights), freedom from oppression, and free trade. War is not our country's tactic of choice and not readily compatible with small government or lower taxes, so I encourage you to better balance our security needs with the financial burden of the war in Iraq. National and global security requires attention to terrorists and rogue nations, but the American Dream should inspire the world, not scare it. Swallow hard and embrace Al Gore's inspiring challenge to wean America off fossil fuels in ten years, lest the hard-won earnings of American workers end up funding interests hostile to America.

Senator McCain, America's ability to prosper in the coming century will be dependent on the innovative power of an enterprising people inspired by the American Dream. I urge you to make that Dream a reality for all working Americans. ■

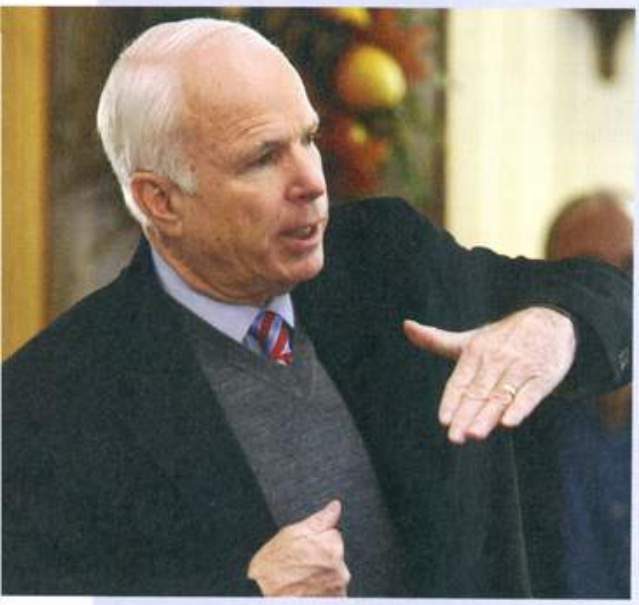
George Vradenburg is co-publisher of Tikkun.

Dear Senator McCain: An Evangelical Message
by Tony Campolo

I AM PART OF THAT EVANGELICAL COMMUNITY THAT WILL PROVIDE MASSIVE SUPPORT FOR YOUR CANDIDACY AS the November election approaches. What I hope you do is recognize that our commitments as Evangelicals go beyond the two hot-button issues of gay marriage and abortion.

A growing number of us have broadened our agenda to include concerns about the environment, a desire to see the war in Iraq brought to an end in the immediate future, a commitment to help those who are suffering from AIDS in Africa and other Third World countries and, most of all, a desire to address the needs of the poor.

We have been prodded into an awareness of biblical imperatives to address the needs of the poor. Our preachers and teachers have told us that there are more than 2,000 verses of scripture in which God requires people of faith to correct the injustices that create poverty. Presently, our nation assigns less than four-tenths of one percent of our federal budget to address the poverty needs of the Third World. Those organizations, and especially the United Nations, that are trying to address the issue of poverty have asked that the developed nations assign seven-tenths of one percent of their federal budgets to ending poverty. We can do it! What's more—we must do it! In the end, our security as a nation is more dependent on the friends that we make than on the armies we deploy.



McCain, himself a victim of torture, had been a leader in opposing the military use of troture, and in banning waterboarding (which with vivid body language he describes here, during the primaries, while explaining why three of his GOP opponents lack the military experience to oppose it)... Until this year, when in an apparent move to appease the right wing he voted against the Feinstein Amendment of 2/13/08 that would have banned various torture techniques, including waterboarding.

Should you be elected, I hope that you will join Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, in establishing something akin to the Marshall Plan that would address, in a comprehensive fashion, the poverty that exists in the world today.

Evangelical Christians, as well as people of other faiths, affirm the Golden Rule. We do not believe that the Golden Rule applies just to personal morality, but that it also encompasses national morality. On this basis, I hope that you would bring an end to the use of torture in interrogating prisoners. The spiritual values of America are eroded when we resort to torture, and even if we call it by other names, the world knows what it is, and you know what it is, having had to endure torture yourself.

Lastly, I would ask you to develop a Middle East policy that not only guarantees safety and security for the Israeli people, but also provides the same for the Palestinian people. So many Christian Zionists within the Evangelical community are anti-Palestinian in their desire to see the fulfillment of what they believe to be biblical prophecies. Please note that an overwhelming majority of us believe that God loves the Palestinian people every bit as much as He loves the Jewish people. Given that conviction we hope you make sure that the illegal settlements on Palestinian land are dismantled and that both Israelis and Palestinians have nations with secure borders and self-government. I hope you believe that justice for both Jews and Palestinians is God's will. That is something which is at the core of the beliefs of not only the overwhelming number of Evangelicals, but of our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters.

You should know that even as I have put together this letter, I do so with a commitment to pray for you, hoping that you will live out the high principles that you have ably articulated; and that you will seek to do the will of God in all of your political activities. ■

Rev. Tony Campolo is President of the Evangelical Association for the Promotion of Education.

AP PHOTO/MATTHEW PUTNEY

Becoming Present
by Peter Gabel



Barack Obama, right, holds hands with church members and prays during services at Trinity United Church of Christ.

My advice to candidates is as follows: Read Eckhart Tolle's *A New Earth*. Seek to quiet your monkey mind as it races from what to say to this group, what to say to that group, how to deal with the media, how to deal with your staff, what to do about the polls, while containing your anger at public mischaracterizations of your views.

Seek to become Present. Present as you talk to your staff and the media about what you believe. Present as you address a human community through the media. Present as you face each of the thousand natural shocks of a presidential campaign.

The single most important source of suffering for the people that you are speaking to and seeking to lead is not their fear of physical harm for themselves and their loved ones, and not their fears about the economy or lack of health care or any other material need: it is their experience of disconnection from a substantial, meaningful, authentic reality.

Surrounded by people who are always keeping their distance by averting their gaze and playing this or that artificial role, bombarded by messages from this same artificial environment telling them they are somehow lacking in this or that quality or attribute, bathed in media images whose predominant emotion is cynicism toward everyone and everything, the people that you are speaking to are longing to be anchored by the presence and authenticity of a compassionate and loving spokesperson for the group who confidently projects his or her energy toward the possibility of our creation together of a compassionate and loving world.

To manifest that Presence is your job. Nothing else.

Becoming Present will be challenging for you because you must conduct your campaign through a mediating screen of images that will resemble the fun house at an amusement park, except that there's nothing fun or amusing about it. Everything you say will be subject to distortion as it passes through the ether of media scrutiny. Those who cannot embrace your manifestation of authentic Presence and the call for authenticity that implicitly accompanies it will seek to cynically undermine your every word and gesture. And since you cannot control the process by which your views and character and aspirations are stolen from you and replayed in alien form to sectors of the population whose votes you may need to win the election, you will be pressed by your staff to be more and more careful, to constantly "position yourself" taking account of the spin that is about to be put on your words, to move to the Center independent of your actual convictions, to stand for as little as possible and still win because the more strongly you stand for something the easier it is to make the consequences appear to lead to some kind of "disaster."

The mediating screen of images through which you must pass to reach the real human beings you are addressing is constituted by the very same impulse toward doubt, cynicism, and collective flight that has placed your actual listener in his or her isolation, his or her spiritual prison. But that anxious circulation of doubt and fear about whether it is possible to connect with others in an authentic loving and compassionate way is precisely what your listener longs to be liberated from. And that mediating ether of doubt and cynicism and fear and flight from one another is made of "nothing" besides its own noise. Your own capacity for love and compassion can penetrate it because it is made of something, your very own Presence.

This then sets for you your task: Become Present as a manifestation of love and compassion for your human listeners who long most of all for the affirmation of this Presence in themselves but who can only be brought into contact with it by having it "recognized"; project your Presence through the mediating environment while taking account of the environment's distorting effects without altering Who you are; and create a mandate for bringing closer the world that we all know ought to be. ■

Peter Gabel is Director of the Institute for Spirituality and Politics, and Associate Editor of Tikkun.

AP PHOTO/NAM Y. HUH

To Senator Obama, Our Next President (I Hope)

by Obery M. Hendricks

The Bible contains laws and gospels, prayers and proverbs, stout prophetic utterances and words and phrases so obscure that they hide as much as they reveal. All of this is there and more. That is why, if you become our next Commander-in-Chief—as I pray you will—and are blessed to solemnize your presidential oath with your hand on that sacred text, it will be important for you to have settled on the passages upon which you will stake your presidency and the future of our nation. In fact, I believe that the American people are even more likely to choose you as our leader if, during these last weeks of your campaign, you have clearly chosen the biblical principles that will guide your administration and express them in ways that all Americans can understand. I know that some would have you choose verses of hatred and vengeance. Others would offer texts of bloodletting and warfare, stoning and killing. Still others would proffer scriptures that seem to portray love as an abstraction, and caring as mere sentiment. Others still would turn you to self-righteous proclamations that, they will claim, sanctify the right of Americans to act in the world however we wish.

Yet I would lift up other texts for your consideration. I would point you to the holistic conception of spirituality that will never fail to rightly guide your path of service:

> You shall love the Lord our God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength ... [and] you shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Mark 12:30-31)

I would offer the primary judgment the Gospels have given to people of faith to judge the fitness of our own souls—and the righteousness of our leaders:

> Then he shall say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his messengers; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they will also answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' (Matthew 25: 41-46; 25: 31-46 in its entirety)

Then I would turn you to the words of the prophet Isaiah as Jesus proclaimed them when he announced to the ages the purpose of his ministry. As his follower, this must be the purpose of your presidency as well:

> The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:18-19; Isaiah 61: 1-2)

If these or like passages are the texts that you choose—and I have every hope that they will be—I will rejoice, for I believe they will bring truths to your remembrance that will guide your presidency—should it come to pass—down a just and loving path. Of what will these remembrances consist?

You will remember what the Lord requires of us all, but especially of you: to do justice, to practice steadfast love, and to walk humbly with God and every living soul.

You will remember Paul's call for humility: "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." (Philippians 2:3-8).

You will remember the wisdom of Abraham Lincoln—"The almighty has his own purposes"—and never presume your judgment to be the judgment of God. You will forget the selfish ways of self-righteousness and every moment remember the selfless ways of faith.

You will remember that the welfare of children already living is as worthy of concern as those yet to be born.

You will remember that a true faith demands that other nations and other peoples must never be demonized, never cast as incarnations of evil or children of a lesser God.

You will remember to stake all that you say and do upon hope and never upon fear, for hope makes room for love,

while fear is the spawning ground of hate.

You will remember that as the holder of our nation's hopes, the rule of law and the precepts of the Constitution will apply to you especially—and before all others.

You will remember that if there are certain truths that cannot yet be spoken, you must keep a holy silence. You might be forgiven for uttering beneficent lies, but you will have forfeited the people's fullest trust.

You will remember to say to every American official—volunteer, appointed and elected; corporate, political and religious—what Franklin Roosevelt said to those in his day: "I shall deem it a favor if you will write to me about the conditions in your community. Tell me where you feel our government can better serve your people."

You will remember that true patriotism is not defined by the quality of our hatred for others. It is defined by the spirit of striving to make our nation healthy, whole, and secure, by conducting itself at home and abroad according to its best and most righteous self.

You will remember to ferret out every vestige of the unholy elitist spirit that loves the needs of some and despises the needs of others—the same loveless spirit that caused shepherds to abandon the most vulnerable sheep of hurricane-ravaged New Orleans to unconscionable suffering and much needless death.

You will remember the words of Woodrow Wilson—"Without the watchful interference, the resolute interference of the government, there can be no fair play"—and do righteous battle from your presidential perch to stay the hand of the powerful and the privileged from lording over the vulnerable, the weak, and all for whom even the smallest privilege remains a distant dream.

And yes, yes, you will remember to treat war-mongering as the greatest sin a president can commit.

How, sir, will you know when you have truly remembered?

You will know because you will have already begun to ask of your every policy decision: Does this treat the needs of the many as holy without carelessly harming the few? Or, as the indefatigable freedom-fighter Fannie Lou Hamer put it, "Is this right? Would God like it?"



When Barack Obama here allegedly told Israeli premier Ehud Olmert that he would only talk to Iran to present an ultimatum in Jerusalem, July 2008, was he "war-mongering," or trying to prevent Israel from going to war before an Obama administration?

And you will know because of the tenor of your allegiances. Your allegiance will *not* be to partisanship, party or power. Your allegiance *will* be to making sure every child has enough to eat, that elders can live out their days in security and freedom from undue anxiety and fear. Your allegiance *will* be to lowering infant mortality rates, to ensuring that no one within our borders suffers for lack of healthcare, for lack of adequate education, for lack of opportunities to thrive because of their race, gender, class, or creed. Your allegiance *will* be to keeping credit markets from becoming slave markets, and creditors from becoming enslavers. As surely as your heart beats and your lungs draw breath, your overarching allegiance *will* be to crafting policies with every neighbor in mind, no matter how great or small, and to hearing and constantly contemplating the people's needs and challenges with solemn prayers and heartfelt love. If you have remembered.

There is one other way you will know that you have truly remembered: From then and forever, your spirit will call you to begin and end every day the same—on your knees. And on your knees a prayer will rest upon your lips that will sound something like this: "Lord, please give me the steadfast love and the righteousness of heart to treat all people and their needs as holy, for as long as you grant me strength." That is, if you have remembered. My prayer is that you already have, and will never forget. ■

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AP PHOTO/NAMY Y. HUH, FILE

An Open Letter to Senator John McCain the Maverick (Please stay that way!)

by Timothy A. Kelly

THERE IS A LOT OF DISCUSSION AMONG MEDIA PUNDITS AND BLOGGERS ALIKE AS TO WHETHER OR NOT YOU are a real maverick and, if so, whether you would stay that way if elected president. Much of your popularity among centrist-leaning Republicans and Democrats, as well as Independents, comes from the perception that you are nobody's lackey—that you follow your principles even in the face of unrelenting pressure to do otherwise. Since presidential elections are won not by the Right or the Left but by the majority in the middle, the answer to these two questions may determine whether or not you become America's 44th president. Permit me then, as one who admires mavericks, to explore them both.

Americans love mavericks, and many years ago we even had a hit TV show with that title (though hopefully you do not gamble). According to Webster's Dictionary, a maverick is "an independent individual who refuses to conform with his or her group." In light of the special interests and party bosses that seem to rule Washington, many of us long for a president who really would be his or her own person. We long for someone who will govern well on our behalf, based on strong principles that do not yield even in the face of the firestorm of political pressures inside the beltway. Are you such a person?



Is this man a maverick?

Are You A Maverick?

LET US CONSIDER THE EVIDENCE. FIRST THE QUESTION OF WHETHER or not you really are a maverick.

You did what most of us could never do. You faced down your captors in North Vietnam, refused early release, endured torture, and came home on your terms. As a Republican senator from Arizona for twenty-one years, you have earned the respect of many (and roused the ire of others) by crossing the aisle to work with Democrats such as Senators Kennedy and Feingold. You have been loyal to the current president yet do not hesitate to take a stand against administration policies when you deem it necessary. For instance, you were an early critic of the way the Iraq war was being fought and stood by your call for a "surge" even when that became extremely unpopular.

I can personally attest to your ability to stand up to a powerful special interest in Washington—the gambling industry. You may not remember, but as Executive Director of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, I testified before your Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on March 29, 2000. You were concerned about the corrupting impact on college athletes and coaches of Nevada's amateur sports gambling, which had been well documented by the Commission's report. Nevada's Senator Reid was on your Committee, intent on protecting his state's interests, and several leaders of the gambling industry were there to counter my testimony. I will never forget how relieved I was to find that you were capable of taking them all on, making sure that I was able to deliver my message to your Committee despite their efforts to shut me down. I know this was not easy for you, as both parties are beholden to huge campaign contributions from the gambling industry. Yet you held firm.

Dr. Tim Kelly has served in senior government positions at both the state and federal levels. He is Director of the Depree Center Public Policy Institute, which promotes "principled centrism" (www.depree.org).

CHRISTOPHER MORRIS / VII

The conclusion we can draw on the first question, then, is that the evidence shows you are indeed the real thing. Deep down you really are a maverick—it's not just a political ploy of some sort—and you appear to take great pleasure in going your own way over the objections of special interests and party bosses alike.

Will You Stay That Way?

Now to the second question. If elected president, would you or would you not stand up to the torrent of national and international political pressures that would be your daily world? Would you find yourself, despite your best efforts, yielding to the powers that rule within the Washington beltway? Would the maverick become tamed by the parties and their respective special interests? Would you be captured by the Right or perhaps swallowed by the Left?

Once again, let's examine the evidence. There are many issues that could be explored—for example, your opposition and then support for extending current tax cuts, or your opposition and then support for drilling for off-shore oil. But I would like to focus on the hot-button issue that almost sank your campaign—immigration reform.

Your campaign had a near-death experience when you collaborated with Senator Kennedy and others on a centrist-oriented immigration reform bill. The GOP leadership reacted against what they perceived as amnesty, and called for any reform to begin by securing the borders. Polls showed that Republican support for your candidacy was waning, and many pundits concluded that your days in the race were limited. The bill did not pass, your candidacy miraculously recovered, and now you must explain to Hispanic voters and the GOP leadership alike what your position is on immigration reform. As I understand it, you still support the bill's basic policies, but with one exception—you now say it is necessary to first secure the borders.

I can't help but wonder why you changed your position on that point. Was it because of new evidence?

Regarding the other issues mentioned—tax cuts and off-shore drilling—I think it is clear that new information has indeed changed lots of minds. There are many who now agree that the tax cuts "worked" to improve the economy, and, in light of rising oil prices, that responsible off-shore drilling should be considered—together with conservation. I applaud you for being flexible and wise enough as a leader to change your position on these two issues, based on new developments. (There are some leaders who seem to confuse being "principled" with being rigid, stubborn and out of touch. That is not what I am calling for!)

So what was the new evidence behind your changed position on border security? I can't help but worry that this shift has more to do with another dynamic altogether—the need to appease your party's base. If so, and if you have embraced something that inwardly you disagree with, therein lies the problem. This means you are tolerating discrepancy between your own core principles and your actions, while denying it is so. That may work politically in the short run, but it won't work psychologically in the long run. It will eventually sap you of the moral certainty and courage that is so admirable about you. Please don't let that happen!

What America desperately needs is a president whose principles enable him or her to stand firm in the face of unrelenting pressure—not stubbornly but wisely—someone who will do what is best for the people despite fierce contrary pressures. You have demonstrated your ability to do this. But you are also facing the inevitable slippery slope that we call national politics, where compromise after compromise appears to be necessary in order to move ahead. Some compromises are unavoidable, since politics is indeed the art of the possible, but they should be exceptional. A straight-talker should make it clear when that is what is happening, not pretend that you have been convinced. It's one thing to say "I can see that the only way to move ahead with immigration reform is to first secure the border, since that is a priority for the vast majority of citizens." It is quite another thing to say that you have changed your mind on the topic, if in fact you have not.

Nine Principles to Stand By

Let me be one voice that encourages you not to concede to the slippery slope. Let me encourage you to stand firm as a "principled centrist"—governing wisely from the center based on a clear set of principles, feeling free to draw on the best ideas from the Right and from the Left. I believe this is not just "where you are" but "who you are"—that you are a centrist by temperament, and a principled man. I believe your principles are well founded, and that they flow from your deepest beliefs, values and faith. You have spoken often and movingly about the three principles that have carried you this far: duty, honor, and country. Your web site adds three more: reform, prosperity, and peace.

Furthermore, based on your speeches and position papers, I believe we could add another three: equal opportunity, ecological responsibility, and health and welfare for the people.

These nine principles (and perhaps others) reflect your heart and soul, do they not? They capture what you live for, what you see as worth fighting for, even perhaps what you would die for. It is the internal principles that make sense of the external actions and policies of a maverick. Please do not let the merciless pressures of the political process rob you of that which is most important. Please find ways to articulate, hold, and advance your principles even amidst the cynicism of beltway politics, and even in the midst of negotiations and compromises. Please continue to enjoy resisting the special interests and party bosses who think that Washington is theirs. Please do not pander either to the far Right or to the far Left, for both are far wrong.

My hope is that your principled centrism will win out and that, if elected, you will surprise the cynics and pundits who suggest you are just another beltway politician. If that happens, you can help lead the nation back from the senseless and destructive polarization that now plagues us. Enough of the "red" and "blue" states, enough of the hate speech from the far Left and the far Right. Show us a way down the middle, the *via media*, for we are all Americans. Please show us how a maverick can govern well based on principled centrism—with straight talk, with wisdom, and in a manner that truly serves the needs of the people. ■

Senator Obama: Add "Healing" to Your Message

by Glen Stassen

I ENCOURAGE YOU TO MAKE HEALING AS WELL AS CHANGE YOUR CAMPAIGN MOTTO. WE NEED BOTH.

So many disasters have happened during this administration that it seems as if the judgment of God is coming. We need change, and you need a clear mandate. That's why you are communicating the change clearly in your public addresses.

So much division has happened. So many people feel left out, unheard, disrespected. We need healing and you need to hear the fears and concerns of many diverse voices. That's why you speak to many diverse concerns.

Republican David Brooks of the *New York Times* is greatly impressed with your ability to get inside differing perspectives, and bring them together into a thoughtful solution. That's the kind of healing we need. The present administration's neocon strategists have brought us ideological policies that have alienated most Americans as well as most nations. They have not even consulted with Congress, let alone the large majorities who disagree with their policies. Our nation is badly divided. You will take diverse positions into account. You treated Hillary Clinton with respect, and now you speak of John McCain with respect, and you want to lead all of us to speak of each other with respect. We hope for healing.

That also means spiritual progressives need to give you some of our patience. Sometimes we care so much about the injustice of the present system, and about the restorative justice that we deeply believe is right, that we can become judgmental of other perspectives. We have seen too much self-righteous, judgmental authoritarianism from spokespersons of the religious Right. We don't want to become their mirror image on the Left. We all need the Mennonite virtue of *Gelassenheit*, patience.

But we do worry that the pressures of the election process can squeeze you into giving up the real change that is needed for healing to take place.

Please assure us that when you say we need healing, you don't mean to heal our wounds lightly, crying "peace, peace," when there is no peace—or justice. You have the gift for understanding where different factions are coming from, and being sensitive to varieties of concerns. But you also need to be more than a mushy middle. We have hurting problems

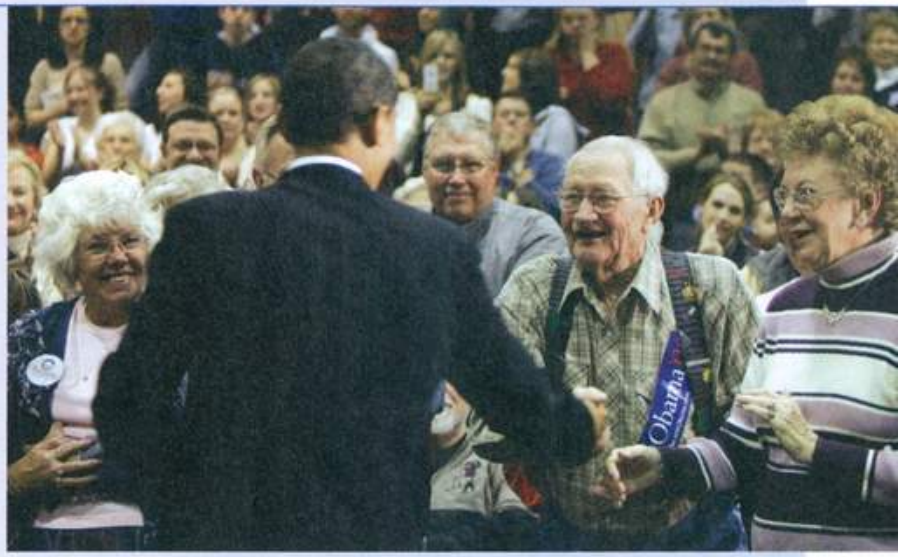
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that need decisive action. We need healing that really heals.

We need racial healing. You have the personal strength of being able to identify with your white mother and your black father; you symbolize the potential for racial healing in your very person, and so will your election, dramatically.

We need economic healing. People are increasingly worried about the rapidly growing gaps between the very rich, the 60% at the bottom and middle whose incomes have decreased for the last thirty years, and the 20% above the middle who have just stayed the same. Reagan dropped the top tax bracket from paying 60% for the topmost earnings to only 29%. The result: the U.S. budget deficit quadrupled, from the debt accumulated by all previous presidents of $1 trillion, to $4 trillion during only the twelve Reagan-Bush years. Clinton raised the top bracket to 39%, and began paying back some debt. George W. Bush not only dropped that bracket back to 29%, but cut capital gains taxes and dividend taxes to 15%, so the wealthy pay less than the middle class on their big investments, and the U.S. debt has skyrocketed in only eight years to over $9 trillion. That is unfair to the large majority of taxpayers, and to coming generations now saddled with that enormous debt. As you have said, "We need Christians on Capitol Hill, Jews on Capitol Hill, and Muslims on Capitol Hill talking about the estate tax. When you've got an estate tax debate that proposes a trillion dollars being taken out of social programs to go to a handful of folks who don't need and weren't even asking for it, you know that we need an injection of morality in our political debate."



Barack Obama greets local residents in Algona, Iowa. Will Obama bring healing by establishing universal health care and other critical measures to help the 60% of Americans whose income has fallen over the last 30 years, or will he shy away from confrontation with wealthy backers and Wall Street?

Consumers make up 70% of the economy, so when the income is shifted away from consumers to the very rich, purchasing slows, and the economy tanks. Americans, including those who are rich, sense that our nation's policies are unfair to coming generations and to workers and to the poor. Michael Lerner and our spiritual progressive movement call for policies of generosity. That fits a virtue that we all value. We need generosity and economic justice within our own nation as well as internationally.

A major cause of divisiveness has been the Bush policy of refusing to talk directly with North Korea, Iran, Hamas, or Cuba. Now Christopher Hill talked with North Korea and got the North Korea reactor closed down, and Egypt talked with Hamas and Israel and got a major step toward peace, and the Bush administration is at last talking with Iran. Thank you for saying you would talk with adversaries and seek healing, not just threaten and condemn. See www.Matthew5Project.org for clear advocacy of following Jesus' command to talk and make peace with adversaries.

On healthcare, we literally need healing—healing medically, and healing from our sense of gross unfairness to the 47 million people who have no health insurance. The United States is spending an average of $6,096 per person for healthcare, but the infant mortality rate is a high 7 per 1,000, and the male life expectancy is only 75. Too many put off going to the doctor because they lack insurance, until they are so sick their hospitalization costs skyrocket, and they may not recover. Spain, Germany, Austria, Canada, England, and Israel have an infant mortality rate of 4 or 5, their combined male life expectancy is 78, and their healthcare costs only half what ours does. Norway, Sweden, and Japan have an infant mortality rate of 3, and they spend less than we do. Even Cuba has an infant mortality rate of 5. We need truly universal health insurance. I urge you to adopt the program advocated by the American nurses, who know the needs best. Everyone knows the system is broken, and our nation is hurting. We need healing.

We need healing of the earth. That doesn't come by drilling oil faster and using up what little is left so the next

AP PHOTO/CHARLIE NEIBERGALL

generations have none. You're clear that the emphasis should be on conservation and new technologies, and you're right on that.

We need your commitment to engage actively from the start in helping heal the gaping sore between Israel and Palestine. What power structure will defend minority rights in Jerusalem? How will we get the creeping occupation stopped and reversed?

We need healing between secular people and people of faith. E.J. Dionne wrote in the *Washington Post* that your speech on faith of June 28 2006 (available on barackobama.com) "may be the most important pronouncement by a Democrat on faith and politics since John F. Kennedy's Houston speech in 1960 declaring his independence from the Vatican."

You said then that we need to "tackle head-on the mutual suspicion that sometimes exists between religious America and secular America." Secularists need to allow room for voices of faith. You testified to your own path to faith in Trinity United Church of Christ. "That's a path that has been shared by millions upon millions of Americans—evangelicals, Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims alike; some since birth, others at certain turning points in their lives.... If we truly hope to speak to people where they're at—to communicate our hopes and values in a way that's relevant to their own—then as progressives, we cannot abandon the field of religious discourse."

And conservatives need to remember "the critical role that the separation of church and state has played in preserving not only our democracy, but the robustness of our religious practice. Folks tend to forget that during our founding, it wasn't the atheists or the civil libertarians who were the most effective champions of the First Amendment. It was the persecuted minorities, it was Baptists like John Leland ... it was the forbearers of the evangelicals who were the most adamant about not mingling government with religion, because they did not want state-sponsored religion hindering their ability to practice their faith as they understood it."

You spoke a humble and a healing word: "So we all have some work to do here. But I am hopeful that we can bridge the gaps that exist and overcome the prejudices each of us brings to this debate. And I have faith that millions of believing Americans want that to happen.... And that night, before I went to bed I said a prayer of my own. It's a prayer I think I share with a lot of Americans. A hope that we can live with one another in a way that reconciles the beliefs of each with the good of all."

For the common good—the good of all—and healing. ■

Dear Senator Obama: Let me tell you a Story

by Eboo Patel

I WANT TO TELL YOU A STORY THAT I'VE NEVER SHARED WITH ANYBODY ELSE BEFORE THIS.

When I ran for class representative in seventh grade, a girl in my mostly-white junior high in the western suburbs of Chicago said, "You'll never win. You look like the guy in Madonna's 'Like a Prayer' video." She meant the black guy.

"I'm not black," I told her. But I knew, and she knew, that her comment wasn't about my skin color. It was about which skin color should represent our 7th grade class.

I can't help but think of that experience every time the issue of your secret Muslim identity is raised.

Let's get one thing straight. People who don't know that you're a Christian must have looked hard for the biggest rock they could find and climbed under it. You have participated in countless high-profile Christian events, from Rick Warren's conference on AIDS in Africa to the Compassion Forum on CNN. You have written eloquently about your faith in both of your best-selling books.

Your faith is not what this whisper campaign is about. The people running the campaign know how you pray. Like

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Eboo Patel is the Founder and Executive Director of the Interfaith Youth Core. He writes "The Faith Divide" blog for the Washington Post. *His book* Acts of Faith *was recently published in paperback.*

the girl in my junior high, their target is different.

When I look back on my junior high experience, I feel humiliated about how I responded to that girl. Even at thirteen, I knew what she was saying. And I knew that I had chosen to be a coward, to pretend that the issue was about my election, not the broader racism that infused her comment.

Similarly, I suspect that you know that the whisperers are using the cover of your middle name and your Indonesian childhood to make a statement about the role that Muslims should play in America. It is a statement made repeatedly by mainstream figures in the American media, like CNN commentator Glenn Beck. Beck welcomed Keith Ellison, the first Muslim elected to Congress, on his show with the following challenge: "Sir, prove to me you are not working with our enemies."

Senator Obama, you have been courageous and direct on a range of issues—the Iraq war, race, foreign policy. Why not do the same with the whisper campaign? Why not dismiss the question about your faith in one line and then make a statement on the real issue: that this is a thinly-veiled attempt to disparage and disenfranchise an entire group of people based on their religion. It is un-American bigotry. Period.



The myth of Barack Obama's "secret Muslim identity" depends in part on the smear that he attended a radical anti-Western Wahabist "madrassa" as child in Indonesia. He actually attended a Muslim public school that included Christians like himself, along with Buddhists and others: the photo above, with Obama circled, was provided by the school, SDN Meteng School 1 in Jakarta. After two years there he spent two years at a Catholic school, before the family returned to the United States.

One of the most attractive parts of your candidacy is your eloquence about identity. "I was engaged in a fitful, interior struggle," you write in *Dreams from My Father*. "I was trying to raise myself as a black man in America, and beyond the given of my appearance, no one around me seemed to know exactly what that meant."

There is a generation of young Muslims coming of age in America who experience a similar struggle. They hear from too many Americans that Muslims can never be true citizens, their loyalties will always be elsewhere. They hear from some twisted voices in the Muslim world that living in America makes them less Muslim. They are at the crossroads of an identity crisis, trying to look both ways at once.

The reason so many people see themselves in you is because of your eloquent story of reconciling your own multiple identities: black and white, Kenya and Kansas, community organizer and corporate lawyer. That process is not just the struggle of individuals, it is at the heart of the American journey as well. Our challenge has always been to make the multiple identities of this nation mutually enriching instead of mutually exclusive.

I cannot pretend to know anything about the challenges of presidential campaigns. My experiment with electoral politics ended pretty much with my defeat for class representative in 7th grade.

But I do know this. "Hussein" is not the only part of your name that has Muslim roots. "Barack" is a derivation of a commonly used word in Islamic Arabic: *baraka*. It is also associated with the Hebrew term, *barukh*. In both languages, it means "blessing." And that is the only way to describe how millions of people feel about you, Senator Obama—that you are a blessing unto them, our nation, and our world.

And those Muslim kids? They are hoping that you, who have so eloquently added a new chapter to the American narrative, will write them into the story as well. You are running to be their President too. I hope you live up to the promise of your name with them. ■

AP PHOTO/SDN SCHOOL MENTENG

Information Age Populism

by Harry C. Boyte

"The world is deluged with panaceas, formulas, proposed laws, machineries, ways out, and myriads of solutions. It is significant and tragic that almost every one of these proposed plans and alleged solutions deals with the structure of society, but none concerns the substance—the people. This, despite the eternal truth of the democratic faith that the solution always lies with the people."

- Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* 1946







The last 150 years have seen three broad democratic populist movements in the U.S.
1. William Jennings Brian, the best known leader of the farmers' movement of the late 1900s, seen here running for President in 1912.
2. The 1930s Depression: this protest march by the unemployed in 1930 ended in a free-for-all fight at the White House when two demonstrators tried to speak.
3. Ella Baker, a key figure in bringing 1930s populist experience to the Civil Rights Movement, at a 1968 press conference.

WE ARE ON THE CUSP OF A NEW, INFORMATION AGE POPULISM. IT WILL generate immense changes in every institution and in society as a whole.

In the following I recover deeper meanings of populism and describe how information age populism, the politics of civic agency, differs from mass politics.

Recovering populism

IN RECENT YEARS, IN PUBLIC DISCUSSION "POPULISM" HAS MOST OFTEN MEANT A FOLKSY style, demagogic leaders who profess to champion victimized people, or regulatory, tax and other policies that champion common people against predatory interests.

Populism also has deeper meanings.

In the quote above, Saul Alinsky, the iconoclastic Jewish activist who is often called the father of community organizing in the United States, passionately restated the basic populist

Harry C. Boyte, founder and co-director of the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the Humphrey Institute, is author, most recently, of The Citizen Solution: How You Can Make a Difference *(Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2008).*

faith. Indeed, his only term of self-description was "populist." Alinsky's ideas were rooted in the great organizing efforts of the Great Depression and the Second World War, especially the experiences of anti-Stalinist public intellectuals and activists who liked "people's front" organizing—a term coined by the Communist Internationale in 1935—but didn't like Soviet-style Marxism. Alinsky's experiences were part of "people's fronts" around the world that gave birth to national liberation movements.

I never met Saul Alinsky, but my own life was profoundly shaped by the same history. My first encounter with the meanings of populism came in an incident that I describe in my recent book, *The Citizen Solution*. When I was nineteen, working as a field secretary for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in St. Augustine, Florida in 1964, I was caught one day by five men and a woman who were members of the Ku Klux Klan. They accused me of being a "communist and a Yankee." I replied, "I'm no Yankee—my family has been in the South since before the Revolution. And I'm a populist, not a communist. I believe that blacks and poor whites should join to do something about the big shots who keep us divided." For a few minutes we talked about what such a populist movement might look like. Then they let me go.

When he learned of the incident, Martin Luther King, head of SCLC, told me that he identified with the populist tradition and assigned me to organize poor whites. For young whites like myself in the movement, its examples of people becoming the shapers of their own destinies offered the possibility of redemption not only for blacks but also for ourselves. I became convinced of the destructive concept of "whiteness," and passionate about recovering my own Scottish heritage.

In the last century and a half, there have been three broad democratic populist movements in the United States, with counterparts elsewhere in the world. The first emerged in the late nineteenth century among small farmers, black and white. Populism resurfaced as a broad movement during the 1930s to defend democracy and to mobilize civic energies to meet the challenges of the Great Depression and fascism. The "people," seen by intellectuals in the 1920s as the repository of crass materialism and parochialism, were rediscovered as a source of strength and hope. Key architects of the third great populist movement, the freedom struggle of the 1950s and 1960s, such as Ella Baker, A. Philip Randolph, and Bayard Rustin, had roots in the Thirties movement. King may have received a deeper knowledge about populism from them.

Today we are on the threshold of a fourth populist movement whose centerpiece is civic agency—the development of the creative powers and social intelligence of ordinary people and of societies to address our collective challenges, to build healthy communities, and to create sustainable democracies. It is fed not only by technological transformations such as the "co-creative" qualities of the Internet, but also by the spread of organizing. To make the case, it is useful to contrast populism with "mass politics."

Mass Politics and Beyond

THE DOMINANT STRAND OF LIBERALISM IN THE LAST CENTURY HAS BEEN "MASS POLITICS." IT emphasizes universal claims, distributive justice, a view of the citizen as consumer, and individual rights. Mass politics is based on what the historian Steve Fraser in *Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order* called the concept of "a new man—existentially mobile, more oriented to consumption than production, familiar with the impersonal rights and responsibilities of industrial due process." Mass politics, Fraser observes, "was inconceivable apart from a political elite in command of the state, committed to a program of enlarged government spending, financial reform, and redistributive taxation, presiding over a reconstituted coalition in the realm of mass politics."

In my view, an outstanding contribution of *Tikkun* magazine has been to challenge the culturally uprooted and spiritually impoverished dynamics of mass politics. It is vitally important because mass politics has spread since the 1970s in what are called "mobilizing" forms of citizen action. Mobilizing approaches include the door-to-door canvass, direct mail fundraising, and recently, Internet mobilizations. All have been understandable as efforts to

FACING PAGE: ASSOCIATED PRESS (LEFT AND CENTER); AP PHOTO/JACK HARRIS (RIGHT)



Obama — the next wave of populism in America?

counter the assault by big business interests on consumer, affirmative action, environmental, and tax gains of the 1960s movements.

But mobilizing on the Left has come at a severe cost. It is based on a formula: find a target or enemy to demonize, stir up emotion with inflammatory language, create a "script" that defines the issue in good versus evil terms and shuts down critical thought, and convey the idea that elites who champion the victims will come to the rescue. Hillary Clinton's experiences were closely associated with mobilizing networks. Most large environmental, public interest, and other progressive civic groups, as well as election campaigns, use mobilizing as a matter of course. Mobilizing approaches also more subtly shape professional practices of all kinds.

This is because higher education prepares students to be mobile individualists, detached from the communities in which they work and the cultures from which they come, who see people in terms of their deficiencies, not their capacities. The historian Thomas Bender calls this shift over the last fifty years in the United States the change from "civic professionalism" to "disciplinary professionalism." For instance, in seminaries and divinity schools, according to Mary Fulkerson, a professor at Duke Divinity School who studies theological education, the "practice courses" typically pertain to matters internal to the life of the congregation, such as preaching, counseling, and church organization. Teaching skills and habits needed to engage with people in places where congregations are located is slighted. When such learning is absent, graduates see themselves as detached experts providing solutions *for* people, not as citizens working *with* fellow citizens on public problems. In the November/December 2007 issue of *Change* magazine, Parker Palmer described the weak sense of civic agency and the posture of "value free" practice that result. "The hidden curriculum of our culture portrays institutions as powers *other* than us, over which we have marginal control at best."

Less visibly, in the 1970s an alternative populist strand of "organizing politics" also began to develop, in networks descended from Saul Alinsky. Such groups engage in what they call "broad-based organizing," consciously contrasted with mobilizing. Organizing involves intense focus on developing the public skills of participants to work across differences on common challenges. Members and leaders of broad-based organizations made up of Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim congregations learn to understand the stories and motivations of others of different income, religious, cultural or partisan backgrounds. They become skilled at working through conflicts of viewpoint and interest in ways that avoid violence and produce beneficial public outcomes. They learn to build "public relationships" across differences for effective public action. They pay close attention to local cultures and networks. They foster what Doran Schrantz, an organizer for the Gamaliel Foundation, calls people's "public growth."

The presidential candidacy of Barack Obama has shown how the methods and mindset of such populist community organizing can be translated into much larger political contexts. Obama was a Gamaliel organizer in the early 1980s. His first autobiographical book, *Dreams from My Father*, contains striking accounts of how "organizing" teaches public skills and develops public identities, including his own.

The organizing message of self-directed collective action forms the heart of his campaign. "I'm asking you not only to believe in my ability to make change; I'm asking you to believe in yours," reads his web site. It finds expression in campaign slogans such as "yes we can," and "we are the ones we've been waiting for," drawn from a song of the freedom movement of the 1960s. Thousands of participants have received basic organizing training. As Tim Dickinson, a reporter for *Rolling Stone* magazine, put it in a review of the field operation, "[The] goal is not to put supporters to work but to enable them to put themselves to work, without having to depend on the campaign for constant guidance. 'We decided that we didn't want to train volunteers,' said [campaign field director Temo] Figueros. 'We wanted to train *organizers*—folks who can fend for themselves.'"

How a new populist movement of civic agency develops—and whether it can effect a "revegetation" in communities ravaged by technocratic clear-cutting over decades—remains to be seen. But a new populism is stirring. And I believe the world will change. ■

A Jewish Approach to Conflict Resolution
Mussar Part II

by Leonard Felder

(In the March/April 2008 issue of Tikkun, *Leonard Felder wrote about the origins and daily practice of Mussar, a self-monitoring system in Judaism that helps a person respond with decency, integrity, and mindfulness even in stressful moments when confronted with someone who disagrees with you passionately. Now in Part II, we asked Felder to offer some additional real-life examples of how the Mussar confrontation style avoids the "I'm right, but you're an idiot" tone of most political conversations and therefore might allow bitter adversaries to become occasional partners for making progress.)*

When Some One Gets On Your Nerves

WHAT TENDS TO HAPPEN WHEN SOMEONE OFFENDS YOU, ATTACKS YOUR ideas, or treats you like you don't matter? How do you deal with situations where you feel enraged or hurt by someone you can't easily dismiss or ignore?

If you walk into a Mussar class or read one of the books about the 200-year-old history of this character-improvement methodology within Judaism, you will find it's not about being a passive doormat for hurtful people. Instead, the Mussar techniques explore how to handle these difficult situations peacefully and with great respect for the human dignity of every individual, even those whose beliefs or actions offend you deeply.

Most of the Mussar mentors and scholars talk about how hard it is to overcome the reactive human tendency to verbally attack or self-righteously lecture someone who says or does things we can't stand. It might be a member of your family who gets on your nerves about politics, religion, your physical appearance, or your love life. It might be a colleague at work who's saying things behind your back or putting down your favorite project at a high-pressure meeting. Or it could be someone in public life who embodies the exact viewpoint that you have been working for years to change.

As soon as you hear someone saying or doing the very thing you detest, your heart begins to race and your hormone glands begin to pump a "fight or flight" megadose of survival juice called adrenalin. This could become an ugly scene, or it might become the Mussar moment when you remember that hundreds of years of Jewish teachings ask you to take a deep breath, connect with the big picture, and respond with decency, inner strength, and compassion rather than self-righteousness or sarcasm.

It's not easy to do. But if you start to monitor yourself during heated, contentious moments to see how you're doing on the scale of "quick to lash out with verbal attacks" or "willing to build a human connection even to those who get on your nerves," you will be amazed at how much progress you can make.

In the Mussar system of daily, weekly, and yearly character self-examination, you are taught how to engage in a *Cheshbon Ha-Nefesh* (an Accounting of Your Soul) to see if you are walking-the-walk or kidding yourself. Each day becomes a learning laboratory to see how far you've come, and how far you still could journey, toward living up to the teachings of Leviticus 19 to "treat the stranger and the person nearby as you would like to be treated."

Here are a few examples of the variety of breakthroughs that can happen if you decide to see each person you encounter not as an opposing force to be attacked, but rather as a precious spark of hidden light.

Leonard Felder, Ph.D. is a licensed psychologist and the author of eleven books, including his newest, Fitting In Is Overrated: The Survival Guide for Anyone Who Has Ever Felt Like an Outsider *(Sterling, 2008).*

1) The Unexpected Overheard Conversation

QUITE OFTEN WHEN YOU ARE IN A TENSE SITUATION THERE ARE SURPRISING MUSSAR opportunities in which a person remembers to think about crucial Jewish teachings rather than just reacting from anger or fear. Like a pebble tossed into a body of water that sends ripples for many miles, these Mussar opportunities can have a long-term impact that are beyond what anyone anticipated.

An inspirational example is that of a Palestinian man named Sami Adwan, who had been born in the West Bank, near Hebron, in the village of Surif (*Newsweek*, 8/13/2007). He recalls growing up with many family stories from his father and his grandfather about what life was like for their families prior to 1948. As a young child, Adwan was told in detail how Jews had seized his family's orange groves and wheat fields.



Sami Adwan, in jail, overheard a conversation between two Israeli soldiers that changed his life.

COURTESY OF SAMI ADWAN

These negative perceptions about Jews were so strong in Adwan's mind that when he came to the United States in 1978 to study for a PhD in education at the University of San Francisco, he felt visceral discomfort in the presence of Jewish students or teachers. He admits he refused to listen to Jewish students and went so far as to transfer out of classes if he thought he would have to sit in a room with Jews.

After returning to his homeland and joining the Fatah Party, which had been outlawed by the Israeli Government, Adwan soon got arrested and, despite never being formally charged, was put in jail in 1991. One day he overheard an argument between two Israeli soldiers over whether Adwan should be forced to sign a document in Hebrew that he couldn't read.

One of the soldiers, basing his arguments on Jewish teachings, was insisting that justice and human dignity were more important than anything else. To Adwan's amazement, this Israeli soldier was arguing vehemently to a fellow Jew, insisting that this Palestinian man named Adwan needed to be treated with human kindness and fairness regardless of his beliefs and his past actions.

That surprising moment of overhearing two Jews arguing passionately about how to live up to the teachings of Judaism caused Adwan to ask himself an important question, "Do I really understand very much about Jews and Judaism?"

A dedicated educator by training and temperament, Adwan eventually became the co-founder and the co-director of an organization called Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME), which is involved in helping Israelis and Palestinians (children and adults) to learn each other's history, pain, and longings. The PRIME goal is not to validate or agree with the other side, but simply to understand it and to respect the humanity of those who have a different narrative than your own.

Since 1998, Adwan and his colleague Dan Bar-On, a professor of social psychology at Ben Gurion University in Israel, have produced numerous interactive booklets for each side and reached tens of thousands of individuals in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. The PRIME model for exploring each other's narratives has also reached tens of thousands of people in the conflicts between Albanians and Macedonians through Skopje University in Macedonia and over 23,000 French citizens discussing the friction between Muslims and non-Muslims in France.

Yet it all began with an Israeli soldier taking an accounting of his own soul and arguing for justice and compassion, as well as a Palestinian educator and activist who was willing to question his earlier training about the Jewish people.

2) The Strange Pairing of Liberal and Conservative

A SECOND REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE (THAT INVOLVED TWO NON-JEWS BUT FELT VERY MUSSAR-like when I read about it) happened more recently in the frequently polarized United States.

The two who decided to treat each other with decency despite their clashing views were a liberal African-American Senator from Illinois and a conservative white evangelical minister from Orange County in California.

The minister, Pastor Rick Warren of the 20,000-member Saddleback megachurch in Lake Forest, California, was well-known nationally for his bestselling book *The Purpose-Driven Life* and for many years of aligning himself with conservative opposition to gay rights, abortion, sex education, and other causes.

But in January of 2006, Warren met the junior Senator from Illinois, Barack Obama, in Washington, D.C. and they began talking occasionally on the phone. During those months, Obama was re-writing his second book, *The Audacity of Hope*, and decided to send Warren a working draft of his chapter on faith to ask the minister to review it and offer suggestions.

At the same time, Warren and his wife Kay had begun to shift away from the traditional evangelical view of AIDS as "punishment for sexual immorality" and were planning their second international conference on responding to the spreading worldwide HIV crisis. They decided to invite Obama to address the Saddleback Church conference with a session entitled "We Must Work Together."

This caused an uproar among many conservative evangelical leaders nationwide. They were furious at Warren for inviting someone who was pro-choice and supportive of gay rights. Many prominent evangelical leaders begged Warren to retract the invitation and they condemned the conference. Some even accused Warren of heresy and said he was becoming part of the evil forces of destruction in American society that would bring about the end of days.

But Warren insisted, "I've got friends here, a Republican and a Democrat. Why? Because you've got to have two wings to fly." This led fellow conference speaker Senator Sam Brownback of Kansas, a conservative evangelical who has traveled to Sudan and other parts of Africa, to say, "There's nothing political about dealing with malaria and global HIV. If we'll just give them the crumbs off our table, they can live and we can save our souls."

Hugely outnumbered by conservatives at the conference, Obama still received a standing ovation from the 2,072 pastors and others who were gathered to talk about Christian church approaches to the HIV crisis. Obama challenged the gathered audience by saying that simply discouraging promiscuity would not be enough to stop the spread of AIDS. He said, "We can't ignore the fact that abstinence and fidelity, although the ideal, may not always be the reality—that we're dealing with flesh and blood men and women and not abstractions, and that if condoms and, potentially, things like microbicides, can prevent millions of deaths, then they should be made more widely available."

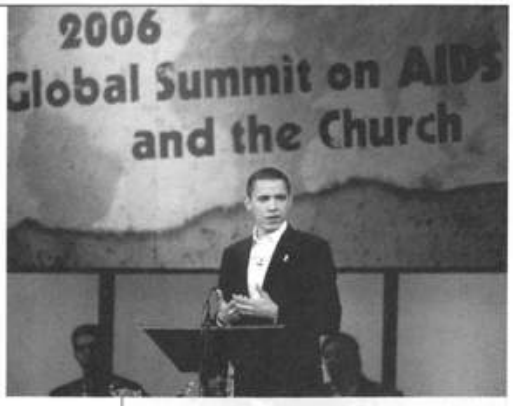
Obama agreed with the ministers that "the relationship between sexuality and spirituality has broken down and needs to be repaired," but he added that on his visits to Kenya and South Africa he had seen that a major part of the problem occurs when men visit prostitutes and bring the disease home to their wives, or when young girls have been subjected to rape and abuse. So Obama talked directly but respectfully to the Christian conservatives about a more feminist/progressive approach, saying, "These are also the issues of prevention we can't walk away from.... The relationship between men and women needs to be repaired."

As a result of the conference, increased pressure was put on the Republican and Democratic leaders in Washington to improve the programs they support for preventing the spread of AIDS. Instead of liberals and conservatives demonizing or verbally attacking each other, they were (on this particular issue) forming a common bond of humanity and teamwork.

Yet the first step was a conservative minister and a liberal political leader getting to know each other personally and privately to discuss complicated issues of faith and social justice. Only when they had looked into each other's souls could they take the risk of honoring one another in a public forum.

3) The Vulnerable Counseling Client and Her Mother

THIS THIRD EXAMPLE OF HOW THE MUSSAR APPROACH CAN TURN A VICIOUS POWER struggle into a renewed sense of humanity and teamwork happened with one of my therapy clients, a woman in her early 20s named Rachel (names have *(continued on page 77)*





To the surprise of many observers Barack Obama (above) addressed the 2006 Global Summit on AIDS and the Church conference, at the invitation of Rick and Kay Warren (below).

AP PHOTO/DAMIAN DOVARGANES (TOP AND BOTTOM)

Labor Day Sermon

by Tom Cornell



Cesar Chavez, center, and followers attend an outdoor Mass on the capitol steps in Sacramento, Calif., before start of a labor protest march, date unknown.

AP PHOTO

It's Labor Day Weekend already, the end of summer, back to school. What does Labor Day have to do with labor? And why should we talk about it in church? When you get back to school, take a look at your high school history book, you students. Parents, you take a look too and see what it has to say about the labor movement. I have taught public high school in four jurisdictions: Connecticut, New York City, New York State, and New Hampshire. We are lucky here in Marlboro. Jack Mazza tells me there is a whole week-long unit on labor in the advanced placement American History course in our high school. That's great but it's not the way it is in most places, and it's still not enough. You're lucky to get a paragraph on the Knights of Labor in the nineteenth century and another on the AFL-CIO in the twentieth, and something about the Wagner Act of 1935 that established the National Labor Relations Board and (this they never tell you) the weakest labor laws in the industrialized world.

If a history book tells you in the preface that it's going to give you an overview of the story of our nation, how it came to be, who formed it and how, and it does not include the mighty battle to establish minimal protections for the working people of this country, then it is not telling you the truth. If it's not the truth, it's a lie. I realized this when a good Jesuit priest, Father Ryan, offered to teach a course in Labor History for us at Fairfield Prep, after school, not for credit. It was the most important class I ever took, in high school or in college, because it taught me that what I had been led to believe was history, wasn't. The struggle for the forty-hour week, for health and safety regulations, for the right to organize for collective bargaining, for social security and old age pensions, for workers' compensation for injury on the job, for unemployment compensation, for a minimum wage, that was all left out.

It cost blood! Yes, there was violence, almost all of it aimed against unarmed workers. Men, women and children were burned to death, men were shot, some were lynched, castrated, dragged through the streets and hanged. In 1897, deputy sheriffs near Hazelton, Pennsylvania shot down nineteen unarmed Slavic, Hungarian and Sicilian miners because they went out on strike. That stimulated the building of the United Mineworkers Union. Organizers were imprisoned unjustly for as long as twenty years, all for trying to form a union. Why talk about this sort of thing in church? Church is where we come to get closer to God, to hear the Word and to come together in Communion with Jesus our God and with one another and all God's children. There you have it! *All God's children*, not just the sons and daughters of the

Deacon Tom Cornell is a veteran of the Catholic Worker Movement, former national secretary of the Catholic Peace Fellowship, and a founder of Pax Christi, U.S.A. This sermon was given in 2006 in Marlboro, NY.

powerful. The God we worship is a God who demands justice, "Whose mighty right arm scatters the proud in their conceit, who lifts up the lowly and casts down the mighty from their thrones, who fills the hungry with good things...." (from *The Magnificat*, Luke 1:46-55)

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Catholic Church had to deal with the devastating effects of the industrial revolution on its people. In countries where the bishops were chosen from the sons of the powerful, the Church was very slow, too slow to respond to the crisis, and Pope Pius IX lamented, "We have lost the working classes." In England, where the Catholic population was small and mostly Irish and poor, and in the United States, where the bishops were, almost every single one of them, sons of workers, the response was quick and positive. The rich and powerful, the noble families that ruled Italy, Spain, France, Germany and the Austro- Hungarian Empire and their bishop cousins wanted the Pope to condemn the labor movement, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, and the Knights of Labor in the United States as Communists and enemies of Christ and his Church. On the other side were Cardinal Gibbons in Baltimore and Cardinal Manning in London. They went to Rome and appealed directly to the Pope. Gibbons and Manning won.



Lawrence, Mass. strikers parading in N.Y.C. 1911

In 1891 Pope Leo XIII gave his answer to the social question in an encyclical that set off the development of modern Catholic Social Teaching, *Rerum Novarum*, or *In These Revolutionary Times*. Labor is prior to capital. Work comes first, because work creates capital. People come first because men and women are made in the image and likeness of God. Dollars, pounds and euros are made in the mint! Labor is not a commodity on the market, subject to the law of supply and demand. All God's creation was meant for the benefit of all. On the other hand, the Church defends the right to private property. "Property is proper to man." The problem with capitalism is that it doesn't get enough capital to enough people. Private property, yes, but it is not an absolute right and must be subject to the requirements of the common good. Workers have a right, even an obligation, to band together to assert their right to a fair share of the product of their own labor by all honorable means, including the withholding of their labor. The public sector has the duty to intervene for the re-distribution of wealth when necessary.



Crowd of strikers and menacing strike-breakers, Lawrence, Mass.

[between 1910 and 1915]

Catholic Social Teaching is the envy of our fellow Christians in the denominations. Many times I have been told by Protestant colleagues that they simply do not have the resources to develop and bring together such a body of teaching. "You write the documents, and we teach them in our seminaries," one told me. And yet, so very few of our fellow Catholics are aware of it. An even smaller percentage of our fellow citizens know anything about the terrible long struggle to attain the degree of social justice we enjoy in this land today, the Pullman Strike in 1894, for example. President Grover Cleveland called out 20,000 troops to put it down. They shot thirteen unarmed men dead and wounded fifty-seven more and the courts condemned, not the killers, but the strikers' leader (and one of the greatest Americans of all time), Eugene Victor Debs, to prison for six months. Or the Haymarket Riots of May 4, 1886 in Chicago. Someone threw a bomb at a rally and four policemen were murdered. It was a terrible crime. Somebody had to pay, so four labor leaders were hanged and one cheated the gallows by suicide in prison. Or the Lawrence, Massachusetts textile strike of 1912, the "Bread and Roses Strike." Two women representing the strikers went to the local newspaper editor. He asked them, "What do you want?" One woman answered, "We want bread!" *(continued on page 78)*

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (TOP AND BOTTOM)

Coming Out (Again)

by Idit Klein



Idit Klein (at left) at a Massachusetts rally for equal marriage rights on July 12, 2006.

"What do you do for work?"

TWO DAYS INTO MY NEW POSITION AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF KESHET I AM at the *shiva* for a family friend. Most of the people here are older members of my parents' synagogue whom I've known since I was a kid. One woman approaches me, smiling: "Your mother tells me you just finished graduate school. So, what are you doing now?" For a moment I freeze and then stammer something about Keshet and working for inclusion of gay Jews in the Jewish community. I watch her smile turn into a firm line. "Oh, very nice," she says and walks away. I spend the rest of the *shiva* steering conversations away from questions about what I do for work—and feel guilty for hiding.

Being a professional queer Jew has meant losing the comforting possibility of ever separating my work identity from my personal identity. It means being unequivocally and irrevocably "out." It means having to constantly answer the question, "What do you do for work?" and choosing either to come out—both as a Jew and a lesbian—or to hide.

When I became the director of Keshet in late August 2001, I faced a number of organizational challenges. I needed to build a board, grow a dwindling membership, and create new programs. I urgently needed to raise money and find new donors. And I needed to confront homophobia in the community that had always been my home. I knew the work would be difficult but assumed the issues, at least, would be clear. I thought people would see the homophobia and heterosexism in their communities either as problematic and in need of change, or as intrinsic to Jewish tradition and thus unavoidable. I was unprepared for how frequently these biases would lie unnoticed just below the surface of communal life; I did not expect people to be so fiercely invested in keeping these dynamics unseen and unacknowledged. I also didn't expect to struggle with my own invisibility as a queer person.

"It takes energy to hide."

I SAY THIS REPEATEDLY WHEN I TALK WITH RABBIS, DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION AT Hebrew schools, and other Jewish community members about why it is important for teachers to feel comfortable being out in the classroom. "If you are hiding an essential part of yourself, you are unable to be fully present, to be the most effective teacher, counselor, mentor, all the roles educators play in students' lives." But I have learned that it also takes energy to make oneself visible over and over and over.

A recent experience: I'm in a cab coming home from the airport after four long days of meetings, presentations, buttoned-down shirts, and stiff shoes. I'm exhausted and close my eyes, falling asleep in the wide, empty back seat.

"So, you coming back from vacation?" The driver's voice jerks me awake. "Um, no," I say, "I was on a work trip," my eyes already fluttering shut again. But he's in a conversational mood and continues, "Oh yeah, what were you doing?"

"Oh, I was at a conference in L.A.," I answer. I didn't plan to be vague. Yet as the final syllable escapes my lips, I know that I am hiding. He asks more questions, but I don't tell him what kind of conference I was attending. I look at the "These Colors Don't Run" American flag decal on the driver's dashboard and his profile: crew cut, thick neck, ruddy face. I let my

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Idit Klein serves as the Executive Director of Keshet, a grassroots organization working for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender inclusion in Jewish life. She lives in Boston with her partner and new baby.

own biases and assumptions make me afraid. I allow myself to give in to my weariness and avoid engagement. And I berate myself for my fraudulence.

Often, I don't have a choice about being out. I serve as the gay Jewish voice on panels about diversity in the Jewish community. I sit behind a Keshet sign at Jewish conferences and tell myself, "This is exactly why we are here" every time someone approaches our table, discovers that Keshet is a gay organization, and then hastily moves away, saying, "That's not for me." Or every time a parent pulls his or her child away from our brightly colored banner at an Israel Day fair and scowls at me, again, I remind myself, "It's important that we are here."

I was once on a bus in Israel sitting hand in hand with my girlfriend when two women started yelling, *"Yesh lesbiot b'autobus ha-zeh! Yesh lesbiot b'autobus ha-zeh!"* ["There are lesbians on this bus!"] while moving towards us threateningly. Yet years later, when I reflect on the challenges I have faced as a queer Jew, it is the countless, everyday experiences of coming out and being out that, perhaps surprisingly, impact me more. It is the constancy of the choice between integrity and the potentially painful risk of exposure; the need to be strong in the face of subtle, and at times, blatant, rejection.

These are the experiences and emotions that keep me connected to why I work for the inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Jews in the Jewish community. I am reminded that this work is hard precisely because many of us are not seen unless we make ourselves seen. Because queer Jews are still invisible in many Jewish communities. Because our voices are not heard, and our absence is unnoticed or ignored. And because all of us lose when people are afraid to make themselves known. It takes so much energy to hide.

"That's never been an issue here."

MY WORK ALSO INVOLVES THE TASK OF POINTING OUT PROBLEMS WHERE PEOPLE SEE NONE. The vicious rhetoric of the Christian Right gives many Jews an escape route; compared to the hate speech we hear from some religious fundamentalists, homophobia and heterosexism in Jewish communities can seem respectfully tempered and may be difficult to detect. Combating blatant homophobia is less of a challenge than exposing the latent, more insidious aspects of homophobia and heterosexism that make silence and invisibility a comfortable norm.

"But we don't have any gay members" is the message I often hear from leaders in Jewish institutions, when I approach them with an offer to facilitate a GLBT awareness training for educators, a community dialogue about GLBT issues, or any other program that includes any of the words "gay," "lesbian," "bisexual," or "transgender." And then, with an expression that is slightly pained and concerned, some version of the question, "Are there really many of you?"

And so the question for me becomes: How can I prove the relevance of this work? How do I show the need? How can I expose the problem of queer invisibility?

Mostly, I tell stories. I share half a dozen tales of queer Jews. I talk about the youth group leader who was fired after he came out. The 31-year-old gay man who grew up Orthodox and now attends Unitarian Universalist services with his partner because they feel more welcome at their local UU church than at the Conservative shul. The candidate for a teaching position whose job offer was abruptly withdrawn after he came out. The 87-year-old lesbian who says *kaddish* alone for her partner of 64 years because she can't conceive of a synagogue welcoming her.

I also ask questions.

"How did your shul/day-school/community organization get to the point where GLBT inclusion is a 'non-issue'? What does that mean?"

"Can I tell our members that your shul is welcoming to gay people? Would it be comfortable for a lesbian couple to kiss one another Shabbat Shalom?"

"Do you want to have a more diverse community? Do you want the gay people who I'm sure are already in your community to feel safe and welcome being out?"

These questions tease out the hidden narratives. A rabbi tells me about the distraught parents who came to him for support after their daughter came out. A Hebrew school teacher talks about a 5th grade girl, Avital, who wears *tzitzit*, is growing *pe'ot*, and wants to be called

only Avi. A day school principal remembers the Jewish history teacher who married her partner and could not share her *simcha* (joy) with the community. Slowly, the silence is punctuated by voices of loss, pain, and isolation. It is only then that the invisibility is seen and the loss is felt. It is then that we can begin to explore how to change this reality.

"But we're not homophobic."

I ALSO FREQUENTLY ENCOUNTER PEOPLE WHO ARE SINCERELY PERPLEXED ABOUT THE FACT that not being homophobic cannot *in and of itself* create full inclusion. Soon after I started working for Keshet, I was asked to make a short presentation about our work to the allocations committee of a Jewish federation. Afterward, a man raised his hand and introduced himself as the coordinator of a Jewish young adult couples group. He explained his confusion: "I just don't understand. I mean, I'm not homophobic. My girlfriend isn't homophobic." The woman sitting next to him smiled and nodded vigorously. "I really think no one in our group is homophobic, but no gay couples have ever come to one of our events. Why don't they come?"

I responded with a simple question: "How would a gay couple know that you and the others in your group are not homophobic?" He blinked, "Um, I'm not sure what you mean." I asked him if there was any language in the group's description, images in PR materials, or advertising that GLBT people would see and thereby understand that this was a welcoming community.

I often liken the relationship between some queer Jews and the Jewish community to that of an adult who was rejected as a teenager by her family. If the family decided that they no longer wanted to reject her, would that simple emotional shift be enough to draw her back? If they called her once or sent a letter, would that be enough? Chances are she would look to them for several indications that they truly wanted her back. After having been so hurt, she would seek multiple assurances that this time it would be different. So, too, the gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender Jew who grew up in a Jewish community that was not welcoming or supportive will look for concrete signs that things have changed.

We will seek communities that are open to transformative inclusion.

The queer Jew who seeks a shul will take note of signposts of inclusion. Are there openly out members of the community? Do membership forms only offer spaces for "husband" and "wife" or do they easily accommodate other types of families? Does faculty orientation for Hebrew school teachers cover how to talk about family inclusively and what to do when kids say "That's so gay"? In short, does the institution demonstrate active efforts to create an inclusive and welcoming culture?

Some of us will look for more than simple inclusion. We will seek communities that are open to transformative inclusion. Transformative inclusion is not just tolerance or even warm acceptance; it requires an awareness of the unique contributions GLBT Jews can offer and a commitment to embracing those gifts, even if that involves change. This means integrating queer Jewish narratives into our broader communal stories. It means changing long-held assumptions that all girls will grow up to marry boys and vice versa; that family trees begin with a mother and a father; that the ideal Jewish family follows a heterosexual nuclear model.

"Of course, we want gay people to feel supported, but homosexuality is not something we want to encourage."

IN CONVERSATIONS WITH MANY JEWISH EDUCATORS, RABBIS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY leaders, I often encounter simultaneously a wholehearted commitment to offering support to gay and lesbian people (I deliberately exclude "bisexual" and "transgender" here as, in my experience, while many people use the acronym "GLBT" or "LGBT" they actually only mean gay and lesbian) and a profound discomfort with the notion that all sexual orientations (never mind gender identities) should be presented as viable, healthy, perfectly normal options—particularly to youth. I recognize and appreciate the tremendous changes that have occurred for many individuals to reach even this point of limited acceptance, but I'm not satisfied.

It's not enough that our community will "support" and "accept" us as queer people once

we've figured it out on our own. When I came out, like many of my generation, I was in college. I had been involved in my Hillel from practically my first step on campus. The Jewish community was my home. Yet when I came out, I suddenly felt alone and vulnerable. Even with the support of close friends and our Hillel rabbi, it took courage for me to come out in this Jewish community simply because there was no one else who was out.

I never heard any blatantly homophobic comments, but I felt the unfriendly stares when I walked into Hillel for Shabbat dinner holding my girlfriend's hand. The complete absence of any signs of GLBT life in the campus Jewish community made me feel like I needed to declare my presence—or risk being swallowed up by the invisibility. There was a tremor in my voice during my carefully prepared coming-out "speech" to the Hillel executive committee. When I stopped speaking most of the room burst into applause, and I felt the quick, hot flush of relief and gratitude.

I am grateful for the loving support of my friends and the majority of my college community, but looking back, I am also troubled. Why? Because nearly fifteen years later, too many gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Jewish youth growing up today still have similar experiences—and they are the lucky ones.

As I write this, I imagine the irritated, confused chorus of voices saying, "Well, what does she want?" What I want is for no Jew to fear that his Jewish community will reject him because he is gay, bisexual, and/or transgender. I want no Jew to feel so invisible that she has to affirmatively declare her presence as a lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender person and, without any certainty, hope for acceptance. I want every Jewish child to know that ours is a community with an equal place for everyone: gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, straight, and/or trans ("trans" is increasingly being used as an umbrella term for transgender and transsexual identities).

I want every Jewish child to know that ours is a community with an equal place for everyone.

In this Jewish community, acceptance is not offered only once someone claims a GLBT identity; affirmation of all sexual and gender identities is *a priori* an integral part of our culture and communal values.

In this Jewish community, our children know that whether they are gay or straight they can lead happy, healthy lives with strong, vibrant Jewish identities.

In this Jewish community, the multiple realities of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people are part of the lived, taught, and celebrated Jewish experience. I imagine a day when posters of Tony Kushner and Kate Bornstein grace the walls of Hebrew school classrooms along with the usual pictures of Israel, famous Jewish baseball players, and holiday scenes. In such a context, queer people would no longer be "supported" after we come out, for the entire notion of coming out would be dismantled. The whole concept of being "out" presumes that the point of departure is to be "in," that queer identity begins in a state of concealment. I am committed to a new status quo in which there is no "in" from which to emerge. I seek a reality that offers multiple ways of being as equally valid and Jewishly authentic. I want a community whose leadership, literature, and language represent full sexual and gender diversity.

"It takes energy to hide."

ALMOST SIX YEARS AFTER THAT FAMILY SHIVA, I ATTEND ANOTHER FAMILY EVENT—THIS time a *simcha*, my brother's wedding. My girlfriend, Becca, and I are the first couple to walk down the aisle, followed by the bride's sister and her boyfriend, and then the two pairs of parents. My family has accepted and supported me for years, but this kind of public recognition feels different and also important.

The burden of coming out is always with me. In moments when I avoid disclosure, my own hidden fissures crack through to the surface. When I lack the strength to out myself and be myself, I want to know that the Jewish community will hold me up and support me. I call on our community to rebuild the foundation of Jewish life to integrate what is still missing. "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone" (Psalms 118:22). May those who do the work of building and leading our community fix inclusion at the core of Jewish life now and in all the days to come. ■

Approaching Harvest: A Sukkot Meditation

by Dan Goldblatt



EDITORS NOTE: For the benefit of our non-Jewish readers, we've included a short glossary.

Sukkah—a temporary shelter erected for the celebration of Sukkot
etrog—citron
aravot—two willow branches
hadassim—three myrtle branches
lulav—palm branch; also refers to the aravot, hadassim and lulav gathered and held together
tefillah—prayer
kahal—community
niggun—rhythmic wordless melody
shul—synagogue

I ARRIVED AT THE SYNAGOGUE WITH *LULAV* AND *ETROG* IN HAND. I GOT A CALL ON MY Palm Pilot from a woman who was going to help lead the service with drumming, body percussion, and a rhythmic grounding of the *tefillah*. She was coming from a nearby town and wasn't sure if she had the directions right. My mind wandered ... East, West, North, South, Heavenward, Ground of Being. I assured her that she was properly directed and told her how delighted I was that she was coming on this evening of Sukkot to help us better embody the *tefillah*; to take us closer to our own hearts after we had come through the intensity of the *yamim noraim*, the Days of Awe, where we had beat out the rhythms on our chests, where we had been doing heart ... beats to call ourselves back, to try to return to our natural internal rhythms.

I turned off my Palm Pilot, and grasped the *lulav*. I greeted people as they arrived with the usual hugs, welcoming them into sanctuary heart to heart. I noticed that the *lulav* caught their attention, a strange, vaguely familiar visitor into the sacred space. It was splayed on the *amud*, the Torah table, *hadasim* and *aravot* branching out from the spinal palm. The *etrog*, all wrapped up in its box, waiting in the wings to make its star appearance. I watched the children look at the lulav, quizzical, wondering ... this collection of tree limbs sitting in such a

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place of honor—the Torah's place.

A soft *niggun* calls the *kahal* to awareness. Our lovely drummer catches everyone's attention. Signals from a long ago place. A story flashes through my consciousness like an unexpected guest. It is an African story from centuries ago:

One day, the drummers of a large village were sitting near the shore, listening to the sea washing up against the edge of their world, listening to the natural rhythms to learn better how to connect their people to the ground of being. They were the holders of sacred wisdom of their people. They provided the pulse for celebrations, the orchestral backing for movement and dance, the essential canvas and connective tissue for all sacred stories. They knew the sounds that allowed for grieving and were able to hold the space for the deepest pain and most profound loss. They were the keepers of the soul music of their people, among them the shamans, the spiritual guides. As they sat together, all of them, the wizened elders and the youngest initiates, they heard other sounds, people approaching.

Out of the tall trees to the north came a large group of strange men, armed and clearly in the hunt. The drummers felt the danger in their viscera and turned to make their escape; these were the dreaded slavers, and the drummers their intended prey. As they turned to run, they saw another group of foreigners, brigands, coming out of the forest from the south and from the west. They were trapped, caught; every drummer, every one. To fight was to die, and some joined their ancestors rather than being taken. It ended quickly. The elders who would never survive the trip were killed on the spot. All the others were tethered like livestock and led away, leaving their precious drums, the work of their hands, wood and skins—sacred instruments—scattered, abandoned on the sand. Before they could even grasp the tragedy, they were loaded onto the ship like cargo, thrown into the depths of the ship's hold.

Lost, disconnected, grieving for their families and loved ones, they made the voyage, beating out the soul-wrenching sounds against the wooden walls of their seagoing prison.

The ancient wisdom would survive through them in their enslavement, but who would understand? Who would comprehend the subtle drumbeats, the powerful language of drumming hand, of sacred, tribal communing?

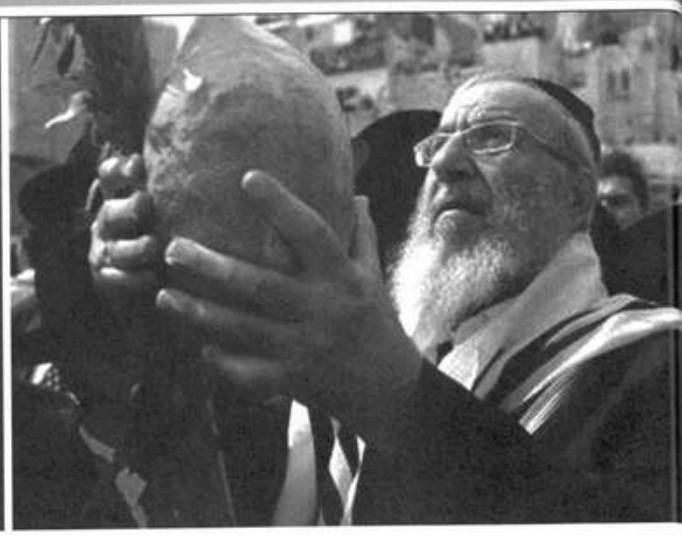
Drumbeats rouse me from this reverie. Our percussionist has warmed up the gathering, readying them for our celebration. On this evening of Shabbat and Sukkot, I wonder if we, here now, can possibly connect to our ancient tribal wisdom, so far removed from harvest, from a genuine connection to the earth.

I offer words of welcome and introduce our special musical guest. Before we move more deeply into prayer, before we welcome Shabbat, we will connect to Sukkot with lulav and etrog. I silently consider what it must have been like for a farmer to assemble living symbols of harvest—myrtle and willow, palm and citron. To hold them together must have been so natural, a simple and elegant ritual of gratitude. The harvest gathered—full or lean—another year's growth to be stored for the winter. Sustenance from the Ground of All Being. Produce from good labor. The work of the family, kin, the tribe. Gathered together, after the work was done; to pause, to celebrate, to be together in the deepest appreciation of life.

We are not farmers. Most of us have never even been on a farm. Some of us have gardens, mostly a novelty, a pleasurable indulgence. Knowing nothing of real harvest, we turn to metaphor, reach out to try to make a meaningful connection. I point to the *Sukkah* outside in the courtyard, and thank the people who erected it for us. We need to be reminded that on this night, when the weather has begun to turn, when the heat of summer has evaporated and the first chill of autumn has descended, that in our own wealthy county, there are more than seven thousand souls who have no home to warm themselves in tonight. They will sleep in cars, in makeshift sukkot under freeway overpasses and other places partly protected from the wind. They are our neighbors without portfolio, alien residents. We have a responsibility to help them survive, because they are the contemporary 'other,' and our deepest teachings are about caring for 'the other.' Some of our grandparents and a few of our parents were 'the other' in other places far away. We talk about surviving the perils of 'otherness' and yet, we have the possibility, the opportunity to do something to ease the burden of our neighbor's

FLICKR/CC/BDNEGIN (FACING PAGE). ILLUSTRATION BY SABIHA BASRAI





(left) A Jewish family in Jerusalem eat dinner in a sukkah, *or hut, during* Sukkot, *2006, to honor and remember the days when the Jews were nomadic. Pine branches, palm fronds or even bamboo may be used to build a* sukkah.

(right) A Yemenite Jew holds a huge Yemeni etrog *(citron) along with the rest of the four species during prayer at the Western Wall.*

GETTY IMAGES/FRED MAYER (LEFT), JOHN BREWE (RIGHT)

alienation and despair. This is the vulnerability that Sukkot is meant to bring us: not simply our own vulnerability, but the exposure of the truly vulnerable in our midst.

I hold the lulav in my hand. Branches gathered. A Jewish divining rod? Showing us a way back to the earth. We hold it in our hands. We bring together fruit and vegetation. How different it is, me standing in front of a hundred people, the only one with a lulav in my hand. I remember growing up in a *shul* where everyone (every man?) had a lulav and etrog. When we shook together, the whole room was alive with the sound. The *shul* was transformed into a wild forest of talking palms. It was like a great wind whipped through taking us back to a different time, another place. But now, singular, I hold the lulav for everyone present. The adventurous ones will have their turn, but it is in my hands to shake the lulav, to shake myself. I shake it and the sound is like the whisper of the trees. I remember standing on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon amidst a grove of aspen—white bark poles holding a leafy sea of yellows, reds and golds. Quiet, waiting for the air to signal them—like the baton of the great concert-master—into percussive wonder. 'Quaking aspen' they are called, but there is another quality, the raucous rattle of living creatures. High altitude trees—trees with definite attitude.

The lulav shakes me into the present moment. I reach towards all that is in front of me, and holding green and pale branches and hard yellow fruit, I bring them into my chest. Trying to take it in. Holding symbols of harvest over my shoulder, behind me, to what is unseen, unknown and still harvest. Right and left, so often words of polarization, brought together, shaking the ground of polarity, of duality.

I raise my lulav, longingly, lovingly, to the heavens: can we maintain our wonder at the Source of all creation being universal, birthing all universes, up and around, often out of reach, inaccessible? Verses of Torah come to me—"But do not say it is in the heavens so that we must go up to the heavens and bring it to us so that we may hear it and respond." Can we stay connected to what we often think of as distant, away from us, skyward, heavenly, and know that it is all here, right now, here, before us, around us, inside us?

Finally, I shake downward, toward the earth, the place of grounding, giver of harvest, mother of nourishment. And I bring it to my heart, this connection so easily forgotten, neglected, despoiled; it is all we have, our nest, our home.

I look around me and wonder if this shaking has reverberated through the room. Has this ritual touched a heart?

The sun has dropped below the horizon. Shabbat is patiently waiting for our holy light. Candles need to be kindled. Just before the lighting, I gently lay down the lulav, and hold up the etrog. Knowing few will actually dare to shake the lulav during the holiday out of not knowing, I promise that before the night is out, I will bring the startling smell of the etrog to every nose in the sanctuary, and for one brief moment, the blessing of harvest will be breathtaking. ■

2008—A Year to Remember Gedaliah

by Everett Gendler



"GEDALIAH? WHO'S THAT?" IF SUCH words express your first reaction to the title, you've plenty of company. Almost certainly the least known figure whose name designates a day in the Jewish calendar, the Fast of Gedaliah (pronounced guh-**dahl**-yuh) itself has also been little noticed for many decades. Yes, it's still listed in traditional printings of Jewish calendars as 3 Tishre, the day following the second day of Rosh Hashanah (for those who observe two days), but even in these printings it receives only the uninformative description, "commemorates the climax of the disasters that befell the Jewish Commonwealth in 586 BCE." The URJ and the WRJ calendars take no notice of it, and neither Hayim Schauss in the 1938 UAHC volume, *The Jewish Festivals*, nor Theodor Gaster in his 1952 *Festivals of the Jewish Year*, bothers to mention it. Quite likely, then, even many who use traditional calendars pay little attention to the day.

Why, then, propose that we remember Gedaliah this particular year? To answer the question, a few words about the historical period in which Gedaliah lived are necessary. During the turbulent times of 587/586 BCE, as the Babylonians advanced on Jerusalem to subdue the Judean kingdom, the Jews were sharply divided on the best response. One faction favored a political alliance with Egypt and its army to fight the Babylonian threat; another advocated a negotiated submission to the Babylonians to ensure the survival of a Jewish presence in Jerusalem and Jewish life and religious practices within the Judean Kingdom. The prophet Jeremiah was a strong advocate of this neutralism, rejecting an alliance with Egyptian power as the safeguard against Babylonia. His words denouncing royal collaboration with the Egyptians angered pro-Egyptian Jewish princes and other prophets, and in a dramatic trial, Jeremiah was threatened with death (see Jeremiah 26 for the vivid account). In this situation, a member of a politically prominent family, Ahikam, son of Shaphan, used his high-level influence to save Jeremiah from falling into the hands of the people who wanted to execute him.

From Gedalia in 586 BCE to nonviolent political campaigns today, such as the student organization "Otpor" (above) which played a central role in ending the autocratic rule of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevich in 2000, nonviolence is controversial and hard to practice. As the Fast of Gedalia this year coincides with Gandhi's birthday, now designated the International Day of Non-Violence by the U.N., let's make it a day to study the whole nonviolent tradition.

AP PHOTO / DARKO VOJINOVIC

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"I see Gedaliah, the peace-seeking compromiser, as a forerunner of Anwar Sadat and Yitzhak Rabin, both, like Gedaliah, killed by uncompromising nationalist zealots...."

PINGNEWS/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (TOP AND BOTTOM)

Following further periods of dramatic and dangerous prophetic activity (see Jeremiah 27-39 for the remarkably exciting details), with Babylonian advance units having already breached the walls of Jerusalem, Jeremiah again passionately urged accommodation with the Babylonians. This time, too, as popular feelings grew more heated, there were again arrests and threats to Jeremiah's life. This time it was Ahikam's son, Gedaliah, who, like his father, became Jeremiah's protector. Gedaliah used his political position and his personal power to ensure Jeremiah's survival. As events unfolded, Gedaliah became governor of those Jews who remained in Jerusalem and Judea, cooperating with the Babylonians while also securing concessions from the invaders to improve the lives of the conquered.

Was this treasonable collaboration or life-preserving accommodation? Just as our assessments might differ, Jews at the time also disagreed, some quite vehemently (for lively details, see Jeremiah 40-41). One faction, encouraged by the King of Ammon and led by Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, undertook a mission to assassinate Gedaliah. Advisors to Gedaliah warned him of the plot, but he refused to take seriously their reports, and was, indeed, slain, along with many of his advisors. According to tradition (the sources are not clear about the exact timing), this assassination occurred on the 3rd of Tishre, and to commemorate Gedaliah, the rabbinic sages enacted a fast day.

This enactment reflected the rabbinic judgment that there had been advantages for the Jews from the non-entanglement-with-big-powers policy that Jeremiah advocated and that Gedaliah administered. Josephus (*Antiquities*, 10:9) gives details of an extensive resettlement policy. Jews who had fled the Babylonian invasion could return, reclaim land for cultivation, and live Jewish lives if they would accept Babylonian sovereignty. In the trenchant words of the eminent historian, David Biale: "The final destruction of any form of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel came about not because of prior policies of Assyria and Babylonia, but because of the victory of the Jewish party of revolt over the party of accommodation" (*Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History*, p. 17). With this prophetic neutralism there is no rabbinic quarrel.

Yet the rabbis did not unequivocally approve of all Gedaliah's actions. There is explicit rabbinic condemnation of Gedaliah's naiveté in dismissing the reports of Ishmael's assassination plans. "He should have taken note of the advice of Johanan the son of Kareah" [about the plot to kill him and his associates], and acted to thwart it. Because he failed to do this, one strain of rabbinic thought regards him as complicit in the slaying of his associates (Talmud Niddah 61a). One might say that the rabbis supported neutralism but not naiveté.

Reading this ancient, nearly forgotten history, we can understand why the Fast of Gedaliah became the most minor of the four minor fast days. But there is a coincidence of dates this year that suggests a fresh significance to Gedaliah, one that might stimulate us to take note of the day even if we don't choose to fast on it. This past October, in a resolution co-sponsored by 140 nations, the United Nations designated Gandhi's birthday, October 2nd, to be observed and celebrated each year as the International Day of Non-Violence. "Bearing in mind that non-violence, tolerance, full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, democracy, development, mutual understanding and respect for diversity are interlinked and mutually reinforcing," the Resolution asks that each year organizations and individuals focus attention on these interlinked basic human values. And this year the International Day of Non-Violence, October 2nd, coincides with 3 Tishre, our traditional if mostly forgotten Fast of Gedaliah.

Is there any connection to be made? Viewed from our current perspective, I see Gedaliah, the peace-seeking compromiser, as a forerunner of Anwar Sadat and Yitzhak Rabin. Both of these men were, like Gedaliah, killed by uncompromising nationalist zealots. While none of the three can be claimed as principled practitioners of non-violence, all of them are certainly related in spirit to the two most effective non-violent leaders of the past century, Gandhi and King, both of whom were also victims of fanaticism become violent.

So how might this observance be given some acceptable ceremonial expression today? Reinstitute the fast? With the approach of Yom Kippur, forget fasting. More liturgical hymns of Divine Sovereignty and poems of Self-Inspection? Immediately following Rosh Hashanah, too much already! However, to do some reading and to *(continued on page 79)*

L'Shana Tova

Haiku for David Shapiro

I hear the ram's horn.
Do you? Do you remember
father, son, mountain?

L'shana tova
old friend, mentor, fellow Jew,
you from New Jersey,

I from Manhattan,
and we met not in temple
but Columbia,

and do you recall
when I visited Cambridge
I left you a note

with the Clare porter.
The world is charged (I wrote) with
the grandeur of you!

And then you came home
and I took your place over
there: at Clare College

Peter Ackroyd came
and asked me if I would speak
to the group on John

Ashbery whose new
book "The Double Dream of Spring"
had just been published.

How could I say no?
They told me you had spoken
on Frank O'Hara

and Aaron Fogel
had spoken on Kenneth Koch.
It was a good omen

I thought but then what
happened was rain rain rain and
more rain. And no mail

because of a strike
in England. There was always
a strike in England.

No mail, no phone calls
to America where my
father lay dying.

The gardeners burned
the leaves and I crossed the Cam
on Clare College bridge

daily, and daily
I went to Heffer's and bought
books by Hölderlin,

Mann, Gide, Henry James.
I imitated Rilke.
The sonnet for you

ran in "Poetry."
More rain. Cold toilet. Bad smell.
And I couldn't find

an English poet
younger than Larkin to like.
No mail. Pub hours.

Beer better than wine.
Awful food. Always hungry.
Had to learn to cook.

And that's where I went
— to the sea of memory —
in temple today

when I heard the sound
of the shofar and prayed for
the living and dead.

–David Lehman

Culture

BOOKS | FILM | MUSIC

[BOOKS]

What is Engaged Spirituality?

A PERSISTENT PEACE: ONE MAN'S STRUGGLE FOR A NONVIOLENT WORLD
by John Dear, SJ
Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2008

Review by Ken Butigan

Ours is the age of a widely emerging "Engaged Spirituality." In many religious traditions, including Judaism, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity, "spiritualities of engagement" for social change are tapping and transforming ancient spiritual truths and pathways to respond to the titanic challenges facing the planet and its inhabitants. Spiritual practices rooted in the primordial wisdom of these and other traditions are actively challenging deeply-embedded structures of violence and injustice and working to cultivate a sustainable, just, and peaceful world.

While each tradition's engaged spirituality is shaped by its own history, rituals, and symbols, in most cases these emergent paths share certain characteristics. They each: consciously grapple with the profound crises of our time; regard spirituality as a powerful force for active and nonviolent change; maintain the indivisible connection between personal and social transformation; and involve organized and public action.

This is the great sacred work of our time. The question is: How does one actually live this life of engaged spirituality here and now?

John Dear's new autobiography, *A Persistent Peace*, is a record of one person's attempt to answer this question. Dear has spent more than a quarter of a century engaged in a relentless journey of peace and justice, a pilgrimage that began with a gnawing restlessness that led him to abandon his technicolor teenage dreams of rock stardom (he wrote rafts of songs and recorded them at a studio near Duke University where he studied history) and to slowly discover and test his growing faith in God. Not unlike other spiritual autobiographies, Dear's journey to the divine is existentially harrowing and arduous yet ultimately transformative. He comes, in the end, to definitively root his meaning and direction in what he experiences as the unconditional love of God.

Almost with the same breath in which he says, "I believe in God," Dear finds himself saying, "And this God is nonviolent." In this he was following the logic of his experience. If God is love, then God's power is the power of love. And if we are to live in the midst of the life and power of God, then we must live this love—the active regard for every person, the embodied yearning for the well-being of all—with our entire mind, heart, soul, and body. With none of the wavering uncertainty others can experience on the question of nonviolence, Dear stepped decisively and irrevocably onto the path of spiritually-grounded nonviolent change. Once he had made his fundamental option for God, Dear sought to live out what seemed clear to him to be God's way: nonviolent transformation for a just and peaceful world.

In the early 1980s Dear sought to deepen his vocation as a faith-based peacemaker by joining the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), an international order of Catholic priests known for scholarship and intellectual rigor. While this order has included a number of Dear's activist mentors (among them Fr. Daniel Berrigan, Fr. Richard McSorley, and Fr. Ignacio Ellacuria, president of the University of Central America, who was assassinated in 1989), it has, by Dear's account, exhibited a perennial ambivalence (and at times outright hostility) toward Dear's unwavering ministry of peacemaking. This echoes a central theme of this book: if you take up

the work for peace and justice, expect trouble—whether from your government or from your home community.

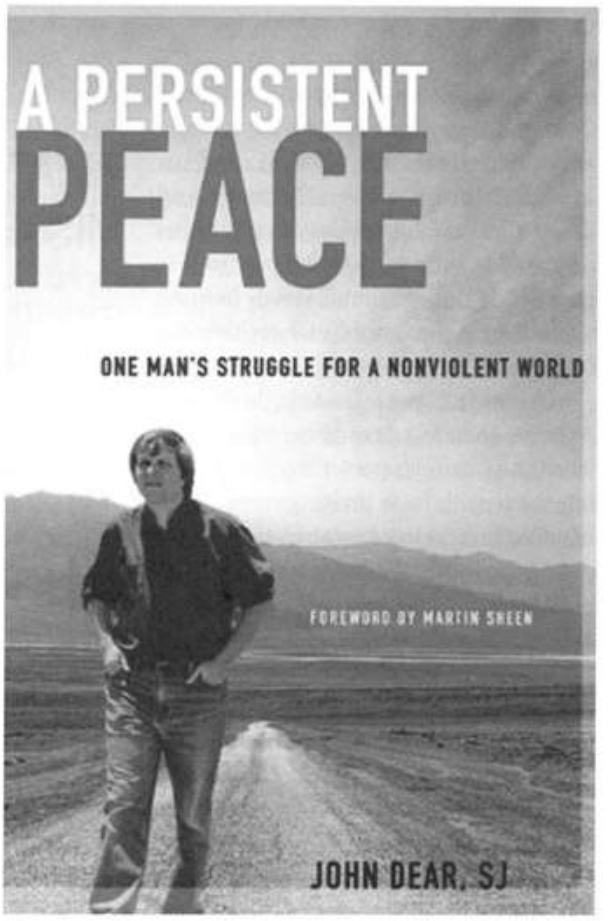
The book's title is not misplaced. Virtually every one of the book's last thirty chapters features at least one or more nonviolent actions—and the trouble that comes with each one. These include numerous acts of civil disobedience: resisting war in Central America and Iraq at the Pentagon and White House; protesting war research at the nation's nuclear weapons labs at Los Alamos, NM and Livermore, CA, as well as the Riverside Research Institute in New York City; and advocating for the homeless. This ministry has also included a year at a peace center in Northern Ireland and working to end the death penalty (Dear's story of entreating Mother Teresa to call prison officials on behalf of a death row inmate who was eventually granted clemency is particularly moving). In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 terror attacks, he organized over 500 chaplains as a coordinator of the Red Cross Spiritual Care Program.

Challenging the Just War Theory

Through John Dear's relentless program of nonviolent action—and his more than twenty books on faith-based peacemaking—this Catholic priest has joined the growing community of voices in the Catholic Church who have decisively questioned and critiqued its Just War theory and are helping to set it on the path to becoming a Peace Church.

In his book *The God Of Peace: Toward A Theology Of Nonviolence* (Orbis Books, 1994), Dear carefully analysed the documents of Catholic Social Teaching, especially since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Here he described an evolution within the Catholic Church from an uncritical acceptance of "justified warfare" to an increasingly critical stance that has begun to name nonviolence as the Gospel way of peacemaking.

The modern foundations of a Catholic turn toward peacemaking, Dear explained, began with Pope John XXIII's 1963 *Pacem in Terris*, which "questioned all warfare and opened the door to a church of nonviolence." In the documents of Vatican II and succeeding meetings, the Catholic Church articulated a central commitment to peacemaking rooted in justice that addresses the causes of war. In 1983, the U.S. Catholic Bishops' pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace", "proposed a theology of peace, explored the scriptural basis of peacemaking, imagined Jesus as a peacemaker and elevated nonviolence as a real Christian option." Ten years later, the U.S. Catholic Bishops issued a letter entitled "The Harvest of Justice Is Sown In Peace" in which they wrote:



> Although non-violence has often been regarded as simply a personal option or vocation, recent history suggests that in some circumstances it can be an effective public undertaking as well. Dramatic political transitions in places as diverse as the Philippines and Eastern Europe demonstrate the power of nonviolent action, even against dictatorial and totalitarian regimes.... These nonviolent revolutions challenge us to find ways to take into full account the power of organized, active nonviolence. (US Bishops' Conference. "The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace". [Washington, DC, 1993], 10-11.)

More recently, Pope Benedict XVI reflected on Jesus' call to "love your enemies" in a 2007 address at the Vatican:

> This page of the Gospel is rightly considered the 'magna carta' of Christian nonviolence; it does not consist in surrendering to evil—as claims a false interpretation of "turn the other cheek" (Luke 6:29)—but in responding to evil with good (Romans 12:17-21), and thus breaking the chain of injustice. It is thus understood that nonviolence, for Christians, is not mere tactical behavior but a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is convinced of God's love and power, who is not afraid to confront evil with the weapons of love and truth alone. Loving the enemy is the nucleus of the 'Christian revolution.' (Pope Benedict XVI, "Pope Benedict XVI Calls for a 'Christian Revolution,' Invites Faithful to Respond to Evil With Good," Public Address in Vatican City, www.Zenit.org, Feb. 18, 2007.)

During its first three centuries, the Christian community maintained a firm commitment to the way of Gospel Nonviolence (including general conscientious objection to war-making), which it viewed as constitutive of the way of Jesus. Its collusion with empire, which began in the fourth century C.E. (with its collaboration with the Roman Emperor Constantine), led to a theology of justified warfare that reigned intact for nearly fifteen centuries. Over the past several decades this position has begun to be challenged, prompted both by the barbarity and scope of modern warfare and by the praxis of faith-based

nonviolence dramatically and patiently lived and organized by Catholic women and men including Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Daniel Berrigan, and Cesar Chavez. John Dear, through his nonviolent witnessing and writing, is part of this lineage that is slowly helping to transform the Catholic Church's vocation as a Church of Peace.

By taking part in this historical process, Dear is not only helping to unleash the Church's power for transforming the world, he is inviting the Church itself to transform its own relationship to power in light of nonviolence: to put compassion, care, and cooperation into action in place of the dogmatic authoritarianism to which it has regrettably been prone both within and without its community.

Dear's work, more broadly still, is part of the historical momentum of an emerging engaged spirituality around the globe. While it irrevocably has a political dimension (for example, supporting and deepening a progressive agenda), this evolving spirituality is rooted in a vision ultimately not reducible to that agenda. More than an ideological commitment, its power springs from a spiritual journey of personal and social transformation grounded in a profound and inclusive understanding of "the love that does justice." Dear has played an important part in this slowly emerging reality.

John Dear's life journey is one of many possible forms of engaged spirituality. In his case, he has marked out a path in which the religious life is one immersed in the challenging but powerful work for justice and peace. This memoir is itself a kind of nonviolent action—dramatic, challenging, illuminating—that prods us to ask: What is the life we will lead to put our own "spirituality of engagement" into action? ■

Ken Butigan is on the staff of Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service.

[BOOK]

WHAT LIBERALS MISSED

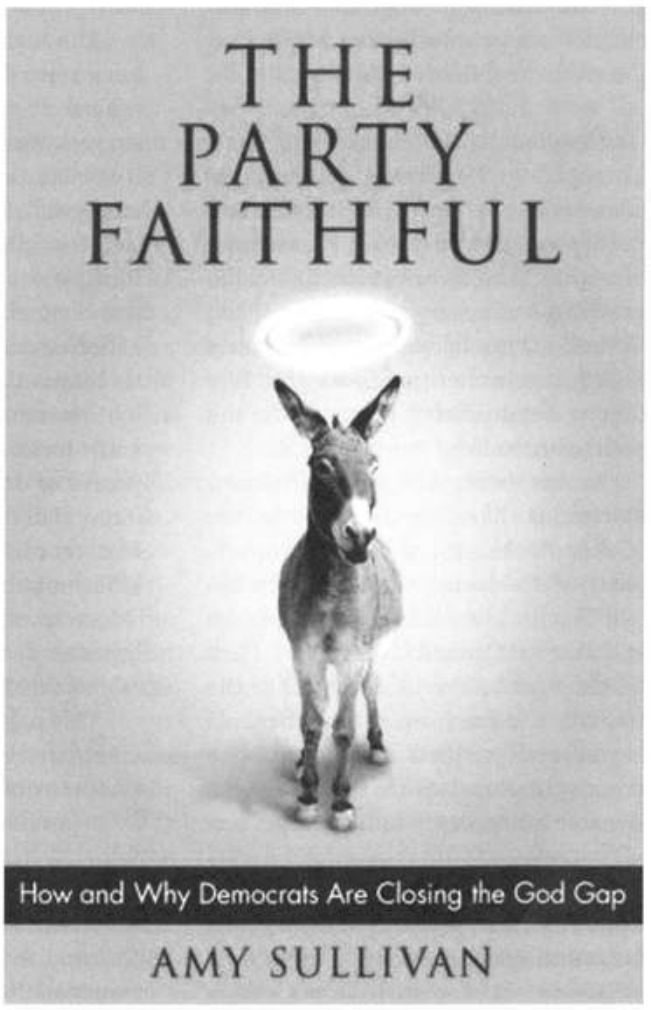
THE PARTY FAITHFUL: HOW AND WHY DEMOCRATS ARE CLOSING THE GOD GAP

by Amy Sullivan, Scribner, 2008

Review by David Belden

IF YOU WANT A GOOD, READABLE overview of the relationship between the Democratic Party and Christians (evangelicals, 'mainline' Protestants and Catholics) over the last 40 years, this is your book. Amy Sullivan writes primarily about electoral politics. She details how the Democrats lost majorities of two of their core constituencies—evangelicals and Catholics—and how they are just now beginning to work out how to get them back.

Better still, if you want a book that will give your aggressively secular liberal friends or relatives a pragmatic understanding of why they should grit their teeth and actively, diplomatically, seek political allies among believers, this should do the trick. It is hard to read this book and not conclude that anti-religious liberals have been childishly stupid over the last decades. If they had not been spooked by God-talk and "pro-life" vehemence, but had simply accorded basic respect to believers who shared their values on other issues, like poverty, contraception, education, healthcare, the death penalty, and war, they would have won over enough evangelical and Catholic voters to win the White House several more times. The most striking thing about the 2000 and 2004 elections were how close run they were. Sullivan's play by play on the Kerry campaign's tone-deaf approach to religion, and how, for example, this Catholic candidate lost the Catholic vote in Ohio, the critical swing state that lost him the election, by 44 to 55 (a 6 point drop from Al Gore's support among Catholics there in 2000), will leave you gasping. While the Bush campaign had legions of operatives working the religious vote, the Kerry campaign hired one young woman who was then sidelined and muzzled. For that we have suffered four more years of torture, energy policy failure and all the rest? It's all too easy to blame Bush's victories solely on the religious Right. Amy Sullivan, a journalist who was raised evangelical, has the wit to understand just how much of the failure rests with



secular liberal myopia.

What you will not get much insight into from the book is deeper reflection on what may be missing from liberal philosophy, as distinct from liberal electoral strategies, that enabled this generations-long failure to happen. Strategy is about making allies; philosophy asks if there is anything to learn from them.

Can the secular, who are not about to take up religious beliefs, nonetheless learn anything from the believers? This of course has been a major theme of *Tikkun* magazine in all its twenty-three years. It was curious that Sullivan referred to the Clintons' espousal of a "politics of meaning" early in Clinton's first term, without a mention of that term's author, Michael Lerner, Editor of *Tikkun*. Apparently she is not drawn yet to a deeper critique of liberalism. For Lerner the secular liberal and left failure is not just one of strategy but of analysis—a deep failure to appreciate spiritual alienation and hunger in Americans. This analytical failure, Lerner argues, arises from a fear of anything that can be considered irrational. It is a wholly understandable fear after centuries of religious wars and irrational fascisms. It persists even though we know that all human beings, including liberals and the left, are moved by fears, passions, longings and ethical values that can neither be dispelled nor embraced simply by rational means. We might wish that pure rationalism were the antidote to religious, racial, gender-based or nationalistic bigotry, but it isn't: love is the antidote, with all its attendant values, practices, pitfalls and paradoxes, and, yes, its alternative analyses.

Sullivan does touch on these issues in the book. She quotes Jim Wallis on the Democratic Party's failure in the mid-1970s to respond to evangelical social activists: "The left had by then turned away from 'common good' politics and towards identity politics, a rights politics." Rights politics, Sullivan comments, "had little in common with religiously motivated altruism." She describes the liberal intelligentsia's thorough rejection of religion by the 1970s and writes that, "Eager to stay in the game, many mainline Protestants responded by filtering most religion out of their political rhetoric, elevating 'rights' over 'righteousness' as the supreme civic virtue." It is telling that when Kerry's lone, young, muzzled religious organizer, Mara Vanderslice, finally opened her own consultancy in 2005 and started winning upset elections for Democrats, she and her partner called their firm "Common Good Strategies." Vanderslice is the primary hero of Sullivan's book: the young evangelical who gets it, when all the veteran organizers don't.

But is there really a huge philosophical gap between rights and righteousness, justice and altruism, individualism and the common good? In the quotes above, Sullivan suggests that such a gap is the heart of the matter, but she doesn't delve further. In most of the book she just seems to think that all that secular liberals need is to understand that the evangelicals and committed Catholics with whom they can make electoral alliances have a different, quirky worldview, which they must be allowed to express in their own way if they are to win votes from their constituencies.

Is there a bigger lesson? Could it be that the liberal world desperately needs to retreat from its own rationalist blind alley back towards a new secular equivalent of "religiously motivated altruism"? Is there in fact such a thing? Who is writing about it? We have George Lakoff writing about how to frame 'our' issues so 'they' get it, but who is teaching us how to develop a secular worldview genuinely based on altruism? Or is that what Lakoff's nurturant parenting is about—I find it hard to tell if he is mostly spin (sorry, framing), or mostly substance. It is interesting that these Christians chose a term, "the common good," that has no religious belief label attached to it. Perhaps Sullivan's next book will go deeper into these questions. We need more religiously-informed critics of secular liberalism who don't simply talk from their own religious tradition, but who can translate into more universal terms what secular liberals are missing: authors like Peter Dunlap, whose *Awakening Our Faith in the Future: the Advent of Psychological Liberalism* has currently grabbed my attention. ■

David Belden, D.Phil., is Managing Editor of Tikkun.

Chicago Theological Seminary announces the Herman Schaalman Chair in Jewish Studies

The Chicago Theological Seminary invites applications for a full-time, tenure-track faculty appointment to the newly established Schaalman Chair in Jewish Studies. Rank is open, Ph.D. required. Area of research specialization is open; however, the successful candidate should be able to offer courses in the classical texts (Talmud, midrash, etc.) of postbiblical Judaism and/or modern Jewish Thought. Applications from female candidates are encouraged. Chicago Theological Seminary is an institution of graduate theological education offering the M.A., M.Div., S.T.M., D.Min., and Ph.D. degrees and it is expected that the person occupying this position will teach in all of these programs. We have a diverse faculty and student body and are committed to the transformation of religious communities and the wider society toward greater justice and mercy. Review of applications will begin on October 15. Please send letter of application, Curriculum Vitae and three letters of recommendation to Office of the Academic Dean, Attn: Schaalman Chair Search, Chicago Theological Seminary, 5757 S. University Avenue, Chicago IL 60637. EOE/AA.

movement was more restricted and the economic situation became more difficult. The corrupt Palestinian Authority was allowed to be corrupt by the international community because of the possible benefits for the peace process. And at the end of the day we Palestinians ended up with a worse situation than when we were living under direct occupation. If we just talk about the number of settlements and settlers, it more than doubled during the years of Oslo. So where are the signs of peace?



Israeli border police scuffle with Palestinian and international activists , during a demonstration against Israel's separation barrier in West Bank village of Nilin, near Modiin, Wednesday, July 9, 2008.

AP PHOTOS/SEBASTIAN SCHEINER

ML: Now specifically what is it that Palestinians are giving up when they are engaged in the negotiations with Israel? What would they be giving up that they wouldn't be giving up if they didn't negotiate?

SA: I don't know what more can be given up. There are many things that the Israeli government has refused to talk about, from the right of return to the status of Jerusalem. I think this is the point where we should pull out of negotiations because the Palestinians are getting nothing from them. One thing that we have given up is credibility, and within the Palestinian community people are becoming more and more afraid to be openly critical because of the structures that have been created.

The Palestinian Authority urges us to not have conversations about resistance because they think that will endanger the negotiations with Israel. Israel says "Oh, there isn't a real partner to make a deal with on the other side," so the PA feels that it has to crack down on militant discourse to prove itself.

ML: Now let's go back to the issue of the parties not having much focus on the national struggle. There is a slow starvation of Gaza, and how could the two major parties not be focused on that?

SA: I use the term "surplus powerlessness" a lot, after having read your (Rabbi Lerner's) book on this topic, because that is what is happening. [Ed. note: *People feel more powerless than they actually are, and then out of that sense of their own powerlessness they take actions that are self-defeating and make them even more powerless than they were objectively.*] You feel so powerless against all the problems, so you have to always prove yourself within the community and that is by engaging in this "well, at least we are doing more than them" or "we are shooting more rockets than they are." I will tell you that if you actually talk to the people shooting the rockets and ask them if they really think this is for liberation and that it is for resistance, they honestly will tell you that it is mostly for internal struggles between the militant factions, not even the political factions. They talk about how many more rockets they have shot than this other group, and it is this manifestation of surplus powerlessness that leads to these acts of violence. I believe that when there is unity to address these bigger issues then all of this factionalism would fall by the wayside. But right now too many groups are involved in positioning themselves within the militant community and not in the struggles dealing with hunger and starvation and land occupation.

ML: How are you going to get out of this situation?

SA: Nonviolence, for me, is the only solution to get out of this mess. Nonviolence is the way to empower the Palestinian community to get out of this mentality of hopelessness and perceiving ourselves always as the powerless victim. Nonviolent struggle is a powerful way to take charge of your situation and make a difference in your community.

The difficulty in building support for a nonviolent form of struggle comes not only from

the problems in the Palestinian consciousness, but also from the Israeli government and military who do not want a nonviolent movement to evolve. That is not to say that they want us to engage in violence, but they also don't want us to engage in nonviolence. Even now with the little nonviolent actions taking place, we are seeing a harsher response from the Israeli military. Even when we do complete nonviolence, there is still a violent response from the military. And this is where there needs to be more discussion and meetings with Israeli groups that are supporting the nonviolent movement: how we can link with them even more, and involve the international community to show that Palestinians are engaging in nonviolence—especially in the Western press which suppresses any news of the Palestinians doing nonviolence.

Part of being realistic about this is realizing that the U.S. media is not interested in providing honest reporting about Palestinian nonviolence. But once a nonviolent movement grows, then people will start to understand that it is powerful and get involved, and the political party leadership will get involved and the media will not have the option to ignore us, and they will have to report on us and discuss it. I would say we are still in the early stages of something evolving. But finally we have been able to face the big opposition to nonviolence within the community, so that weight has gone. Now the challenge is to build a movement.

ML: My experience here in the United States is that *Tikkun* and the Network of Spiritual Progressives are perceived as apologists for Zionism and pushed away by Palestinians living in the United States when we try to build any joint activity, conference or teach-in. So is there any group that you see of U.S. Palestinians who might align with the nonviolent position?

SA: For many Palestinians living in the United States, most Palestinian groups who come out of the region direct their efforts toward charity and supporting families and children of Palestinians there. There is a fear of becoming too politically involved and not knowing how the U.S. government is going to deal with the political involvement. So most are worried that offering resistance, or even using the word resistance, violence or nonviolence, would be too risky, so they concentrate on helping those in need.

ML: We have a small but vocal group of people identified with the Palestinian cause that says "Israel has to be wiped off the face of the earth" and "Israel is evil."

SA: Those people would probably give me, as a Palestinian, as difficult a time as any other person who talks about nonviolence. You probably get flak from the Jewish community more than others. It is the story of what they know, how they grew up; most of them are refugees who did not come from Palestinian areas, probably born in refugee camps and moved to wherever they are now. The narrative is very deep for them, the agony from that history of losing everything sets their minds. But for many of the Palestinians who live in the Occupied Territories and understand the dynamics of the conflict, I would think they would have a different narrative, not to say one is right or wrong, just a different narrative.

ML: So your strategy now, in Palestine, is to just do more of what you are doing, which is training people in nonviolence?

SA: To do more of what we are doing, and to go deeper than that. This is the new thinking that we are developing. It is not just about engaging in resistance, it is about creating real understanding and deep analysis of what is causing the Israeli community and society to act in the way it acts, to allow their government and their military to engage in these acts of violence. If they knew better, or understood better, or were open to the situation more, they would not allow things to happen in their name that are happening quite frequently.

We need to build strategies to address this, and for me, this is where nonviolence has great success. In negotiations and political discussions you only have certain languages to use, certain diplomatic lingo that you have to engage in, and certain issues that you look at, such as border issues, land, and water rights—these are the kind of things you negotiate. With nonviolence it opens you up to engaging in a new language that the politicians will refuse to talk about.

For example, the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that you, Rabbi Lerner, defined in the May/June 2008 issue of *Tikkun*, as manifested in the *(continued on page 70)*

PALESTINIAN FOR NONVIOLENCE
(continued from page 23)

fear that is embedded in the Israeli community. You've correctly pointed out how we as Palestinians need to learn and understand that it is this fear that allows the Jewish population to give the green light to their government to commit acts of oppression and suppression of Palestinians.

How do we as Palestinians, even though we are not responsible for causing the initial inherited fear within the Jewish communities which happened in Europe, which was committed by white Christians, not Palestinians from the Middle East, how do we address our actions to be involved in the process of healing the fear that exists in the Jewish community?

Our Palestinian community needs to realize that every act of violence done against Israel is not isolated, not an act done against one military checkpoint or some civilians. There is a uniqueness in the Jewish perspective that we need to understand and take into account when acts of violence are done. These acts are misinterpreted and understood as a violent attack against an entire nation, an act of destroying an entire people. This is also part of the strategy that we are developing, trying to create language and tactics that will avert creating that feeling among the Jewish population.

ML: I have tried many times on the Israeli side to convince people to try to understand and deal with the psychodynamics in the Palestinian world. At one point, when I met with Rabin right after Oslo, I tried to convince him to say, "Ok, if you want to help the peace process here, I want my fellow Israelis to (1): learn Arabic, and speak Arabic to people. And (2): get to know Palestinians and invite them to your home. And (3): I want to apologize to the Palestinian people for all of the death, hurt, and violence that has happened because now we are on a path toward peace. I know that we hurt a lot of people."

I would love to see that same thing happening in the other direction. Of course, on an ethical level, it is totally unfair to ask the oppressed to deal with the psychology of the oppressor, but I try to make a distinction between what is fair and what is smart. There is a big difference there. It is not fair to ask Palestinians to worry about the psychology of Israelis, but on the other hand it is very smart to worry about that. So one such thing that I want you to think about is to have people who are part of that nonviolent movement writing letters to the families and communities of people who have been hurt by acts of Palestinian violence. To say "We are Palestinians who support nonviolence and we want you to know that most Palestinians here do not want to wipe you out and that we are deeply sorry at the death and the hurt caused by such and such act of violence. We don't support that, we don't think that that is an action that is part of our struggle, and we think it is a mistake. We want to apologize for that on the part of a whole lot of Palestinians who don't agree with it. But we can't control random people."



Sami Awad, the executive director of the Holy Land Trust Bethlehem, during a nonviolent demonstration at Al Mi'sara village southwest of Bethlehem city.

SA: I understand, but we do not want to be seen as the apologists for the Palestinian violence. Instead we need to create new tactics and strategies to prove to the Israelis, through action, that we are not out to hurt them, to destroy them.

ML: Can you tell me, are there such roots in Palestinian culture, of nonviolence? Or is it something that you are creating? Because a lot of people will say, "Oh, the Awads are Christians, they are mostly drawing on Christianity, but most of the people in the armed struggle are Muslims. And there is nothing in Muslim culture that is for nonviolence." So you are really trying to interpret the suppressed Christian voices as being the authentic articulation of Palestinian culture?

SA: Well, yeah, that is how many people try to present it, as interpreted. But knowing how small the Christian population is, which is 55,000 in total, and knowing that the vast majority of them are not involved in anything, no resistance, I conclude that all the nonviolent actions happening now in 2008 are conducted and led by Muslim leaders in the community, fully committed to nonviolence, fully understanding nonviolence in Islam, and as part of the Palestinian culture. And the Palestinian culture and Islam are both rich with examples—from as far back as the Prophet Mohammed up to modern culture, Palestinians have engaged in nonviolence. Maybe it wasn't talked about much, or directly referred to by the term nonviolence, but the term you used earlier, "smart resistance," smart actions, not this reactionary violence, these are terms that many Palestinians actually use to represent Islam. But for the majority of Palestinians, it really does go against the teachings of Islam. So, if the movement is going to evolve, it has to be led by the Muslim community, and will be. Are there any roots on the other side?

ML: I don't see any roots in Judaism for nonviolence. I mean, I create those roots by reading the text in a particular way, but it is not like the presence of an explicit nonviolent discourse is knocking me over the head. I am not overwhelmed by how much the Jewish tradition has nonviolence in it. I am not hearing it when I go to my Orthodox synagogue here in Berkeley. There are a lot of Jews who talk about peace who are actually primarily about revenge. There are

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some quotes that I can pull out of the tradition and say "hey look at this," but the majority tendency in the Bible is not nonviolence. It is the same as Christianity, there are some quotes from Jesus supporting nonviolence, but for the past 2000 years they haven't been practicing nonviolence. In fact, Christianity has been very violent. It all depends on the culture of the people practicing a given religion, on what aspects of that religon they emphasize. But back to what to do. So, let me ask you this: How can we help you? We have no money, as you know.

SA: I have always known that. I think part of it is creating knowledge and understanding. The American Jewish public needs to know that it is not just a simple black and white story over there, there are people on both sides who are working very hard trying to end the cycle of violence, and they need to start understanding that if they support and love Israel, they need to do the right things for Israel to survive. And everything that is being done now, this absolute blind support for Israel and the illness that the Israeli political establishment has, is destroying Israel in the long-term. I could even say, as a Palestinian, that it is to my benefit, I am now saying things that would be pro-Israel's survival, if they were to adopt them. The situation is getting more difficult, more people are now saying that the two-state option is a non-option. I see this in the walls and the land confiscation.

ML: And the one-state is not an option either. There are enough people that would see it as losing sovereignty.

SA: We really need to engage in deep thinking that would make Israeli society and Jewish society feel the security they need. If we were to propose a one-state plan, we would have to think of how to make the Jewish people feel secure enough to accept it. They don't have security now, and they would need to feel like a plan will make them more secure if they are going to go along with it.

ML: Israelis would need to be convinced it was a better deal.

SA: It has to be proven to be a better deal for them. And it's not just about some border that would make it geographically workable, it has to address the deep-rooted concerns of the Jewish community.

ML: It's not like we have no historical basis for fear in that regard. You just look at the Balkans and see the one state solution that was attempted, called Yugoslavia, didn't end up providing safety for those different groups. So there is some historical precedent that makes people feel like it would be even worse if they were all together.

SA: This is part of what Israel has to address. I always use the analogy of marriages and divorces: just don't leave us hanging in the middle like this. Marriage is the one-state and divorce is two-state. In the two-state plan, both states need viability, opportunity and equality, so that one state is not subordinate to the other. Subordinating one group to the other will not lead to a solution, it will still feel like an occupation. I mean, we saw Israel pull out of Gaza completely, so the land was liberated, but the occupation continues.

ML: What do you think about the idea of Palestinians campaigning for the right to vote in Israel as a way of provoking Israel to move toward a two-state solution? By saying, it's a fact that it is a one-state now, so give us the vote.

SA: Well, there is a step before that, a step that needs to be taken by the Palestinian leadership and establishment, which is to demand that the PA be dissolved. And that is the first step in the struggle against the Israeli government. By dissolving it, we remove the veil of responsibility from the Palestinian people, represented by the PA, and let it rest in the hands of the occupying forces who have the actual control right now anyway. And say, as occupiers, it is your responsibility. And there are many voices in the PA calling for the PA to give the authority back to the Israelis in the areas that are under occupation by the military.

And then from there you can say that we are living under one country, and demand the vote. Equality. It is all about equality, at the end of the day. For me, the struggle is about equality. One-state or ten-state, it does not matter. It is about every citizen in that society having equal rights, equal opportunities, equal possibilities. Of course everyone has access to a school, but it is more than that, it is equality at every level. Have good schooling for every child, and have good opportunity for every individual. If there is no sense of equality than whatever plan is implemented will not last.

ML: What do you make of Sabeel? [Ed. Note: *Sabeel is an ecumenical grassroots liberation theology movement among Palestinian Christians.*]

SA: I have a lot of respect for what they do, but I feel that they are too much of a niche group, that they are too focused on one thing, too focused on the Christian groups and the traditional groups that have been very supportive of peace and justice issues. So they have not been able to break through into other churches in the United States

ML: I heard from the kinds of people that Sabeel invites to its conferences a much more aggressive language than you use. There is much more anger at Israel coming from them than from you. There doesn't seem to be any comprehension of the need to deal with the psychology of Israel.

SA: Yes, and I think we are probably the only ones who are developing this language. But hopefully as we talk to more people about it, they will begin to understand. I don't want to be excusing and justifying the actions of Israel, saying we can't do this, we can't do that. I want to be saying what we can do that can really create change within Israeli society.

ML: Blessings to all who are committed in principle and practice to nonviolence. ■

TIBET
(continued from page 27)

collaborators as well as Chinese, some dressed as monks, some dressed as Khampas from Eastern Tibet. The combination of these agents provocateur and the absence of the usual swift crushing presence of the PAP incited some Tibetans to riot, and Zhang got the footage he wanted from his security cameras, which he had people stationed to defend. If it had been a real, coordinated Tibetan-instigated riot, the first target would have been the security cameras, which are omnipresent and very well known to the Tibetans.

But then things went wrong for

Zhang's plan. Unexpectedly, monks and laypersons all over the Tibetan plateau began to stand up and protest, in over 170 demonstrations. Tibetans themselves were unarmed and resorted to violence only in two of these demonstrations, the ones in Lhasa, clearly stage-managed by Zhang. The PAP fired into crowds, beat demonstrators, arrested and tortured thousands, and so on. It still goes on. The Western media was confused, as they began to say "there seem to be a lot of Tibetans *outside of Tibet* who are protesting in solidarity with the people in Lhasa!" But those areas are not really "outside" of Tibet; they are on the high plateau which defines Tibet. In the 1950s, during the time when the People's Liberation Army was first invading Tibet, the Chinese Communist government divided the Eastern Tibetan provinces of Khams and Amdo into the eleven "Tibet Autonomous Prefectures" of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan provinces. They created on paper an "Inner" and "Outer" Tibet in case the rest of the world protested and resisted their invasion of Central Tibet (now the "Tibet Autonomous Region"). These "autonomous prefectures" constitute three-fifths of what was Tibetan territory traditionally, and two-thirds of the Tibetan people live in them. In fact the whole plateau, with an average altitude of 14,000 feet—the roof of the world—is the Tibetan people's natural habitat. So the uprising in spring of 2008 was all over the whole Tibetan region.

The uprising of the entire Tibetan people, overwhelmingly nonviolent in spite of harshly violent repression and assault by over a hundred thousand PAP paramilitary troops, was a great embarrassment for Zhang Qingli. He had been conducting his own new "cultural revolution" in Tibet for several years, forcing monks to denounce the Dalai Lama and pay homage to the Chinese selected puppet Panchen Lama, instituting compulsory "patriotic reeducation campaigns" and communist management committees in monasteries, arresting and beating lay people for possessing pictures of the Dalai Lama and the imprisoned true Panchen Lama, and so forth.

In fact he was implementing policies set up for Tibet by Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao in the mid-1990s, when the then party boss of Tibet, Chen Kueiyuan, declared that Tibetan Buddhism itself was seditious, since it was that core aspect of Tibetan culture that made the Tibetans identify themselves as Tibetans and refuse to identify themselves as Chinese. So the Chinese occupiers of Tibet have openly proclaimed their intent to finalize a cultural genocide in Tibet. This is the third time they have engaged in this, the first being the 1950s when they were destroying monasteries and killing monks and pious laypeople in Eastern Tibet, the second being the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, and now this one, which really began in 1994 and has intensified in the last two or three years. It is this assault on Tibetans' spirituality and core identity that is the true cause of the uprising within Tibet this year. But sadly, Zhang has convinced his bosses in Beijing that his policies are not the problem, and that the Dalai Lama instigated all the trouble, so they are now doubling down on policies that have failed them for sixty years.

The question now is, what to do going forward? The Chinese are still not negotiating in good faith with the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Democratic Government in exile, in spite of the urgings of various national leaders like Gordon Brown, Nicholas Sarkozy, Angela Merkel, George Bush, Yasuo Fukuda, Kevin Rudd, and Stephen Harper. They do not even recognize the exile government or the Dalai Lama as representing the Tibetan people, though every Tibetan inside and outside Tibet considers him their unquestioned leader. The Chinese government maintains a shrill, harsh rhetoric about the Dalai Lama and about Tibet, and uses false propaganda to mobilize a militant nationalism in their own people, conflating the Tibetans' natural wish for freedom and the world's people's humanitarian support of that wish with Western powers' "evil desires" to "harm" or "split" China. On the Internet, you can find Chinese citizens calling for more blood of the "barbaric Tibetans." Zhang obviously has succeeded, so far, in propagandizing his home audience.

So does this mean that all is lost, the Dalai Lama has failed, the Tibetan cause is finished? There is a pseudo-syllogistic argument circulated by various fellow travelers of the Chinese imperium that runs as follows: "China's control over Tibet is absolute and unshakeable, that is a given. Therefore, if you want to help the Tibetans, do not give them a false hope that there is any way they can regain their freedom. This only makes them resist re-education, protest against the Chinese, question the legitimacy of Chinese ownership of Tibet, and struggle against their rulers. This in turn makes the Chinese more insecure and therefore more oppressive towards the Tibetans. The logical conclusion then is, if you want to help the Tibetans, don't help the Tibetans; it will only encourage them and give them false hope, which will get them in more trouble, and you will be the false friend."

An answer to this was once made by a Tibetan friend of mine, when responding in a media interview to one of these fellow travelers. He said, "So you would recommend to a woman being raped that she not scream or resist the rapist, because that would only provoke him to treat her more harshly?"

My opinion is that the reason the Chinese leadership has not yet responded to the Dalai Lama's totally beneficial offer to help them solve the problem, giving each side what it most desires in a win-win solution, is that they are caught in the grip of fear, and are also in denial about the ineffectiveness of their current policies. What is needed is not less pressure from outside countries (which need to include India, the Southeast Asian countries, especially Vietnam, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, the Mongolias, and the various Central Asian "-stans," so it is not just "Western") but friendly yet rock-hard insistence that Chinese leaders stop being paranoid, realize their own strength, relax their suppression of human rights and human rights advocates, and deal honestly and fairly with their minorities. They need to show that they are confident enough about the benefits of belonging to the Chinese union to loosen their grip and not treat their ethnic regions like colonies, and gradually stop imitating nineteenth-century Western imperialists on the excuse that they were

once harmed by such imperialists.

The Chinese are a great people, with a great civilization of their own. However, they have totally lost contact with their past due to the disastrous communist miseducation they have suffered under for several generations. With Marxism they were mentally invaded by one kind of Western, fanatically materialist ideology, and with unbridled one-party-state controlled capitalism they are completing their own self-destruction under the control of the opposite kind of Western, fanatically materialist ideology. Our relationship with China is among the most important relationships of this century. Continuing on the present path of superpower competition will lead to planetary catastrophe. We must change that path by treating the Chinese like we do any other human beings, not as some special strange personalities who are intractable to normal human interaction, as many of our Sinologists would have us believe. They are our mature equals, as capable of reason and self-correction as we should be, and potentially excellent partners in making a better world for all. We must show true friendship. But true friends are not co-dependents, enabling their friends' addiction to self-destructive ways of being and doing. The Chinese must stop trying to conquer the world, as so many have tried before, and so many failed. They must join us in a twenty-first Common Era century, which must be based on mutual cooperation and altruistic creativity (sometimes called enlightened self-interest). This is not idealistic, but only realistic; war is obsolete and colonialism and slavery no longer acceptable in the community of nations. We must have an ethical revolution worldwide, to solve the dire problems facing all humans on this planet. This revolution has its outstanding exemplars—the Dalai Lama is perhaps the most well known worldwide.

The Dalai Lama is China's and our best ally in helping China get back to its own civilization (operating on the Confucian version of the Golden rule, rediscovering their Buddhist transcendentality, living by their Taoist harmony with the natural environment, etc.), re-kindling their own spirituality (while embracing their Muslims and Christians), and taking a responsible leadership role in creating a harmonious, economically viable, environmentally restorative, and politically peaceful world. Under the spiritual leadership of the Dalai Lama, the Tibetans have resisted the Chinese oppression mostly nonviolently for almost sixty years now. We can certainly invest a few more years in seeing this unique nonviolent liberation movement though to success. ■

JEWISH HISTORY
(continued from page 32)

no solution to the Jewish problem that isn't simultaneously a solution to the world's problem" (p. 216). Right before I met you for the first time (and before I had read any of your work) I had written an article that explored this theme. Since the Jews have served as a virtual archetypal "Other" throughout much of our history, I suggested that we may not find lasting peace until the conditions and consciousness of the world are such that people have little remaining need to project their rage and frustrations onto an "Other."

Lacking a religious background, however, I had never heard the Jewish mission described as you boldly express it: "To serve as a witness to the possibility of healing and transformation, and to be a vanguard people working to heal and transform the world."

If the above is our mission then perhaps it makes sense that we can never fully be at "peace" in the world until that mission is fulfilled.

MICHAEL LERNER: I do want to point out that in my view "Israel" refers to anyone who is Yisra-el, that is, wrestling with God (to connect more deeply), and that that vanguard consists of all those who are seeking actively with their fullest life commitments to build a world of justice, peace, ecological sanity, love, kindness, generosity, awe and wonder at the universe, and embodying the sacred. That includes some Jews, some Christians, some Muslims, some Buddhists, some Hindus, some atheists and some "spiritual but not religious" secularists. One reason why we are trying to make *Tikkun* more interfaith and have created an interfaith organization—the Network of Spiritual Progressives (NSP)—is to get away from the tendency of Jews (even progressive Jews) to fall back into unconscious chauvinistic ideas about the role of Jews in the world. I believe that Jews have, because of our Torah and our history of identifying with the oppressed that manifests in telling a foundation story about ourselves as slaves in Egypt who were able to get out of that slavery, and our history of being the most rebellious and iconoclastic of peoples through much of our history (thereby setting ourselves up also to be the enemy of ruling elites by the very revolutionary nature of our Torah and its teachings), a strong foundation for becoming part of that vanguard needed to heal our planet. In my book *Jewish Renewal*, and in the weekly class I teach on explicating the weekly Torah portion, I've tried to unpack the way that the Jewish holidays and the observance of Shabbat can dramatically strengthen our identification with the liberatory struggles of all peoples.

But as we've sometimes demonstrated in the pages of *Tikkun*, the dominant strands of Zionism, the policies of the State of Israel, and the way these have impacted Jewish thought and Jewish religious practice around the world, have all led many Jewish people to be less likely to want to be part of any transformative vanguard. On the contrary, Jews influenced by the narrow vision of what Israel is and can be that currently predominates in the discourse of the State of Israel and in the organized Jewish communities of the Diaspora, have become increasingly open to forms of chauvinistic nationalism and militarism that stand in sharp contrast with the peace-and-justice-oriented proclivities of Judaism throughout the ages. Happily, there is a counter-tendency in the Jewish world, a tendency to renew the peace-and-justice orientation of Judaism, and I'm proud that *Tikkun* magazine has played an important role in giving voice to that tendency.

Of course, this is not just a Jewish problem. Every other religious and national community on the planet is split between what I call "the Right Hand of God" (oriented toward "power over others") and "The Left Hand of God" (oriented toward love and generosity). So, the vanguard that needs to emerge to accelerate the healing

needed by the people of this planet, a vanguard that I hope the NSP can participate in shaping and nurturing, will come from all peoples, races, genders and religions (and anti-religions), and I look forward to working with all who are ready to join with us in the NSP. Those people will become the inheritors of the task that the Jewish people as a biological construction are no longer fulfilling. Indeed, given the shrinking of the world and the growing consciousness of our unity with all other human beings, the ability of many Jews to grow beyond nationalist chauvinism and to welcome the inclusion of all people into the spiritual vanguard that is needed in this historical period, is a manifestation of the very spiritual consciousness that is a fulfillment of Isaiah's vision for the future.

2. The value of the Bible's two voices

Oxenberg: You point out that two very different voices can legitimately be heard in the Bible, and that perhaps this tension is not regrettable. You note that the two voices (the "voice of God" and the "voice of accumulated pain") are the two tendencies so often vying with one another inside the human psyche. If I understand correctly what you are suggesting, the process of "wrestling" with the text requires us to "wrestle" with the different sides of our nature. Through this process we can eventually come to recognize that our voice of forgiveness, love, generosity, mercy... is our more essential voice, the one that can offer us genuine healing and peace, unlike our more reactive voice of vengeance and domination. Thus, we will hopefully conclude that the loving, generous, and forgiving "voice" in the Bible is the true voice of God.

As I understand the above, the wrestling process you describe is worthwhile because it leads to growth. Had the Bible just included the loving and caring voice, it wouldn't have spoken to our inner struggle. Some might have tried to emulate this loving voice, if they could (and repress more vengeful impulses) primarily to gain favor with God in this and/or whatever afterlife may occur. But the fact that the text is ambiguous requires us to wrestle with (rather than repress) our different sides and eventually "choose" consciously which voice to work to emulate.

Lerner: That may be a good outcome, but I doubt if there was a someone there thinking this through and making the decisions in the conscious way your formulation seems to suggest. I don't believe that there is a God who intends to shape history and then makes things happen in history. Rather, I think that God's message has always been available, that it is built into the evolving structure of the universe, which is a structure encouraging greater levels of love, consciousness, and freedom. Human freedom has been used both to hear the message of love and also to undermine it, and both of these things happen within the daily life experience of human beings. All of us have in our consciousness two voices or master narratives about "reality"—a voice of fear that seeks protection through domination of others, and a voice of hope that seeks protection through love and generosity toward others. All of us sometimes hear God as tilting more toward the voice of fear (which inevitably leads to a politics of domination and control over others), what I call "the right hand of God" (as Moses' sister calls it when she talks about God's right hand wiping out the Egyptians), or more towards the voice of hope or love (which leads to a politics of generosity and building caring and open-hearted alliances), or what I call the left hand, something I try to explain more fully in my 2006 national best-seller *The Left Hand Of God.*

3. The "repetition compulsion" cycle and Israel-Palestine

Oxenberg: As with the two examples above, perhaps the fact that when the Jews "leapt from the burning buildings of Europe," we "landed on the backs of the Palestinians," could serve an evolutionary purpose as well, despite the suffering it has caused, thus far, to both parties. For, had the Jews been able to find a truly uninhabited, undisputed "home" after the genocidal suffering we experienced in Europe, we wouldn't be forced to grow (through healing), to achieve peace.

Further, had our story ended peacefully there, after our excruciating final chapter in Europe, we would have established great credentials to bear witness to suffering, and perhaps to the potential for inner healing, but we wouldn't be challenged to work to "transform" the victim/perpetrator, repetition compulsion cycle that has characterized much of human history.

Instead, faced with an inherent conflict over the land and a still traumatized consciousness, while amassing increasing power we've been confronting the ease with which one can become a "victim/perpetrator," along with the potential impetus to work to heal and transform this uncomfortable identity dialectic. In this role we have been getting to know, firsthand, the complexity of emotions and psychological dynamics that can affect behavior while one is still traumatized and faced with difficult external/interpersonal circumstances (including fear, legitimate anger over the actions of one's "adversary," greed, aggression, projection, rationalization, projective identification, etc.).

With such experience, we can attest to the complex psychological processes that often underlie behavior that can be deemed "destructive," "oppressive," or even "evil" by others. Thus, we can attest as well to the "non-ontological" nature of much of what gets labeled "Evil."

Lerner: Yes, this is a positive way of reading that history.

I see both Israelis and Palestinians as suffering from PTSD (see my analysis of Israel/Palestine in the May/June 2008 issue of *Tikkun*).

One thing for sure: suffering doesn't automatically produce higher levels of consciousness or awareness, and quite frequently it produces paranoia, anger, hatred of others, and other psycho-spiritual distortions. But it can on occasion, and with the right help, also be a spur to growth and deeper levels of wisdom and of identification with and caring about the suffering of others. Both sets of consequences have happened to Jews throughout our history. The expulsion from our ancient homeland and the creation of a rabbinic Judaism appropriate for survival in the 1800 years of our dispersion opened up a creative and deep form of religious experience and sustainable religious practice that made possible a post-Diaspora Judaism confronting

different questions than those that faced the Jewish people in the days when we had animal sacrifice in our Temple. But I've also witnessed the distorted ways that some Jews have used our suffering in the Holocaust as a warrant to become indifferent to the suffering of the Palestinian people. So I now feel very cautious about any claim that suffering necessarily produces a greater love or identification with others who are suffering. And I'm suspicious when any oppressed group claims higher levels of virtue, wisdom or legitimate rights because of the ways that they have been maltreated in the past.

4. Going Deeper than Oslo

OXENBERG: Yes, how we respond to our suffering affects whether it can potentially serve as a spur to growth or will merely feed and expand the victimization/perpetration cycle.

Related to these two possibilities, perhaps the fact that the Oslo process broke down when it did, although very painful, could also make room for a greater healing, if wise choices are made. As you know, at the time of the 2000 Camp David summit—and still today—neither the Jews nor the Palestinians had engaged in the level of inner healing that would have allowed for a real transformation in their relationship and a truly sustainable, deep-rooted peace. As you have written, this was a key reason why Oslo broke down in the first place. However, even if Oslo had "succeeded," it would have masked significantly unhealed psyches on both sides, and thus would likely have led to a cold peace at best, with great potential for renewed conflict. Unfortunately this critique may still be applicable today even if the current efforts to achieve "peace" result in some success.

Further, as you've written, Israel has not acted as a "Jewish" state, but rather a state where many Jewish people happened to live. As you've noted, Israel has adopted many of the values and habits of other Western, market-based societies in which materialism, consumerism, and selfishness serve as stand-ins for more meaning-based priorities. Sadly, Israel has lost much of the idealistic dimension of the original Zionist vision. Perhaps Israel will only find lasting, deep-rooted peace when it can better serve as "a light unto the nations," rather than as yet another alienating, competitive, market-based society. Although many argue that holding Israel to a "higher standard" than other countries is a form of anti-Semitism, and it may be, the Torah clearly holds the Jews to a particular standard. Israel's path to lasting peace may well depend upon its ability to better embody Torah values.

LERNER: Yes, this a central point of my perspective on the Middle East. Israel will never be "the" light unto the nations, but it could be one of the lights unto the nations—and in the twenty-first century it could play a very important role if it could model a hurt people overcoming its nationalist chauvinism and acting and talking in a way that embodied the notion that our own well-being as a people depends on the well-being of the Palestinian people, or Arabs, and of all people on this planet. That would make Israel a light unto the nations. It is also, in my view, the only plausible survival strategy for Israel and for the Jewish people.

Few of the current crop of leaders of Israel or Jewry in the United States outside the *Tikkun* world are able or willing to articulate this as a goal, much less to act upon it. In fact, apart from the community around *Tikkun* and Rabbis for Human Rights, the overwhelming majority of the current leaders, rabbis, and Jewish journalists, editorialists, op-ed writers, college professors, politicians, etc. are either fanning the flames of Jewish or Israeli chauvinism or they are quietly accepting those who do so as legitimate leaders and providing no alternative discourse and no public critique.

Or, like some of the Jewish peace organizations, they quietly affirm a peace-oriented perspective on Israel but then tip-toe around the Jewish world, fearful that they will be called anti-Semitic or self-hating Jews should they dare to forcefully criticize Israel's most recent violations of human rights (e.g., the war in Lebanon in 2006 or the collective punishment of the people of Gaza in 2008) in a way that would be heard by the public.

I've been particularly disappointed at Jewish peace groups that are so concerned about maintaining their own legitimacy that they refuse to publicly mourn the suffering of the Palestinian people, instead focusing only on why Israel's policies are bad for the Jews. While that claim is 1000% true, when that focus becomes dominant it tends to reinforce the consciousness that "what's good for the Jews" is the primary criterion by which Jews should evaluate what we do in the world. That can only be a legitimate criterion if we take the broadest possible view of "what's good for the Jews," as we do in *Tikkun*, namely that what's good for the Jews is the wellbeing of the planet earth and of all the people who live on it, and that consequently Jewish self-interest cannot be separated from the ecological, peace, social justice, survival, connection to God, and love-maximization interests of the entire population of the world.

5. Healing collective traumas

OXENBERG: Perhaps we can make the argument that it is now time for Jews, and hopefully Palestinians, to actually do the deeper-rooted healing necessary to transform our consciousness in a manner that can allow a lasting peace to emerge. In your book you describe an outline of the emotional healing process that the Jewish community needs to engage in to finally heal the scars that continue to haunt our collective psyche.

While numerous Israel/Palestine co-existence projects and inter-cultural dialogue groups have been run over the past decade or more, very few procedures have been developed to help either the Jewish or Palestinian community directly process, mourn, and *heal* the impact of their historic traumas.

Perhaps *Tikkun* can take the lead on this front. The Middle East Healing Project that is being sponsored by the *Tikkun* Institute is designed to address this need. We're working to bring together experts (e.g., trauma specialists, mental health experts, conflict resolution professionals) to develop a group process that can provide a space for deep community mourning of collective loss, and for healing the impact of collective trauma. We are incorporating

techniques drawn from depth psychology, particularly the Internal Family Systems (IFS) model of psychotherapy (a brief synopsis of IFS theory is attached to the end of this paper).

To read more about our Middle East Healing Project go to:
www.tikkun.org/oxenberg

Two features of the IFS process may render it particularly relevant to the project of Middle East healing you describe in your book. 1) IFS work helps individuals and groups learn to identify, witness, and heal wounds incurred by the different "voices" within, so that we become less inclined to automatically identify with our "voices" of accumulated pain. 2) IFS theory is psycho-spiritual at its core. Through helping individuals and groups "unblend" from (or dis-identify with) various "parts" within, the IFS process enables us to make more sustained contact with our "higher Self" (perhaps equivalent to our "voice of God" within), which is viewed in this system as the *ultimate agent* of healing and transformation.

Lerner: I applaud your efforts and those of all others who are truly practicing psycho-spiritual healing. The next step that I do not yet see happening is that healers need to train activists on how to reach beyond those who would voluntarily come to their programs, to do mass outreach to those who have been turned off to the possibility of peace and reconciliation. This is going to take a major commitment of time and money, and a major challenge to the political culture in both Israeli and Palestinian society. I believe that those best situated to make such a challenge would be those who could present themselves as articulators of the deepest truths of the spiritual wisdom of Judaism, Christianity and/or Islam.

6. The possible future

Oxenberg: Clearly no group therapeutic healing experience in itself can change the consciousness in Israel/Palestine or transform the collective psyche of Israelis or Palestinians. Our project, expanding upon the tradition of your book *Healing Israel/Palestine* is focused primarily on presenting a simple, accessible analysis of how many harmful attitudes and behaviors exhibited by various parties on both sides of the conflict represent specific hurtful responses to the "voices of accumulated pain" within each community, along with options for working to heal the impact of this collective hurt. We aim to identify the historical and current roots of such pain, along with the beliefs, attitudes, and defensive strategies that have emerged in response to this wounding; we will then explore how these responses (exhibited by various polarized "parts" within each community) often serve to recreate and reinforce the perpetuation of such pain for all parties involved (although we certainly acknowledge the asymmetry of power and collective suffering in the current context). We will also elicit from each Israeli, Palestinian, and American project participant a vision of what a higher Self-led response to the Israel/Palestine conflict might look and feel like (one more clearly influenced by the "voice of God" within each party), and what attitudes, behaviors, and structural changes would be needed to support such a vision. Once we synthesize this material, we plan to distribute this relatively accessible, psycho-spiritual perspective to journalists, politicians, educators and leaders on different levels of Israeli, Palestinian, and U.S. society. Participation in an actual IFS group process is an additional component of our Healing project for participants motivated to engage in such an experience.

With respect to the Jewish community—if we can eventually heal enough to be able to make a sustainable and just peace, we may finally be ready to fulfill what you believe the Torah proclaims to be the Jewish mission, and ultimately, the human mission. If so, we will not only be able to "Serve as a witness to the *possibility* of healing and transformation" *we will be an embodiment of the REALITY of healing and transformation.* If so, we will have 'wrestled' significantly with the different voices inside ourselves, and finally become able to identify, and better identify with, the voice of God. In this context, perhaps our history of both intense suffering, and perpetration of harm, will not have been in vain. Given that Israel/Palestine is located in a spiritual heart of the Western world and holds a profound significance for Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike, clearly our healing and transformation will have a very significant impact on the consciousness of the world.

Brief synopsis of IFS (the Internal Family Systems model of psychotherapy):

IFS theory is psycho-spiritual and posits that each human being (and by extension each ethnic group) has access to an unwoundable essence, or higher Self, characterized by wisdom, compassion, and loving non-attachment. However, current and historic wounding at the personality level, along with defenses that develop to protect and compensate for such psychic injury, frequently obscures this essence. Such unhealed trauma often leaves individuals and groups identified exclusively with "parts" of themselves that carry burdens, including distorted beliefs about themselves and others that emerged in the context of, or in reaction to, their earlier trauma. IFS technique offers a highly practical methodology to help individuals and groups "unblend" from the limited perspectives and painful affect held by their unhealed "parts." They can then access their higher Self's wisdom to witness and heal the wounds their "parts" have carried often for years, or within groups, sometimes for generations.

The ultimate goal of IFS therapy is to allow individuals or groups to become more "Self"-led in their behavior, rather than led around by the emotions, reactivity, and limited perspectives carried by their burdened and wounded parts (for more information you can check out the website, www.Selfleadership.org). As a result, IFS's practical methodology can potentially help parties to the Mideast conflict better embody core tenets of their shared Abrahamic faiths including the dictates to: "Love your neighbor as yourself," "Love the stranger," and "Aid one another in what is good and pious. Do not aid one another in what is sinful and aggressive." ■

MUSSAR
(continued from page 53)

been changed to protect confidentiality). Rachel had grown up with a very attractive but somewhat self-absorbed mom named Phyllis.

As Rachel explained during her initial counseling session, "My mom can be quite charming and charismatic. She's an incredible real estate saleswoman and she can throw the most elegant dinner parties with decoration skills that are beyond Martha Stewart. But when it comes to empathy or flexibility, forget it! My mom gets real testy and sarcastic when she's not in control, or when either of her kids ask her to consider their point of view in a situation where my mom fears she's going to lose face or look bad in the eyes of someone she's trying to impress. She can say the most vicious things and not care one bit if she's hurt you deeply. For her, everything is an issue of survival and she doesn't care who gets crushed as long as she gets her way."

For years Rachel had gone to therapists who told her to cut off from her mom or to "let it all out—tell your narcissistic mother exactly how you feel." Rachel found, however, that "each time I would start yelling at my mom, it got me nowhere. My mom's sarcastic put-downs and her lack of caring hurt me even more than before."

Then a year ago Rachel enrolled in a Mussar class and began to explore the idea that finding a way to act with integrity, inner strength, and compassion even when her mom was being unpleasant was an option she hadn't tried yet. Along with her Mussar training, Rachel came to see me for a few counseling sessions about a specific dilemma she was facing.

Rachel had known since her college days that she was attracted to women, and she had recently fallen in love with a friend-of-a-friend named Ellie. But Rachel had never told her mother about her sexual orientation and now Ellie was asking if she could come and meet the family at the upcoming lavish high holiday dinner that Phyllis was hosting in a few weeks.

At first Rachel admitted, "I feel caught in a no-win situation. If I come out to my family and I bring Ellie to one of my mom's big events, it's going to be horrible. My mom is going to say vicious things to me and she's going to find a way to make Ellie feel unwelcome and rejected. I don't want to do that to her, but on the other hand I can sense that Ellie has no desire for us to have a closeted relationship and she's wondering why I lack the courage to stand up to my mom and say, 'Hey, this is who I am and this is how it's going to be from now on.'"

During our counseling sessions, I asked Rachel, "From your Mussar readings and assignments, what might be another possibility for how to approach your mom?"

Rachel looked at me with a blank expression for a moment and then something lit up in her eyes. She said, "In Mussar, we take a moment to look at ourselves as a humble-but-improving vessel for God's love and holiness and to look at the other person as a humble-but-improving vessel that also contains hidden sparks of light. But that's not easy to do with someone like my mother, because her sparks of light are so deeply hidden under layers and layers of status-seeking, ego, defensiveness, and sarcasm."

So I asked Rachel the tough question, "What do you think might be some of your mom's hidden sparks of light?"

Rachel smiled and admitted, "I've never really asked myself that question." Then she got a mischievous grin on her face as she said, "Do I really have to consider my mom in such positive terms?"

I replied, "It doesn't mean we need to whitewash or lie about your mom's difficult traits. It just means that in your next few interactions with her, you might benefit from seeing if there's some light and goodness hidden under all that puffed-up protection."

Rachel thought for a moment and then said, "The truth about my mom is that she desperately wants to be loved and approved of by everyone around her. She's like a little girl who never quite believes she's good enough or pretty enough, so she's always trying harder to prove herself. It makes me sad to think of just how vulnerable and fragile my mom is underneath all her bravado and sarcasm. She's always in fear that someone is going to figure her out and reject her. I guess that's going to make it hard for her to deal with the fact that she's about to find out she's the mom of a lesbian and that her impeccable dinner parties are now going to have something controversial that might cause narrow minds to question whether she was a good-enough parent."

That insight about her mom's vulnerability and longing for love was the

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beginning of a breakthrough for Rachel. For the next few weeks, Rachel initiated six gentle phone calls and three face-to-face conversations in which she listened compassionately as her mom described some of her own fears and concerns about what people might think or say about the news that Rachel was bringing her female lover to the holiday dinner.

As Rachel discovered, "Once I realized that my mom's insecurities and sarcastic cover-ups were about her and not about me, it was so much easier to just listen and appreciate how hard this is for my mom. I actually had a moment where I looked into her frightened, defensive face and saw my mom's vulnerable longing for love shining through. She's not an easy woman to love, but my mom is so hungry to be appreciated and cared about. Talking to her about how much I have longed for love with a woman I could trust and build a life with, and how much my mom has longed for love in each of her three marriages and many breakups, has helped us connect in a way we never did before."

I cannot say that Rachel's mom became a perfectly behaved, compassionate human being as a result of these heart-to-heart talks. At the high holiday dinner a few weeks later, Rachel's mom was still quite bossy, controlling, and even made two sarcastic remarks that had subtle hints of homophobia.

But Rachel found, "My strength and my happiness didn't come from holding my breath and waiting for my mom to change into a perfect empathic human being. I'm feeling good about Ellie's first visit to my family because for the most part my mom and I treated each other with dignity throughout these past few weeks and the family gathering was 95% decent and only 5% toxic. There were a few tense moments, but using some of the Mussar techniques for asking God to keep my heart open, I was able to feel loved and accepted by most of my extended family even when one or two people had judgmental looks on their faces."

Rachel concluded, "Despite her discomfort with the whole situation, my mom seemed to appreciate that Ellie dresses well, that Ellie helped with the table decorations, and was quite charming and presentable in front of all the relatives. I think my mom felt good about the fact that I'd given my beloved single parent a lot of time and attention to explore her concerns with me during the weeks prior to the holidays. And I felt great about the fact that I was able to hear her insecurities and judgments without resorting to my old habit of feeling shut down, defensive, or crushed like I used to get. My mom is still a vulnerable work-in-progress, but as I've learned in my Mussar studies, I'm also a vulnerable work-in-progress." ■

LABOR DAY
(continued from page 55)

The other chimed in, "And roses too!" Or the Ludlow Massacre on Easter Night, 1914, when the National Guard in Ludlow, Colorado shot dead a dozen striking coal miners, thirteen of their children and one pregnant woman. Or the Lawrence strike of 1919, led by my beloved teacher, A.J. Muste, or the 1937 Flint, Michigan strike against General Motors that established the United Auto Workers Union, led by A.J.'s students.

The last survivor of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in Lower Manhattan in 1911 just died recently. Two hundred and seventy-five young women, most of them Jewish and Italian immigrants right off the boat, worked six-day weeks, ten hours a day in this sweatshop. The doors were kept locked so that none of them could sneak out. When fire broke out on the ninth and tenth floors, many of them jumped to their deaths to escape the flames. One hundred and forty-six died. That spurred the growth of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, where my aunt learned to speak English with a Jewish-Italian accent. These lives were part of the price we paid for health and safety regulations in factories.

Who remembers that Gene Debs ran for President of the United States from a federal prison cell and won a million votes! Debs opposed World War I. For saying so out loud, that's right, just for saying so in public, he was sentenced to twenty years in prison. President Harding freed him after three years, but Debs's health was broken and he died not long after. Or A. Philip Randolph, who organized the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first Black union when many unions were still segregated? Mister Randolph—even his closest associates called him Mister Randolph—was the Martin Luther King of his time.

I hope the names of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti are not forgotten, men who were executed in 1927 for being labor activists and for being Italian immigrants. "We never brought a morsel of bread to our mouths, from our childhood to today, which has not been gained by the sweat of our brows. Never!" Vanzetti wrote the night before he was murdered in the electric chair. The State of Massachusetts legislature has apologized, thank you! Let us never forget! The trial and appeal records are there for anyone to read, and a more shameful exhibition of ethnic prejudice and hatred cannot be found. My Italian mother impressed upon me the meaning of all this, and why we must all come to the defense of any people who are humiliated for their race or their ethnic identity. Lest we forget!

It wasn't all beer and skittles within the labor movement. Communists vied for control with gangsters. The Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, before and after World War II, set up labor schools all over the country to teach rank-and-file union members how to keep control of their own unions. One of its leaders, my friend John Cort, died just last month at age 92.

Little is known of the part that organized labor played in the great Civil Rights Movement of the Sixties, but I know because I was there. I know who paid the bills! My teacher, A.J. Muste, trained Walter and Victor Reuther of the United Auto Workers Union. Each of these men, and Cesar Chavez, deserves a chapter of his own in every American history book. And they were all connected to Martin Luther King through A.J. Muste. A.J. sent Bayard Rustin to Montgomery in 1956 to assist Dr. King in running the Bus Boycott. Then Bayard put together the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SCLC, Dr. King's

organization.

You have to ask yourself why, except for King, these names are not there in your history book. Many texts don't even tell you that King was a Christian minister, and they surely don't tell you anything about his social philosophy. Whose interests does this silence serve? If you want to know the answer to that, look for the people who fought Social Security then and would undo it now, look for those who fought the minimum wage then and now, for those who fought the forty-hour week and are fighting still to keep it all for themselves.

When workers band together to secure justice for themselves and their fellows so that they might raise their families in decency, they are acting under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. That's what Dorothy Day taught, and that's what Cardinal O'Connor taught, and it's right out of the social encyclicals of the Popes for the last one hundred years.

It was in 1906 that Father John Ryan published his book, *The Living Wage*, arguing that everyone has the right to honest work and that all honest full-time labor deserves compensation at a level sufficient to maintain a family in decency. One hundred years later we still don't have it, and it takes two full-time jobs to maintain a family with the kids in child-care, educated not by a parent in their family's beliefs and traditions and values, but by a corps of hirelings in a day-care center where the mention of God is forbidden.

Young people crave adventure. Do you want a struggle, young people? Here's a struggle for you! Learn your own history, not the lying pap they feed you in school or in the mass media. You have to search it out for yourself. You have to find it. Then engage yourself, get in gear, take your part in the struggle, the only struggle that can honestly claim that it has God on its side, the nonviolent struggle for justice, peace and equality in this land of the free and home of the brave.

Happy Labor Day, everyone, and remember where you came from. Remember Labor! And as Mother Jones put it, "Pray for the dead, and fight like hell for the living!" ■

GEDALIAH
(continued from page 64)

give some serious thought to neutralism, naiveté, nonviolence, their interrelations and their implications, could be a compelling contemporary way to observe this day commemorating Gedaliah. Is nonviolence practical? Isn't it a naive approach to a tough world of power politics? But what is power? Obviously nonviolence has worked at some times in some places. Where? How has it operated? Can it become more pragmatic, more practical, more powerful? Reading for discussion of these issues at greater depth (see below) could be both a stimulating and an appropriate way to observe the Fast of Gedaliah this year as it coincides with the International Day of Non-Violence.

A group discussion or an individual study session could appropriately begin with the traditional blessing before studying Torah:

BA-RUCH A-TA A-DO-NAI E-LO-HE-NU ME-LECH HA-O-LAM

A-SHER KID-SHA-NU B'MITZ-VO-TAV

V'TZI-VA-NU LA-A-SOK B'DIV-REI TORAH.

You abound in blessings, Eternal our God, Source of All Creation, making our lives holy through Your injunctions, and directing us to study Torah.

And the readings? I would propose some chapters from Jeremiah and two short pamphlets for a beginning, with a longer volume for further inquiry.

Jeremiah Chapters 26-41.

Gene Sharp: From Dictatorship to Democracy (a brief pamphlet that inspired, among others, the successful OTPOR student strategy that toppled Milosevich).

Robert L. Helvey: On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: Thinking About the Fundamentals (a compellingly non-naive treatment of nonviolence by a retired U. S. Army colonel) (both available from The Albert Einstein Institution, P. O. Box 455, East Boston, MA 02128).

Gene Sharp: Waging Nonviolent Struggle (a 2005 summary and update of Sharp's classic 1973 work on the dynamics of nonviolent struggle, with numerous brief case studies of recent nonviolent actions around the world).

But are the secular readings listed above in any sense "Torah"? I would suggest that in truth they are. I see both Sharp and Helvey's work as "Midrashim of Maaseh," action-interpretations and applications of Isaiah's remarkable formulation of a nonviolent approach to power in 30:15:

"In turning and tranquility shall you be saved, in stillness and trust shall be your strength."

A fuller exploration of the meaning of each of the four key Hebrew terms must await another occasion. But Sharp and Helvey provide numerous instances and analyses of how morality gains muscle, how spirit has sinews (my terms, not theirs).

To do this reading and to give some serious thought to neutralism, naiveté, non-violence, their interrelations and their implications, could be a powerful and significant contemporary way to observe the Fast of Gedaliah.

Finally, a personal note, or perhaps simply "full disclosure." Since our retirement from regular work commitments in 1995, my wife Mary and I have been helping the Tibetan exiles in India develop a community-wide educational program on Strategic Nonviolent Struggle for the Tibetan cause. With the approval of the Dalai Lama and under the guidance of the Tibetan Government in Exile, the project, after these twelve years of our intermittent, once-or-twice-a-year teaching tours, has now become a Tibetan-run, Tibetan-staffed Non-Governmental Agency, ANEC, the Active Nonviolence Education Center. And in a most auspicious coincidence of timing, its formal dedication will be (God willing) this year on 2nd October—Gandhi's birthday, the International Day of Non-Violence, and the Fast of Gedaliah. "B'siman tov uv'mazal tov!" May it, indeed, take place under these most favorable and fortunate of circumstances. ■

Dear Swami

Time to Declare Independence and Interdependence

BY SWAMI BEYONDANANDA

Dear Swami:

What advice do you have for Senators McCain and Obama?

Dwight Mann,
Norfolk, Virginia

Dear Dwight:

Last time I looked, I couldn't help but notice that both of those candidates have hordes of high-paid advisers. And what are their advisers advising them to do? They are helping them use the mainstream media—which is little more than a brainwashing machine stuck on spin—to persuade you that their candidate is not as bad as the other guy.

So what do they need with my free advice? If I'm going to offer my advice freely and not be paid for it, I'm going to offer it to those who need the help the most—the people of America.

So here is my advice for the people of America: Whomever you cast your ballot for this November, make sure you elect yourself first. The latest polls show that 95% of the electorate mistrusts the government. What great news! Finally, we have one issue where nearly all Americans regardless of political stripe, plaid or polka dot agree: We can trust our leaders to not be trustworthy. Which brings up an even bigger challenge. We now must learn to trust ourselves instead.

Eleven score and twelve years ago, America's revolutionary founders cut us loose from the Old World model where the rule of gold overruled the Golden Rule, where mining took precedence ("that's mine, that's mine, that's mine"), and the lowest common dominator was king. But the revolution was barely over before the devolution had begun, and 230 years later those same creeps we declared independence from have crept back into power.

Now once again we must declare both our independence and our interdependence.

We declare our independence from the limiting belief system that when push comes to shove, whoever does the most pushing and shoving wins.

We declare our independence from the dysfunctional, politically immature "don't ask, don't tell" policy we've adopted regarding our government—we promise not to ask them what they are doing, they promise not to tell us.

We declare our independence from the corporate media, who have disabled the body politic with weapons of mass-distraction.

We declare our independence from reality TV and join the cast of a far bigger, and far more amazing show—reality! Extreme Planetary Makeover ... a world win campaign where the whole world can win.

We declare our independence from blame and vengeance. The laws of karma work well enough, or as Groucho Marx once said, "Time wounds all heels." We would do better to withdraw our attention from wounding heels, and focus on healing wounds instead.

We declare our independence from the obsolete positions of left and right, and we come front and center to face the music and dance together. We see there are no sides, only angles ... and when seen from the right angle, we are all on the same side.

And finally, as truly independent, one-of-a-kind entities we declare our interdependence as well.

We declare that each of us is an independent, interdependent cell in the body of humanity, here to regrow the Garden and have a heaven of a time doing it.



As interdependent independent beings, we declare a transparent conspiracy to end the apparent trance that has given us the neocon nightmare we have today. In other words, a conspiracy to end cons' piracy. To conspire means to "breathe together," so anyone who breathes can join our conspiracy to create a world where everyone can breathe easier.

At a time when most of those in power prefer to leave Orwell enough alone, we declare interdependence because the only way to overgrow Big Brother is through bigger brotherhood—and sisterhood.

As independently interdependent citizens, we hereby declare an American Evolution that will officially begin with the coming election. When those two big shots are fired, it will truly be heard—and cheered—around the world. ■

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Tikkun RECOMMENDS

MAKING SUSTAINABILITY WORK

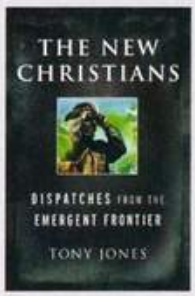
Mark J. Epstein
Berrett-Koehler, 2008



IF YOU THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE to measure the social, environmental and economic impacts of the operations of large corporations, this book will show you how it can be done. Sustainability initiatives can be implemented and their social and financial impact quantified. Unfortunately, Epstein has not yet turned his attention to the Social Responsibility Amendment to the Constitution (the SRA proposed by the Network of Spiritual Progressives) which would seek a broader social-responsibility measure than this book provides. But studying Epstein is a useful place to start, along with the important work of Hazel Henderson.

THE NEW CHRISTIANS

Tony Jones
Jossey-Bass 2008



TONY JONES' VIBRANT ACCOUNT OF A NEW movement in Christianity, part of which appeared in our May issue, is spiritually nourishing and stimulating for anyone in any religious tradition who has wondered "can these dry bones yet live?" A comrade of the sage Brian McLaren, Jones manages to teach as well as to describe, and the book is first rate entertainment as well as a great introduction to the most vibrant new movement in Christianity.

HEBREW WRITERS ON WRITING

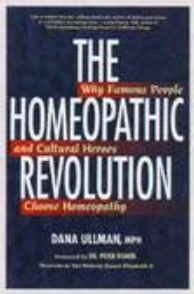
ed. Peter Cole
Trinity University Press,
San Antonio, 2008



PETER COLE WAS AN ASSISTANT EDITOR AT Tikkun Magazine before moving to Israel and becoming an expert on Hebrew poetry. In this collection he moves beyond his customary sphere and gives us a delightful selection from Hebrew writers reflecting on the act of writing itself, sometimes in separate essays, sometimes in the midst of their poetry or fiction. Though some of the writers criticized Israeli policy toward Palestinians, and the way that the culture of writing was used to legitimate the settlement and occupation policies, little in this writing reflects that kind of thinking (for which you'd best turn to the analyses of Hebrew writing done by Hanan Hever and Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi).

THE HOMEOPATHIC REVOLUTION

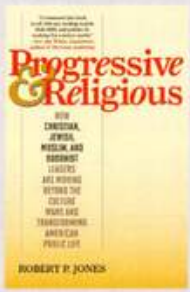
Dana Ullman
North Atlantic Books, 2007



IN LIGHT OF THE INCREASING ASSAULTS ON our health as we have discovered poisons in our water, air and food, many people have begun to give homeopathy and other alternatives approaches to medicine a second look. However it appears that conventional physicians and their organizations have rarely read the several hundred clinical studies that have tested homeopathic medicine and shown significant results. Ullman gives an impressive discussion of those famous people and cultural heroes who have endorsed what is still perceived by many as a hocus-pocus approach to health.

PROGRESSIVE & RELIGIOUS

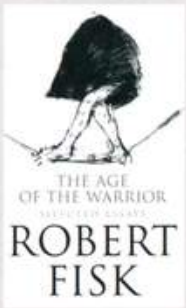
Robert P. Jones
Rowman & Littlefield, 2008



ROBERT JONES GIVES US AN UP-TO-DATE overview of the major progressive religious voices that have emerged in the past two decades and gives us some deep insight into what these voices have been saying in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. His book challenges the notion that to be religious is to be right-wing. Any open-minded secular progressive who reads this book will find it impossible to rationally retain their prejudice against all religious people. But since prejudices are by their nature irrational, and religio-phobia is indeed a prejudice, countering it requires much more than good counter-arguments. Jones has provided us with a vital tool, but the question that remains is: what would it take to get secular progressives to work together with progressive religious people without requiring the latter to drop their religious concerns and language?

THE AGE OF THE WARRIOR

Robert Fisk
Nation Books, 2008



"EACH TIME I TOUR THE U.S., I STARE THROUGH a looking glass at the faraway region in which I live [the Middle East] and see a landscape I do not recognize, a distant tragedy turned here, in America, into a farce of hypocrisy, banality and barefaced lies." Thus Robert Fisk, reporter for the English daily The Independent, who refuses to pretend not to see the brutality and craziness of his fellow journalists, and who tells what he really sees. If only American journalism could be like this, we'd have a slight chance of overcoming the mass indoctrination that has dumbed-down American understanding of the world. This collection of his essays is a pleasure and an enlightenment to read.

New Bottom Line
CONFERENCE FOR PROFESSIONALS

(Especially Physicians, Lawyers, Teachers/Academics, Psychologists/MFTs/MSWs, Nurses, Media, Govt Employees, Scientists, Hi-Tech industry professionals)

THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN YOUR HIGHEST IDEALS AND THE REALITIES OF THE WORLD OF WORK

Sunday, September 21, 2008 University of California, Berkeley (Clark Kerr Campus) 10am-6pm

The Problem is not you, though you may be experiencing it in the form of deep disappointment, frustration, depression or emotional withdrawal. We are organizing to challenge the materialism and selfishness and "me-first-ism" that permeates professional life and the lives of our clients, patients, and the institutions within which we work. Our goal: instead of defining 'productivity', 'efficiency', and 'rationality' solely in terms of maximizing money and power (the Old Bottom Line), we are building a movement of professionals who want to change the world of work so that these terms extend to include how much our work or our institutions, corporations, government policies, schools and hospitals and legal arrangement are able to maximize love, caring, kindness, generosity, ethical and ecological sensitivity, and enhance our capacities to respond to the universe with awe, wonder and radical amazement at the grandeur of all that is.

PRESENTERS:

RABBI MICHAEL LERNER, Editor, *Tikkun* and psychotherapist

PETER GABEL, author *The Bank Teller and other Essays on the Politics of Meaning*, Professor of Law

JOHN GEYMAN, Professor of Medicine, author, *The Corrosion of Medicine: Can the Profession Reclaim its Moral Legacy?*

SVI SHAPIRO, Professor of Education, author, *Losing Heart: The Moral and Spiritual Miseducation of America's Children*

PLUS small group discussions with members of YOUR PROFESSION to begin strategizing about how to introduce a new way of thinking and acting to colleagues and larger institutions.

This is not merely a thought gathering—we will begin organizing at this event. If you can't come, but want to be part of our campaign, send your name, profession, address and your ideas to: dlapedis@tikkun.org.

Registration: $85 (Students in Professional Schools: $50) Mail check to Tikkun/NSP, 2342 Shattuck Ave, Berkeley, Ca. 94708 or on-line at www.spiritualprogressives.org or Call 510 644 1200.



No matter who wins the election, we will still have an uphill fight to:



END TORTURE
DEMONSTRATE AGAINST THE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS

AT FORT BENNING, GEORGIA NOV. 21-23

The School of Americas trains Central and South American police and military to kill or torture dissidents in the name of "counter-insurgency" and "promoting democracy"

Join the Network of Spiritual Progressives as we bring people to join the long-standing annual demonstration organized by the School of the Americas Watch, this year: NSP will hold sessions on Friday night and Saturday afternoon at the SOAW teach-in, and then join the March on Sunday.

More info on location, accommodations, etc.: www.soaw.org
Info on School of the Americas Watch: *see inside front cover*