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Evangelicals and Jews in Conversation on Scripture, Theology, and History

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Introduction

"All real living is meeting," the late Martin Buber wrote in his *Life of Dialogue*. In that sense, the majority of evangelical Christians and Jews in America have been existing, not actually living together in vital relation with one another. Whereas the theological and cultural differences are clear and substantial, the common spiritual affirmations and ideals should be no less so. In light of this, it is all the more poignant that bridges of understanding and friendship between both faith communities have been so limited until this time.

Today's images of both evangelicals and Jews have to some degree been falsely depicted. This has largely resulted from a majority culture and literature that for decades have in various ways emptied both faith communities of their true humanity, background, and distinctiveness. All too often the rich faith traditions of each group have been projected as little more than cardboard constructions, which did not have to be taken seriously. Can anyone honestly believe that the popular images such as "rednecks," "crackers," "wild-eyed religious fanatics," "narrow-minded bigots," "Bible thumpers," and "street preachers" do justice to the present-day reality of Southerners and of evangelical Christians? Can anyone honestly believe that the epithets of "Christ-killers," "Pharisees," "Shylock," "Elders of Zion" have any basis in the empirical fact of Jewish history, religion, or contemporary society?

Ironically, these distorted views of evangelicals and Jews

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MARC H. TANENBAUM

Jews and Social Responsibility

In his first comprehensive work on psychoanalytic theory, Dr. Erich Fromm explains that he started with the study of aggression and destructiveness because, aside from being one of the fundamental theoretic problems in psychoanalysis, "the wave of destruction engulfing the world makes it also one of the most practically relevant ones."[1]

Noting that the preoccupation of professionals and the general public alike with the nature and causes of aggression is rather recent—dating in fact only to the middle of the 1960s—Dr. Fromm asserts that "one probable reason for this change was the fact that the level of violence and the fear of war had passed a certain threshold throughout the world."

As noted in a 1973 study of "Violence, Non-Violence and Struggle for Social Justice" prepared for the World Council of Churches, "violence today has become demonic in its hold on human life. In the life of some nations and among many severely oppressed peoples, it seems more like an addiction than like rational behavior."

Amnesty International, reporting on its world-wide study of the use of torture by individuals and governments, came to the conclusion, "torture can exist in any society," and indeed "the practice of torture is becoming internationalized." Although there are exceptions, torture has been *standard* administrative practice in more than thirty countries and has occurred in more than sixty.

Writing from the perspective of an economic historian in post-Vietnam, post-Watergate America, Robert L. Heilbroner writes pessimistically of the "malaise of civilization." He states:

> There is a feeling that great troubles and changes loom for the future of civilization as we know it. Our age is one of profound turmoil, a time of deep change, and there is a widespread feeling that the world is coming apart at the seams.
>
> We have gone through "a drubbing of history," and a barrage of confidence-shaking events has filled us with a sense of unease and foreboding during the past decade or so. No doubt foremost among these has been the experience of the Vietnam War, an experience that has undermined every aspect of American life—our belief in our own invincible power, our trust in government, our estimate of our private level of morality.
>
> But the Vietnam War was only one among many such confidence-shaking events. The explosion of violence in street crime, race riots, bombings, bizarre airplane hijackings, shocking assassinations have made a mockery of the TV image of middle class American gentility and brought home with terrible impact the recognition of a barbarism hidden behind the superficial amenities of life.
>
> We switch on the evening TV and learn what's going to hit us next on the head—a hijacking, a murder, a rape, or some other daily terror. These things profoundly affect our outlook.[2]

An eighteen-month study released by the Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency of the United States Senate Judiciary Committee noted that the destruction of school property in 757 school districts costs $500 million a year—the amount spent on textbooks. Further, more than 100 murders are committed in schools each year and at least 70,000 assaults on teachers.

The president of the National Education Association told the Senate subcommittee that the student violence is a

symptom of violence in society generally. He declared that students "see that violence is a fundamental way of life in our society."

Time magazine reports, "One study claims that the average American youth can be expected to watch 11,000 TV murders by the time he or she is 14." In the same special cover story on crime (June 30, 1975), it is asserted:

> By any measurement, crime has become an ominous national problem [in the United States]. Since 1961 the rate for all serious crimes has more than doubled. From 1973 to 1974 it jumped 17%—the largest increase in 44 years that national statistics have been collected.
>
> Violent crime has had an even sharper increase. In the past 14 years, the rate of robberies has increased 255%, forcible rape 143%, aggravated assault 153% and murder 106%. Preliminary reports to the FBI in 1974 show that the rate for violent crimes as well as property crimes like burglary is still sharply on the rise. Says a Chicago cop, "You just can't paint the picture too bad."

Social analysts report that since Hitler and the founding of the United Nations, more persons have been killed by massacre than by the traditional wars that have kept the world on edge. As Nathan Glazer has documented in his essay, "The Universalization of Ethnicity," "an epidemic" of conflicts is taking place literally on every continent of the world, conflicts in which race, religion, region, and nationality are involved, frequently resulting in practices of torture, mass aggression, and genocide.[3]

Africa

While most of the new nations of Africa have constitutional provisions that are designed to protect individuals and groups, torture has become a common tool for governments and for continuing tribal warfare. There have been large-scale religious-ethnic conflicts in Nigeria, Uganda, Sudan, and Burundi.

For example, Burundi has a population of 3.2 million,

of which the Hutu community constitutes 84 percent, but the government is in the hands of the Tutsi minority. When, in 1972, the Hutu unsuccessfully tried to displace the government, there followed massacres of Hutus estimated to number between 90,000 and 250,000. The United States sent relief supplies, and tried to get the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity to intervene to stop the killing. But the American ambassador, Thomas P. Melady (see his book, *Burundi: The Tragic Years*) grieved that more could not be done.[4] "Selective outrage" appears to dominate the United Nations and the massacre of black people in Africa cannot get the time of day before this international forum of human rights.

In the African Republic of Chad, President Ngarta Tombalbaye announced in August 1973 a "cultural revolution" or policy of "Chaditude" to divest the four million inhabitants of the influence of French colonialism. There has been a revival of the ancient tribal custom of Yondo, which imposes floggings, facial searings, and trials such as crawling naked through a nest of termites. It is reported that in July 1974 a thousand officials were sent to Yondo camps, many of whom did not return; those who did return behave as though they were divorced from their past and their families and friends. The 52 percent of the people who make up a Muslim majority, and the 5 percent Christians both oppose the Yondo rites. It has been reported that more than 130 native Protestant pastors and lay church leaders have been assassinated since November 1973. President Tombalbaye was assassinated recently, and the military junta that succeeded him has promised a new and honorable course.

Since its independence in 1962, Uganda has been regarded as the African state where human rights are violated most frequently. Tribal conflicts prevail. Prime Minister Obote ousted the president in 1966 and was himself ousted in 1971 by the military under General Idi Amin whose oppressive rule has done little to reduce tribal conflicts. Massacres and mutilations have been added to the older practices of torture.

On August 5, 1972, Amin launched one of the greatest acts of racism of this decade—the brutalization of Asians. By November 1972, he had expelled 50,000 Asians in circumstances of mass suffering and cruelty. Ambassador Melady reports that Amin is responsible for the massacre of 80,000 black Christians during the last four years. On July 2, 1975, sixteen Catholic priests were expelled from Uganda by Amin's government.

During November 1972, Amin hosted a state dinner for King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. The late "Protector of Islam" unleashed a bitter attack on the Jews of the world, and copies of the discredited *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* were distributed to each of the dinner guests as "mementos" of the occasion.

In Zambia, also, tribal conflicts continue along with an effort to institute a one-party system of government.

Congo-Zaire expelled all Nigerian traders after confiscating their assets. Many were kept for a year in detention, suffering torture and even death.

In the Sudan, the Arabic-speaking group in the north, who are Muslim, massacred an estimated one million blacks in the south, who were either Christian or pagan. The issue of wholesale slaughter was never allowed to surface for examination before any tribunal or commission of the United Nations.

Despite some recent gestures toward reconciliation, a highly threatening situation exists in Rhodesia and in South Africa, where white minorities persist in oppressive rule over the region. There is reason for genuine anxiety over the possibility that there will be severe bloodshed of both whites and blacks unless a solution more acceptable than apartheid can be found. The practice of racism and persecution by whites against blacks has managed to obtain the sustained interest of and action by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

Asia

The situation in Asia has not been better. The events in

China call for an independent study of that nation alone. Suffice it to note for our purposes, before the Communists took over in 1949, 90 percent of the Chinese people practiced a mixture of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, while 1 percent were (at one time at least) nominally Christian. The Western missionaries came under repeated attack from various regimes, but the decisive blows were dealt by the Communists. After they took over in 1949, they seized most religious property as part of their land reform program. The foreign missions lost large holdings. Buddhist temples were gradually closed and pressure was applied to eliminate family ancestral shrines. The traditional religions of China—whose central focus is on the family rather than on service to the state—have gradually yielded to the cult of Mao.

Even though freedom of religion is specifically guaranteed in the Chinese Constitution, and the government maintains a bureau of religious affairs, religion is officially "discouraged." All that remains of the Catholic Church in China are 5,000 worshipers and ten cathedral priests in Peking. Protestantism, too, has all but disappeared, except for a Protestant church in Peking which conducts Sunday services for a congregation which is entirely foreign.

The military activities of Communist China against the people of Tibet in the 1950s deprived them of life and land, and drove their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, from their midst. Not far away, about 200,000 East Pakistanis were massacred by their own Muslim brothers. As a result, the sufferings in Bangladesh continue unabated. Some ten million refugees fled into India during the violent birth of Bangladesh as it broke away from Pakistan in 1971. Nearly a quarter million more, stranded in hostile territory, were shuttled by jet between West Pakistan and Bangladesh. Millions of lives were lost in Vietnam and in Cambodia, and the massacres are far from concluded. It is despairing to contemplate the fact that so much of the once productive lands and people of Southeast Asia has been destroyed by weapons produced in the "friendly"

United States, as well as in Communist countries which are ostensibly engaged in détente.

In Asia, the ordinary hazards of torture and massacre due to ethnic and religious differences and political conflicts tend to be overwhelmed by the severer pressures of poverty and overpopulation. As noted in the report of Amnesty International:

> In societies where the problems of malnutrition, disease and illiteracy have not yet been solved, torture and the denial of human rights may stand out with less clarity than in more economically developed areas; in most Asian countries, these problems are further compounded by population pressures, and in some by deep ideological division. . . .
>
> The situation [in Indonesia] is aggravated by a low popular level of legal awareness which means that many victims are deterred from describing their treatment not only through fear, but also through ignorance of the fact that they have basic rights which are being violated. Conversely, in the case of Indochina, the availability of evidence is determined not only by the gravity of the situation but also by the international character of the conflict.[5]

Several hundred thousand Communists were massacred in Indochina in the absence of any effective international protests. The World Council of Churches was compelled to cancel its 1975 General Assembly in Jakarta for fear of reprisals from Muslim fanatics.

In India, along with keen sensitivity to human rights, there has developed "an increasingly rigorous program of counter-insurgency" that has jailed many thousands of suspected Marxist-Leninists. This is in reaction to "selective assassinations of landlords, policemen and other 'agents of the state machinery' which began in the West Bengal countryside in 1967 and shifted to Calcutta in 1970" (p. 143). However, conditions in India appear almost beyond outside help as long as there are continuing growth of her population; general backwardness in technology, agriculture, and education; little initiative for

self-help; and poor use of the resources of the nation. The great wealth of the land is limited to an elitist fraction whose concern for the nation as a whole appears to leave much to be desired. Although the caste system has been outlawed, its influence persists in the life of the people. Disease and malnutrition keep the life expectancy low, a condition that encourages bearing more children to assure care of the aged. The moves that Indira Gandhi took to silence the opposition raised grave concern about the future of democracy in this country.

Europe

In the European sphere, although conditions in Communist countries have improved substantially since the Stalin era, the use of torture and other modes of physical violence against the human person have been far from eliminated. In the Soviet Union in particular, the practice continues of forcibly committing to psychiatric hospitals individuals who are declared by government officials to be dissenters or who wish to exercise the "right to leave" as vouchsafed to them by the United Nations. The reciprocal bombings of civilians by Catholic and Protestant extremists in Ireland depress religious people everywhere.

Middle East

Massacre and torture gripped innocent civilians of both the Greek and Turkish communities on Cyprus. The plight of hundreds of thousands of refugees on Cyprus cried out for some of the attention and amelioration that seemed to be reserved exclusively for Palestinian Arabs. Muslim Kurds also suffered at the hands of their coreligionists in Iraq and Turkey. The complex problems of the Middle East, compounded as they are by the problems of the legitimate right of self-determination for the Jewish people of Israel and for the Palestinian Arabs, are bedeviled by a repetitive cycle of terrorism by the Palestine Liberation Organization and the ensuing Israeli reprisals in self-defense to prevent further massacres of innocent children as at Ma'alot, Nahariya, and elsewhere.

Latin America

In Latin America, where with a few exceptions governments tend to be dictatorships, police brutality and harsh prison treatments remain a traditional and largely accepted part of the social structure. Torture continues in Chile and is still widely used in Brazil despite pledges by the government to halt the barbaric practices. According to a report compiled by Brazilian Roman Catholics and by victims and their attorneys, over the past nine years thousands have been subjected to beatings, electric shocks, and other torments at the hands of the military security forces. The story as it applies to some of the Indian tribes of Brazil appears to add still larger dimensions to the tragedies and national problems. The story varies only in degree in the other nations of South and Central America.

North America

In the United States, while the policies are certainly intended to promote civil liberties, peace, and prosperity in the world, the revelations of Watergate and the Senate hearings regarding the planned assassinations by the Central Intelligence Agency and the invasion of privacy by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service with their data banks and compilations of "enemy lists" left millions of Americans feeling increasingly insecure about their constitutional democracy. Denial of rights and equal opportunities to many blacks, American Indians, and Latin-speaking people is very much part of the "unfinished agenda" of the American people.

The mood of pessimism, even despair, that has emerged over the human prospect in the face of these assaults against human life is further compounded by several universal problems that show no signs of going away in the foreseeable future.

First, there is the problem of world hunger and overpopulation. There are, despite the recent heroic efforts to provide massive food supplies, some four hundred million people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America who are starving

or suffering from severe malnutrition. Despite its great wealth, in the United States some fourteen million people still are the victims of poverty and millions still go to bed hungry every night. It is estimated that several million people in the developing countries will die from hunger during the coming year.

The world's present economic condition, Robert Heilbroner writes, resembles an immense train in which a few passengers, mainly in the advanced capitalist countries, ride in first-class coaches, in conditions of comfort unimaginable to the enormously greater numbers crammed into the cattle cars that make up the bulk of the train's carriages!

Second, there are the arms race and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In 1973, $240 billion were spent to train, equip, and maintain armed forces. The international trade in nonnuclear arms now tops $18 billion annually—up from a mere $300 million in 1952. In 1974, after processing nearly 14,000 export license applications from private firms, the Office of Munitions Control approved sales to 136 countries totaling $8.3 billion—representing 46 percent of total world sales.

The Soviet Union is second in international arms sales—$39 billion since 1950, $5.5 billion in 1974. The Middle East is the biggest customer of both the United States and Russia—first Iran, then Israel, next Saudi Arabia ($756 million). Russia's latest arms deal with Libya will further increase the Soviet stake in the Middle East arms game, which is characterized by cheap credit and cut-rate prices. France is third with a sale of $3 billion to eighty nations, and Britain follows with $1.5 billion.

In 1973, Third World nations imported $7.7 billion worth of arms, with Iran in the past two years spending $7.6 billion in the United States alone. (Pentagon officials joke that the Persian Gulf will sink under all the arms that it is buying.)

Impoverished India has spent $3 billion in the Soviet Union for arms in the past three years. Pakistan, scrimping

to find $250 million for a new fertilizer factory, spends at least that much on weapons annually.

The arms trade can scarcely advance peace. In each of the sixty military conflicts since the end of World War II, imported weapons were used almost exclusively, and those arms have brought not only violence and destruction but death to more than ten million people (according to the MIT Center for International Studies).

Third, the advent of nuclear weapons with their potential for "irreparable" damage, as contrasted with the much more restricted and more easily repaired damage of most conventional wars, has created a whole new technology of war for the coming decades. Unleashing the warheads now possessed by the United States and by the Soviets could bring fatalities ranging from 50,000,000 to 135,000,000 people in the United States alone. Moreover, many small or relatively poor nations, even though they possess no fully developed industrial base or highly skilled labor force, can gain possession of nuclear weapons—witness China and India. Today there are 426 nuclear power plants in thirty-nine nations, a number of which could produce atomic bombs as well as electricity. Poor nations can be expected to obtain nuclear weapons as a by-product of the atomic power plants that many of them are now building or contemplating, and it is quite conceivable that some may use these as instruments of blackmail to force the developed world to undertake a massive transfer of wealth to the poverty-stricken world.

What are the implications of these facts for Christians and Jews today? What relation do these developments have to the Nazi holocaust?

It is evident that we live in an age of violence and of terror. There is not a continent on the globe that is not despoiled by terror and violence, by barbarism, by a growing callousness to human suffering, and by pain and threat to human existence. At the center of the human crisis today is the fundamental depreciation of the meaning and value of human life. In theological terms, the biblical affirmation that each human life is created in the sacred

image of God and is therefore of ultimate worth and preciousness is being battered from every side.

It is my conviction that this erosion in the belief of the sanctity of human life is one of the decisive black legacies bequeathed by Nazi Germany to mankind. By and large, with rare exception, the overwhelming majority of citizens and dominant institutions of the Western world have avoided confronting the magnitude of evil incarnate in the Nazi holocaust, and have therefore failed to learn how to cope with forces and structures of dehumanization that are being multiplied in many parts of the globe.

The Nazi campaign of genocide against the Jewish people was unique and in many ways unprecedented. Yet the Nazi trauma must not be seen as "a Jewish obsession," for the fateful meaning of that holocaust is of ultimate importance to the future capacity of mankind to understand itself and to acquire the resources to cope with the challenges to its survival.

As Lucy Dawidowicz has written in her recent study, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945*, the uniqueness of the Nazi holocaust against the Jewish people lay in the fact that

> the final solution of the Jewish Question was not just another anti-Semitic undertaking, but a metahistorical program devised with an eschatological perspective. It was part of a salvational ideology that envisaged the attainment of heaven by bringing hell on earth.[6]

André Malraux called it, *"le retour de Satan."*

To attain the goal of a heavenly hell on earth, the Nazi war killed over thirty-five million people, more than half of them civilians. The human cost of the 2,191 days of war surpassed the losses of any previous war in the history of the world.

The slaughter of six million Jewish men, women, and children—two out of every three European Jews—was the most massive destruction and disastrous catastrophe in Jewish history. Though one-third of the Jews survived, though Judaism and the Jewish people outlived the Third

Reich, the Germans succeeded in destroying irrevocably the life and culture of East European Jewry. Even the destruction of the Second Temple, the greatest Jewish national trauma, did not place the physical survival of Jews in such jeopardy as did the Nazi holocaust. (In 70 C.E. only about one-quarter of the Jews lived in Palestine, the rest were scattered throughout the diaspora. In 1939, two-thirds of the Jews lived in Europe; three-quarters of them—one-half of world Jewry—were in Eastern Europe.)

Never before in modern history, Dawidowicz writes, has one people made the killing of another the fulfillment of an ideology, in the pursuit of which the means were identical with the ends. The German state, deciding that the Jews should not live, arrogated to itself the judgment as to whether a whole people had the right to existence, a judgment that no person and no state have the right to make. The German dictatorship involved and engaged the entire bureaucratic and functional apparatus of the German state and the Nazi movement and employed the best available technological means.

And in that reality lodges the universal implication for the whole of mankind. The "final solution" destroyed East European Jews. In doing so, it subverted fundamental principles and every system of law that has governed, however imperfectly, human society for millennia.

A hitherto unbreachable moral and political barrier in the history of Western civilization was successfully overcome by the Germans in World War II, and henceforth the extermination of millions of citizens or subject peoples will forever be one of the capabilities and temptations of government. In a period in which a faltering economic system has condemned millions of able-bodied workers to redundance, in a time in which global overpopulation contends with scarcity of food supplies and other shrinking resources, the prospect of disposing of surplus population becomes a temptation more likely to be enhanced than diminished. Witness the calm, objective manner in which *triage* is discussed today in learned circles.

All this is to say that Auschwitz has enlarged our conception of the state's capacity to do violence. The Nazi period serves as a warning of what we may become if we are faced with a political crisis of overwhelming proportions.

Usually, progress in death-dealing capacity in the twentieth century has been reckoned in terms of technological advances in weaponry. Too little attention has been given to the "advances" in social organization that made it possible to cross residual moral barriers and massacre millions. To understand these advances it is necessary to consider the role of bureaucracy in modern political and social organization. Writing in 1916, the great German sociologist, Max Weber, said:

> When fully developed, bureaucracy stands under the principle of *sine ira ac studio* [without scorn or bias]. Its specific nature develops the more perfectly the more bureaucracy is dehumanized, the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred and purely personal and irrational elements which escape calculation. This is the specific nature of bureaucracy, and it is appraised as its specific virtue.[7]

Both the Nazi and the non-Nazi bureaucrats insisted that anti-Jewish measures were to be taken in a disciplined, systematic, and methodical manner—as in the manufacture of a Leica or a Mercedes.

Max Weber's writings on bureaucracy were part of a larger attempt to understand the social structure and value of modern civilization. According to Weber, modern bureaucracy can be understood as a structural and organizational expression of related processes of *secularization, disenchantment of the world,* and *rationalization.*

The secularization process involves the liberation of ever wider areas of human activity from religious domination. The disenchantment of the world occurs when "there are no mysterious forces that come into play, but rather ... one can, in principle, master all things by calculation." Rationalization involves "the methodical attainment of a

definitely given and practical end by means of an increasingly precise calculation of adequate means."[8]

In the disenchantment of the natural and political orders, the domain of the sacred was increasingly relegated to the heavenly sphere. A beginning was made toward that secularization of consciousness which finally culminates in the most extreme form of secular disenchantment—the dehumanized, rationalized forms of modern political and social organization, including bureaucratically administered death camps.

In the biblical world all human activity stands under the judgment of a righteous deity. In the modern world, the supramundane deity has disappeared for all practical purposes—persons are alone in the world, free to pursue any end they choose, including mass murder, "by means of an increasingly precise calculation of adequate means."

Nevertheless, before the "dehumanized" attitude of bureaucracy in which "love, hatred and purely personal and irrational elements" are eliminated in one's dealing with his fellows could be acquired, the disenchantment process had to become culturally predominant; God and the world had to be so radically disjoined that it became possible to treat both the political and natural orders with uncompromisingly dispassionate objectivity. This occurred with the triumph of certain traditions of Protestantism and their insistence upon the radical transcendence of God.

Their triumph opened the path in the twentieth century to such radical secularization of consciousness that the question of eliminating "surplus people" lost all religious and moral significance and became a question only of bureaucratic problem-solving.

Contrary to popular opinion, as Richard Rubenstein has noted, the Nazi holocaust was not carried out by a group of irresponsible criminals on the fringes of society who somehow forced the German people to pursue a policy of ethnic hatred that was wholly at odds with the great traditions of Western civilization. Indeed, we are far more likely to understand the extermination of Europe's Jews if we

regard it as the expression of some of the profound tendencies of twentieth-century Western civilization.

In an earlier age, most men and women genuinely stood in awe of the judgment of divinity, of a natural and God-ordained law binding upon all persons and nations; but is this any longer true, especially for the decision-making elites? Does not the history of the Nazi holocaust and the fate of its perpetrators demonstrate that there are absolutely no limits to the degradation and assault technicians of violence can inflict upon men and women who lack the power of effective resistance? (Reflect here on why Israelis—especially those who survived the holocaust—insist upon safe, genuinely secure borders and conditions of guaranteed nonbelligerency, and why they will not [indeed cannot afford to] rely on rhetorical flourishes of Arab leaders vaguely assuring peace and co-existence, particularly when these speeches are broadcast to the Western world but withheld from domestic Arab populations. What trust can any open-eyed Israeli or anyone else put in such assurances of public relations while all the Arab actions move in the opposite direction of rendering Israel impotent by trying to reduce it to pariah status through elimination from UNESCO, the WHO, the ILO, and quite possibly from the UN itself?)

It is true that a few miserable Nazi camp guards were incarcerated after World War II, but the government and corporate bureaucrats who planned the entire operation and really made it possible returned very quickly to places of dignity and honor in German society. If there is a law that is devoid of all penalty when it is violated, does it have any functional significance in terms of human behavior? Is not a law that carries no penalty functionally equivalent to no law at all? Even if it can be demonstrated to "exist" can it not be safely ignored? We are sadly forced to conclude that we live in a world that is functionally godless and increasingly lawless.

The process of secularization thus ends where it began. In the beginning it involved the demystification and limitation of a sovereign's power. In the end the secular state has

dethroned all mystifications of power save its own. The state thus becomes the only true god on earth. It is possessed of the ultimate power of divinity, the power to decide who shall live and who shall die. No cold-blooded contemporary need worry like David about a modern Nathan the prophet proclaiming the ultimacy of God's law. This does not mean that the sovereign is above limits; he or she can be limited but only by the laws of persons acting in concert, at best a tenuous guarantee of a humane society.

Bleak as are the prospects for countering these forces of dehumanization in the world, "we need not complete the task," as Rabbi Tarphon admonished, "but neither are we free to desist therefrom." In concert, if we are to learn from the Nazi holocaust and not be doomed to allow its repetition, we must attempt at the very least the following:

First, Christians and Jews must help engender a national and international attitude of scorn and contempt for those who use violence or who advocate the use of violence. We must work to deromanticize all appeals to use violence and terrorism as means of liberation or of institutional oppression, since from a moral standpoint, no ends can justify such antihuman means.

Second, Christians and Jews must work to curtail the resort to inflammatory propaganda, especially from international forums which have psychological impact on an international scale. As Gordon Allport of Harvard University demonstrated in his monumental study, *The Nature of Prejudice*, there is an inevitable progression "from verbal aggression to violence, from rumor to riot, from gossip to genocide."[9]

Third, Christians and Jews must work toward educational development and communication among peoples to reduce the abrasive effects of "differences." Differences, as we have learned in the pluralistic experience of America, can be a source of enrichment rather than a threat.

Fourth, Christians and Jews should engage in a massive effort to establish on a global basis a "new humanism" that seeks to restore the biblical value of the infinite worth and preciousness of each human life. We must also engage in

an urgent and sustained intellectual and educational effort to elaborate a theology and ideology of pluralism which presuppose the right of each religious, racial, and ethnic group to define itself in its own terms and to be accepted unconditionally under that definition. Christians and Jews have a decisive contribution to make to the building of the ideological foundations without which a stable world community cannot come into being.

Fifth, Christians and Jews should work toward making the economy of each nation as self-sufficient and stable as possible in the sense of not perpetually requiring relief support. Inextricably linked with such an effort is the control of the arms race on an international scale, gun control in America, and a rational reordering of priorities that allows for adequate defense and yet at the same time reallocates some of the billions wasted on arms to the crying needs of the hungry, the diseased, and the homeless.

And finally, Christians and Jews should work for the completion of the judicial instrumentalities called for by Article 6 of the Genocide Convention in the form of an international penal tribunal for trying those who are accused of genocide attempts anywhere in the world.

"The salvation of mankind," Alexander Solzhenitsyn reminds us, "will depend on everyone becoming concerned about the welfare of everybody everywhere."

NOTES

1. Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973), p. 18.

2. Robert L. Heilbroner, *An Inquiry into the Human Prospect* (New York: Norton & Co., 1973), p. 24.

3. Nathan Glazer, "The Universalization of Ethnicity," *Encounter* (February 1975), 8.

4. Thomas P. Melady, *Burundi: The Tragic Years* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1974), p. 4.

5. Amnesty International, *Report on Torture* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1973), pp. 138-39.

6. Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1975), p. 153.

7. Max Weber, *Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 195.

8. Ibid.

9. Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 57.

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PAUL E. TOMS

Evangelical Christians and Social Responsibility

James Stewart suggests very clearly to us where Christian action and responsibility lie.

> For after all, where is the Lord Jesus surely to be found today? Where is what a sacramental theology would call, "the real presence of Christ"? No doubt in word and sacrament and worship, in all the ordinances of the faith, here in this church, yonder in your own room when you kneel to pray. Yes, but also and most certainly in the flesh and blood of every needy soul throughout God's earth today. This, if only we had eyes to see and heart to understand, is where Christ the King comes forth to meet us. Did he not tell us this himself? "I was hungry, and you gave me no meat; sick and in prison, and you visited me not. Then shall they answer him, Lord, when saw we thee hungry or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee? Then shall he answer them, inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me."
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> Here is the real presence: Every homeless refugee, every hungry child, every racially segregated soul from whom a western culture stands conditionally and patronizingly aloof; and to come nearer home—that troublesome neighbor, that handicapped sufferer, that poor bungler who has made a wretched mess of his life, that woman who carries a hidden tragedy in her heart, that paganized youth who will tell you he