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**RELIGIOUS VALUES IN AN  
AGE OF VIOLENCE**  
AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES

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## **PREFACE**

Throughout Judaeo Christian history there has been a profound lack of comfort between the ideas of violence and the best of the religious tradition. This discomfort has not been noticed by all persons at all times. Ancient Israel found it proper that a Divine Warrior should intercede on their behalf. German soldiers in World War I, at least, inscribed "Gott mit uns" on their belt buckles. Even today the chapel at the Air Force Academy has a cross in the form of a sword.

But in all religious traditions there has been a very strong judgment that much of the above is unseemly, that God blesses not war but peace, and that all religious men must cooperate together, truly to find peace in our time.

Rabbi Tanenbaum in this thoughtful essay examines the situation of the world today, which he knows far better than most religious leaders by reason of his travel and wide ranging contacts. Finally he makes some suggestions on the role that Jews and Christians ought to play if the strongly pacifistic strain that runs

through our tradition is to exercise its proper role in a troubled world.



## *MORAL AND ETHICAL VALUES OF JUDAISM*

Neither the Bible nor Rabbinic Judaism has a word for "ethics". A small volume in the *Mishnah* often referred to as the "Ethics of the Fathers" — because it contains much ethical instruction — is entitled in Hebrew merely "The Chapters of the Fathers." Ethics is not conceived apart from religion, so that it is included in whatever expression the Bible and the Talmud use for religion. Ethics is part and parcel of "the way of life" of Judaism.

That Jewish "way of life" has its origins in the experience of the Divine Presence in the midst of the decisive events of the Exodus and of Sinai, events which have altered the entire course of human history. The children of Israel experienced the reality of the Lord of history through His involvement in their liberation from physical oppression, persecution, massacre, and injustices as "slaves unto Pharaoh in Egypt." To

Pharaoh, who was worshipped as a Divine emperor and who was the source of law, never its servant, the Israelite slaves were regarded as chattel, "the untouchables" of ancient Egypt. (See the essay, "Between Mesopotamia and Egypt," by Prof. Ephraim Speiser, in the volume *Jewish Expression*, edited by Dr. Judah Goldin, Bantam Books).

At Sinai, the Israelites had a transforming experience of Divine Revelation as moral will which was ratified by an everlasting Covenant. Henceforth, the Israelites are perceived by God to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." What an extraordinary Divine-human scenario! Yesterday, they were slaves, the outcasts of history; now an entire people are stamped with the dignity of priesthood and holiness, and are set on the course of history with a messianic task of redemption in society and through history until the coming of the Kingdom.

Israel's religion, Prof. David Flusser asserts, was a breakthrough in human consciousness. The God of Israel initiated

a new era in the history of mankind, introducing a new concept of justice — which is the central message of His revelation — an uncompromising moral law, and an original social order to be established paradigmatically in the Holy Land of Palestine,<sup>1</sup> conceived in this justice. This postulate of individual and social justice was not to be limited to Israel only. The Creator of the universe postulates this justice for all His human creatures; it was incumbent on all the peoples of the world.

The concept of justice which emerges from the Hebrew Bible is not just the regimen of mighty men — the Bible does not identify God on the side of Pharaoh and his *imperium*! It stresses that God cares for the poor and unprotected, for the orphan, the widow and the stranger. The basis of social justice was not to be external power and might, but the reverence of God and obedience to His moral will.

To understand the idea of justice in Israel, we must bear in mind the Biblical teaching that the human being is created



in the image of God, that each human life is sacred and of infinite worth. In consequence, a human being cannot be treated as a chattel or an object to be disposed of for someone's program or project or ideology, but must be treated as a personality. Every human being is the possessor of the right-to-life, dignity and honor, and the fruits of his or her labor.

Justice is respect for the personality of others and their inalienable rights, even as injustice is the most flagrant manifestation of disrespect for the personality of others. Judaism requires that human personality be respected in every human being — in the female prisoner of war, in the delinquent, even in the criminal condemned to death. The supreme importance of the human being in the economy of the Universe is expressed in this Rabbinic teaching: "Man (the human being) was first created as a single individual to teach the lesson that whoever destroys one life, Scripture ascribes it to him as though he had destroyed a whole world; and whoever saves one life, Scrip-

ture ascribes it to him as though he had saved a whole world" (Sanhedrin 4:5).

However, justice is more than mere abstention from injuring our fellow human beings. "The work of justice is peace, and the effect thereof quietness and confidence forever" (Isaiah 32:17). It is a positive conception, and includes economic well-being, intellectual and spiritual growth, philanthropy, and every endeavor that will enable human beings to realize the highest and best in their natures.

The conditions for that self-realization require active efforts to bring about the final disappearance of injustice and oppression, which, as represented in the Jewish High Holiday liturgy, are the goals of human history. "And may all wickedness be consumed as a flame and may evil rule be removed from the earth" declare the Rosh Hashonah prayers.

And finally, the stability, as well as the happiness of a community, can only be assured when it rests upon a foundation of peace. In the absence of peace there

can be neither prosperity nor well-being. "Peace is equal in worth to everything" declare the Rabbis (Sifra). And they add, "Beloved is peace since the benedictions only conclude with the hope of peace," thus teaching that the blessings even of the High Priest are of no avail unless accompanied by peace (Numbers Rabbah 11:7).

While the Prophets of Israel and the Rabbis believed that God intended the nations to be at peace with one another, war was not prohibited. Jewish ethics would admit the duty to defend the higher values in human life by war if necessary. If Isaiah or Jeremiah had thought that yielding to the foreign invader would mean destruction to the religion or the people they valued, they would have urged resistance, with the same vigor that they demanded constantly the practice of righteousness in obedience to God's will. All the facts of Biblical and post-Biblical Judaism taken together lead to the conclusion that the ethical judgment on war, according to Judaism, is that it must be

eradicated to make human life conform to the Divine rule, that those guilty of causing it commit a crime against humanity and a sin against God. However, they are justified who, to defend the higher values in human life, resist, if necessary by war, an attack on them. The justification would extend to a nation's defense of its liberty. The spiritual values in the life of a nation, which include its historic distinctiveness, may justify it, when attacked or threatened, to engage in war to save its independent existence. (See Dr. Israel Mat-tuck in his study of *Jewish Ethics*, particularly his chapter on "The Judgment on War.")

*The American Democratic Ethos:  
A Bicentennial Perspective*

As we mark the observance of the American Bicentennial, it will be helpful to recall that however angrily the Founding Fathers might argue over points of constitutional structure, they agreed unanimously that it would take more

than a perfect plan of government to preserve ordered liberty. Something else was needed, some moral principle diffused among the people to strengthen the urge to peaceful obedience and hold the community on an even keel.

Theophilus Parsons wrote at the end of his great *Essex Result*,

The spirit of a free Republican Constitution, or the moving power which should give it action ought to be political virtue, patriotism, and a just regard for the natural rights of mankind.

Samuel Adams spoke for all American thinkers when he reminded James Warren,

We may look up to armies for our defense, but virtue is our best security. It is not possible that any state should long remain free where virtue is not supremely honored.

Another Bostonian added, "Liberty cannot be preserved if the manners of the people are corrupted, nor absolute monarchy introduced, where they are sincere."

The decade of crisis preceding the Revolution brought new popularity to the



cult of virtue that had long held sway in the colonies. Revolutionary thinkers drew heavily on their colonial heritage in proclaiming *virtue the essence of freedom*. There was a widespread conviction that free government rested on a definite moral basis — a virtuous people. Conversely, the decay of a people's morals signaled the end of liberty and happiness. On no point in the whole range of political theory were Americans more thoroughly in accord.<sup>2</sup> Free government was in large part a problem in practical ethics.

Most of the ceaseless preaching about "the fatal effects of luxury to a free state" was directed at the mother country. This was especially true in the last months before independence, when men like Edward Bancroft began to argue that the "Effeminacy, luxury, and corruption which extend to all orders of men" in England would poison the youthful body of America unless it were to cut short its dependence.

Americans could launch a Republic

with some hope of success, for it was the one form of government, John Adams pointed out, "whose principle and foundation is virtue."

In the process of exhorting one another to be brave, frugal, and honest, and of damning England as "that degenerate land," American writers worked out a well-rounded theory of the ethical basis of the government. In particular, they identified the essential public virtues, described the contrasting political fates of good men and bad, and recommended techniques for promoting virtue and discouraging vice.

In addition to approving all recognized Biblical (Jewish and Christian), Roman, and English virtues, Americans singled out several attitudes or traits of special consequence for a free republic:

First, *the willingness to act morally without compulsion, to obey the laws of nature as interpreted by reason and the laws of man as established in consent,*

Second, *the love of liberty, the desire for the adventure and sacrifices of free govern-*

*ment rather than the false security of tyranny,*

Third, *public spirit and patriotism*, defined by a native in 1776 for the enlightenment of his fellow Virginians as "*a disinterested attachment to the publick (sic) good, exclusive and independent of all private and selfish interest.*"

Fourth, *official incorruptibility*, a state of virtue saluted by Jefferson in *The Summary View* when he reminded George III that "*the whole act of government consists in the art of being honest,*" and

Fifth, *industry and frugality, hard work and plain living*, the *only path to personal liberty and national independence*. Special attention was devoted to the fifth of these qualities, for industry and frugality were essential to the success of America's program of economic resistance.

The cultivation of these great public virtues — moral action without compulsion, love of liberty, public spirit, incorruptibility, and industry and frugality — was considered the first duty of a free people. Men and women who displayed



these qualities were the raw material of liberty. Without such people, in low places as well as high, free government could not possibly exist. The fruits of virtue, for nations as well as men and women, were liberty, prosperity, and happiness; the fruits of corruption and luxury were tyranny, poverty and misery. "And as too great authority intoxicates and poisons kings, so luxury poisons a whole nation," Nathaniel Ames warned.

How to encourage virtue and thus "keep up the spirit of good government?" To this key question of political liberty, Americans replied: (a) hortatory religion; (b) sound education; (c) honest government; and (d) a simple economy.

A) RELIGION — The strain of piety in the philosophy of American life is evident in the appeal of the Declaration of Independence to "Nature's God," "the Creator," and "the Supreme Judge of the World." Few thinking lay people, whether believers like Samuel Adams or skeptics like Benjamin Franklin, ever

doubted the indispensability of organized religion in the preservation of public and private morality.

The practice of religion was as essential to virtue as was the practice of virtue to freedom. Religion helped put order in ordered liberty, especially by emphasizing the dependence of public morality on private virtue.

B) EDUCATION — The second means of promoting virtue was public and private education. Like their colonial forbears, the men and women of the Revolution considered the inculcation of morality one of the three or four basic purposes of all instruments of education.

C) HONEST GOVERNMENT — In the Revolutionary mind, natural law and virtue were closely identified. The Massachusetts Constitution reflected the deeply-held conviction that government was important as a promoter of virtues. Not only did it nourish morality indirectly by encouraging and protecting, and perhaps supporting, the instruments

of religion and education; it was expected to make a number of direct contributions by:

- a) Passing sumptuary laws "to discourage prodigality and extravagance, vain and expensive amusements and fantastic foppery, and to encourage the opposite virtues;"
- b) Making proclamations from time to time of days "of public humiliation, fasting, and prayer."
- c) Operating itself at the highest level of justice, virtue and incorruptibility.

*Preachers never tired of exhorting legislators and judges to be men of spotless integrity in both public and private dealings. Orators never tired of reminding the public that it should look for virtue before all other qualities in selecting candidates for public office.*

D) SIMPLE ECONOMY. — One influential group of Revolutionary thinkers asserted that the virtues necessary to maintain free government were more likely to flourish in an agrarian than in a manufacturing or commercial economy.

In sum, just as religion, education, government, and agriculture could raise

the level of public and private morality, so morality could strengthen each of these great human undertakings. It was the business of political philosophers to discover the virtues that lead to free government, and the form of government that leads men and women to virtue.

With these Biblical and American democratic value-assumptions in mind, we now proceed to examine "the signs of the times" and their implications for religiously-committed and other concerned peoples.

The first volume of a comprehensive work on psychoanalytic theory written by Dr. Erich Fromm is entitled, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973). Prof. 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."

Noting that the preoccupation of pro-

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 1960's — 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 worldwide 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 oc-

curred in more than sixty.

From the perspective of an economic historian in post-Watergate, post-Vietnam America, Robert L. Heilbroner, author of the book, *An Inquiry Into the Human Prospect*, 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 have 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 mock-



ery 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.

Results of an 18-month study released by the Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee found that the destruction of school property in 757 school districts cost \$500 million a year — the amount spent on textbooks. It also found that more than 100 murders were committed in schools each year and at least 70,000 assaults on teachers.

The president of the National Education Association in the U.S. 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 that special cover story on crime, *Time* magazine (June 30, 1975) asserts:

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 even 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 on "The Universalization of Ethnicity," (*En-*



*counter*, London, February 1975) "an epidemic" of conflicts is taking place literally on every continent of the world in which race, religion, region and nationality are involved, frequently resulting in practices of torture, mass aggression and genocide.

*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 sup-

plies, and tried to get the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity to intervene to stop the killing. But the U.S. Ambassador, Thomas P. Melady, (see his book, *Burundi: The Tragic Years*) could only grieve that more could not be done. "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 transform the 4 million inhabitants from the influence of French colonialism. There has been 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 in July 1974, a thousand officials were sent to Yondo camps, many of whom had not returned, while those who returned behave as though they were divorced from their past and their

families and friends. The 52% of the people who make up a Muslim majority, and the 5% 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 by horrible punishment. President Tombalbaye has been assassinated recently, and the military junta that succeeded him has promised a new and honorable course.

Uganda is regarded as the African state where human rights have been violated most frequently since its independence in 1962. Tribal conflicts prevail. The 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 expelled 50,000

Africans 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 its Nigerian traders after confiscating all their assets. Many were kept for a year in detention suffering torture and 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 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 would call for a complete study of its own. Suffice it to note for our own purposes, before the



Communists took over in 1949, 90% of the Chinese people practiced a mixture of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and 1% of the people were once at least nominally Christian. The Western missionaries came under repeated attack from one regime or another, 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 worshippers and 10 cathedral

priests in Peking. Protestantism, too, has all but disappeared, except for a Protestant church of 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 1950's deprived them of life and land, 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 10 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 end of massacres is far from concluded. It is despairing to contemplate the fact that so much of the once productive lands and people of Southeast Asia have been destroyed by weapons produced in

“friendly” United States, as well as in Communist countries who are ostensibly engaged in detente.

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 (p. 138).

In Indonesia,

... the situation 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  
(p. 139).

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 the holding of 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). Going beyond the Amnesty report, however, conditions in India appear almost beyond outside help so long as there is continuing growth of her population, and general backwardness in technology, agriculture, education, 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 recent moves by Indira Ghandi to silence the opposition raise grave concern about the future of democracy in this country.

### *Europe*

Moving into 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

their UN-vouchsafed "right to leave." The reciprocal bombings of civilians by Catholic and Protestant extremists in Ireland depresses religious people everywhere.

### *Middle East*

Massacre and torture gripped innocent civilians of both the Greek and Turkish communities in 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 Muslim co-religionists in Iraq and Turkey. The complex problems of the Middle East, compounded as they are with 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 PLO terrorism and the ensuing Israeli reprisals in self-defense to prevent further massacres of innocent children as in Ma'alot, Nahariya and elsewhere.

*Latin America*

In the Americas, 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 to be used 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 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 CIA and the invasion of privacy by the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service with their data banks and compilations of "enemy lists" left millions of Americans feeling increasingly insecure about the threats to their constitutional democracy. Denial of rights and equal opportunities to many blacks, American Indians, and Latin-speaking people are 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 world hunger and population problem. There are, despite the recent heroic efforts to provide massive food supplies, some 400 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 14 million people still are the victims of poverty and millions still go to bed every night hungry. It is estimated that several million people will die from hunger during the coming year in the developing countries.

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 is the arms race and the nuclear weapons proliferation. In 1973, \$240 billion were spent to train, equip and maintain armed forces. The international trade in non-nuclear arms now tops \$18 billion annually — up from a mere \$300 million in 1952, and a jump of 550% since 1950. In fiscal 1975, the United States sold \$9.5 billion in military supplies to 71

countries; \$600 million worth more was sold through commercial channels and another \$600 million worth was given away. This represents 46% of total world sales.

The Soviet Union is second in international arms sales — \$39 billion since 1950, \$5.5 billion in 1974. France is third with a sale of \$3 billion to 80 nations, and Britain follows with \$1.5 billion.

In 1973, Third World nations imported \$7.7 billion. Impoverished India has doled out \$3 billion to 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 race can scarcely advance peace. In each of the 60 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. (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 in the coming decades. Unleashing the warheads now possessed by the United States or by the Soviets could bring fatalities ranging from 50 to 135 million people for the U.S. alone. Beyond that, 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 39 nations, a number of which would permit production of atomic bombs as well as electricity. The International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, according to the New York Times of November 2, 1973, predicts "the installation of 356 nuclear generating stations in the third world by 1990." Poor nations can be expected to obtain nuclear weap-



ons 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.

Five arms control experts, writing in the Harvard magazine of November 1975, predict that some nuclear wars are likely to occur before this century's end as a direct result of bombs spreading around the world like an "epidemic disease." The proliferation of "peaceful" nuclear power only aggravates the danger because as MIT Political Scientist George Rathjens (formerly of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency) writes, "by the end of the century there will be several thousand reactors around the world, each producing enough material to build a weapon a week."

The peril is compounded by the knowledge disclosed by Dr. Ted Taylor in his study, "Nuclear Theft," that an

atomic weapon would not be impossible for a guerilla-group to construct with just over 13 pounds of plutonium. It is believed that more than 4,000 pounds of plutonium were shipped in the United States last year and nobody knows exactly how much of that material was lost in transit or production.

An article by Ruth Leger Sivard in the April 1975 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* depicts the armaments monster we have created:

In nuclear weapons the United States has a stockpile of 8,000 megatons, equivalent to 615,385 Hiroshimas. What this means in practice: the U.S. nuclear stockpile by itself translates into a potential kill-power of 12 times the present world population. Adding the inventory of other major powers would double the total nuclear stockpile, amounting to tons of high explosives for every man, woman and child on the globe. The cost of maintaining the world's armament staggers the imagination. In 1973, the latest year for which global figures are available, the world total of expenditures for military purposes was \$240 billion. Another way to put it: every hour of every day the nations of the

world were spending \$30 million on their armed forces and armaments. The U.S. alone had already spent \$400 billion on its strategic nuclear force, and each year spent another \$20 billion for maintenance and expansion. By the end of this decade, it is estimated, total world military outlays in the '60's and '70's will have exceeded the incredible sum of \$4,329 billion.

Given the facts like these, it is obvious that the arms race has become a process that is almost out of human control; the war machine has gone berserk. In what started as a defensible search for security, mankind is in danger of losing all contact with reality. And every dollar that is now spent on arms represents the theft of food from the mouths of the earth's poor.

What does the world's expenditure of \$240 billion a year for armaments mean? That sum is larger than the entire gross national product of the populations of Africa, the Middle East and South Asia put together. The U.S. and the USSR alone spend more for military purposes than the combined annual incomes of over one billion people in 33 of the world's poorest nations. The world's annual military spending is more than is spent altogether for the education of over one billion children; it is

twice the public expenditure for health care for the total world population; it is almost twenty times the value of the foreign economic assistance of all nations put together. Worldwide medical research gets \$4 billion a year; military research and development takes a grand total of \$25 billion.

In a hungry world, such profligate military spending has tragic consequences. Every dollar spent on arms means less food somewhere else. In 1973 it is estimated that 460 million people were suffering from severe malnutrition. Just a portion of the amount we spend on arms each year would meet crisis needs at home and abroad and provide long-term assistance to improve food production. For only \$4 billion annually, 200 million children would be provided special feeding programs. Even less than that amount would treble present aid for agricultural development. Out of the present world population, more than 700 million are unable to read or write; at a cost of only \$1.5 billion a year, it is calculated that illiteracy could be virtually eliminated in five years. (Quoted in *Commonweal*, December 19, 1975.)

I fully appreciate, and support in many ways, the argument made by Dr. Paul

Nitze that "the United States take positive steps to maintain strategic stability and high-quality deterrence" as a means of assuring that the Soviet Union or an enemy is deterred from believing they could profit from seeking a nuclear-war-winning capability or effectively use pressure tactics to get their way in a crisis situation. (*Foreign Affairs*, January 1976.) Nor am I unmindful of the need and possibilities of controlling the defense budget through judicious pruning of waste. (*Foreign Affairs*, January 1976, "Controlling the Defense Budget," by Barry M. Blechman and Edward R. Fried.)

Given the "absolutely catastrophic nature of nuclear war," we must ask whether our Government and its allies have done enough to restrict their sales of nuclear reactors to unstable countries and to countries of uncertain political persuasion. Andrei Sakharov has proposed the creation of an international committee to investigate all nations, forbidding all bombs. Sen. Hubert Humphrey has in-

roduced a bill calling for Congress to share systematically in shaping policies guiding arms exports. It is a central moral issue, in my judgment, that Congress help America finally to develop a rational approach to arms sales as well as to the intensification of universal disarmament measures. The very survival of the human family depends on such measures taken vigorously here and in concert with other nations.

*Some Implications for  
Christians and Jews*

What are the implications of these facts for Christians and Jews today?

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 and by a growing callousness to human suffering and 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 of the Western world, and their dominant institutions 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 replicated 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 Prof. Lucy Dawidowicz has written in her recent study, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), 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.

Andre Malraux called it, "*le retour de satan.*"

To attain the goal of a heavenly hell on earth, the Nazi war killed over 35 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 world.

The slaughter of six million Jewish men, women and children — two out of 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 CE, 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, Prof. Dawidowicz writes, has one people made the killing of another the fulfillment of an ideology, in whose pursuit 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 func-

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tional 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 millenia.

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 of 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 redundancy, 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.

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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 20th 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 also stands, in a specific sense, under the principle of *sine ira ac studio* [without scorn or bias]. Its specific nature . . . develops the more perfectly the more the 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 special virtue.<sup>3</sup>

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 that 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."

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 supra-mundane 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 persons could acquire the "dehumanized" attitude of bureaucracy in which "love, hatred and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements" are eliminated in one's dealings with one's fellow persons, 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 its insistence upon the radical transcendence of God.

In so doing, the path was opened to the 20th century's radical secularization of consciousness in which the question of eliminating "surplus people" lost all religious and moral significance and became only a question of bureaucratic problem-solving.

Contrary to popular opinion, as Prof. 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 20th 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, conditions of guaranteed non-belligerency,

and will not, cannot afford to rely on rhetorical flourishes of Arab leaders about vague assurances of peace and co-existence, particularly when these are broadcast to the Western world but are 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, and ILO, and quite possibly from the UN itself?)

It is true that a few miserable SS 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 within German society. If there is a law that is devoid of all penalty when 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 David need worry 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 counter-ing these forces of dehumanization in the world, "we need not complete the task,"

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 should engage in a massive effort to establish a "new humanism" on a global basis that seeks to restore the Biblical value of the infinite worth and preciousness of each human life that must be appreciated as an end itself and never as an object of somebody's project or program.

Second, 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 anti-human means.

Third, 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 Prof. 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."

Fourth, 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.

Fifth, Christians and Jews should engage in an urgent and sustained intellectual and educational effort to elaborate a theology and ideology of pluralism which presupposes the right of each religious, racial, and ethnic group to define itself in its own terms and to be accepted unconditionally by its own self-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.

Sixth, 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, a gun control in American 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 that should be applied to the crying needs of the hungry, the diseased, and the homeless.

And finally, Christians and Jews need to recognize the fundamental interdependence of all human rights and collaborate vigorously to assure that every nation — East and West, North and South — implement fully their commitments to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

In particular, American 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 Solzhenitzyn reminds us, "will depend on everyone becoming concerned about the welfare of everybody everywhere."

*Footnotes*

1. (See *The Holy Year and Its Origins in the Jewish Jubilee Year*, by this writer, published by the Vatican Office for the Holy Year, 1975, Vatican City.)

2. *The Political Thought of the American Revolution* by Clinton Rossiter, Harvest Books.

3. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958) pp. 215f.

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