

RENVERSONS LES IDOLOCAUSTES !

Pouvoir juif

par Paul Eisen

Introduction
de Silvia Cattori

Paul Eisen a dû s'arracher pour écrire ce texte difficile et terrifiant. Paul Eisen, (comme quelques rares israéliens tel Gilad Atzmon, Ilan Pappé et Israël Shamir) a le courage et l'honnêteté intellectuelle d'aller au fin fond des questions qui se posent. Il ne supporte pas ce demi-soutien - le jeu des négociations, les accords d'Oslo. Genève, etc - qui a permis à Israël, d'arriver là où nous savons.

Je remercie Marcel Charbonnier d'avoir traduit un si important texte. Même si l'on ne partage pas tout ce que Paul Eisen dit, il nous permet de trouver des réponses rares, là où nous sommes dans le doute.

Force est de constater que les mouvements de solidarité nous ont désinformés ; en ce sens, ils n'ont pas fait mieux que les médias pour nous éclairer sur la réalité et les racines de cette guerre. Pire ! Ils n'ont jamais eu le courage de résister aux interventions des pro-israéliens qui avaient eux tout intérêt à "contenir" le mouvement et à envenimer le débat en faisant croire que les plus éclairés d'entre-nous étaient suspects de...

Il n'y a pas d'anti-juifs. Cela n'existe pas. Mais cela a servi à diviser et à écarter du débat les personnes les plus lucides : celles qui voyaient les manipulations destinées à nous affaiblir et à sauvegarder l'image de victime d'Israël pendant que les Palestiniens, eux, se faisaient massacrer.

N'ayez pas peur des mots vrais. N'ayez plus peur d'écouter la voix de ceux qui savent mieux que vous, qui voient avec justesse, et qui pour cette raison sont diabolisés. N'ayez pas peur d'être accusés d'antisémitisme ou autre, quand vous défendez leurs positions. Si nous sommes nombreux à résister aux calomnies, elles ne pourront plus rien contre nous.

C'est avec ces calomnies-là, que des associations, mi-figue mi-raisin, ont réussi à affaiblir le mouvement de solidarité. C'est à ce jeu là que se sont perdues les associations qui se sont laissées manipuler par plus forts qu'elles.

C'est aussi ces accusations là, qui ont frappé tant de personnes admirables et importantes pour mener la guerre des idées et contre les médias, qui ont permis à Israël de gagner sa guerre dehors aussi. Et que nul ne défend. Ceux qui tombent sont nos meilleurs alliés, dite-le vous bien une fois pour toutes.

Il n'est peut-être pas trop tard pour se ressaisir et voir avec lucidité. Donnons-nous la peine de lire ce que des personnes comme Paul Eisen, Michael Neumann, Israël Shamir, Ilan Pappé, chacun avec leur voix propre, ont fait l'effort de nous dire. Car écrire sur la guerre d'Israël et son allié US, dans cet univers de sourds, est un effort ingrat, colossal.

Toute personne qui travaille sur ce sujet, devrait lire ce texte qui couvre tous les aspects de ce difficile sujet. Les erreurs de compréhensions dans ce conflit ont déjà laissé trop de victimes sur le terrain.

Censurer ce texte, le retenir chez soi, par peur, serait malhonnête et faire un grand tort à ceux qui veulent mieux comprendre, mieux donner leurs forces aux opprimés palestiniens alors que les mouvements de solidarité peinent.

Nous ne devons regarder cette guerre inhumaine d'un point de vue humain. La religion qui est notre ne doit pas rentrer en considération.

Reconnaître ses faiblesses en toute humilité, faire confiance à ceux dont la pensée et de l'imagination peut nous tirer en avant est une urgence.

Les Palestiniens, (nous ne parlons pas de ceux à Ramallah, qui "collaborent" avec Israël pour quelques dollars et sont en train de former la police qui va arrêter les résistants, leurs frères), sont au fond du fond.

Nous devons cesser de faire le compte de nos succès. Nous avons lamentablement échoué. Et si on prétend défendre la cause des opprimés qui souffrent des injustices d'Israël et de toutes les trahisons de ceux qui prétendent ouvrir pour la paix, et bien commençons par comprendre, en toute modestie, pourquoi nous n'avons pas pu mieux défendre les Palestiniens.

31 août 2005.

Pouvoir juif

par Paul Eisen *

Traduit de l'anglais par **Marcel Charbonnier**

Le crime contre le peuple palestinien est en train d'être perpétré par un Etat juif dont les soldats juifs utilisent des armes ornées de symboles religieux juifs, avec l'entier soutien et la complicité de l'immense majorité des juifs organisés, de par le monde. Mais de là à désigner les juifs en tant que responsables de ce crime. : voilà pourtant qui semble impossible !

L'avenir est toujours ouvert, et rien ne peut jamais être écarté. Mais, pour l'instant, il est difficile d'entrevoir comment Israël pourrait être stoppé.

Depuis plus de cinquante ans, il est clair qu'Israël ne relâchera son attitude exterminatrice envers les Palestiniens et l'existence palestinienne que lorsqu'il sera contraint à le faire. Cette nécessité ne saurait résulter d'une action militaire, et il est néanmoins difficile d'entrevoir de quelle manière quelque chose d'autre pourrait l'imposer. La croyance généralement admise - selon laquelle, si l'Amérique tournait le robinet à dollars, Israël serait mis à genoux - est loin d'être prouvée. Tout d'abord, cela n'arrivera pas. Ensuite, ceux qui y croient sous-estiment vraisemblablement tant la cohésion de la société israélienne que la force de l'histoire juive qui l'imprègne. Encore plus invraisemblable est l'option militaire. La seule force, au monde, qui pourrait éventuellement réduire Israël, c'est l'armée américaine. Et, là encore, cela n'arrivera pas.

La résistance palestinienne nous surprendra toujours. Après plus de cinquante ans d'agression brutale par ce qui risque fort d'être considéré un jour comme l'une des puissances les plus impitoyables et irrationnelles des temps modernes, confronté à la coalition de la quasi totalité des puissances terrestres, les Palestiniens sont encore parmi nous, ils tiennent toujours bon, ils savent encore qui ils sont et d'où ils viennent ! Néanmoins, actuellement, la résistance effective est peut-être déjà derrière nous (bien que la possibilité d'une résistance non-violente ne puisse jamais être totalement écartée) et, pour l'instant, la seule stratégie qui s'offre encore à eux risque fort de n'être qu'une stratégie pour la survie.

Pour nous, il est tellement plus facile de nier cette réalité, plutôt que l'accepter, et sans aucun doute : le combat va continuer. Jusqu'à quel point ce combat sera-t-il fructueux, personne ne peut le prédire. Bien que le présent semble totalement désespéré, la survie est toujours vitale, et personne ne sait quand de nouvelles opportunités pourront se présenter. Quoi qu'il en soit, le combat contre l'injustice vaut toujours le coup d'être mené. Mais quid, si ce combat devient tellement décevant qu'il fait obstacle à la résistance, plutôt qu'il ne la seconde ? Quid si la lutte devient une manière d'éviter la réalité, plutôt que de l'affronter ? Ces slogans : « A bas l'occupation ! » et « Deux Etats, pour deux peuples » sont désormais rejoints par un nouveau slogan : « Une seule solution : un Etat unique ! ».

Ce slogan est exactement aussi fantasmagorique que ses prédécesseurs, parce que, de la même manière que l'occupation ne prendra jamais fin, et qu'il n'y aura jamais de véritable Etat palestinien, il n'y a pour l'instant, aucune

possibilité d'un quelconque « Etat unique » que l'Etat d'Israël, qui s'étend désormais de la Méditerranée au Jourdain, et la seule « solution » est une solution finale, laquelle - même elle - ne saurait être écartée du revers de la main.

« Le sionisme, ce n'est pas le judaïsme ; le judaïsme, ce n'est pas le sionisme ».

Le crime contre le peuple palestinien est en train d'être perpétré par un Etat juif dont les soldats juifs utilisent des armes ornées de symboles religieux juifs, avec l'entier soutien et la complicité de l'immense majorité des juifs organisés, de par le monde. Mais de là à désigner les juifs en tant que responsables de ce crime. : voilà pourtant qui semble impossible ! Le passé est simplement trop terrible. Nous savons tous à quelle haine et à quelle violence ont conduit, dans le passé, les accusations portées contre les juifs. Aussi, si nous nous mettions à examiner d'un œil critique le rôle des juifs dans ce conflit, qu'en adviendrait-il de nous, et de notre combat ? Serions-nous étiquetés d'antisémites, perdant l'essentiel du soutien que nous avons tant peiné à conquérir ?

Le présent, lui aussi, est plein d'ambiguïtés. Le sionisme n'est pas le judaïsme ; le judaïsme n'est pas le sionisme : voilà qui est devenu un article de foi, répété comme un *mantra*, à l'infini, ainsi que l'assertion selon laquelle le sionisme serait une idéologie laïque, opposée, pour l'essentiel de son histoire, à l'immense majorité des juifs religieux et à laquelle s'opposent encore aujourd'hui des juifs véritablement respectueux de la Torah, tels ceux du mouvement Neturei Karta. Mais le sionisme est désormais au cœur de la vie juive, car il se trouve des juifs religieux parmi les sionistes les plus virulents. Et les Neturei Karta, en dépit de leur judaïsme impeccable, de leurs magnifiques discours et de l'enthousiasme avec lequel ils sont accueillis dans les meetings de solidarité, etc., risquent fort de n'être que des juifs de carnaval, à des années lumières de la réalité de la vie juive.

Et, quand bien même le sionisme pourrait être désolidarisé du judaïsme, pourrait-il être distingué d'une identité juive plus large, ou de la judéité ? Très souvent, le sionisme est donné comme un ajout moderne à l'identité juive, une nouvelle idéologie colonialiste de peuplement, fût-elle anachronique, à la seule différence qu'elle serait adoptée par des juifs, en réponse à leur vocation. Mais ne serait-ce pas plutôt que notre besoin d'échapper à l'accusation d'antisémitisme et nos propres perceptions et sentiments conflictuels, notre insistance à affirmer que le sionisme et la judéité sont disjoints, nous ont amenés à interpréter la situation de manière erronée ? Notre refus de regarder en face la judéité même du sionisme et ses crimes ne nous a-t-il pas empêché de comprendre exactement ce contre quoi nous nous battons ?

Les juifs, le judaïsme et le sionisme

Les juifs sont complexes ; l'identité juive est complexe et la relation entre le judaïsme, une religion, et une identité juive, ou judéité, plus large et souvent laïque, est véritablement très complexe. La judéité, cela peut s'expérimenter à l'écart de toute synagogue, de toute *yeshiva* [école talmudique] ou de tout autre aspect formel de vie juive religieuse. Et pourtant, elle n'en est pas moins

inextricablement liée au judaïsme. C'est la raison pour laquelle les juifs laïcs sont enclins à proclamer leur laïcisme au moins aussi fort qu'ils clament leur judéité. Marc Ellis, un juif religieux, dit que lorsque vous examinez ces juifs qui sont solidaires des Palestiniens, l'immense majorité d'entre eux sont laïcs - mais, d'un point de vue religieux, l'Alliance les concerne tout autant. Pour Ellis, ces juifs laïcs sont peut-être porteurs de l'avenir de la vie juive, à leur insu, voire même à leur corps défendant.

L'identité juive, qui lie les juifs entre eux, provient des profondeurs de l'histoire juive. Il s'agit d'une histoire partagée, à la fois réelle et imaginaire, en ceci qu'elle est à la fois littérale et théologique. Beaucoup de juifs, en Occident, partagent une véritable histoire de vie commune en tant que peuple distinct, ayant vécu tout d'abord en Europe orientale ou centrale, puis en Europe occidentale et en Amérique. D'autres partagent une authentique histoire d'installation en Espagne, suivie d'une expulsion, puis d'une réinstallation un peu partout dans le monde, et en particulier dans les pays arabes et musulmans. Mais cela n'est peut-être pas ce qui unit tous les juifs, parce que cela n'est pas avéré pour tous les juifs, mais d'autres liens existent, qui peuvent être théologiques ou historiques. La plupart des Palestiniens, aujourd'hui, ont sans doute plus de sang hébreu dans leurs petits doigts que la plupart des juifs occidentaux n'en ont dans tout leur corps. Et néanmoins, l'histoire de la Sortie d'Égypte est aussi réelle, pour beaucoup d'entre eux, et - plus important - cette histoire a été aussi réelle pour eux, quand ils étaient enfants - que s'ils s'étaient personnellement trouvés, avec tous les juifs, en compagnie de Moïse lui-même, au pied du Mont Sinäï.

Et des histoires comme celles-ci ne s'arrêtent pas à l'époque contemporaine.

Même pour des juifs laïcs, il existe un sentiment, même s'ils ne le reconnaissent pas ou n'en ont pas conscience, non seulement d'une histoire en partage, mais aussi d'un destin commun. Le sentiment d'une mission axée sur l'exil et le retour est central dans l'histoire juive, tant religieuse que profane. Comment expliquer autrement la dévotion extraordinaire de si nombreux juifs, religieux et laïcs, envers le « retour » sur une terre avec laquelle, en termes réalistes, ils n'ont qu'un lien extrêmement ténu, et encore, lorsqu'ils en ont un ?

Pour bien des juifs, cette histoire leur confère une « spécificité ». Cela n'est pas unique aux juifs - après tout, qui, au plus profond de soi-même, ne se sent-il pas un tant soi peu différent d'autrui ? Mais, pour les juifs, cette spécificité est au centre de leur auto-identification, et la plupart des hommes, autour d'eux, semblent y apporter leur concours. Pour les juifs religieux, leur spécificité découle d'une alliance supposée avec Dieu. Mais pour les juifs laïcs, leur spécificité provient d'une histoire particulière.

Dans les deux cas, cela peut être une bonne chose, et même une très belle chose. Dans l'essentiel de la tradition religieuse juive, cette spécificité n'est pas autre chose qu'une obligation morale, qu'une responsabilité particulière, à offrir en exemple au monde, et pour beaucoup de juifs laïcs, cela les a conduits à lutter pour la justice, en beaucoup d'endroits, dans le monde entier.

Au cour de cette spécificité juive, il y a la souffrance et la victimitude juives. Comme l'histoire partagée elle-même, cette souffrance peut - mais pas nécessairement - correspondre à la réalité. Les juifs ont indéniablement souffert, mais leur souffrance demeure inexpliquée, car inexploree. L'Holocauste, qui représente désormais le paradigme de la souffrance juive,

n'appartient plus depuis longtemps à l'histoire : il s'agit désormais d'un phénomène théologique, considéré comme tel aussi bien par les laïcs que par les religieux - presque un texte sacré - et il est, partant, au-delà de tout examen critique. Et la souffrance ne trouve jamais de fin. Quelque grande qu'ait été leur souffrance, les juifs ne souffrent pas, aujourd'hui, c'est une évidence. Mais, pour de nombreux juifs, leur histoire de souffrance n'est pas simplement un passé auquel on ne saurait rien changer ; c'est aussi un futur possible. Aussi, peu importe le degré de sécurité dont puissent jouir les juifs, beaucoup parmi eux ont le sentiment qu'ils ne sont qu'à un jet de pierre d'Auschwitz.

Le sionisme est au cœur de tout ceci. Le sionisme est, lui aussi, complexe, et il provient, lui aussi, du tréfonds de l'histoire juive, avec ce même sentiment d'exil et d'aspiration au retour. Le sionisme, lui aussi, confirme que les juifs ont une spécificité, dans leur souffrance, et il explique que les juifs doivent « retourner » sur une terre qui leur aurait été donnée - à eux, exclusivement - par Dieu, s'ils sont croyants, ou par l'histoire, s'ils ne le sont pas et, cela, pour la « bonne » et simple raison qu'ils ne sauraient être en sécurité, où que ce soit, ailleurs, sur Terre.

Et alors, allez vous demander ? Si les juifs pensent qu'ils sont un peuple doté d'un lien avec une terre et s'ils ont un désir profond d'y « retourner », en quoi cela nous regarde-t-il, dès lors que cette terre ne serait pas déjà peuplée par les Palestiniens ? Et si les juifs ont le sentiment qu'ils sont spéciaux et que Dieu a conclu quelque marché spécial avec eux, où est le problème, dès lors que cela ne les amène pas à exiger de traitement préférentiel, ni à user de discrimination envers d'autres qu'eux-mêmes ? Et si les juifs ont le sentiment qu'ils ont souffert comme nul autre sur Terre, très bien, dès lors qu'ils n'utilisent pas leur souffrance afin de justifier la souffrance qu'ils imposent à d'autres, ni de manière à exercer un chantage moral sur le monde entier, en lui imposant un silence complice, sinon.

C'est bien là le problème, avec le sionisme. Il exprime l'identité juive, mais il lui donne aussi le pouvoir. Il dit aux juifs (et à beaucoup de non-juifs, aussi) que les juifs peuvent faire ce que les juifs ont toujours rêvé faire. Il s'empare des sentiments religieux parfaitement acceptables des juifs, ou si vous préférez, des illusions parfaitement inoffensives des juifs, et il s'efforce de les transformer en une réalité terrible. Les notions juives de spécificité, d'élection, voire même de suprématisme, sont parfaites, pour un petit peuple errant, mais lorsque ce peuple s'est doté d'un Etat, et d'une armée équipée d'avions de chasse F-16, elles deviennent préoccupantes pour chacun d'entre nous.

Le sionisme, en tant qu'accession des juifs à la nationalité, change tout. Israël n'est pas simplement un Etat comme les autres, c'est un Etat juif, et ceci signifie quelque chose de plus que simplement un Etat pour les juifs.

Cet Etat juif est édifié sur des traditions et des modes de pensée qui ont évolué, parmi les juifs, à travers les siècles - et parmi ces modes de pensées, se trouvent notamment les notions que les juifs sont particuliers et que leur souffrance est particulière. De leur propre aveu, les juifs sont une « nation qui vit à part », et pratique le « nous, et eux », et même, dans bien des cas, le « nous, ou eux ». Et ces tendances trouvent leur traduction dans l'Etat moderne d'Israël. Il s'agit d'un Etat qui ne connaît pas de frontières. D'un Etat qui croit, et utilise en guise de justification de ses propres agressions, en la notion que sa survie est en permanence en jeu, et que par conséquent tout et n'importe quoi est justifié afin d'assurer cette survie. Israël est un pays qui pense

manifestement que les règles tant juridiques qu'humanitaires applicables à tous les autres Etats ne s'appliquent tout simplement pas à son propre cas.

Leur pire cauchemar, mais un cauchemar bien à eux.

Quelle terrible ironie, de constater que cette accession au pouvoir des juifs en est venu à ressembler comme deux gouttes d'eau aux avènements de ces pouvoirs sous lesquels les juifs ont souffert mille morts. Le christianisme au pouvoir, là aussi un mariage entre foi et puissance, a imposé son idéologie et poursuivi ses dissidents et ses ennemis avec une ferveur en rien supérieure à celle manifestée par le judaïsme au pouvoir.

Dans son zèle et sa confiance en lui-même, le sionisme en est venu à ressembler aux idéologies modernes les plus brutales et les plus implacables. Mais, à la différence du rationalisme brutal du stalinisme, prêt à sacrifier des millions d'êtres humains au nom de la révolution politique et économique, cette idéologie juive, dans son zèle et son irrationalité, s'apparente plutôt au national socialisme, qui a pourtant condamné des millions de personnes au nom de l'atteinte d'une suprématie raciale et ethnique insensée.

Bien sûr, il y a des différences. Mais il y a aussi des similitudes. Le national socialisme, comme le sionisme, autre alliage entre mysticisme et pouvoir, a acquis une crédibilité en tant que moyen supposé susceptible de redresser des torts infligés à un peuple victime. Le national socialisme, comme le sionisme, aspirait à maintenir la pureté raciale / ethnique d'un groupe humain déterminé et à maintenir les droits de ce groupe ethnique particulier au-dessus de ceux des autres peuples. Le national socialisme, comme le sionisme, a proposé, lui aussi, un attachement quasi mystique de ce groupe humain déterminé à un territoire particulier. De même, tant le social nationalisme que le sionisme avaient en partage un intérêt commun : séparer les juifs des non-juifs, dans ce cas particulier, en faisant partir les juifs d'Europe - et ils coopèrent activement dans la poursuite de ce but.

Et si la similarité entre ces deux idéologies est tout simplement trop profonde et trop amère pour être admise, on peut se demander de quoi le national socialisme, avec ses uniformes, ses oriflammes et sa jeunesse enrégimentée avait l'air, aux yeux des Allemands désespérés par les accords de Versailles et les ravages subis par l'Allemagne du fait de la Première guerre mondiale ? Sans doute l'image qu'ils en eurent n'était pas si différente de celle retirée des uniformes, des oriflammes et de la jeunesse au pas cadencé de l'Etat pré- et post-sioniste par les juifs, après leur histoire faite de souffrances, en particulier après l'Holocauste.

Il s'agit là, pour les juifs, de leur propre pire cauchemar : ce qu'ils aiment le plus au monde est devenu ce qu'ils haïssent par-dessus tout. Quant à ces juifs, et d'autres aussi, qui pâlisent en comparaison, laissons-les se poser eux-mêmes la question suivante : qu'est-ce qu'un Allemand moyen, quand bien même eût-il été un nazi fanatique, aurait dit, par exemple en 1938, si vous aviez évoqué devant lui la possibilité d'un Auschwitz ? A ses yeux, vous auriez passé pour dément !

Les juifs américains et l'Amérique juive

Au cour du conflit, il y a la relation entre Israël et l'Amérique. Il est inutile de rappeler ici les statistiques - des milliards de dollars d'aides et de prêts, les

veto américains automatiques à l'ONU, etc. - le soutien américain à Israël semble sans limite. Mais quelle est la nature de ce soutien ? Pour beaucoup de gens, sans doute la majorité, la réponse est relativement simple. Israël est un Etat client de l'Amérique, et cet Etat sert les intérêts américains ou, plus précisément, les intérêts de ses élites au pouvoir. Cette vision des choses est sous-tendue par l'importance évidente du pétrole, l'énorme importance stratégique de la région du Moyen-Orient et le fait que, si Israël ne défendait pas les intérêts des gens qui contrôlent l'Amérique, alors nous pourrions être certains que l'Amérique ne soutiendrait pas Israël. Aussi nul doute que l'Amérique ait trouvé dans les Forces israéliennes « de défense » une armée merveilleusement souple et efficace, aisément mobilisable et excitable, et qu'on peut laisser se déchaîner à loisir, dès lors qu'un quelconque groupe d'Arabes se monterait un peu trop le bourrichon.

Mais est-ce là toute l'histoire ? Israël sert-il réellement les intérêts de l'Amérique, et leur relation est-elle entièrement fondée sur ces intérêts partagés ? Considérons l'immensité des pertes, en terme de bonne volonté de la part d'autres pays, accusées par l'Amérique en raison de son soutien à Israël, et considérons la puissance et l'influence du lobby « juif », « sioniste » ou « pro-israélien » (comme on voudra), qui fait que beaucoup de législateurs généralement responsables, confrontés à la perspective d'une intervention du lobby juif susceptible de leur faire remporter les prochaines élections, semble trop heureux de placer leurs perspectives de réélection très au-dessus de ce qui serait simplement « bon, pour l'Amérique ».

Les détails, qui filtrent, de temps à autre, sur les agissements de l'Aipac (et d'autres officines) et les mécanismes grâce auxquels ces groupes exercent des pressions sur les législateurs et les gouverneurs américains, ont été traités ailleurs ; nous voulons simplement relever ici que ce groupe de pression est sans aucun doute extraordinairement efficace et qu'il rencontre beaucoup de succès. Il ne s'agit pas simplement de petits groupes de juifs favorables à Israël, comme leurs financeurs et soutiens voudraient nous le donner à accroire : il s'agit d'idéologues, puissants et motivés : des multimilliardaires, des magnats des médias, des hommes politiques, des activistes et des leaders religieux. Quoi qu'il en soit, la capacité du lobby juif à bâtir - ou à démolir - toute personnalité publique est légendaire - ce n'est pas pour rien qu'on y fait le plus souvent référence en utilisant l'expression elliptique « The Lobby » [Le Lobby, par excellence].

Mais, là encore, il y a sans doute bien plus, dans les relations israélo-américaines, qu'une simple communauté d'intérêts et l'efficacité de certains groupes de pression. Le fait que le soutien d'Israël serve nécessairement les intérêts des gens qui contrôlent l'Amérique est certainement la réalité, mais : qui contrôle l'Amérique ? Sans doute, la véritable relation n'est-elle pas entre Israël et l'Amérique, mais entre les juifs et l'Amérique.

L'écrasante majorité des juifs, en Amérique, vivent leur vie, exactement comme le font tous les Américains, non-juifs. Ils sont aisés, et ils sont indubitablement satisfaits de voir l'Amérique soutenir leurs coreligionnaires juifs en Israël, mais les choses s'arrêtent là. Néanmoins, un groupe considérable de juifs contrôle une partie considérable de l'Amérique - oh, bien sûr, pas les muscles industriels de l'Amérique, tels la sidérurgie, les transports, etc., ni le pétrole et les industries de l'armement, ces usines à fric traditionnelles. Non, si les juifs ont une influence, quelque part, en Amérique, ce n'est ni sur les muscles ni sur les tendons, mais plutôt sur le sang et le cerveau. C'est dans la finance et

les médias que nous trouvons beaucoup de juifs à des positions extrêmement stratégiques. Les listes abondent (bien que vous deviez consulter des sites ouèbes particulièrement sulfureux pour les trouver) de juifs éminents dans la finance et la vie culturelle : Les juifs dans le secteur bancaire, Les juifs figurant dans la liste des Américains les plus fortunés, établie par Forbes Magazine ; les juifs d'Hollywood ; les juifs de la télévision ; les journalistes, écrivains, critiques juifs, etc.

Les juifs n'ont pas été particulièrement manchots lorsqu'il s'est agi d'exploiter leur position. Ils n'ont pas hésité à utiliser les moyens (quelsqu'ils fussent) dont ils disposaient pour assurer la promotion de leurs intérêts bien sentis. Inutile d'adhérer à une quelconque théorie du complot pour remarquer combien il est naturel, pour un juif des médias, de faire la promo des juifs et de leurs valeurs, qu'ils présentent comme positifs et dignes d'être imités. Qui, parmi vous, a vu dernièrement un juif présenté sous un jour autre que favorable ? Les juifs sont intelligents, moraux, intéressants, trépidants, chaleureux, futés, complexes, éthiques, contradictoires, prophétiques, insupportables, parfois passablement irritants, mais toujours formidablement séduisants. Pas étonnant, dès lors, si les juifs occupant des positions enviabiles sont enclins à faire la promotion de ce qu'ils pensent être les intérêts collectifs des juifs. N'est-il pas tout simplement incroyable que les conseillers juifs qui entourent la présidence américaine aient les intérêts d'Israël à l'esprit lorsqu'ils prodiguent leurs conseils en matière de politique étrangère au président américain ?

Mais bon. Ainsi, il y a beaucoup de juifs qui ont beaucoup d'argent, et beaucoup de juifs qui ont beaucoup de choses à dire et aussi les moyens de les dire et d'être entendus. Si les juifs, en vertu de leur capacité à utiliser des ressources (gagnées tout aussi honnêtement que celles des autres), font la promotion de ce qu'ils perçoivent être leur propre intérêt collectif, qu'y a-t-il à redire à cela ? Tout d'abord, à de rares et notables exceptions, la grande majorité des juifs peuvent, en toute bonne foi, mettre la main sur leur cœur et jurer qu'ils n'ont jamais pris la moindre décision, ni entrepris la moindre action, en ayant à l'esprit des intérêts collectifs juifs, en tout cas, certainement pas consciemment. Et même si c'est le cas, ils ne se comportent pas différemment de tout un chacun. A quelques exceptions près, les juifs ont gagné durement leurs positions avantageuses. Ils sont partis de rien, ils ont joué en respectant les règles du jeu, et s'ils utilisent leur influence afin de promouvoir ce qu'ils pensent être des intérêts juifs, qu'y a-t-il là de si répréhensible ?

Les Polonais, les Ukrainiens, le lobby des armes, les évangélistes chrétiens, n'œuvrent-ils pas, eux aussi, à l'avancement de leurs intérêts spécifiques ?

La différence, entre les juifs et les autres groupes, c'est que les juifs le font probablement mieux que les autres. Les juifs sont, en fonction de quasiment la totalité des critères, le groupe ethnique qui réussit le mieux aux Etats-Unis et, quelle qu'en soit la raison, ils sont depuis longtemps extraordinairement doués lorsqu'il s'agit d'assurer leur auto-promotion, tant individuelle que collective. Et ils n'y aurait probablement rien à redire à cela, si ce n'est le fait que ces mêmes personnes qui exercent une telle influence et un tel contrôle sur la vie américaine sont aussi celles qui semblent refuser d'être tenus de rendre des comptes. C'est subrepticement que les juifs sont perçus comme ayant atteint le succès, ce qui soulève des soupçons. Les juifs, c'est le moins qu'on puisse en dire, se montrent particulièrement chatouilleux sur le chapitre de l'influence qu'on leur prête ou qu'ils ont véritablement. Prononcez simplement l'expression « pouvoir juif », et vous verrez la réaction ! Ils affirment que cette susceptibilité

tient au fait que cette accusation a souvent été utilisée à leur encontre, et qu'elle a été le signe annonciateur de discriminations et de violences dirigées contre eux, mais ils ne prennent jamais en considération la possibilité que leur propre réticence à discuter du pouvoir qu'ils détiennent puisse susciter des soupçons, voire même de l'hostilité à leur encontre.

Et puis il y a cette autre allégation, plus subtile, et aussi plus inquiétante. C'est celle selon laquelle ce pouvoir n'existerait pas ; les juifs ne détiendraient aucun pouvoir ; il n'y aurait pas de lobby juif ; les juifs en Amérique n'exerceraient aucun pouvoir et aucune influence afin de promouvoir des intérêts juifs, et même que des intérêts juifs, cela n'existe pas ! Il n'y a pas d'intérêts juifs impliqués dans la guerre en Irak, il n'y a pas d'intérêts juifs en Amérique ; plus étonnant encore, il n'y a pas d'intérêts juifs non plus, ni en Israël, ni en Palestine ! Il n'existe pas de collectif juif. Les juifs n'agissent pas collectivement afin de promouvoir leurs intérêts. Ils disent même que le lobby pro-israélien n'a en réalité pas autant à voir qu'on le dit avec les juifs, que la judéité d'Israël n'a aucune importance et que les Comités pour les Affaires Publiques [Public Affairs Committees - PACs] qui font un lobby effréné en faveur d'Israël ne font rien de plus, en réalité, que soutenir un allié, et par conséquent veiller aux intérêts bien sentis de l'Amérique, allant même jusqu'à dissimuler leur véritable objectif sous des noms d'emprunt d'organismes tels « American for Better Citizenship » [Les Américains pour une meilleure citoyenneté], « Citizen's Organized PAC » ou encore « National PAC » - dont aucun ne fait la moindre allusion, dans sa raison sociale, ni à Israël, ni au sionisme, ni aux juifs. De même, les juifs et les organisations juives sont censés faire la promotion non tant des valeurs et des intérêts juifs qu'américains, voire universels. Ainsi, le plus grand musée de l'Holocauste, présenté comme « Musée de la Tolérance », met l'accent non seulement sur l'antisémitisme, mais sur toutes les formes d'intolérance connues de l'humanité (excepté celle dont des juifs font preuve envers les non-juifs, en Israël et en Palestine.). De même, l'Anti-Defamation League ne serait rien d'autre qu'une organisation visant à assurer la promotion des principes universels de tolérance et de justice, non seulement en ce qui concerne les juifs, mais pour tout le monde.

Cette convergence entre intérêts juifs et américains n'est nulle part plus éclatant que dans le domaine de la politique extérieure américaine actuelle. Si jamais un tableau a pu évoquer puissamment une conspiration mondiale juive, c'est bien le spectacle donné par les néocons juifs assemblés autour de la présidence actuelle et dirigeant sa politique au Moyen-Orient. Mais on nous dit que le fait que les néocons juifs soient si nombreux à avoir des liens avec des formations de droite en Israël et à être aux premières lignes pour inciter (l'administration américaine) à (adopter) une politique pro-israélienne n'est pas autre chose qu'une simple coïncidence, et toute suggestion que ces personnages puissent être influencés par leur judaïté et leurs liens avec Israël est immédiatement repoussée du revers de la main : elle ne saurait relever que des mythes antisémites surannés concernant la loyauté duplice des juifs. L'idée que l'intervention américaine en Irak, seule véritable contrepoids militaire à l'hégémonie israélienne au Moyen-Orient, et, partant, instigateur de la résistance palestinienne, serve essentiellement des intérêts israéliens, bien avant les intérêts américains, a été elle aussi consignée dans le monde succube des mythes antisémites médiévaux. La suggestion que ces juifs, dans l'entourage du président américain, agissent poussés par des motivations autres que la promotion des intérêts de l'ensemble des Américains, voilà qui n'est pas autre

chose que de la diffamation antisémite. Et peut-être ont-ils raison. Peut-être ceux qui assurent la promotion des intérêts juifs sont bien, en fait, en train de défendre des intérêts américains, dès lors que, tout au moins pour l'instant, ils semblent ne faire qu'un.

La Juimérique

A Washington, District of Columbia, on peut admirer un mémorial immortalisant une terrible tragédie. Non pas un mémorial dédié à une tragédie infligée par une puissance étrangère aux Américains, comme à Pearl Harbour, ou encore les attentats du 11 septembre 2001. Non pas un mémorial dédié à une tragédie infligée à des Américains par des Américains, comme la mise à sac de la ville d'Atlanta. Non pas un mémorial de contrition pour une tragédie infligée par des Américains à un autre peuple, tels l'esclavage ou l'histoire de la discrimination raciale en Amérique. Rien de tout cela. Le mémorial de l'Holocauste est là pour rappeler une tragédie infligée à des gens qui n'étaient pas Américains, par des gens qui n'étaient pas Américains, et en un lieu très très éloigné de l'Amérique. Et les coreligionnaires, ou même, si vous voulez, les concitoyens de gens auxquels cette tragédie fut infligée et auxquels le mémorial est dédié représentent environ 2 % de la population américaine. Comment se fait-il qu'un groupe de personnes qui représentent un pourcentage tellement minime de la population américaine générale puisse imposer un respect et une prévenance tels qu'un monument leur soit dédié au cour symbolique même de la vie nationale américaine ?

Le narratif juif occupe désormais le centre de la vie américaine, en tous les cas, avec certitude, de celle des élites culturelles et politiques de l'Amérique. Il existe, quoi qu'il en soit, beaucoup de choses, dans la façon dont les Américains veulent se voir et voir leur histoire, qui est tout à fait naturellement compatible avec la manière dont les juifs se perçoivent eux-mêmes et dont ils perçoivent leur histoire. Pourrait-il y avoir paradigme plus adéquat, pour un pays fondé sur l'immigration, que l'histoire d'immigration massive des juifs à la fin du dix-neuvième et au début du vingtième siècles ? Pour beaucoup d'Américains, l'histoire de ces juifs venus vers leur *Goldenes Medina*, comme ils disent en yiddish, vers leur Eldorado, démunis de tout, et parvenus, à force de travail acharné et de persévérance, au top niveau même de la société américaine, c'est aussi leur propre histoire. Et pourrait-il y avoir meilleur sujet d'inspiration, pour un pays (sinon officiellement, en tous les cas viscéralement et profondément chrétien) que l'histoire des juifs, le peuple même de Jésus, et le peuple élu de Dieu, retournant dans son ancienne patrie et la transformant en un Etat moderne ? Et pour une nation qui se perçoit comme un phare de démocratie illuminant le monde, quelle meilleure âme-sœur que l'Etat d'Israël, qui passe largement pour « la seule démocratie au Moyen-Orient » ?

Enfin, quelle plus éclatante validation, pour un pays lui-même fondé sur une narration de conquête et d'épuration ethnique que le narratif biblique de la conquête et de la purification ethnique de la Terre promise, à laquelle vient se surimposer la colonisation tout aussi violente de la Palestine moderne, avec sa propre épuration ethnique, suivie du « reflourissement du désert » ?

Bien sûr, la notion de peuple juif = peuple souffrant a encore bien plus de résonances. Le fait que ce « peuple souffrant » jouisse aujourd'hui d'un succès qui va bien au-delà des rêves les plus fous d'un quelconque autre groupe ethnique aux Etats-Unis semble n'avoir aucune espèce d'importance.

Tout aussi ignorée est la manière dont les juifs américains sont parvenus à accéder au sommet de la société américaine, tout en se plaignant, tout au long de leur ascension, de la manière dont ils ont fait l'objet de discrimination. Néanmoins, pour l'Amérique, les juifs ont connu une histoire ininterrompue de souffrances et de victimitude. Mais cette histoire a, il est vrai, rarement été étudiée, voire même débattue.

Un peuple souffrant

Le fait que les juifs aient souffert est indéniable, mais la souffrance juive est présentée comme ayant duré si longtemps, comme ayant été si intense et si particulière qu'elle doit être tenue pour différente de toute autre souffrance. Ce sujet est complexe et ne saurait être débattu de manière exhaustive ici, mais les points suivants sont susceptibles de susciter la discussion et de stimuler le débat.

Même au plus fort des périodes les plus terribles de la souffrance juive, telles les Croisades ou les massacres de Chmielnitzky, dans l'Ukraine du dix-septième siècle, et encore plus à d'autres époques historiques, il a été dit que le paysan moyen aurait donné ce à quoi il tenait par-dessus tout pour pouvoir devenir juif. La signification de ceci est évidente : d'une manière générale, au travers de la plus grande partie de leur histoire, la condition des juifs fut le plus souvent supérieure à celle de la masse de la population.

Les massacres ukrainiens auxquels nous avons fait allusion sont intervenus dans le contexte d'une révolte paysanne contre l'oppression imposée aux paysans ukrainiens par leurs seigneurs féodaux polonais. Comme cela fut souvent le cas, les juifs furent perçus comme occupant une position coutumière consistant à être alliés à la classe dirigeante, et participant de ce fait à l'oppression des paysans. Chmielnitzky, le chef de cette insurrection populaire, est aujourd'hui célébré comme le héros de la nation ukrainienne, non pas pour ses assauts contre les juifs (on fait même souvent allusion au fait qu'il avait offert à des juifs pauvres de se joindre à l'insurrection paysanne afin de participer au combat contre leurs coreligionnaires exploités - offre que les juifs déclinèrent), mais pour sa défense des droits des Ukrainiens opprimés. Là encore, l'inférence est simple : des explosions de violence antisémite, même si elles ne sauraient jamais être justifiées, ont bien souvent été des réponses face au comportement juif, tant concret qu'imaginaire.

Dans l'Holocauste, trois millions de juifs polonais ont péri, mais il en alla de même pour trois millions de Polonais non-juifs. Des juifs furent pris pour cibles, mais il y eut aussi des Tziganes, des homosexuels, des Slaves, principalement des Polonais. De même, l'Église a brûlé les juifs en raison de leurs croyances non conformes au dogme. Mais l'Église a brûlé de la même manière quiconque entretenait des croyances non conformes. Aussi, là encore, il faut poser la question suivante : qu'a donc la souffrance juive de tellement spécial ?

L'Holocauste, ce paradigme de tout l'antisémitisme et de toute la souffrance juive, est traité comme s'il était au-delà de tout examen et de toute critique. Remettre en question la narration de l'Holocauste, est, dans le meilleur des cas, socialement inacceptable. Cela conduit souvent à l'exclusion et à la discrimination sociales et, au pire, dans certains pays, cela est illégal et entraîne de très lourdes sanctions pénales. Les spécialistes du révisionnisme de

l'Holocauste, généralement qualifiés de négationnistes de l'Holocauste par leurs détracteurs, ont relevé le défi.

Ils ne déniaient pas la réalité d'un assaut brutal et extensif du régime nazi sur les juifs, mais ils rejettent une narration de l'Holocauste telle celle qui est présentée de nos jours par les establishments et les élites. Plus spécifiquement, leur déni se limite à trois aires principales. Tout d'abord, ils déniaient l'existence d'un quelconque projet, chez Hitler, ou n'importe quel autre responsable du parti nazi, d'éliminer physiquement et systématiquement tous les juifs d'Europe ; ensuite, ils déniaient l'existence de quelconques chambres à gaz à usage d'extermination d'hommes ; enfin, ils affirment que le nombre des victimes juives de l'agression nazie a été fortement magnifié.

Mais là n'est pas la question. Que ceux qui mettent en doute le narratif de l'Holocauste soient des universitaires révisionnistes aspirant à trouver la vérité et scandaleusement persécutés pour avoir osé s'opposer à une faction puissante, ou qu'il s'agisse de fous haïssant les juifs, qui déniaient une tragédie tout en en diffamant les victimes bien réelles, demeure le fait qu'il est tout à fait loisible de remettre en question le génocide arménien, que l'on peut discuter librement du commerce des esclaves, qu'on peut affirmer que l'assassinat de millions d'Ibois, de Cambodgiens et de Rwandais n'a jamais eu lieu et que la lune n'est pas autre chose qu'un morceau de gruyère géant flottant dans l'espace, mais qu'on ne saurait mettre en doute l'Holocauste juif. Pourquoi ? Parce que, comme le reste de l'histoire de la souffrance juive, l'Holocauste sous-tend le narratif de l'innocence juive, qui est utilisé afin de leurrer et d'aveugler toute tentative de voir et de comprendre ce que sont tant le pouvoir juif que la responsabilité juive en Israël / Palestine, et ailleurs, dans le monde.

Le pouvoir juif : qu'est-ce qu'un juif ?

L'écrivain israélien, originaire de Russie, Israël Shamir, est partisan du droit qu'ont toutes les personnes, quelle que soit leur ethnie ou leur religion, à vivre ensemble en totale égalité entre la mer Méditerranée et le Jourdain. Shamir condamne le comportement d'Israël et de la diaspora juive, et il en appelle à ce qu'un terme soit mis à leur traitement préférentiel, mais il propose, également, une opposition au judaïsme lui-même, raison pour laquelle il est accusé d'anti-judaïsme - accusation qu'il ne dénie nullement, puisqu'en réalité, il la revendique.

Shamir pose l'existence d'une idéologie juive, qu'il appelle le « paradigme juif », et il suggère que c'est l'adhésion volontaire à cet « tournure d'esprit » qui fait d'un juif qu'il est juif. Pour lui, la judaïté n'est ni une race, ni une ethnicité - pour Shamir, il n'existe pas de « tribu » ni de « famille » juives - il ne s'agit donc pas d'un corps biologique ou ethnique d'où nul ne saurait se libérer. De plus, cette idéologie (juive), basée sur des notions d'élection, d'exclusivisme voire même de suprématisme est, tout au moins lorsqu'elle s'est emparée du pouvoir, incompatible avec la paix, l'égalité et la justice en Palestine, ou n'importe où, d'ailleurs.

Il ne viendrait à l'idée de personne de s'opposer à un quelconque juif pour la simple raison qu'il est juif, ni même en raison de ses croyances. Cette opposition ne saurait concerner que ce que ce juif fait. Le problème étant que, dès lors, comme le dit Shamir, que ce que les juifs pensent et même font est précisément ce qui fait d'eux des juifs, l'opposition à la judaïté en tant qu'idéologie se rapproche dangereusement de l'hostilité envers les juifs en

raison du simple fait qu'ils le sont. Mais, pour Shamir, les juifs sont juifs parce qu'ils choisissent d'être juifs. On peut être né de parents juifs et avoir été élevé dans les traditions juives, mais on peut toujours, si on le veut, rejeter cette éducation juive et devenir un non-juif. Et c'est ce que beaucoup de juifs ont fait, dont des renégats aussi célèbres que Karl Marx, Saint Paul, Léon Trotsky (et Israël Shamir lui-même.). L'opposition aux juifs n'a donc rien de comparable à l'hostilité envers les Noirs ou les Asiatiques, ou à n'importe quelle autre attitude raciste, dès lors que ceux qui font l'objet de ce rejet sont parfaitement à même d'abandonner l'idéologie dont il est question.

Jamais Shamir n'a appelé d'aucune manière que ce soit à ce qu'il soit fait du mal à des juifs ou à quiconque d'autre, ni à ce que des juifs ou qui que ce soit d'autre fassent l'objet d'une quelconque forme de discrimination. L'adhésion à cette idéologie juive est, pour Shamir, regrettable, mais elle ne constitue pas, en elle-même, un motif pour une opposition active. Cela ne signifie pas non plus que Shamir s'opposerait à tout individu juif pour la simple raison qu'il s'agirait d'un juif ou d'une juive. Non. Ce à quoi Shamir objecte activement, ce n'est pas aux « juifs », mais c'est à la « juiverie ». Dans la même acception que l'Eglise catholique, la juiverie consiste en ces juifs organisés avec leurs dirigeants, qui font la promotion active d'intérêts et de valeurs juifs corrosifs, en particulier, aujourd'hui, ceux qui contribuent à l'oppression des Palestiniens.

Nul besoin d'être d'accord à cent pour cent avec Shamir pour comprendre ce dont il nous parle. Pourquoi les juifs n'auraient-ils pas une « mentalité » ? Après tout, un concept tel que celui-ci a bien été évoqué et étudié, concernant toutes les autres nations ? « Il est dangereux, il est erroné, de parler « des Allemands », ou d'un quelconque autre peuple, comme s'il s'agissait d'une unique entité indifférenciée, qui inclurait tous les individus dans une même appréciation.

Et pourtant, je ne pense pas que j'irais jusqu'à nier qu'il existât une mentalité propre à chaque peuple (sinon, ce peuple ne serait pas un peuple) : une Deutschtum, une italianité, une hispanité : ce sont les sommes de traditions, de coutumes, d'histoires nationales, de langues et de cultures. Quiconque ne ressent pas en lui-même cet esprit, cette mentalité, qui est national(e) au meilleur sens de ce terme, non seulement n'appartient pas complètement à son propre peuple, mais n'est pas non plus partie de la civilisation humaine. Par conséquent, autant je considère insensé le syllogisme « Tous les Italiens sont des passionnels ; vous êtes Italien, donc, vous êtes un passionnel », autant je pense légitime, dans certaines limites, d'attendre des Italiens, pris dans leur ensemble, ou des Allemands, etc., un comportement spécifique, collectif, plutôt qu'un autre. Il y aura certes des exceptions individuelles, mais une prévision prudente, probabiliste, est à mon avis possible. » (Primo Levi)

Et, s'agissant des juifs, cette analyse est sans doute encore plus appropriée. La place du judaïsme, en tant qu'idéologie, au centre de l'ensemble de l'identité juive peut être débattue, mais peu de gens contesteraient l'idée que le judaïsme soit au minimum au centre historique de la judaïté, et, quels que puissent être par ailleurs les liens éventuels qui lient les juifs entre eux, il est certainement vrai que la religion joue un rôle important. Ensuite, pour un groupe de personnes qui ont acquis une telle identité collective extrêmement forte, sans avoir jamais partagé l'occupation d'un même territoire, d'une même langue, ni même, dans bien des cas, une même culture, il est difficile d'envisager ce qu'il

pourrait y avoir d'autre, qui fasse que les juifs sont des juifs. Assurément, pour des juifs, en l'absence d'autres facteurs, plus évidents, c'est précisément une telle mentalité qui les a rendu capables d'acquérir leur identité distinctive, depuis si longtemps, et en dépit d'une telle adversité.

Mais, s'il existe bien une quelconque forme d'esprit juif ou d'idéologie juive, de quoi s'agit-il ? En ce qui concerne le judaïsme, je parle ici de la religion, il semble tout à fait clair qu'il y a une idéologie, fondée sur l'élection d'Israël par Dieu, cette relation spéciale que les juifs sont supposés entretenir avec Dieu, et la mission spéciale confiée aux juifs par Dieu. Aussi, pour les juifs pratiquants, il existe une qualité spécifique, intrinsèque à l'alliance et au judaïsme même, bien qu'ils ne soient pas tous unanimes à trouver cette qualité particulièrement enthousiasmante :

« Il existe une tendance, dans la pensée juive, qui dit qu'il y aurait quelque chose de spécial, de Divin, ou autre, qui se serait transmis à travers les générations, formant une certaine lignée génétique, et qui conférerait une qualité particulière à des gens, et que, par conséquent, la judaïté serait une qualité spéciale. Pour ma part, j'appelle ça du racisme métaphysique ».

Le rabbin Mark Solomon.

Mais s'il est aisé de constater un tel esprit partagé chez les juifs religieux - après tout, n'est-ce pas précisément cet esprit qui fait d'eux des religieux ? - il est beaucoup plus difficile, en revanche, de le définir chez les juifs laïcs, ces juifs qui rejettent, souvent d'une manière on ne saurait plus vocale, tous les aspects de la foi juive. Ils clament bien souvent qu'ils n'ont pas d'idéologie, ou que leur idéologie est une idéologie, disons, de gauche : non seulement cette idéologie n'aurait rien de juif, mais elle serait même opposée à toutes les religions, le judaïsme compris. Cependant, tout en étant en apparence aussi libres de toute cette superstition ignorante, ces mêmes personnes n'en continuent pas moins à se définir comme juives, et dans bien des cas, elles épousent d'autres juifs et continuent à assister à des réunions de solidarité, auxquels n'assistent que des juifs, sous des bannières exclusivement juives. Leur idéologie ne serait-elle pas un petit peu juive, sur les bords ?

Pour moi, il s'agit d'exactly le même sentiment de spécificité que celle que l'on trouve chez les juifs, mais avec une référence spéciale à la victimitude. « Oui, mais seulement au sens hitlérien du terme », répondit le philosophe Maxime Rodinson [= en fait, linguiste et historien] après qu'on lui eut posé la question de savoir s'il se considérait comme juif. Pour beaucoup de ces juifs-là, c'est leur identité de peuple menacé et victimisé qui fait d'eux des juifs. « Hitler a dit que j'étais juif, alors pourquoi ne serais-je pas juif, après tout ? » est une réponse, ou encore « Etre juif, quelque part, cela revient à dénier une victoire à tous ceux qui ont pu persécuter des juifs, à travers l'histoire - aussi : je suis juif ! » Pour ces juifs, bien qu'ils soient totalement étrangers à la vie religieuse juive, et même à la vie communautaire juive, le célèbre 614^{ème} commandement post-holocaustique (à ajouter aux 613 commandements classiques) créé par Emil Fackenheim : « Tu survivras ! » est un impératif absolu. Mais, quelle que soit la raison, cette auto-identification va vraiment très profondément en eux. Parmi ces juifs, peu importe à quel point ils peuvent être de gauche ou progressistes, vous pouvez critiquer Israël à la puissance N, vous pouvez vous moquer de l'establishment juif, vous pouvez même dénigrer effrontément la religion juive, mais dérogez ne serait-ce que d'un iota à la ligne du parti en

matière d'antisémitisme et de souffrance juive, et vous aurez droit à une soufflée dans les bronches. Pour ces personnes pourtant rationnelles, la souffrance juive et l'antisémitisme sont tout aussi inexplicables, mystérieux et, partant, tabous qu'ils le sont pour n'importe quel juif religieux.

La sécularité juive est souvent citée à titre de preuve qu'il n'existerait pas d'identité juive agglutinée autour d'une quelconque idéologie partagée. Après tout, si tous les juifs adhèrent à la même idéologie fondamentale, comment se fait-il donc que des juifs aussi nombreux, de toute évidence, n'y adhèrent pas ? Et si tous les juifs défendent essentiellement les mêmes intérêts, comment se fait-il qu'ils soient si nombreux, de toute évidence, à ne pas le faire ? Mais est-ce si évident ? Non seulement des juifs laïcs, très souvent, semblent bel et bien adhérer à des notions juives telles l'élection, la spécificité et la victimitude, mais aussi, dans leurs attitudes vis-à-vis des non-juifs en général, et vis-à-vis des Palestiniens en particulier, ils ne diffèrent absolument en rien de juifs religieux.

On invoque souvent le grand nombre de juifs militant dans des mouvements de solidarité avec les Palestiniens, et à quel point la majorité de ces mouvements sont laïcs. Et c'est vrai : il y a beaucoup de juifs qui sont en sympathie avec les Palestiniens, et ces juifs sont très majoritairement laïcs, et dans sa flambée principale, consécutive à 1967, le sionisme virulent s'est trouvé associé à la droite religieuse. Mais cette tradition juive laïque, en réalité, s'est trouvée aux premières lignes de l'assaut sioniste contre les Palestiniens. Ce sont les sionistes laïcs travaillistes qui ont créé l'idéologie sioniste et la société « juifs seulement » pré-étatique. Ce sont des sionistes laïcs - de braves kibbutzniks, humanistes, de gauche - qui ont dirigé et mené à « bien » l'épuration ethnique de 750 000 Palestiniens, ainsi que la destruction de leurs villes et villages. Ce sont des sionistes laïcs qui ont créé l'Etat actuel, avec toutes ses pratiques discriminatoires ; et ce sont des gouvernements largement laïcs qui ont maintenu les citoyens palestiniens d'Israël sous gouvernement militaire, dans leur propre pays, dix-huit années durant.

Enfin, c'est un gouvernement travailliste laïc qui a conquis la Cisjordanie et la bande de Gaza, commencé à construire des colonies et embarqué dans le processus d'Oslo, froidement planifié afin de tromper les Palestiniens et de les amener à brader leurs droits légitimes. Eh bien, même ces juifs laïcs, qui soutiennent effectivement les droits des Palestiniens, offrent dans bien des occasions une solidarité limitée par leur intérêt propre. Que ces gens, au moins autant que n'importe qui d'autre, agissent sous l'empire de leurs motivations les plus élevées, est peut-être vrai. Beaucoup ont été des militants, toute leur vie durant, de multiples causes et beaucoup ont le sentiment que leur activisme découle, consciemment ou inconsciemment, de ce qu'ils considèrent être leurs idéaux les plus élevés inhérents à leur judaïté. Mais, néanmoins, pour beaucoup d'entre eux, la solidarité avec les Palestiniens signifie, avant tout, la protection des juifs. Ils en appellent à la création d'un Etat palestinien sur 22 % du territoire de la Palestine historique, mais à seule fin de pérenniser et de protéger la « judaïté » de l'Etat juif. L'Etat palestinien qu'ils appellent de leurs vœux serait inévitablement faible, dominé par l'économie israélienne et sous le feu des canons de l'armée israélienne – on ne nous fera pas croire qu'ils ne savent pas ce que cela signifie ! Meeting après meeting, discours après discours, tract après tract et banderole après banderole, ces juifs dénoncent l'occupation. « A bas l'occupation !. A bas l'occupation !. A bas l'occupation !. » Mais sur l'injustice inhérente à un Etat réservé aux seuls juifs : pas un mot !

Peut-être, éventuellement, une mention du butin bien mal acquis en 1948, mais rien sur le droit au retour des réfugiés, aucune restitution. Peut-être, simplement une « juste solution », prenant en compte, bien entendu, des « préoccupations démographiques d'Israël ». « Nous sommes avec vous. Nous sommes avec vous. » disent-ils. « mais. » Qu'il s'agisse de telle ou telle forme prise par la Résistance palestinienne, qu'ils désapprouvent, ou d'une occurrence - réelle, ou perçue - d'antisémitisme, pour ces juifs, il y a toujours un « mais. ».

Ils devraient prendre de la graine chez un Henry Herskovitz. Il appartient à une association, Les Témoins Juifs pour la Paix, qui installe des vigiles silencieux devant les synagogues les jours de Shabbat. Bien entendu, tous les autres militants juifs lui gueulent après qu'il ne doit pas cibler les juifs dans ses protestations, qu'il faut faire un distinguo entre les juifs, les Israéliens et les sionistes, qu'il ne fera que s'aliéner les gens que nous voulons mobiliser. Mais il n'en a cure. Il sait que le soutien provenant des juifs consensuels, comme le trotskiste Tony Cliff avait coutume de dire, « . c'est comme du miel sur ton épaule : tu le vois, tu le sens, mais tu ne pourras jamais y goûter ! » Henry le sait, lui aussi, parfaitement, que dire que les juifs, en Amérique, individuellement, et dans leurs associations communautaires et religieuses ne doivent pas être tenus responsables de ce qui est en train de se passer, c'est un mensonge. Et que cela discrédite tous les juifs, aux yeux du monde non-juif.

Ainsi, ces juifs laïcs finissent-ils bien souvent par n'être qu'une énième tourné de ce que Michael Neuman a qualifié d' « authentique jeu de bonneteau » de l'identité juive. « Regardez ! On est une religion ! Et non : on est une race ! Et hop ! Non : on est une identité culturelle ! Désolés : on est de nouveau une religion ! » La raison ? C'est là la clé pour maintenir le pouvoir juif : il faut qu'il soit indéfinissable, il faut qu'il soit invisible. Comme un bombardier « furtif » Stealth (vous ne le décelez pas sur votre écran radar, mais vous êtes sûr que vous l'aviez au-dessus de la tronche quand vous sautez), le pouvoir juif, avec ses contours estompés et ses formes changeantes, devient invisible. Et si vous ne pouvez pas le voir, vous ne pouvez pas le combattre. Pendant ce temps-là, l'agression contre le peuple palestinien continue.

« Les juifs »

L'expression - « les juifs » - est en elle-même terrifiante, à cause de son association passée avec la discrimination et la violence à l'encontre des juifs. Mais les juifs, eux-mêmes, n'ont aucun problème à l'employer. La notion de peuple juif est au centre de la foi juive, avec des juifs présentant tous les degrés d'adhésion religieuse, voire pas du tout, affirmant encore et toujours son existence. Elle est aussi au centre du sionisme, même dans ses avatars les plus laïcs, et elle est inscrite dans les textes fondateurs de l'Etat d'Israël. Le concept a même reçu une approbation légale internationale quand le peuple juif a été déclaré, par l'Etat allemand, les héritiers de juifs intestats disparus, vivant dans l'après-guerre de 1939-1945. Et c'est néanmoins un article de foi absolu, pour tout le monde, y compris au sein de mouvement de solidarité (avec les Palestiniens), que nous pouvons critiquer et affronter Israël et les Israéliens, mais nous ne pouvons pas critiquer et affronter le peuple juif. A la différence d'Israël et de n'importe quel autre pays, le peuple juif n'a pas de politique commune, et toute critique à l'encontre du peuple juif ne saurait, par conséquent, que viser ce qu'ils sont et n'ont pas ce qu'ils font !

Mais le fait de parler des juifs faisant ceci ou cela est-il plus ou moins acceptable que le fait de parler, disons, des Américains ? Si l'armée américaine dévaste un pays du tiers monde, elle le fait en fonction des ordres que lui a donnés un gouvernement (un gouvernement, c'est un tout petit groupe), avec l'entier soutien des élites gouvernantes (autre tout petit groupe), le soutien tacite d'une partie conséquente de la population (un groupe plus important), la désapprobation silencieuse, probablement, de la majorité de la population (un groupe très nombreux) et l'opposition d'une toute petite minorité (un petit groupe). Les choses sont-elles si différentes, chez les juifs ?

Peut-être. A la différence des Etats-Unis, « les juifs » ne sont pas un corps légalement constitué, et ils n'ont pas une politique commune évidente et définie. « Les juifs » n'ont pas de leadership officiellement désigné, ils n'habitent pas une région particulière, ils ne parlent pas une langue commune, ni même ils ne partagent une culture commune. Théoriquement, tout du moins, il semble y avoir tellement de différences que cela rend toute comparaison intenable. Dans la pratique, l'histoire ne se résume pas à cela.

Il est vrai que « les juifs » ne constituent pas un corps légalement reconnu. Mais le sionisme, avec sa prétention à représenter tous les juifs, a rendu la question de plus en plus confuse. Il est vrai, également, que les sionistes ne représentent pas tous les juifs. Mais ils représentent bel et bien les opinions de très nombreux juifs, vraiment très nombreux. Et certainement aussi des juifs les plus puissants et influents. Et il n'y a aucun doute que l'écrasante majorité des juifs organisés soutiennent totalement le projet sioniste. Que « les juifs » n'aient pas de leadership formellement désignés ne signifie nullement qu'ils n'aient aucun leadership - des corps, à nouveau, auxquels l'écrasante majorité des juifs organisés font acte d'allégeance : le gouvernement israélien, l'Organisation sioniste mondiale [WZO] ; beaucoup de grandes organisations juives puissantes, comme l'Anti-Defamation League et la Conférence des Présidents des Grandes Organisations Juives Américaines, le Centre Simon Wiesenthal ; des organismes moins considérables, comme le Bureau des Députés Juifs Britanniques et des associations analogues dans tous les pays où vivent des juifs. Et puis, il y a le réseau très étendu des institutions juives, souvent liées, via des synagogues, à l'ensemble du spectre de la vie communautaire et religieuse juive. Toutes ces institutions, avec leur vaste réseau interconnecté représentent un leadership, et comment ! Ils ont des politiques clairement définies, et ils sont sur un seul rang (on ne voit qu' une tête) derrière le sionisme et Israël, dans leur agression contre les Palestiniens.

Ceci est-il constitutif d'un collectif juif identifiable engagé dans la promotion d'intérêts juifs ? Officiellement, peut-être pas. Mais effectivement, quand on relève la remarquable unanimité des intentions de toutes ces institutions, la réponse est peut-être bien « oui ». Bien sûr, elles ne représentent pas tous les juifs, et tous les individus juifs ne sont pas responsables des agissements de ces institutions, mais néanmoins, « les juifs » - les juifs organisés, actifs et efficaces - sont tout aussi responsables de la poursuite d'intérêts juifs en Palestine et ailleurs que l'étaient « les Américains » au Vietnam, « les Français » en Algérie et « les Britanniques » en Inde.

Alors : pourquoi faudrait-il que notre réponse soit différente ? Pourquoi « les juifs » ne seraient-ils pas aussi responsables que « les Américains » et même pourquoi les juifs ordinaires ne seraient-ils pas aussi responsables que les Américains de base ? Pourquoi ne faisons-nous pas des sit-in devant les bureaux de l'Anti-Defamation League, de la Conférence des Présidents, ou devant les

bureaux, et pourquoi pas devant le domicile, des Abe Foxman, Edgar Bronfman et autres Mort Zuckerman, aux Etats-Unis, ou Neville Nagler, en Angleterre ? Pourquoi ne harcelons-nous pas Alan Dershowitz, aux Etats-Unis, ou Melanie Phillips, au Royaume-Uni ? Qu'en est-il du grand rabbin d'Angleterre, qui, en son temps, avait tellement de choses à dire sur Israël et la Palestine ? Pourquoi ne portons-nous pas la lutte devant la moindre synagogue et le moindre centre communautaire juif, où que ce soit, dans le vaste monde ? Après tout, chaque prière de shabbat est dite pour l'Etat d'Israël, dans chaque synagogue majoritaire du pays, dont la plupart sont des points de ralliements pour la propagande et les fêtes de charité sionistes destinées à recueillir des fonds. Alors : pourquoi ces juifs qui choisissent délibérément de mélanger leurs prières et leur politique jouiraient-ils d'une immunité totale, quand et parce qu'ils font leur prière, de nos protestations légitimes contre leur politique ? Quand à ces rares juifs qui se préparent réellement à se lever et à ce qu'on puisse compter sur leur solidarité avec les Palestiniens, pourquoi ne pouvons-nous toujours pas leur manifester la déférence et le respect que nous leur devons, comme nous l'avons fait pour ces rares Américains qui se sont opposés à l'impérialisme américains et pour ces quelques Blancs sud-africains qui se sont opposés à l'apartheid ?

La réponse est simple : nous avons peur. Même en sachant que les juifs sont des gens responsables, qui devraient donc être tenus pour tels, et à qui par conséquent nous devrions demander des comptes, nous sommes effrayés. Nous avons peur, parce que la critique des juifs, en raison de son histoire terrible de violence et de discrimination, semble tout simplement une position trop dangereuse pour être prise - elle risquerait de donner libre cours à une déferlante de haine anti-juive. Nous avons peur, si nous nous mettions à contester le rôle des juifs dans ce conflit, et dans d'autres régions, et si nous nous mettions à tenir les juifs responsables pour responsables, de risquer d'être qualifiés d'antisémites, et de perdre tout soutien. Et, peut-être par-dessus tout, nous avons peur des passions en conflit à l'intérieur de nous-mêmes, qui nous surprennent et nous désarment, dès lors que nous commençons à nous pencher sur la réalité des problèmes. Le fait de dire la vérité sur l'identité juive, le pouvoir juif et l'histoire juive, entraîne-t-il inéluctablement le fait que des juifs soient traînés dans des camps de concentration et des crématoires ? Bien sûr que non ! C'est la haine, la peur et la suppression de la liberté de pensée et de parole qui conduisent à ces horreurs-là - que la haine, la peur et la censure soient dirigées contre les juifs, ou qu'elles soient commandées par des juifs. Quoi qu'il en soit, en dépit des efforts pour nous convaincre du contraire, nous ne vivons plus au treizième siècle. Il est fort improbable que les Californiens sortent un jour de leurs salles de cinéma, après avoir vu la Passion du Christ de Mel Gibson, chantant « Mort aux juifs ! » sur l'air des lampions. Et, en des temps où des juifs, en Israël / Palestine, soutenus par l'écrasante majorité des organisations juives en Occident, sont en train de profaner des églises et des mosquées en gros et d'oppresser grossièrement des populations chrétiennes et musulmanes entières, on nous pardonnera de l'avoir saumâtre quand nous assistons à un branle-bas de combat pour quelques graffitis, quelque part, sur le mur d'une synagogue. Si nous nous mettions à marcher sur les brisées des juifs, dans ce conflit, on aurait vite fait d'être taxés d'antisémitisme et nous perdriions vraisemblablement, tout du moins, au début, nos soutiens. La malédiction portée par le mot "antisémitisme" sert depuis si longtemps à effrayer et à

réduire au silence toute critique envers les juifs, Israël et le sionisme, et elle serait à coup sûr utilisée, pour discréditer la cause que nous défendons.

Mais quoi ? **Ils nous traitent d'antisémites, d'ores et déjà, alors qu'avons-nous à perdre ?** Edward Said a consacré sa vie à se frayer un chemin dans le champ de mines Israël / sionisme / judaïsme, et il n'a pas une seule fois critiqué les juifs. Cela n'a pas empêché qu'il soit vilipendé pour son « antisémitisme » durant toute sa trop brève vie. Et même après sa mort, cela continue ! En tant que mouvement, nous avons probablement passé au moins autant de temps à être gentils avec les juifs qu'à élever la voix pour défendre les Palestiniens. Et tout ça, pour quoi ? Qu'est-ce que cela nous a rapporté ? Nous ne sommes pas racistes et nous ne sommes pas antisémites, alors qu'ils fassent donc le pire, ça ils savent faire ! Quant à nous, disons le fond de notre pensée !

Cela fait désormais tellement longtemps qu'on dit aux gens que noir, c'est blanc et non seulement ça, mais si quelqu'un s'avisait de nier que noir c'est blanc, il serait immédiatement dénoncé pour antisémitisme, avec toutes les pénalités afférentes. On nous maintient dans un cul-de-sac moral et intellectuel, dont la finalité est de réduire au silence toute critique du pouvoir israélien et juif. En disant l'indicible, nous pouvons nous libérer nous-mêmes, et libérer autrui. Et pensez-y : quelle ne sera pas votre satisfaction, la prochaine fois où on vous taxera d'antisémitisme, de pouvoir répondre : « Eh bien, je n'en sais rien. Mais j'ai des critiques très fortes, mais légitimes à faire aux juifs et à la manière qu'ils ont de se comporter. et j'ai bien l'intention de le faire savoir » ?

Et puis, on ne sait jamais. Qui sait : vous pourriez être agréablement surpris. Israël Shamir, qui n'a aucun problème à appeler un juif un juif, a été spontanément fêté, récemment, lorsqu'il s'est présenté, depuis la salle, lors d'un meeting de solidarité, à Londres ? J'en suis le témoin direct. Son premier livre en anglais venait d'être publié ; Shamir correspond librement avec de nombreux intellectuels respectés, et il appartient au conseil d'administration de l'Association pour Un Etat Unique et Démocratique en Palestine ainsi qu'à celui de Deir Yassin Remembered. Peut-être s'agit-il tout simplement d'une nouvelle histoire de vêtements du roi : on va peut-être se rendre compte que le roi est nu ! ? ! Peut-être n'attendons-nous plus qu'un enfant innocent donne le coup de sifflet qui nous le fera remarquer ?

La situation à laquelle le peuple palestinien est confronté est absolument terrible. Les vieilles stratégies politiques ne nous ont menés nulle part. Il nous faut un débat nouveau et élargi. Peut-être un discours nouveau, et crédible, qui mette les juifs et la judaïté au centre critique de nos discussions fait-il partie des solutions ? Et, encore ceci : dans un article précédent, paraphrasant Marc Ellis, j'écrivais :

« Aux chrétiens et pour l'ensemble du monde non-juif, les juifs disent ceci : « Vous présenterez des excuses pour la souffrance juive, encore et encore et encore. Et quand vous vous serez excusés, vous vous excuserez encore. Quand vous aurez assez présenté d'excuses, nous vous pardonnerons. à condition que vous nous laissiez faire ce que bon nous semble, en Palestine ! »

Shamir m'a pris au mot. « Eisen pêche par optimisme », a-t-il commenté, ajoutant : « La Palestine n'est pas l'objectif ultime des juifs. Leur objectif ultime, c'est le monde. » Eh bien, je n'en sais rien. Mais si, comme cela semble aujourd'hui vraisemblable, la conquête de la Palestine est terminée et l'Etat

d'Israël s'étend de Tel Aviv jusqu'au Jourdain, à quoi pouvons-nous nous attendre ? Les juifs d'Israël, soutenus par les juifs en-dehors d'Israël, vont-ils désormais respecter le droit, vivre pacifiquement à l'intérieur de leurs frontières et jouir des fruits de leur victoire, ou en voudront-ils encore plus ? A qui le tour, maintenant ?

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L'ORIGINAL ANGLAIS

Jewish Power

By **Paul Eisen** - (August 19, 2004)

The crime against the Palestinian people is being committed by a Jewish state with Jewish soldiers using weapons displaying Jewish religious symbols, and with the full support and complicity of the overwhelming mass of organised Jews worldwide. But to name Jews as responsible for this crime seems impossible to do.

The future is always open and nothing can ever be ruled out; but, for now, it's hard to see how Israel can be stopped. After over fifty years, it is clear that Israel will only relinquish its eliminationist attitude to Palestinians and Palestinian life when it has to. This need not be through military action but it is hard to see how anything else will do. The conventional wisdom - that if America turned off the tap, Israel would be brought to its knees - is far from proven. First, it's not going to happen. Second, those who believe it may well be underestimating both the cohesiveness of Israeli society and the force of Jewish history which permeates it. Even more unlikely is the military option. The only force on earth which could possibly confront Israel is the American military, and, again, that is not going to happen.

Palestinian resistance has been astonishing. After over fifty years of brutal assault by what may well one day be seen as one of the most ruthless and irrational powers of modern times, and with just about every power on earth ranged against them, Palestinians are still with us, still steadfast, still knowing who they are and where they come from. Nonetheless, for the time being effective resistance may be over (though the possibility of organised non-violent resistance can never be ruled out), and, for now, the only strategy open may be no more than one for survival.

For us it is so much easier to deny this reality than to accept it, and doubtless the struggle will continue. How fruitful this will be no-one can say. Although the present seems hopeless, survival is still vital and no-one knows when new opportunities may arise. Anyway, to struggle against injustice is always worth doing. But what if the struggle becomes so delusional that it inhibits rather than advances resistance? What if the struggle becomes a way of avoiding rather than confronting reality? Those slogans "End the Occupation!" and "Two States for Two Peoples!" are now joined by a new slogan, "The One-State Solution!" This is every bit as fantastic as its predecessors because, just as there never was going to be an end to the occupation, nor a real Palestinian state, so, for now, there is no possibility of any "one state" other than the state of Israel which now stretches from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, and

the only "solution" is a final solution and even that cannot be ruled out.

**"Zionism is not Judaism;
Judaism is not Zionism...."**

The crime against the Palestinian people is being committed by a Jewish state with Jewish soldiers using weapons with Jewish religious symbols all over them, and with the full support and complicity of the overwhelming mass of organised Jews worldwide. But to name Jews as responsible for this crime seems impossible to do. The past is just too terrible. All of us know of the hatred and violence to which accusations against Jews have led in the past. Also, if we were to examine critically the role of Jews in this conflict, what would become of us and of our struggle? Would we be labelled anti-Semites and lose much of the support that we have worked so hard to gain?

The present, too, is full of ambiguities. *Zionism is not Judaism; Judaism is not Zionism* has become an article of faith, endlessly repeated, as is the assertion that Zionism is a secular ideology opposed, for much of its history, by the bulk of religious Jews and even now still opposed by true Torah Jews such as Neturei Karta. But Zionism is now at the heart of Jewish life with religious Jews amongst the most virulent of Zionists and Neturei Karta, despite their impeccable anti-Zionism, their beautiful words and the enthusiasm with which they are welcomed at solidarity rallies, etc., may well be just Jews in fancy dress, a million miles from the reality of Jewish life.

And even if Zionism can still be disentangled from Judaism, can it be distinguished from a broader Jewish identity or *Jewishness*? So often Zionism is proclaimed to be a modern add-on to Jewish identity, another, albeit anachronistic, settler-colonial ideology simply adopted by Jews in response to their predicament. But, could it be that our need to avoid the accusation of anti-Semitism and our own conflicted perceptions and feelings, our insistence that Zionism and Jewishness are separate, has led us seriously to misunderstand the situation? Has our refusal to look squarely at the very *Jewishness* of Zionism and its crimes caused us to fail to understand exactly what we are up against?

Jews, Judaism and Zionism

Jews are complex; Jewish identity is complex and the relationship between Judaism the religion, and a broader, often secular, Jewish identity or Jewishness is very complex indeed. Jewishness may be experienced a long way from synagogue, *yeshiva* or any other formal aspect of Jewish religious life, yet is often still inextricably bound to Judaism. That is why secular Jews are able to proclaim their secularity every bit as loudly as they proclaim their Jewishness. Marc Ellis, a religious Jew, says that when you look at those Jews who are in solidarity with Palestinians, the overwhelming majority of them are secular - but, from a religious point of view, the Covenant is with *them*. For Ellis, these secular Jews unknowingly and even unwillingly may be carrying with them the future of Jewish life.

Jewish identity, connecting Jews to other Jews, comes from deep within Jewish history. This is a shared history, both real and imagined, in that it is both

literal and theological. Many Jews in the west share a real history of living together as a distinct people in Eastern, Central and then Western Europe and America. Others share a real history of settlement in Spain followed by expulsion and then settlement all over the world, particularly in Arab and Islamic lands. But this may not be what binds *all* Jews, because for *all* Jews it is not a real, but maybe a theological, history that is shared. Most Palestinians today probably have more Hebrew blood in their little fingers than most western Jews have in their whole bodies. And yet, the story of the Exodus from Egypt is as real to many of them, and most importantly was as real to them when they were children, as if they, along with all Jews, had stood with Moses at the foot of Mount Sinai.

And histories like that don't stop at the present. Even for secular Jews, though unacknowledged and even unrealized, there is a sense, not only of a shared history, but also of a shared destiny. Central to Jewish identity both religious and non-religious is the sense of mission centered on exile and return. How else to explain the extraordinary devotion of so many Jews, religious and secular, to the "return" to a land with which, in real terms, they have very little connection at all?

For many Jews, this history confers a 'specialness'. This is not unique to Jews - after all, who in their heart of hearts does not feel a little bit special? But for Jews this specialness is at the centre of their self-identification and much of the world seems to concur. For religious Jews, the specialness comes from the supposed covenant with God. But for secular Jews, the specialness comes from a special history. In either case this can be a good, even a beautiful, thing. In much of Jewish religious tradition this specialness is no more than a special moral obligation, a special responsibility to offer an example to the world, and for so many secular Jews it has led them to struggle for justice in many places around the world.

At the heart of this Jewish specialness is Jewish suffering and victimhood. Like the shared history itself, this suffering may, but need not, correspond to reality. Jews have certainly suffered but their suffering remains unexamined and unexplained. The Holocaust, now the paradigm of Jewish suffering, has long ceased to be a piece of history, and is now treated by religious and secular alike, as a piece of theology - a sacred text almost - and therefore beyond scrutiny. And the suffering never ends. No matter how much Jews have suffered they are certainly not suffering now, but for many Jews their history of suffering is not just an unchallengeable past but also a possible future. So, no matter how safe Jews may be, many feel just a hair's-breadth away from Auschwitz.

Zionism is at the heart of this. Zionism is also complex and also comes from deep within Jewish history with the same sense of exile and return. Zionism also confirms that Jews are special in their suffering and is explicit that Jews should 'return' to a land given to them, and only them - by God if they are religious, or by history if they are not - because they simply are not safe anywhere else on earth.

But so what? If Jews think that they are a people with a religious link to a land and have a deep wish to 'return', why should we care, so long as the land is

not already populated by Palestinians? And if Jews feel that they are special and that God has made some kind of special arrangement with them, so what, so long as this does not lead them to demand preferential treatment and to discriminate against others? And if Jews feel that they have suffered like no-one else on the face of the earth, fine, so long as they do not use this suffering to justify the imposition of suffering on others and to blackmail morally the whole world into quiescent silence.

This is the problem with Zionism. It expresses Jewish identity but also empowers it. It tells Jews (and many others too) that Jews can do what Jews have always dreamed of doing. It takes the perfectly acceptable religious feelings of Jews, or if you prefer, the perfectly harmless delusions of Jews, and tries to turn them into a terrible reality. Jewish notions of specialness, chosenness and even supremacism, are fine for a small, wandering people, but, when empowered with a state, an army and F16s become a concern for us all.

Zionism as Jewish empowerment in statehood changes everything. Israel is not just any state, it is a Jewish state and this means more than just a state for Jews. This Jewish state is built on traditions and modes of thought that have evolved amongst Jews for centuries - amongst which are the notions that Jews are special and that their suffering is special. By their own reckoning, Jews are "a nation that dwells alone" it is "us and them" and, in many cases, "us or them". And these tendencies are translated into the modern state of Israel. This is a state that knows no boundaries. It is a state that both believes, and uses as justification for its own aggression, the notion that its very survival is always at stake, so anything is justified to ensure that survival. Israel is a state that manifestly believes that the rules of both law and humanity, applicable to all other states, do not apply to it.

Their own worst nightmare

It is a terrible irony that this empowerment of Jews has come to most resemble those empowerments under which Jews have suffered the most. Empowered Christianity, also a marriage of faith and power, enforced its ideology and pursued its dissidents and enemies with no greater fervor than has empowered Judaism. In its zeal and self belief, Zionism has come to resemble the most brutal and relentless of modern ideologies. But unlike the brutal rationality of Stalinism, willing to sacrifice millions for political and economic revolution, this Jewish ideology, in its zealotry and irrationality, resembles more the National Socialism which condemned millions for the attainment of a nonsensical racial and ethnic supremacy.

Of course there are differences but there are also similarities. National Socialism, like Zionism, another blend of mysticism and power, gained credibility as a means to right wrongs done to a victimized people. National Socialism, like Zionism, also sought to maintain the racial/ethnic purity of one group and to maintain the rights of that ethnic group over others, and National Socialism, like Zionism, also proposed an almost mystical attachment of that group to a land. Also, both National Socialism and Zionism shared a common interest - to separate Jews from non-Jews, in this case to remove Jews from Europe - and actively co-operated in the attainment of this aim. And if the

similarity between these two ideologies is simply too great and too bitter to accept, one may ask what National Socialism with its uniforms, flags and mobilized youth must have looked like to those Germans, desperate after Versailles and the ravages of post-First World War Germany. Perhaps not so different from how the uniforms, flags and marching youth of pre- and post-state Zionism must have looked to Jews after their history of suffering, and particularly after the Holocaust.

This is, for Jews, their own worst nightmare: the thing they love the most has become the thing they hate the most. And for those Jews and others, who shrink from the comparison, let them ask themselves this: What would an average German, an enthusiastic Nazi even, have said in, say, 1938 had they been confronted with the possibility of an Auschwitz? They would have thought that you were stark, staring mad.

American Jews and Jewish America

At the heart of the conflict is the relationship between Israel and America. The statistics - billions in aid and loans, UN vetoes, etc., etc. need not be repeated here - American support for Israel seems limitless. But what is the nature of this support? For many, perhaps most, the answer is relatively simple. Israel is a client state of America, serving American interests or, more particularly, the interests of its power elites. This view is underpinned by the obvious importance of oil, the huge strategic importance of the region and the fact that, if Israel did not further the interests of those who control America, then we can be sure America would not support Israel. Also, there is no doubt that, in the IDF, America has found a marvellously flexible and effective force, easily aroused and let loose whenever any group of Arabs get a little above themselves.

But is this the whole story? Does Israel really serve America's interests and is their relationship wholly based on the sharing of these interests? Consider how much in terms of goodwill from other nations America loses by its support for Israel, and consider the power and influence of the "Jewish", "Zionist" or "pro-Israel" lobby, as when many an otherwise responsible lawmaker, faced with the prospect of an intervention in their re-election campaign from the Jewish lobby, seems happy to put his or her re-election prospects way in front of what is good for America.

The details of the workings of AIPAC and others, and the mechanics by which these groups exert pressure on America's lawmakers and governors, have been dealt with elsewhere; we need only note that this interest group is undoubtedly extraordinarily effective and successful. Not just a small group of Jews supporting Israel, as its supporters would have us believe, these are powerful and committed ideologues: billionaires, media magnates, politicians, activists and religious leaders. In any event, the power of the Jewish lobby to make or break pretty well any public figure is legendary - not for nothing is it often referred to simply as "The Lobby".

But again, there may be far more to the Israel/U.S. relationship than just a commonality of interest and the effectiveness of certain interest groups. That

support for Israel must be in the interests of those who control America is certainly true, but who controls America? Perhaps the real relationship is not between Israel and America but between Jews and America.

The overwhelming majority of Jews in America live their lives just like any other Americans. They've done well and are undoubtedly pleased that America supports their fellow Jews in Israel but that's as far as it goes. Nonetheless, an awful lot of Jews certainly do control an awful lot of America - not the industrial muscle of America - the steel, transport, etc., nor the oil and arms industries, those traditional money-spinners. No, if Jews have influence anywhere in America, it's not over its muscle and sinew but over its blood and its brain. It is in finance and the media that we find a great many Jews in very influential positions. Lists abound (though you have to go to some pretty unpopular websites to find them) of Jews, prominent in financial and cultural life: Jews in banks; Jews in Forbes Magazine's Richest Americans; Jews in Hollywood; Jews in TV; Jewish journalists, writers, critics, etc., etc.

Nor have Jews been slow in exploiting their position. Jews have not hesitated to use whatever resources they have to advance their interests as they see them. Nor does one need to subscribe to any conspiracy theory to note how natural it is for Jews in the media to promote Jews and their values as positive and worthy of emulation. When did anyone last see a Jew portrayed in anything other than a favourable light? Jews are clever, moral, interesting, intense, warm, witty, complex, ethical, contradictory, prophetic, infuriating, sometimes irritating, but always utterly engaging. Nor is it any wonder that Jews in influential positions are inclined to promote what they see as Jewish collective interests. Is it really all that incredible that Jewish advisers around the Presidency bear Israel's interests at heart when they advise the President on foreign affairs?

But so what? So there are a lot of Jews with a lot of money, and a lot of Jews with a lot to say and the means to say it. If Jews by virtue of their ability and use of resources (as honestly gained as by anyone else) promote what they perceive as their own collective interest, what's wrong with that? First, with some notable exceptions, the vast majority of Jews can, in good faith, lay hands on hearts and swear that they never take decisions or actions with collective Jewish interests in mind, certainly not consciously. And even if they did, they are acting no differently from anyone else. With a few exceptions, Jews have earned their advantageous positions. They came with nothing, played according to the rules and, if they use their influence to further what they perceive as Jewish interests, what's so special about that? Do not the Poles, the Ukrainians, the Gun lobby, the Christian Evangelicals also not work to further their group interests?

The difference between Jews and other groups is that they probably do it better. Jews are, by pretty well any criteria, easily the most successful ethnic group in America and, for whatever reason, have been extraordinarily successful in promoting themselves both individually and collectively. And there would probably be nothing wrong with this were it not for the fact that these same people who exert so much control and influence over American life also seem to refuse to be held accountable. It is the surreptitiousness with which Jews are

perceived to have achieved their success which arouses suspicion. Jews certainly seem cagey about the influence they have. Just breathe the words "Jewish power" and wait for the reaction. They claim it's because this charge has so often been used as a precursor to discrimination and violence against them, but never consider the possibility that their own reluctance to discuss the power they wield arouses suspicion and even hostility.

But there is another claim, subtler and more worrying. This is that *it doesn't exist*; that Jews do not wield power, that there is no Jewish lobby; that Jews in America do not exert power and influence to advance Jewish interests, even *that there are no such things as Jewish interests!* There are no Jewish interests in the war in Iraq, there are no Jewish interests in America; most amazing, there are no Jewish interests even in Israel and Palestine. There is no Jewish collective. Jews do not act together to advance their aims. They even say that the pro-Israeli lobby has actually not all that much to do with Jews, that the Jewishness of Israel is irrelevant and the Public Affairs Committees (PACs) which lobby so hard for Israel are in fact doing no more than supporting an ally and thus looking after America's best interests even to the extent of concealing their true purpose behind names such as "American for Better Citizenship", "Citizen's Organised PAC" or the "National PAC" - none of which make one reference in their titles to Israel, Zionism or Jews. Similarly, Jews and Jewish organisations are said to be not so much furthering Jewish interests and values as American, or, even, universal interests and values. So, the major Holocaust Museum, styled as a "Museum of Tolerance", focuses not only on anti-Semitism, but on every kind of intolerance known to mankind (except that shown by Jews to non-Jews in Israel and Palestine). Similarly, the Anti-Defamation League is but an organisation for the promotion of universal principles of tolerance and justice, not just for Jews but for everyone.

This conflation of Jewish interests with American interests is nowhere more stark than in present American foreign policy. If ever an image was reminiscent of a Jewish world conspiracy, the spectacle of the Jewish neo-cons gathered around the current presidency and directing policy in the Middle East, this must be it. But we are told that the fact that the Jewish neo-cons, many with links with right wing political groups within Israel, are in the forefront of urging a pro-Israel policy, is but a coincidence, and any suggestion that these figures might be influenced by their Jewishness and their links with Israel is immediately marginalised as reviving old anti-Semitic myths about Jewish dual loyalty. The idea that American intervention in Iraq, the one viable military counterweight to Israeli hegemony in the Middle East and therefore an inspiration to Arab and Palestinian resistance, primarily serves Israeli rather than American interests has also been consigned to the nether world of mediaeval anti-Semitic myth. The suggestion that those Jews around the president act from motives other than those to promote the interests of all Americans is just anti-Semitic raving. And maybe they're right. Perhaps those who promote Jewish interests are in fact promoting American interests because, for now at least, they appear to be one and the same.

Jewish America

In Washington, D.C. is a memorial to a terrible tragedy. Not a memorial to

a tragedy visited on Americans by a foreign power as at Pearl Harbour or 9/11, nor to a tragedy visited by Americans on Americans such the sacking of Atlanta. Nor is it a memorial of contrition to a tragedy inflicted by Americans onto another people, such as to slavery or to the history of racial injustice in America. It is to none of these. The Holocaust memorial is to a tragedy inflicted *on* people who were not Americans, *by* people who were not Americans, and *in* a place a very long way from America. And the co-religionists or, even, if you like, the co-nationals, of the people on whom the tragedy was visited and to whom the memorial is built make up around two percent of the American population. How is it that a group of people who make up such a tiny percentage of the overall American population can command such respect and regard that a memorial to them is built in the symbolic heart of American national life?

The Jewish narrative is now at the centre of American life, certainly that of its cultural and political elites. There is, anyway, much in the way that Americans choose to see themselves and their history which is quite naturally compatible with the way Jews see themselves and their history. What more fitting paradigm for a country founded on immigration, than the story of the mass immigration of Jews at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? For many Americans, the story of those Jews who came to their Goldenes Medina, their Golden Land, with nothing and, through hard work and perseverance, made it to the very top of American society, is also their story. And what could be more inspirational for a country, if not officially but still viscerally, deeply Christian than the story of the Jews, Jesus' own people and God's chosen people, returning to their ancient homeland and transforming it into a modern state. And for a nation which sees itself as a beacon of democracy in the world, what better international soul-mate than the state of Israel, widely held to be "the only democracy in the Middle-East"? Finally what greater validation for a country itself founded on a narrative of conquest and ethnic cleansing than the Biblical narrative of the conquest and ethnic cleansing of the Promised Land with the addition of the equally violent settlement of modern Palestine with its own ethnic cleansing and then "making the desert bloom"?

Most resonant, of course, is the notion of Jews as a suffering people. The fact that this "suffering people" is now enjoying a success beyond the dreams of any other ethnic group in America seems irrelevant. Also ignored is how American Jews have made it to the very top of American society whilst, every step of the way, complaining about how much they're being discriminated against. Nonetheless, to America, Jews have an enduring and ongoing history of suffering and victimhood. But this history has rarely been examined or even discussed.

A Suffering People

That Jews have suffered is undeniable, but Jewish suffering is claimed to have been so enduring, so intense and so particular that it is to be treated differently from other sufferings. The issue is complex and cannot be fully debated or decided here but the following points may stimulate thought and discussion.

— During even the most terrible times of Jewish suffering such as the

Crusades or the Chmielnitzky massacres of seventeenth century Ukraine, and even more so at other times in history, it has been said that the average peasant would have given his eye-teeth to be a Jew. The meaning is clear: generally speaking, and throughout most of their history, the condition of Jews was often far superior to the mass of the population.

— The above-mentioned Ukrainian massacres took place in the context of a peasant uprising against the oppression of the Ukrainian peasantry by their Polish overlords. As has often been the case, Jews were seen as occupying a traditional position of being in alliance with the ruling class in their oppression of the peasantry. Chmielnitzky, the leader of this popular uprising, is today a Ukrainian national hero, not for his assaults on Jews (there are even references to his having offered poor Jews to join the uprising against their exploitative co-religionists - the Jews declined) but for his championing of the rights of the oppressed Ukrainians. Again, the inference is plain: outbreaks of anti-Semitic violence, though never justified, have often been responses to Jewish behaviour both real and imaginary.

— In the Holocaust three million Polish Jews died, but so did three million non-Jewish Poles. Jews were targeted but so were Gypsies, homosexuals, Slavs and Poles. Similarly, the Church burned Jews for their dissenting beliefs but then the church burned everyone for their dissenting beliefs. So again, the question must be asked: what's so special about Jewish suffering?

The Holocaust, the paradigm for all anti-Semitism and all Jewish suffering, is treated as being beyond examination and scrutiny. Questioning the Holocaust narrative is, at best, socially unacceptable, leading often to social exclusion and discrimination, and, at worst, in some places is illegal and subject to severe penalty. Holocaust revisionist scholars, named Holocaust deniers by their opponents, have challenged this. They do not deny a brutal and extensive assault on Jews by the Nazi regime but they do deny the Holocaust narrative as framed by present day establishments and elites. Specifically, their denial is limited to three main areas. First, they deny that there ever was an official plan on the part of Hitler or any other part of the Nazi regime systematically and physically to eliminate every Jew in Europe; second, they deny that there ever existed homicidal gas-chambers; third, they claim that the numbers of Jewish victims of the Nazi assault have been greatly exaggerated.

But none of this is the point. Whether those who question the Holocaust narrative are revisionist scholars striving to find the truth and shamelessly persecuted for opposing a powerful faction, or whether they are crazy Jew-haters denying a tragedy and defaming its victims, the fact is that one may question the Armenian genocide, one may freely discuss the Slave Trade, one can say that the murder of millions of Ibos, Kampuchians and Rwandans never took place and that the moon is but a piece of green cheese floating in space, but one may not question the Jewish Holocaust. Why? Because, like the rest of the Jewish history of suffering, the Holocaust underpins the narrative of Jewish innocence which is used to bewilder and befuddle any attempt to see and to comprehend Jewish power and responsibility in Israel/Palestine and elsewhere in the world.

What is a Jew?

Israel Shamir, the Russian-born Israeli writer, advocates the right of all people, whatever their ethnicity or religion, to live together in complete equality between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River. Shamir condemns the behaviour of Israel and of Diaspora Jews and calls for an end to their preferential treatment, but he also proposes an opposition to Judaism itself for which he stands accused of being anti-Jewish - a charge he does not deny but actually embraces.

Shamir proposes the existence of a Jewish ideology, or "Jewish paradigm" as he puts it, and proposes that it is the voluntary adherence to this "spirit" which makes a Jew into a Jew. For him, Jewishness is neither race nor ethnicity - there is, for Shamir, no such thing as a Jewish 'tribe' or 'family' - no biological or ethnic body from which there can be no escape. Further, this ideology, based on notions of chosenness, exclusivity and even supremacism is, at least when empowered, incompatible with peace, equality and justice in Palestine or anywhere else for that matter.

No-one wants to oppose any Jews simply for being Jews, or even for what they believe, but only because of what they do. The problem is that since, according to Shamir, what Jews believe and even do is precisely what makes them into Jews, so opposition to Jewishness as an ideology surely comes dangerously close to opposition to Jews simply for being Jews. But for Shamir, Jews are Jews because they choose to be Jews. Someone may be born of Jews and raised as a Jew but they can if they wish reject their Jewish upbringing and become a non-Jew. And many have done just that including such famous escapees as Karl Marx, St. Paul, Leon Trotsky (and Shamir himself), etc. Opposition to Jews is not, therefore, like opposition to Blacks or to Asians or to other common racist attitudes since the object of the opposition is perfectly able to relinquish the ideology in question.

Shamir has never in any way called for any harm to be done to Jews or anyone else, nor for Jews or anyone else to be discriminated against in any way. Adherence to this Jewish ideology is, for Shamir, regrettable, but not, in itself, a matter for active opposition. Nor does this mean that Shamir is opposed to any individual Jew just because he or she is a Jew. What Shamir actively opposes is not "Jews" but "Jewry". Analogous to say, the Catholic Church, Jewry consists of those organised Jews and their leaders who actively promote corrosive Jewish interests and values, particularly now in the oppression of the Palestinians.

One doesn't have to be in complete agreement with Shamir to understand what he is talking about. Why should Jews not have a "spirit"; after all, such a concept has been discussed with regard to other nations?

"It is dangerous, wrong, to speak about the "Germans," or any other people, as of a single undifferentiated entity, and include all individuals in one judgement. And yet I don't think I would deny that there exists a spirit of each people (otherwise it would not be a people) a *Deutschtum*, an *italianitia*, an *hispanidad*: they are the sums of traditions, customs, history, language, and

culture. Whoever does not feel within himself this spirit, which is national in the best sense of the word, not only does not entirely belong to his own people but is not part of human civilization. Therefore, while I consider insensate the syllogism, 'All Italians are passionate; you are Italian; therefore you are passionate,' I do however believe it legitimate, within certain limits, to expect from Italians taken as a whole, or from Germans, etc., one specific, collective behavior rather than another. There will certainly be individual exceptions, but a prudent, probabilistic forecast is in my opinion possible." **Primo Levi**

And for Jews it is, perhaps, even more appropriate. The place of Judaism as an ideology at the centre for all Jewish identity may be debated, but few would dispute that Judaism is at least at the *historic* heart of Jewishness and, whatever else may bind Jews together, it is certainly true that religion plays an important part. Second, for a group of people who have retained such a strong collective identity with no shared occupation of any land, language, nor even, in many cases, a culture, it is hard to see what else there could be that makes Jews into Jews. Surely for Jews, in the absence of other, more obvious factors, it is precisely such a spirit that has enabled them to retain their distinctive identity for so long and in the face of such opposition.

But if there is some kind of Jewish spirit or ideology, what is it? As far as Judaism, the religion, goes it seems fairly clear that there is an ideology based on the election of Israel by God, the special relationship Jews are supposed to have with God and the special mission allocated to Jews by God. So for observant Jews there is a special quality intrinsic to the covenant and to Judaism itself, though not all of them find it appealing:

"There is a strain in Jewish thought that says there is a special Godly something or other that is passed down in a certain genetic line which confers a special quality on people and Jewishness is a special quality. I call that metaphysical racism." **Rabbi Mark Solomon**

But whilst easy to see such a common spirit in religious Jews - after all it is precisely that which makes them religious - it is so much harder to define it in secular Jews, those Jews who reject, often quite vociferously, all aspects of Jewish faith. They often claim that they don't have an ideology, or that their ideology is one of, say, the left: not only not Jewish, but opposed to all religions including Judaism. Yet seemingly so free of all such ignorant superstition, these same people still call themselves Jews, still more often than not marry other Jews and still turn up to solidarity rallies only with other Jews and under Jewish banners. What is their ideology?

For my money it is much the same sense of specialness found in religious Jews but with a special reference to victimhood. "Yes, but only in the Hitlerian sense", answered philosopher Maxime Rodinson when asked if he still considered himself a Jew. For many of these Jews it is their identity as a threatened and victimized people that makes them Jews. "Hitler said I was a Jew, so I may as well be a Jew" is one response or "To be a Jew somehow denies all those who ever persecuted Jews a victory- so I'm a Jew". For these Jews, albeit estranged from Jewish religious and often community life as well, Emil Fackenheim's famous post-Holocaust 614th commandment (to add to the other 613): *Thou shall survive!* is an absolute imperative. But whatever the motive,

this self-identity runs very deep indeed. Amongst these Jews, no matter how left or progressive they may be, one may criticise Israel to the nth degree, poke fun at the Jewish establishment and even shamefully denigrate Judaism as a religion, but depart one iota from the approved text on anti-Semitism and Jewish suffering, and you are in deep trouble. For these rational folk, Jewish suffering and anti-Semitism is every bit as inexplicable, mysterious and therefore, unchallengeable as for any religious Jew.

Jewish secularism is often offered as evidence that there is no such thing as a Jewish identity gathered around any shared ideology. After all, if all Jews subscribe to the same basic ideology, then how come so many Jews so obviously don't? And if all Jews essentially support the same interests, how come so many Jews so obviously don't? But is it that obvious? Not only do secular Jews very often seem to subscribe to Jewish notions of specialness and victimhood, but also, in their attitudes to non-Jews in general, and Palestinians in particular, they are by no means all that different from religious Jews.

It is often quoted how many Jews are in solidarity movements with Palestinians and how many of these are secular. And it's true: there are many Jews in sympathy with the Palestinians and the overwhelming majority are secular, and the main thrust of post-1967 virulent Zionism has come to be associated with the religious right. But this secular Jewish tradition, in fact, has been at the forefront of Zionism's assault on the Palestinians. It was secular Labour Zionists who created the Zionist ideology and the pre-state Jewish-only society. It was secular Zionists - good, humanistic, left-wing kibbutzniks - who directed and carried out the ethnic cleansing of 750,000 Palestinians, and the destruction of their towns and villages. It was secular Zionists who established the present state with all its discriminatory practices; and it was a largely secular Labour government that held the Palestinian citizens of Israel under military government in their own land for eighteen years. Finally, it was a secular, Labour government which conquered the West Bank and Gaza, and first built the settlements, and embarked on the Oslo peace process, coolly designed to deceive the Palestinians into surrendering their rights.

And even those secular Jews who do support Palestinian rights, on so many occasions, the solidarity they offer is limited by self interest. That these people, at least as much as anyone else, act out of their highest motives may be true. Many have been lifelong activists for many causes and many find their activism springs, consciously or unconsciously, from what they see as the highest ideals of their Jewishness. But nonetheless for many of them, solidarity with Palestinians means above all, the protection of Jews. They call for a Palestinian state on 22 per cent of the Palestinian homeland, but only to keep and protect the 'Jewishness' of the Jewish state. The Palestinian state they call for would inevitably be weak, dominated by the Israeli economy and under the guns of the Israeli military - surely they must know what this would mean!

At rally after rally, in speeches and on leaflets and banners, these Jews denounce the occupation: "Down with the occupation...down with the occupation...down with the occupation..." but not a word of the inherent injustice of a state for Jews only; perhaps a mention of the ill-gotten gains of 1948, but nothing of the right of return of the refugees, no restitution merely 'a

just solution' taking account, of course, of Israel's 'demographic concerns'. "We are with you....we are with you....we are with you" they say "...but...". Whether it be condemnation of some form of Palestinian resistance of which they disapprove, or some real or perceived occurrence of anti-Semitism, for these Jews there is always a "but."

They should take a leaf from Henry Herskovitz. He is part of an organisation called Jewish Witnesses for Peace, which holds silent vigils outside synagogues on shabbat. Of course, all the other Jewish activists are shrieking at him that you mustn't target Jews for protest, that you must draw a distinction between Jews, Israelis and Zionists, that you'll only alienate the people we want to engage.... but he doesn't care. He knows that support from the Jewish mainstream, as Tony Cliff the Trotskyite used to say, "...is like honey on your elbow - you can see it, you can smell it but you can never quite taste it!" Henry also knows that to say that Jews in America individually and in their religious and community organisations should not be held accountable for what is happening is a lie and discredits all Jews before the non-Jewish world.

So these secular Jews often end up being just another round of Michael Neuman's "veritable shell game" of Jewish identity. "*Look! We're a religion! No! a race! No! a cultural entity! Sorry--a religion!*" Because this is the key to maintaining Jewish power - if it's indefinable, it's invisible. Like a Stealth Bomber (you can't see it on your radar but you sure know when you've been hit) Jewish power, with its blurred outlines and changing forms, becomes invisible. And if you can't see it you can't fight it. Meanwhile the assault on the Palestinians continues.

"The Jews"

The phrase is itself terrifying because of its past association with discrimination and violence against Jews, but Jews themselves have no problem with it. The notion of a Jewish People is at the centre of Jewish faith with Jews of all or no degrees of religious adherence over and over again affirming its existence. It is also at the heart of Zionism even in its most secular forms and is written into the foundational texts of the state of Israel. The concept even received international legal approval when the Jewish people were declared, by the West German state, to be the post-war residual heirs of intestate Jews. And yet it is an absolute article of faith for everyone, including those in the solidarity movement, that while we may criticize and confront Israel and Israelis, we may not criticize and confront the Jewish people and Jews. Unlike Israel and any other state, the Jewish People has no common policy and any attack on the Jewish people is, therefore, aimed at what they are and not at what they do.

But is speaking of the Jews doing this or doing that any more or less acceptable than speaking of, say, the Americans? If the American military lays waste a third world country, it is done by order of the government (a small group) with the full support of the ruling elites (another small group), the tacit support of a substantial segment of the population (a larger group), the silent denial of probably the majority of the population (a very large group) and the opposition of a tiny minority (a small group). Is it all that different with Jews?

It may be. Unlike the United States, 'the Jews' are not a legally constituted body and they do not have an obvious and defined common policy. 'The Jews' do not have an officially designated leadership, nor do they inhabit one area of land, nor do they speak a common language or even share a common culture. Theoretically at least there seem to be so many differences as to render any comparison untenable. In practice this may not be the whole story.

It is true that 'the Jews' do not constitute a legally recognized body, but Zionism, with its claim to represent all Jews, has increasingly confused the issue. It is also true that the Zionists do not represent all Jews but they do represent the views of very many Jews indeed, and certainly the most powerful and influential Jews. And there is no doubt that the overwhelming majority of organized Jews are fully behind the Zionist project. That 'the Jews' do not have a formally designated leadership does not mean that they have no leadership - bodies again to which the overwhelming majority of organized Jews owe allegiance: the Israeli Government, the World Zionist Organization; numerous large and powerful Jewish organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League and The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, The Simon Wiesenthal Centre; lesser bodies such as the Board of Deputies of British Jews and similar organizations in every country in which Jews reside. Then there is the extensive network of Jewish bodies often linked, through synagogues to the whole spectrum of mainstream Jewish religious and community life. All these bodies with their vast and interconnected network do provide leadership; they do have clearly defined policies and they are all four-square behind Zionism and Israel in its assault on the Palestinians.

Does this constitute a definable Jewish collective engaged in advancing Jewish interests? Officially, perhaps not, but, effectively, when one notes the remarkable unanimity of intent of all these bodies, the answer may well be yes. They do not of course represent all Jews nor are all individual Jews responsible for their actions, but nonetheless 'the Jews' - organized, active and effective Jews - are as responsible for the pursuit of Jewish interests in Palestine and elsewhere as 'the Americans' in Vietnam, 'the French' in Algeria, and 'the British' in India.

So why should our response be different? Why should 'the Jews' not be as accountable as 'the Americans' and even ordinary Jews as accountable as ordinary Americans? Why do we not picket the offices of the Anti-Defamation League or The Conference of Presidents or the offices or even the homes of Abe Foxman, Edgar Bronfman and Mort Zuckerman in the U.S. and Neville Nagler in the U.K.? Why do we not heckle Alan Dershowitz in the U.S. and Melanie Phillips in the U.K.? What about the U.K. Chief Rabbi who in his time has had lots to say about Israel and Palestine? Why do we not take the struggle to every synagogue and Jewish community centre in the world? After all, every Shabbat a prayer is said for the state of Israel in every mainstream synagogue in the land, most of which are focal points for Zionist propagandizing and fundraising, so why should these Jews who choose to combine their prayers and their politics be immune while at prayer from our legitimate protests at their politics? And for those few Jews who are really prepared to stand up and be counted for their solidarity with Palestinians, why can we not still give to them due honour and

regard as we did to those few Americans who opposed American imperialism and those white South Africans who opposed apartheid?

The answer is that we are frightened. Even knowing that Jews are responsible and should be held accountable, still we are frightened. We are frightened because criticism of Jews with its woeful history of violence and discrimination seems just too dangerous a position to take - it may open the flood-gates to a burst of Jew hatred. We are frightened that if we were to discuss the role of Jews in this conflict and in other areas and begin to hold Jews accountable, we might be labelled anti-Semites and lose support. And, perhaps most of all, we are frightened of the conflicted inner passions that confound us all whenever we come to look at these things.

Does speaking the truth about Jewish identity, power and history lead to Jews being led to concentration camps and ovens? Of course it doesn't! It is hatred, fear and the suppression of free thought and speech which leads to these things - whether the hatred, fear and suppression is directed against Jews *or by Jews*. Anyway, despite efforts to convince us to the contrary, we do not live in the thirteenth century. Californians are unlikely to pour out of their cinemas showing Mel Gibson's 'Passion' chanting "Death to the Jews!" And, at a time when Jews in Israel/Palestine, overwhelmingly backed by Jewish organisations in the west, are desecrating churches and mosques wholesale and brutally oppressing entire Christian and Muslim populations, we may be forgiven for finding it hard to get excited about graffiti daubed on some synagogue somewhere.

If we were to begin to engage with the role of Jews in this conflict, we may well be labelled anti-Semites and we may well, initially at least, lose support. The anti-Semite curse has long served as a frightener to silence all criticism of Jews, Israel and Zionism, and undoubtedly will be used to discredit our cause. But so what? They call us anti-Semites anyway so what's to lose? Edward Said spent a lifetime picking his way through the Israel/Zionism/Judaism minefield and never once criticised Jews, and he was called an anti-Semite his whole life, right up to and even after his death. As a movement we have probably spent as much time being nice to Jews as we have speaking up for Palestinians, and for what? Where has it got us? We are not racists and we are not anti-Semites, so let them do their worst. We shall speak our minds.

For so long now Jews have told the world that black is white and not only that, but also if anyone should dare to deny that black is white they will be denounced as anti-Semites with all the attendant penalties. We are held in a moral and intellectual lock, the intention of which has been to silence all criticism of Israeli and Jewish power. In saying the unsayable we may set ourselves and others free. And think how it will feel the next time you are called an anti-Semite to say "Well, I don't know about that, but I do have some very strong but legitimate criticisms to make of Jews and the way they are behaving....and I intend to speak out"?

And you never know; we may be pleasantly surprised. Israel Shamir, who has no trouble whatsoever in calling a Jew a Jew, was cheered spontaneously recently when he introduced himself from the floor at a London solidarity

meeting. I saw it with my own eyes. His first English-language book has just been published; he corresponds freely and reciprocally with many highly respected figures and is on the boards of advisers of The Association for One Democratic State in Palestine and of Deir Yassin Remembered. Perhaps it's all just a case of the Emperor's new clothes. Perhaps we're all just waiting for some innocent child to blow the whistle.

The situation facing the Palestinian people is truly terrible. Old political strategies have got us nowhere. We need a new and widened debate. It may be that a new and credible discourse which puts Jews and Jewishness at the critical centre of our discussions is part of that.

And one final point: In a previous piece, paraphrasing Marc Ellis I wrote:

"To the Christian and to the entire non-Jewish world, Jews say this: 'You will apologise for Jewish suffering again and again and again. And, when you have done apologising, you will then apologise some more. When you have apologised sufficiently we will forgive you ... provided that you let us do what we want in Palestine.'

Shamir took me to task, "Eisen is too optimistic", he said, "Palestine is not the ultimate goal of the Jews... ..the world is."

Well, I don't know about that, but, if as now seems likely, the conquest of Palestine is complete and the state of Israel stretches from Tel-Aviv to the Jordan River, what can we expect? Will the Jews of Israel, supported by Jews outside of Israel, now obey the law, live peaceably behind their borders and enjoy the fruits of their victory, or will they want more? Who's next?

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UN AUTRE TEXTE

In June [2005], Gilad distributed an article by his friend Paul Eisen, entitled "The Holocaust Wars". It is a long defence of the neo-Nazi, Hitler lover, and Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel, now deported from Canada to Germany where he faces criminal charges. Eisen speaks warmly of Zundel and sets out the historical revisionist case - that there was no Nazi plan to exterminate European Jewry and no gas chambers - a case which he supports. He concludes that the Palestinian resistance and their supporters should make common cause with the historical revisionists - supposedly the only people the Zionists fear aside from Palestinians themselves.

Greg Dropkin, antiraciste de Liverpool. 28 July 2005.

The Holocaust Wars

The virulently anti-Semitic Zundelsite (<http://www.zundelsite.org/>) has posted his Jewish Power essay, which it describes as "brilliant." Of course, Eisen cannot control the use of his work by these scum, but that is hardly the point. The sad fact is that it represents a "brilliant" endorsement of their own ideology of Jew-hating

Joel Finkel

"Scum"

The "scum" to which Joel Finkel refers are Ernest Zundel, currently in solitary confinement in the Metro West Detention Center, Toronto, and Ingrid Rimland his wife who owns and runs the Zundelsite – a website dedicated to supporting Zundel, his work and his struggle. All day every day Zundel sits in his cell on a pile of court transcripts (chairs are not permitted), wearing the same orange jumpsuit as all the rapists and murderers and with the permitted pencil stubs (ball-points are forbidden) he fights his campaigns, writes, draws and meditates on the past, present and future. Meanwhile, from her Tennessee home Ingrid wheels and deals, begs and borrows, plots, posts and publishes to try to get him out, or at least to stop his imminent deportation to his native Germany where he can expect a warrant for his arrest under Germany's severe "hate laws" and a possible five year sentence.

Ernst Zundel immigrated to Canada in 1958 to avoid the draft (he is a lifelong pacifist) where he has lived for forty two years. Unlike most Holocaust revisionists (rather an austere, academic lot), Zundel is a hands-on activist – a gentle, good-humored man, kind and honest and with those qualities often found in the strangest places: a fine mind and a good heart. Born in Germany's

Black Forest, Zundel sometimes refers to himself as a 'Swabian peasant' and it's true, he does have that about him. But Zundel understands people and, most important, he understands history. He is, to use his own word, a vordenker – one who thinks ahead of the crowd, one who sees the panorama of life.

For decades now Zundel has battled the Holocaust establishment.

"I was like everybody else in my own postwar years in Germany. I was disgusted with my father's generation whom I believed to have been monsters. Like practically all people on our planet, I used to believe in the standard, widely accepted notion that the government of National Socialist Germany, under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, had attempted to kill the Jews by an act of state-decreed genocide. I was ashamed to be a German.....In the 1960'sI experienced my first doubts about some details of the Holocaust story. Further study, mostly at night, convinced me that many segments of the story were highly exaggerated, and the number of Jewish losses were wildly inflated." Ernst Zundel

Thus began Zundel's activism – persistent, flamboyant and effective. Who else would have got himself photographed carrying a martyr's cross up the steps of a Canadian courtroom? And who else, after having been beaten on the steps of a courthouse by members of a violent Jewish group when he appeared for court dates, would thereafter appear for all court hearings in a hard hat and bulletproof vest? His first brush with Canadian law was when the government sought to remove his special mail privileges. He won that one and has never looked back.

In 1985 Zundel ended up in court when he distributed a booklet: *Did Six Million Really Die?*, and ran foul of Canada's "False News" Laws:

Everyone who willfully publishes a statement, tale or news that he knows is false and that causes or is likely to cause injury or mischief to a public interest is guilty of an indictable offense and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.

Twice Ernst Zundel was in court for what turned out to be the two greatest Holocaust revisionism trials of our time, twice he was convicted and twice the convictions were overturned. The first in 1985 lasted seven weeks and ended with a 15 month sentence, overturned in 1987 by the Ontario Court of Appeal citing errors of law ordered a retrial. This, the second Zundel trial in 1988, lasted for almost four months. It was in this trial that Zundel commissioned Fred Leuchter, an expert on executions by gas in the U.S. to visit Auschwitz and conduct a forensic examination which was presented in court as proving conclusively that there were no homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz. For the revisionist community, that day in April 1988 when Fred Leuchter presented his report to the court, was the day the myth of the Holocaust was finally laid to rest.

Despite an impressive defense from heavyweights such as Robert Faurisson, Marc Weber and David Irving who, having just read the Leuchter report, took the opportunity of the trial to proclaim his conversion to Holocaust revisionism, Zundel was again found guilty and sentenced. But in 1992, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down as unconstitutional the law banning the spread of false news. This decision temporarily put an end to the deportation proceedings launched against Zundel after his 1988 conviction.

For the next few years Zundel continued his struggle despite various

assaults, both legal and illegal – prosecutions, violence against his person, arson against his home and possessions.

In the spring of 1994, several Marxist street groups organized to attempt to drive Zundel out of his neighbourhood in Toronto. Pamphlets were distributed calling him a "hatemonger" and "white supremacist" and calling for his charging under Canada's hate laws. These groups began a campaign of posters put up across Toronto with Zundel's face in a rifle sight, giving directions to his home with instructions on how to build Molotov cocktails. Street graffiti appeared on fences and buildings calling for people to "drive Zundel out." Zundel lodged complaints with Toronto police but nothing ever came of his complaints...On May 7, 1995, an arsonist torched Zundel's house which was almost completely gutted on the second and third floors, causing over \$400,000.00 in damages and destroying an extensive library and rare book collection. No person was ever charged with this offence. After the arson, Zundel suffered from severe anxiety, loss of memory, and loss of concentration.....At the end of May 1995, a powerful pipe bomb was sent to Zundel through the mails from Vancouver, British Columbia. Suspicious of the parcel, he took it unopened to the police. The bomb contained nails and metal shrapnel; Toronto police determined it would have killed anyone who opened it and anyone within 90 metres of the blast. (2)

Twice he submitted faultless applications for Canadian citizenship and twice he was refused. There was a conviction for 'hate crime' in Germany and prosecutions for being "a threat to the safety and security of Canada", and there were the incessant legal battles about the Zundelsite.

In January 2000, exhausted after the struggles of the eighties and nineties, Zundel moved to the United States, where he married Ingrid, a U.S. citizen. There the couple lived quietly, establishing an art gallery, experimenting in organic agriculture and thinking about future campaigns. Then, on February 5th 2003 Ernst was arrested because, as he was told, he had missed showing up at a scheduled immigration hearing in May of 2001. "Remember what I told you?" He said to Ingrid as they faced together the arresting officers, "That's what they were going to do. Use a bureaucratic excuse to get me." He also told her, as he was led away in handcuffs, where to find her Valentine gift.

In what amounted to a legal kidnapping, Zundel was deported to Canada where he faces extradition proceedings to Germany where "Holocaust denial" is against the law. There, you can get up to five years in prison for having the wrong opinion or, as they put it, for "... defaming the memory of the dead." Two years later Zundel is still in prison as the legal wrangles continue.

....you have just arrived at what is sneeringly called a "Holocaust denier."

Ingrid Rimland

I had neither heard of Zundel nor the Zundelsite until I received an email from Ingrid Rimland asking permission to post my essay Jewish Power as one of her 'Z-Grams' – the emails she sends out to Zundel supporters all over the world. I agreed, and logged onto the Zundelsite. I appreciated its excellent selection of revisionist literature but confess to being a little unnerved by its schwarz weiss rot livery, runic-style logo and anti-Jewish cartoons. But I carried on until I came across her introduction to my piece.

"Despite some occasional slipping into the RKPS mode....this Eisen essay

is one remarkably crafted essay! Beautifully done! Rich in imagery and ice-cold in precision. " ...one remarkably crafted essay! Rich in imagery and ice-cold in precision! But what was this RKPS that I was occasionally slipping into?

Dear Paul

RKPS stands for Requisite Knee-fall Paragraph Syndrome. It is a common, near universal writer's affliction in every Western country. It neutralizes what crude folks call a "sh-t detector." It befalls otherwise perfectly reasonable intellectuals much more than low-brow folks. It is as common as freckles.

It kicks in whenever the so-called "Holocaust" comes up. It's automatic. One cannot help it. By inner command, one must immediately get down on ones knees, bow to the dust, pay homage to the "six million", get up, kick Hitler in the shin, deplore the "racism" of the Third Reich, and otherwise distance oneself from the period of '33-'45 so that there is no doubt as to exactly where one stands - fair square against (gulp!) "Nazis".

Now, dear (future) friend - I have probably nixed a potentially congenial friendship right at the start by showing my true colors and putting my foot in the mouth - but I am a German, married to the world's premier thought-criminal presently languishing in Abu Ghraib North, and my heart aches when I read otherwise magnificent writing like yours - and then detect the RKPS. It hurts me, because it is unworthy of thinking and otherwise fair people who have been raised on the Holocaust Drip that has deformed that part of their nature that is meant to be fair and critical.

Here is the example of the RKPS in your piece:

"In its zeal and self belief Zionism has come to resemble the most brutal and relentless of modern ideologies. But unlike the brutal rationality of Stalinism, willing to sacrifice millions for political and economic revolution, this Jewish ideology, in its zealotry and irrationality, resembles more the National Socialism which condemned millions for the attainment of a nonsensical racial and ethnic supremacy." (From "Jewish Power" by Paul Eisen) (3)

You see, Paul, when I read passages like that, I wince. Let me take it apart, bit by bit. "Zealotry", yes - to the extent one wants a better, cleaner, saner, more honest, more compatible world for one's own where life does not feel like having to wear a hair shirt for the benefit of strangers. Scientists deeply committed to their inventions are zealous. Mothers are zealous in wanting the best for their children. I am zealous when it comes to keeping smut out of the language I love. But not zealous like some Deep South Baptist preacher who thumbs the Bible, chews tobacco, and thinks nothing of spitting on your feet.

"Irrationality" - far from it! I used to think like that - I am ashamed to say I suffered badly from RKPS for most of my life. When I first started questioning why I behaved exactly like some brainless robot, I became curious about what people who were part of the National

Socialist movement really thought. I talked to an old man whom I respected deeply for his integrity, and who had lost his only 18-year-old son at Stalingrad. He said to me, holding his son's picture in his hands: "It felt right in my mind, and it felt right in my soul." I asked: "You paid a price. Do you regret it?" And he said very quietly: "How could I? How could anyone who took the trouble understanding?"

That was the start of my resolve to take the trouble understanding.

"Non-sensical racial and ethnic supremacy." You are just plain misinformed. Let me put it this way. You have been lied to about the murder of JFK, about Vince Foster, about the USS Liberty, about Weapons of Mass Destruction, about --- you get the point. You have been lied to and lied to and lied to. You know you have. You accept that. And you haven't been lied to about this "racial and ethnic supremacy" nonsense?

Here's what I say to people who question my motives. Hitler has been dead for more than half a century. I don't want to resurrect him. Nobody in my circle does. It cannot be done. What is gone is gone and is never going to return. But what we Germans want is balanced thinking, fair assessment of what the Hitler days were like. We don't want people to assault us morning, noon, and night for things we didn't do. I for one don't like to watch grown men and women run and hide like rabbits the moment the Holocaust Lobby says "Boo!" After all, we all enjoy the Autobahn, don't we? Why should not our world enjoy the benefits that came out of those times - the research in fighting cancer, for instance? The superb appreciation of genuine art? The emphasis on simple lifestyle, respecting the ecological system? The brilliant strides in space research? It is unworthy of us to let ourselves be spooked by professional smear mongers for profit. Paul, put your hand on your heart and confess: Just what have you read of the times that did not come out of the propaganda mills of Hollywood and such?

For me, your sentence read like a traditional RKPS - to nodding agreement of the audience. Am I wrong?

If I am right, you have just arrived at what is sneeringly called a "Holocaust Denier." I will look you straight in the eye and say that one cannot deny what did not exist. And now, to my regret, we have a mis-tone in our new-found mutual love (dare I say zealotry?) for ideas expressed in precise and finely honed words.

I suggest that forensic science ought to settle that disagreement about what Germans did or did not do in World War II in an open public forum - not by imprisonment and "torture lite" - as has happened to my husband, who sent the first forensic team EVER to inspect the "murder weapon", the so-called "gas chambers at Auschwitz" - and found it not what it was purported to be.

Ingrid.

...I am frightened of you but I am more frightened of my ignorance...

Message to Ingrid Rimland from a ZGram reader

Ernst Zundel is a Holocaust revisionist or, a 'Holocaust denier' as some would have it. Like all revisionists, Zundel does not deny that the National Socialist regime targeted Jews or that Jews suffered at

their hands, but he does deny specific, albeit key aspects of the Holocaust narrative as we know it. His denial is limited to three areas which should be clearly understood.

That there ever was an official plan on the part of Hitler or any other part of the Nazi regime systematically and physically to eliminate every Jew in Europe.

That there ever existed homicidal gas-chambers.

That the numbers of Jewish victims have been exaggerated.

Although unpopular enough itself, if Zundel had stuck to Holocaust revisionism he might have had an easier ride. But for Ernst Zundel revisionism is but a means to an end. He cannot and will not relinquish his loyalty and devotion, as he sees it, for his country, his people and their history. For him, the revision of the Holocaust is not just the pursuit of a truth, but the pursuit of a truth that will set his people free. Germans stand accused of having committed the worst crime in human history: the premeditated attempt to coolly and efficiently annihilate every Jew in Europe. Zundel rejects this. He is prepared for National Socialist Germany to be held accountable for the crimes it did commit but the attempted genocide of European Jews is, for him, not one of them.

Some readers, even those who stand for free speech, may now be reaching for their delete buttons. After all, maybe Zundel should not be penalized for his beliefs but that doesn't mean that his views must be disseminated, and it certainly does not mean that we have to read them. But free speech is not only the right to think, to speak and to write freely, but also to be given a fair hearing without ridicule and abuse or at least until a proper examination has been made. And you never know, even those who generally find such views repellent, if they were to hear them, even they might hear something worth hearing. So, for those folk prepared to grant to Ernst Zundel the same freedom they grant to themselves, for those who have the curiosity and the courage to pause awhile, this could be an opportunity rarely offered - an opportunity to hear and consider another and hitherto unheard, point of view.

Everybody has a story and everybody has a point of view and in the matter of the events in Europe from 1933-1945 there are many points of view. The British have a point of view, the Americans have a point of view, the Poles, the Dutch, the Russians, the Serbs they all have a point of view and the Jews certainly have a point of view. But the Germans too have a point of view, even those Germans who once called themselves National Socialists, even those Germans who still call themselves National Socialists.

Dear Paul

Many WWII soldiers (now very old) have told me that World War II - that is, the war against the East - was really a preventive/defensive

war against Communism, which was Jewish. Europe was about to be overrun by the Red Terror - Stalin had amassed his assault troops at the border, and it was only a matter of weeks, so Hitler hit first. Right now I am reading a book by a Swede, Juri Lina that is one long, horrid accounting of the Bolshevik/Jewish horrors. I don't know how good his sources are - but he has certainly documented them. Six million? Even if it were true, which we say it isn't, it was peanuts compared to the bloodbath in Russia, starting with the 1917 Revolution, all of it laid at the feet of the Jews. How much of that was known in Germany by the common people, I don't know. But it was certainly known by the leadership. And the Jews were seen as subversives, rightly or wrongly, more and more so as the war went on. Add to that the Versailles Treaty that brutalized Germany financially, and the corruption of the Weimar Republic, which brutalized it spiritually, both of which were blamed on the Jews - and you have cause aplenty, as that generation saw it.

Ingrid

How do those Germans now nearing the end of their lives, feel when told that what seemed so right then and perhaps even still seems so right was in fact so wrong? And how do those Germans today, born and educated in postwar Germany, feel when told of the shame and disgrace of their parents and grandparents? How might it feel, to be forbidden, alone amongst the peoples of Europe, to recall your recent history with anything but shame? Year after year all over the western world nations proudly parade, remembering their countrymen and women and the contribution they made in the war. At ceremonies they remember their dead and the sacrifices made. But for Germans, only the atrocities are to be remembered, not a word - nothing of the achievements and sacrifices of their fellow Germans. Such was and is the price of 'rehabilitation' and the re-entry of Germany into the family of nations.

Of wartime suffering we hear plenty. The British in the blitz, Americans in the Pacific, French, Dutch and Danes under occupation, Russians and Poles in the East and of course, Jews in the Holocaust, but who hears about the suffering of Germans: the terror-bombing of German cities with the deliberate causing of firestorms, the only purpose of which was the mass slaughter of civilians? In the 1940 bombing of Coventry around 550 civilians were killed whilst in the 1945 bombing of Dresden around 35,000 (the lowest figure I could find) were killed. And our response is to twin Dresden with Coventry which says all you'll ever need to know about 'balance'.

Who cares or even knows about the deportations of millions of Germans from their generations-long homes in the East, the rape and pillage of Berlin and other cities and the hunger and deprivation endured for years and years after the defeat of National Socialism. Who remembers the ten million Germans and Austrians who died in World War 2? Who much cares about Germany post World War 1 – the injustices of Versailles, the hunger, hopelessness, degradation and humiliation? So who will try to understand how it might have felt when a leader came along - a veteran of the war, a brave soldier by all accounts (twice wounded; Iron Cross First-Class), a fellow sufferer, one of their own, a man who promised peace, stability and well-being and the restoration of pride and honor - and, most incredibly of all, at that time kept his promises?

The Hitler we loved and why...

Ernst Zundel was once involved in the publication of a book called *The Hitler We Loved and Why*, but Ernst Zundel was not the only German who loved Hitler and is probably not the only German who still loves Hitler. Millions of Germans loved Hitler who for twelve years impacted on them as no German has or probably ever will, and, though they never say so, must, deep down still cherish his memory.

In his book "*Letters from Cell #7*" Zundel tells of a visit he made back to Germany to his aged mother still living in their Black Forest home. They were sitting there, at the table eating supper, just the two of them. It was dark, the clock ticking away on the wall as it had done for years when his mother said to him,

"You know, Ernst, you would never have been born if Adolf Hitler had not come to power."

And she told him how because Hitler kept his promises of bringing work, peace, stability and honour to a ravaged German people, thousands of families who had felt unable to have children, now felt able to have them.

"You are one of those children" she said.

Ernst Zundel the Holocaust denier is a German nationalist and, by his own admission, a racist. He is an admirer of Hitler and is nostalgic for the National Socialist period of German history. He is anti-Jewish. He is also interested in UFO's. So Ernst Zundel is easily dismissed as a crank, a Nazi, or as Joel Finkel would have it, as 'scum'.

But Ernst Zundel is a Holocaust denier because he believes the Holocaust narrative falsely defames his people and their history. He is a racist because race, for him a cultural, emotional and spiritual, as well as biological determinant, is vital and precious in the life of human beings and that his own white and German race, as he would term it, is, as is every other race, something to be cherished and preserved. He is a patriot who loves his country, his people, their language, culture and history. He remembers Adolf Hitler for the national regeneration he brought. He knows that he committed terrible crimes but asks that he be judged as any other historical figure like Stalin or Napoleon, no more, no less, and that National Socialism be judged also on its merits and demerits. He believes, as do many others (including many, if not most, Jews), that there exists some kind of Jewish spirit or sensibility but further believes that this Jewish spirit, so often creative and energizing can, if unchecked and unbalanced, be damaging and corrosive to any society and he grieves for the damage he believes it has caused to the world he loved.

But Ernst Zundel does not hate Jews because Ernst Zundel doesn't hate anyone. Ernst Zundel has never committed an act of violence nor has he ever called on anyone else to commit an act of violence. Ernst Zundel has never discriminated against anyone nor has he called on anyone else to discriminate against anyone. Ernst Zundel has never stifled anyone's freedom of expression nor has he ever called on anyone else to stifle anyone's freedom of expression. Ernst Zundel looks on his enemies as they try to silence, prosecute, imprison, bomb and burn him, with bewilderment, sorrow and some anger because, as he has said, "sometimes I simply run out of cheeks to turn".

The War for the Truth The Revisionists

It bears repetition that the denial of the Holocaust revisionists does not extend to the entire Holocaust narrative. Revisionists do not deny that the National Socialist regime brutally persecuted Jews. They do not deny that Jews in Germany were discriminated against, violently assaulted, dispossessed, imprisoned in camps and expelled. They also do not deny that Jews in countries occupied by Germany or within the German sphere of influence were also pitilessly assaulted, dispossessed and subjected to brutal deportations many to forced labour camps where many hundreds of thousands died. Nor do they deny that many Jews were executed by shooting in the East.

But they do deny the Holocaust narrative as we know it in three specific areas.

- They deny that there ever was an official plan on the part of Hitler or any other part of the Nazi regime systematically and physically to eliminate every Jew in Europe.

- They deny that there ever existed homicidal gas-chambers;

- They deny the figure of six million Jewish victims of the Nazi assault and claim that the actual figure was significantly less.

In making their claims, Revisionists have offered a considerable body of work. To what degree they are right, everyone must judge for themselves. Many will take the view that Holocaust revisionism is but pernicious nonsense motivated only by a hatred of Jews and a desire to rehabilitate Hitler and National Socialism specifically, and fascism in general and therefore not even worthy of scrutiny. I don't agree, and those with sufficient curiosity to wish to research the subject can visit the website of the premier Revisionist think tank the Institute for Historical Review, locate the Journal of Historical Review (4) and its archive of articles and papers and start reading. For an overview of the whole subject, they can obtain a copy of Joel Hayward's 1993 M.A. thesis "The Fate of Jews in German Hands" (5)

The Revisionist case is broadly as follows:-

- There exists no documentary evidence whatsoever that there ever was a decision on the part of Hitler or the National Socialist state to physically murder all the Jews of Europe. There is however an abundance of evidence for the decision to persecute, disempower and expel all Jews from Europe

- There is no physical evidence whatsoever for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at Auschwitz or indeed anywhere else. There is however abundant evidence for the widespread use of hydrogen cyanide (Zyklon B) gas and gas chambers for delousing and disinfection against typhus. No-one has yet been able to produce, draw or describe a homicidal gas chamber or produce a photograph or plan of one because no-one has ever seen a homicidal gas chamber.

- No-one has ever seen a homicidal gas chamber because they did not exist. The gas chambers shown to thousands of visitors to Auschwitz are, by the admission of the museum authorities, post-war reconstructions. Common

images of gas chambers from other locations are either disinfestation chambers or more commonly morgues, air-raid shelters (often gas-tight) or crematoria. Common images of the gassing of Jews – deportees boarding and disembarking from trains, mountains of eyeglasses and shoes, piles of corpses, crematoria chimneys are just that – people and trains, eyeglasses and shoes, corpses, smoking chimneys, no more, no less - they do not constitute evidence of mass gassing.

— Not only is there no physical evidence for the existence of homicidal gas chambers there is substantial physical, architectural, topographical, geographical and forensic evidence against their existence. The critical evidence is in three reports all resulting from investigations at the site itself at Auschwitz. The first and most famous of these was the Leuchter report commissioned by Ernst Zundel in 1988. Acclaimed by revisionists this report was somewhat hurriedly put together and, because of dispute about the interpretation of its conclusions, must be regarded as revelatory but nonetheless, inconclusive. However Leuchter's findings and conclusions were refined and confirmed by a forensic study carried out by German chemist Germar Rudolf and by a forensic examination and report commissioned by the Auschwitz State museum and conducted by Institute of Forensic Research in Krakow.

— The gassing and cremation of the numbers claimed, in the time claimed and with the facilities claimed is simply not possible. Some of the evidence for this conclusion comes from studies of individual gas executions performed in the United States, any study of which will show how hard it is to kill one person safely and efficiently let alone the hundreds claimed.

— The numbers of Jews killed by the Nazis, usually held to be around six million, is grossly exaggerated. This is largely because of greatly inflated pre-war Jewish population figures and underestimated Jewish survival and emigration figures.

— The context of much of the evidence for the Holocaust narrative was the Nuremberg Trials – an extraordinary and unprecedented set of trials of the vanquished by the victors with little attempt to find or to tell the truth. Without the evidence generated by these proceedings there would be no significant evidence that the extermination of Jews took place at all. The legitimacy of the court itself was questionable, its procedures were a disgrace with defendants denied basic procedural rights and with much of the evidence presented in the form of survivor testimony taken at face value or confessions beaten and tortured out of the hapless defendants. As a matter of record, the key confession of Auschwitz Commandant, Rudolf Hoess was obtained through torture and coercion. (6)

— Overall there is very little evidence for the established Holocaust narrative. Hard evidence is elusive, and what evidence as does exist is built largely on eyewitness reports, confessions and hearsay. Witness reports, notoriously unreliable anyway, are in this case, totally false. Many key witnesses have already been demolished in the witness box and many noted ones such as those by Rudolf Vrba, Felipe Muller, Kurt Gerstein and Rudolf Hoess are now partially or completely discredited.

— Many key elements of the Holocaust narrative have already been disproved to the extent that even establishment Holocaust writers have conceded their inaccuracy. Examples of these are the Jews-into-soap story – the long disproved story of how the Nazis used the bodies of gassed Jews to make soap, the use of “steam chambers” to steam victims to death, and the existence of homicidal gas chambers at concentration camps in Germany itself such as Dachau and Buchenwald – all claims were made at Nuremberg and all have subsequently been quietly discarded. Most telling is the quiet downgrading of the figures of victims illustrated by the removal of nineteen signs at Auschwitz which told visitors in nineteen languages that four million Jews died in the camp. These have now been replaced with signs claiming a million and a half (still claimed by revisionists to be a significant exaggeration).

Revisionist research seems to have been carried out in a scholarly manner, is well supported by evidence and is presented in a calm and restrained way. That some revisionists (not all) have histories in far-right activism is true. That some (not all) exhibit anti-Jewish sentiment is also true although this may in part be due to the assaults that many have come under from Jews and Jewish organisations. Some (not all) have, in the past, been affiliated to racist and nationalist organisations, some (not all) speak fluent German and some even are Germans. Such information should lead us to look closely for signs of bias in their research; but not to discount their findings per se.

“Show me or draw me a Nazi gas chamber...” Robert Faurisson (7)

No-one is able to show us, at Auschwitz or anywhere else, even one of these chemical slaughterhouses. No-one is capable of describing to us their exact appearance or workings. Neither a trace nor a hint of their existence is to be found. Not one document, not one study, not one drawing. Nothing. Nothing but some occasional, pitiful “evidence”, which vanishes, like a mirage, as soon as one draws near, and which the Jewish historians themselves, in recent years, have finally been obliged to repudiate.

Robert Faurisson (8)

For 15 years, every time that I heard of a witness anywhere, no matter where in the portion of Europe that was not occupied by the Soviets, who claimed to have himself been present at gas exterminations, I immediately went to him to get his testimony. With documentation in hand, I would ask him so many precise and detailed questions that soon it became apparent that he could not answer except by lying. Often his lies became so transparent, even to himself, that he ended his testimony by declaring that he had not seen it himself, but that one of his good friends, who had died in the camps and whose good faith he could not doubt, had told him about it. I covered thousands and thousands of kilometers throughout Europe in this way.

Paul Rassinier (9)

Robert Faurisson the veteran revisionist scholar has written that at the

heart of the Holocaust is Auschwitz, and at the heart of Auschwitz are the gas chambers. He therefore urges those who wished to combat the Holocaust myth to focus their efforts on that heart. It was Faurisson who, in the mid seventies first thought of putting Holocaust revisionism on firm ground by focusing on the material and forensic evidence for or against the existence of homicidal gas chambers. He visited a functioning gas execution facility in the U.S. and saw for himself exactly what it took to efficiently and safely (for the executioners at least) kill one person at a time, let alone the many hundreds at a time claimed by Holocaust writers, and he concluded that "for physical and chemical reasons understandable to a child of eight" the existence and operation of the Nazi gas chambers was fundamentally impossible. But it was the activist Ernst Zundel who, at the time of the second False News trial in 1988 had the idea of sending to Auschwitz a forensic team to determine the issue once and for all. According to revisionists and despite its flaws (most likely due to the speed under which it was formulated), the findings of the Leuchter Report were clear – the facilities held to have been homicidal gas chambers were neither used for that purpose nor could they have been used for that purpose.

Nothing seems to fit about the gassing story. The numbers of victims crammed into the space, the design and construction of the gassing facilities, the lack of protection for the attendants, the implausibility surrounding the rate of cremation, the huge errors, omissions and disparities in eye-witness accounts – all these and more, when added to the near total absence of hard affirmative evidence, makes one wonder why anyone believed such a story in the first place. No-one has yet been able to explain how a gas chamber worked. No-one has been able to explain how pellets of Zyklon B were poured into holes that do not and never have existed. No-one has been able to explain how the Sonderkommando (special detachment) of Jewish prisoner/attendants was able to enter a gas chamber immediately, (even wearing gas masks which do not offer anything like proper protection especially when the wearer is active), after a mass gassing to remove the bodies even though such an environment would have been an ocean of hydrogen cyanide. The deadly gas would have still been everywhere and particularly in the soft tissue of the corpses. In effect, no one has been able to take up the Faurisson challenge: "Show me or draw me a Nazi gas chamber!"

The established Holocaust narrative can, and to a degree, has survived the successful promotion of two of the three revisionist claims. The debate between "intentionalists" and "functionalists" within the establishment in effect concedes that there may not have been a definite intention on the part of the German state to exterminate all the Jews. Similarly by downgrading the Auschwitz figures, the establishment has accepted at least the possibility of downgrading the overall figure of six million. But with the issue of the gas chambers there is simply nowhere to go. To paraphrase Faurisson: no gas-chamber, no Holocaust.

The Holocaust Establishment

Anti-revisionists, Holocaust affirmers, exterminationists - the range of labels on offer reflects the difficulty in naming the opposition. Even the word "opposition", like the phrase "anti-revisionist" itself is misleading because it implies a reflexive, defensive posture. Although establishment writers do often

find themselves responding to revisionist initiatives and do often sound rather defensive, the words “opposition” or “anti-revisionist” also suggest that they are the weaker party or that they have not themselves taken the initiative. This is not the case. Few narratives, true or false, have been promoted more forcefully or more widely than the Holocaust and few lobbies have been stronger, better resourced and enjoyed such complete dominance over the accepted discourse. The same holds true for the term ‘affirmers’. The Holocaust narrative may well turn out to require affirmation but you would never know it looking at the huge amount of ‘affirming’ material currently available. Finally the term ‘exterminationist’, usually used by revisionists to describe their opponents, though strictly accurate, is rather sneering and demeaning in tone. So we will adopt the relatively neutral term of ‘Holocaust establishment’.

For over sixty years there has been no shortage of material promoting the establishment view of the Holocaust - books, articles, films, plays, poems, TV programs, academic studies, conferences, memorials, museums – all supporting and promoting the established narrative and it is only recently that the establishment has felt the need to respond to the claims of the revisionists. As before, for those who wish to research the subject, the following starting points are recommended:-

The ADL website (10)
The Niskor website (11)

Many of the contributors to these sites are known Jewish and Zionist activists many with open and established links to Jewish and Zionist activist organizations. Again, this may lead us to view their findings with appropriate caution though not to discard them per se.

The establishment has attempted to respond to specific revisionist claims but only sporadically. They claim that extermination and cremation facilities were indeed perfectly capable of processing the numbers claimed and that all claims are well supported by hard evidence. Any reader can study the evidence which is freely available on the internet, but the debate has degenerated somewhat into a yes-it-is, no-it-isn't squabble – one which could possibly be resolved by the appointment of some kind of judicial body with powers to call on expert witnesses.

But there still remains the problem that there is just not all that much available evidence to support the Holocaust narrative and what is available is often far from satisfactory - documents are often “ambiguous”, witnesses are often “confused” or “traumatized” and buildings and installations are often “demolished”. Instead of denying the undeniable, the establishment has chosen rather to offer explanations. The lack of documentary evidence is explained by the fact that the final solution was top secret so not only were written communications kept to an absolute minimum but were also written euphemistically. Thus “special treatment” must mean extermination and “evacuation to the East” must mean deportation to a death camp. Similarly, no-one has yet been able to come forward and take up Robert Faurisson’s challenge to show him or draw him a gas chamber because anyone who saw a gas-chamber obviously did not live to tell the tale. The gassing facilities at

Auschwitz-Birkenau shown to so many visitors over the years are now conceded to be "post-war reconstructions", but only because the original gas chambers were destroyed in 1944 to remove the evidence in the face of the advancing Soviet forces. Finally the statements of survivors and perpetrators, whilst conceded to be confusing and contradictory are so because of the traumatic conditions under which these terrible events were observed and the sheer quantity of these statements, and often their poignancy as well, qualify them as acceptable evidence.

But whether because of the lack of evidence or not, the establishment has, in the main, been less concerned with refuting specific revisionist claims than with questioning the right of revisionists to make them. For many Holocaust writers, and indeed for almost the entire intellectual establishment worldwide, the Holocaust happened and that is that. In 1979 in response to Faurisson's questioning of the gas-chambers, thirty four French intellectuals published an appeal in *Le Monde*, the second sentence of which stated, "We must not ask how such a mass murder was technically possible - it was technically possible because it happened." For most establishment figures to even discuss the issues is to concede to revisionism legitimacy it does not deserve.

If somebody came along today and reported the calling of a scientific congress to examine the question of whether the sun revolves around the earth or the earth around the sun, he would either be ridiculed or declared non-compos mentis. It wouldn't occur to anyone to discuss the matter seriously... A similar thing occurs with the propagandists of the so-called 'Auschwitz Lie' or 'Holocaust Lie': their statements that there was no extermination of the Jews, is so obviously false that it is basically unworthy of serious scientific discussion. (12)

Such is the view of Deborah Lipstadt, Associate Professor of Jewish and Holocaust Studies at Emory College. Lipstadt, to her supporters a scholar of the Holocaust, to her detractors, a Jewish ethnic activist, has written extensively about Holocaust revisionism. Jewish herself and from a relatively orthodox background, Professor Lipstadt has had a lifelong allegiance to, and has been active in Jewish causes. She is a committed Zionist and is funded and aided by many Jewish and Zionist organizations such as the Vidal Sassoon International Centre for the Study of Anti-Semitism at the Hebrew University and the ADL – again, cause for scrutiny of her claims but not outright rejection.

Rather than dealing with revisionist claims, Lipstadt has focused on the revisionists themselves: their credibility, qualifications, motivations, affiliations and methods. In her book *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*, she traces the development of revisionism from the late forties to the early nineties and aims to demonstrate that the revisionists are overwhelmingly anti-Semitic with long connections to fascist, white supremacist and generally racist organizations, that their motivation is nothing less than to rehabilitate the Hitler regime specifically, and fascism and anti-Semitism generally and their scholarly veneer is just that; a cover for their racist and intolerant views.

Those who argue that the Holocaust deniers must be given a fair

hearing fail to recognize that the deniers' quest is not a search for truth. Rather they are motivated by racism, extremism, and virulent anti-Semitism....their methodology is based on deception and falsification, and the scholarly and restrained tone of most revisionist writings, are merely window dressing to conceal their real character and intentions. Deborah Lipstadt (13)

She maintains that the revisionists are not only a danger to the validity and memory of the Holocaust itself but also constitute a general danger to history and scholarship itself and even to democratic life as we know it.

Holocaust denial should not be seen as an assault on the history of one particular group. It repudiates reasoned discussion, the way the Holocaust, itself, engulfed all civilization. Its attack on Jewish history is, like anti-Semitism, an attack on the most basic values of a reasoned society. Deborah Lipstadt (14)

For a long time Professor Lipstadt chose to ignore the revisionist challenge but the ever-improving quality of revisionist scholarship does not go unnoticed,

Lately, the deniers' work has become more virulent and dangerous, in part because it has become more sophisticated. Their publications, including *The Journal of Historical Review*, mimic legitimate scholarly publications. This confuses those who do not immediately know the Journal's intentions. Deborah Lipstadt (15)

So she now responds but only insofar as to challenge their credibility, she still refuses to either debate them or to respond to their specific claims. For her there can be no discussion of the essential truth of the Holocaust.

Despite the favorable balance of power and their successes both inside and outside the courtroom, neither Professor Lipstadt nor the rest of the Holocaust establishment are actually doing all that well. Revisionism and its influence has grown steadily and the revisionists exhibit a confidence and sureness of touch whilst the establishment seems at times to be somewhat rattled. And the revisionists are not without guile. Identified as the eternal underdogs in this struggle, they have adopted a devastatingly effective passive-aggressive posture – a wide-eyed innocence in claiming that revisionism has no ideological base and is simply a method for seeking the truth. Nonetheless whatever their ideological motivations, they have in the main confined themselves to scholarly investigation conducted in a responsible manner and have, with devastating single-mindedness, piece by piece, proceeded to unpick the hitherto sacred Holocaust narrative.

Take the case of Raul Hilberg. In 1961 Hilberg published *The Destruction of the European Jews*. In this book, seen as a foundational text of the Holocaust, Hilberg describes an undertaking personally supervised by Hitler who issued two effective orders to set the genocide in motion. These orders were acted upon by various administrative agencies especially in the police and military which prepared, organized and executed this vast criminal enterprise. For twenty-five years this view remained substantially unchallenged until in 1976 Arthur Butz published *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* and in 1978-1979 Robert Faurisson published two articles in *Le Monde* claiming that the

Nazi Gas chambers could not have existed. A panel of experts was assembled to assert that the gas chambers did exist and among the experts was Raul Hilberg. Just before the start of the proceedings Hilberg gave an interview to the French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* in which he acknowledged there were no existing documents to prove the existence of the gas chambers or that the extermination of the Jews was conceived and planned by the National Socialist regime. On February 22nd 1983 in New York, at an event organized by the Holocaust Survivors Foundation, Hilberg said,

What began in 1941 was a process of destruction not planned in advance, not organized centrally by any agency. There was no blueprint and there was no budget for destructive measures. They were taken step by step, one step at a time. Thus came about not so much a plan being carried out, but an incredible meeting of minds, a consensus - mind reading by a far-flung bureaucracy."

This was confirmed in Hilberg's testimony at the first Zundel trial in Toronto in 1985 and again in the same year in the revised edition of his book which included the following:-

In the final analysis, the destruction of the Jews was not so much a product of laws and commands, as it was a matter of spirit, of shared comprehension, of consonance and synchronisation.

Apart from bewilderment at such a tale of consensual genocide conceived and directed by mind-reading, there must also be some acknowledgement that such a protracted and agonizing volte-face could only have come about as a result of the steady drip-drip of revisionist endeavor – and all achieved whilst the revisionists were being prosecuted, fined, imprisoned, assaulted and certainly shunned.

The Holocaust establishment has often preferred to respond less with argument and more with power. Largely due to pressure from Jewish organizations, Holocaust revisionism is subject to legal penalty in Israel, France, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, Australia, Belgium, Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, and Spain. Laws in these countries make it a crime for anyone, regardless of their credentials or the factual basis of their views, to question or revise any aspect of the history of World War II or the Holocaust in a manner that goes beyond the standards established by the governments of those countries. Also some countries punish revisionism without even having such laws (USA, Great-Britain, Netherlands etc). In the U.S. a California judge took against the IHR "judicial notice" of the existence of the Nazi gas chambers. In France, in 1949-1950, forty years before the specific law of July 13 1990, revisionists had been sentenced for their writings.

A person who, in writing or by word of mouth, publishes any statement denying or diminishing the proportions of acts committed in the period of the Nazi regime which are crimes against the Jewish people or crimes against humanity, with intent to defend the perpetrators of those acts or to express sympathy or identification with them, shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of five years (16)

Historians, researchers, authors, and publishers are being fined, imprisoned, placed under gag orders, expelled from their native countries, and denied entry into others. Revisionists facing prosecution have sometimes faced the absurdity that any defense of a revisionist character i.e. any claim that the revisionist position was actually correct, would itself constitute a repetition of the offence; also, any witness who gave testimony in support of the revisionist position could, upon demand of the prosecution service, himself be immediately charged.

In addition in these and most other countries in the western world, even where not technically illegal, revisionism has carried the risk of severe penalty including loss of employment and social exclusion of many kinds. Finally revisionists have been on the receiving end of much violence both threatened and real. All leading revisionists suffer legal assaults, all suffer social and professional exclusion and many have suffered physical attacks. Holocaust revisionism today is, quite simply, held as witchcraft was held in previous times, to be a Holocaust denier is to place oneself on the outside of civilized society on a level with a pedophile.

This exercise of power has yielded victories. Revisionism has been kept out of the main media; revisionists have been denied access to the discourse and the establishment has achieved a couple of stunning retractions such as this one from Joel Hayward, who in 1993 wrote a thesis in which he endeavored (and in my view, succeeded) to faithfully describe the state of the revisionist/establishment conflict.

I now regret working on such a complex topic without sufficient knowledge and preparation, and hope this brief addendum will prevent my work causing distress to the Jewish community here in New Zealand and elsewhere or being misused by individuals or groups with malevolent motives..... I can now see that I failed in my M.A. thesis to place adequate analytical weight on the motivation of numerous authors on the Holocaust, even though some were obviously writing with a view to attacking Jews and rehabilitating Nazis.

Joel Hayward (17)

And this statement from the young Jewish revisionist David Cole obtained through less than legal means and faxed to Irv Rubin, then head of the Jewish Defense League, is worth quoting in full.

This statement is given in an attempt to set the record straight about my current views regarding the Holocaust and Holocaust denial. As anyone who follows the subject of the Holocaust denial knows, from 1991 until 1994 I was well known in the movement as a Jewish Holocaust denier (a self-described "revisionist"). For the last three years I have no longer been associated with this movement, having realized that I was wrong and that the path I was taking with my life was self-destructive and hurtful to others. I have spent the last few years in silence on the subject of my time with the denial movement, a silence

caused mainly by my shame at what I had done with my life and my desire to distance myself from that life.

However, in that shame-induced silence it has been brought to my attention that I have not gone as far as I should have to make a clear and complete public statement in order to set the record straight as to where I stand. It is my great hope that this statement accomplishes that task.

I would like to state for the record that there is no question in my mind that during the Holocaust of Europe's Jews during World War II, the Nazis employed gas chambers in an attempt to commit genocide against the Jews. At camps in both Eastern and Western Europe, Jews were murdered in gas chambers which employed such poison gases as Zyklon B and carbon monoxide (in the Auschwitz camp, for example, the gas chambers used Zyklon B). The evidence for this is overwhelming and unmistakable.

The Nazis intended to kill all of the Jews of Europe, and the final death toll of this attempted genocide was six million. This atrocity, unique in its scope and breadth, must never be forgotten.

During my four years as a denier, I was wracked with self-hate and loathing, a fact that many of my critics were quick to point out. Indeed, this self hatred was obvious to most, but I was too blind to see it. The hate I had for myself I took out on my people. I was seduced by pseudo historical nonsense and clever-sounding but empty ideas and catch-phrases. When my eyes were finally opened, thanks to several good, kind friends who refused to give up on me even at my worst, I was horrified by what I had done. My instinct was to flee and never look back, but I now understand that I owe it to the people I wronged to make a forceful repudiation of my earlier views. I also owe a very large apology, not only to the many people I enraged, and to the family and friends I hurt, but especially to the survivors of the Holocaust, who deserve only our respect and compassion, not re-victimization.

Therefore, to all of the above people, let me offer my most humble and very, very sincere apology. I am sorry for what (I) did, and I am sorry for the hurt I caused.

And just as I must set the record straight concerning my views, it is also incumbent on me to set the record straight regarding the video "documentaries" and media appearances I did from 1991 to 1994. These "documentaries" are merely videotaped garbage filled with self-hatred and pseudo-intellectual nonsense. My "media appearances" were nothing but an embarrassment. My glazed look, specious reasoning, and talking-in-circles during my talk show appearances would have hopefully alerted any astute viewers that this was a man not in touch with reality.

It has been brought to my attention that Bradley Smith is still using one of my videos in advertisements he is running on college campuses. Therefore, I would like to make these additional points: This video is being advertised without my consent, and I denounce this video as being without worth. Bradley Smith is no historian, and denial is no "historical field". Students on college campuses should look elsewhere to find out about the Holocaust. To these students, I would say, look to books like Hilberg's "Destruction of the European Jews", Yahil's "The

Holocaust", and Dawidowicz's "War against the Jews" for correct information. If your school library doesn't stock these books, have them order copies. Do not pay any attention to any "David Cole" videos, except to rightly denounce them as frauds.

I am thankful for being given the opportunity to make this statement. This statement is made freely and under no duress, and is quite willingly, even happily given to Mr. Irv Rubin of the Jewish Defense League for the widest possible distribution. This statement is the most current and accurate compilation of my views, and it supersedes any previous writings, videos, or statements. It is my hope that there will be no more confusion as to where I stand. I thank you for letting me set the record straight.

David Cole (18)

Despite these victories it is still true that there is remarkably little hard evidence to support the established Holocaust narrative and people are bound to ask how such a vast and complex undertaking as the premeditated and mechanistic extermination of such a huge number of people could possibly have taken place without leaving a clear trail of evidence, both documentary and physical. Also with regard to tactics and strategy, Holocaust activists are in something of a no-win situation. If they debate the revisionists they give them credibility and concede that the Holocaust is a matter for debate, if they refuse to debate with them, as in the main they do, they lay themselves open to the charge that they have something to hide.

And of course the internet has changed everything. Revisionist material, previously unseen, is now available at the click of a mouse and you don't have to go into some dubious bookshop to get it. Online booksellers who have elected to stock revisionist materials have inevitably given it a new respectability. E-mails and newsgroups have widened and speeded up the debate. So much more can be said, so much quicker and to so many more people and for the moment at least, no-one can stop you saying it or reading it.

Reading the revisionist literature one senses a confidence, not only that revisionists believe themselves to be right but also that the future lies with them. In 1988, at the time of the second Zundel trial and in reference to Ernst Zundel himself, Robert Faurisson wrote:

"Zündel may once again go to prison for his research and beliefs or be threatened with deportation. All this is possible. Anything may happen when there is an intellectual crisis and a realignment of historical concepts of such a dimension. Revisionism is the great intellectual adventure of the end of this century. Whatever happens, Ernst Zundel is already the victor."

But how could it be so?

This must surely be the establishment's strongest weapon - the sheer incredibility of the revisionist proposition. How could such a deception have taken place? How could all those survivors be so wrong in their testimonies? How could all those perpetrators be so wrong in their confessions? How could all those documents, unspecific as they are, have been falsified? Arthur Butz

called his groundbreaking revisionist study "The Hoax of the Twentieth Century" but a hoax of this size and nature just defies belief. Conspiracy theories rarely convince, nor do those who propagate them, so surely the sheer absurdity of the revisionists' claim tells us all we need to know. If revisionism is to have any credibility at all it must demonstrate how, if false, the Holocaust narrative, as we know it, came to be.

The first reports of the mass slaughter of Jews by the Germans were propagated in the spring of 1942 by Jewish and Zionist agencies and published in the Jewish press. These entirely uncorroborated reports received immediate and unmatched credibility by being broadcast (on one occasion in Yiddish) back into Poland by the BBC, and by repetition in the American press, particularly the New York Times. They spoke for the first time of extermination, but not only by gas. According to these reports Jews were being steamed to death, suffocated to death, pressed to death and electrocuted as well as being gassed. It is only later in reports compiled by the Soviet authorities when they liberated the camps of Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944 and 1945 that gassing emerges as the main method of slaughter and even later, as just one element in the shower-gas-cremation sequence which now lies at the heart of the Holocaust narrative.

It is with these Soviet reports plus others from the World Refugee Board that the now-familiar extermination narrative emerges. The victims disembark from trains for selection. Those designated for extermination are taken to complexes designed to look like disinfection facilities. There they are separated into sexes and led to undressing rooms where they undress. Then they are led, 600-700 at a time, into huge rooms resembling shower rooms. When the rooms are crammed full Zyklon B pellets are dropped from apertures in the roof and, as the temperature rises, hydrogen cyanide gas is released. The victims take about five to fifteen minutes to die, watched all the time through glass peepholes in the doors by SS personnel. An interval of about half an hour is allowed for the gas to clear assisted by a ventilation system after which a Jewish Sonderkommando (special detachment) enters with gas masks, rubber boots, gloves, hooks and hoses to disentangle, hose down and remove the bodies. The bodies are taken to mortuaries where gold teeth etc. are extracted with pliers and they are then transported to crematoria where they are burned to ashes. If the number of corpses should prove to be too great for the cremation facilities, then those remaining are taken to be burned in specially designed open pits.

But if such a narrative is false it is interesting to speculate as to how it took the form it did. Possible answers may be found in the 50-100 year history of Europe prior to the events under investigation. This period saw huge movements of people westwards, many of them Jews and many of them migrating to or through Germany. All over central and western Europe but particularly in Germany there was a problem with, and a fear of epidemics, particularly of typhus and many of the receiving authorities, and particularly the German authorities, were intent of developing and implementing mass disinfection and disinfestation procedures. These included mobile and stationery mass steam and shower baths and mobile and stationery facilities for the disinfestation of clothing by gas. The gas used for disinfestation was of course hydrogen cyanide gas in the form of Zyklon B pellets.

This use of gas for delousing and disinfestation must be set against the background of the very real use of poison gas as a weapon in the Great War and in various other areas of conflict both real (such as by the Italians in Abyssinia) and imaginary (as by the Martians in *The War of the Worlds* radio broadcast of 1938). It should also be noted how after the introduction of gas onto the battlefield in 1915, stories of homicidal gassings of civilians began to appear in atrocity propaganda. In March 1916 the *Daily Telegraph* reported that the Austrians and Bulgarians had murdered hundreds of thousands of Serbians using poison gas.

At roughly the same time cremation was increasingly being used for the disposal of bodies and particularly for the mass disposal of epidemic victims. Cremation as a means of corpse disposal was widely promoted by the German National Socialist regime - a regime noted for its modern attitudes to technology – and it was also universally used in its euthanasia programme. One result of the use of cremation in these euthanasia killings, was that it fed the general suspicion that cremation was used to conceal the cause of death by gas poisoning (deaths in the euthanasia programme are now thought more likely to have been by lethal injection) which was widely (and falsely) believed to cause disfigurement. So cremation became associated with attempts to deceive the population about the cause of death. In effect, all these techniques of disinfection and cremation, considered to be at the very cutting-edge of modernism by enlightened western Europeans, were viewed by large sections of the European masses - and particularly by immigrants, usually poor, conservative and deeply superstitious, and even more particularly by the eastern Jewish masses with their additional religious concerns about mass undressing and cremation etc – with the deepest suspicion.

It's not so crazy if you put yourself in the shoes of a poor Jewish immigrant fleeing the conditions of Tsarist Russia. You arrive exhausted and terrified together with a mass of similarly exhausted and terrified folk at a German border station where you are confronted with uniformed guards and officials shouting at you in a language you barely understand. They want to separate you from your men- and women-folk, to undress you and to put you into large cold and forbidding chambers. You've heard the stories as you stand naked and shivering under the showerheads and wait for what you have been told will be water, but for what a part of you fears will be gas. An account from a surprising quarter illustrates the point:

I remember fairly clearly one such "experience" sometime in 1944. This was during the Wehrmacht retreat from the Eastern front, when huge refugee treks of ethnic Germans traveled westward with horse-drawn wagons under German Army protection, experiencing horrendous hardships from hunger and cold, the advancing Red Army ever in our backs.

My family belonged to German-descent Mennonites, a fundamentalist Christian community who had come to the Ukraine in 1789, but we still considered ourselves to be Germans and still spoke the German language. Ever since the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution - which happened when my grandmother was still a young woman and my

mother was only four years old - my people had been savagely persecuted by the Communists. Many of my cousins, aunts, uncles, more distant relatives perished in waves of ethnic cleansings. This persecution started before I was born and became deadly in 1938, affecting practically every male age 14 and over. My own father was exiled to Siberia when I was only five years old in 1941, and our entire family escaped exiling only at the last moment, literally hours before the German Army overran the Ukraine in September of that year - only weeks after my father was taken from us forever.

When the (for us) voluntary retreat to Germany began two years later, in the fall of 1943, there were four of us left - my grandmother, my mother, my baby sister and I. The rest of our family had either been exiled to Siberia, been killed, or simply disappeared in the havoc of those horror years since 1917. Now we were running for our lives from the Red Army - almost all of us women and children.

We entered Nazi-occupied Poland sometime in 1944 and were invited to be officially naturalized as Germans. I remember the city as Litzmannstadt (Lodz) but I cannot be sure.

But first we had to be deloused. Naturally! As far as I know, this was routine for everybody entering German-occupied territory and certainly Germany proper, an obligatory health measure to control epidemics such as typhus, a disease that was carried by lice. Everybody who was coming from the East was infested with lice in those days - Russians, Poles, Germans, Jews - soldiers and civilians. There was no way not to have lice, unless you underwent delousing. We were made to enter a long train. Whether that train took us to a building, or if it ended in a building, I don't remember any more. Somehow the rumor sprang up that we were going to be gassed. I have no idea who started it. As a seven-year old, I do remember how terrified I was.

We were all stripped naked, had our hair shorn, and then, while we were all sitting, old and young, in long rows of benches, water and soap, probably mixed with insecticide, rained down on us from shower heads

above. I don't remember the relief, only the fear. Similarly, the rumor sprang up on that train that the Germans were looking for "yellow blood", presumably Jewish, by clipping our ear lobe. I was just as terrified of that one.

Ingrid Rimland

So these Soviet reports with their now-detailed descriptions of the shower-gas-cremation procedure of extermination, coming after three years of other terrifying reports of exterminations of Jews and others by the Germans and also in the context of fears in Europe about the use of gas as a weapon used against civilians and of cremation as a new and unfamiliar method of the disposing of bodies, could possibly have been instrumental in laying the foundations of the Holocaust gas-chamber narrative as we know it. Certainly from the time of those reports, the mere presence of showers, disinfestation gas chambers and crematoria had become in itself evidence of mass homicidal gassing.

So when the western armies came across the German concentration camps at Belsen, Dachau and Buchenwald sites at which it is now known that there

were no mass extermination facilities, and saw the now familiar images of skeletal, diseased inmates and piles of discoloured corpses and discovered sealed rooms, showers and crematoria which we now know had been used only for disinfection and disinfestation, and encountered inmates who were prepared to tell them tales of mass exterminations, they were both able and willing to interpret it all in terms of what they had heard, rather than what, in this instance at least, was the truth.

Whatever conditions might have been in the German camps throughout the war, by 1945 and the final defeat of Germany the system, and particularly the camp system, had collapsed and conditions were catastrophic and it was the results of this collapse which the western armies came across. The Americans and the British saw these things, and, most critically, filmed and photographed them, as clear evidence of a planned genocide, rather than what they were: the result, particularly in the form of typhus epidemics, of a breakdown of Germany generally and the camp system in particular, under the onslaught of the allied saturation bombing.

Although it cannot entirely be ruled out that some of these authorities knew that they were propagating a myth, it seems most likely that the Jewish authorities who first spread reports of exterminations were reacting only from a real concern for their fellow-Jews, known to be under ferocious assault by the Germans who, at the time of those first reports, were ratcheting up their assault on the Jews by beginning brutal deportations to the East. But what of the other authorities involved – the Americans, the British and the Soviets? These authorities surely would have been happy to accuse the Germans of absolutely anything and possibly not averse to a little falsification of the evidence if needed. After all, these same authorities had been perfectly prepared to continue to accuse the Germans of the massacre of over 4000 Poles at Katyn - a deed they knew full well had been perpetrated by the Soviet NKVD. In fact, the only cases where there is any evidence of contrived fabrication occur at the liberation of the camp at Majdanek by the Red army, at which time the Soviet authorities closed the site for a month and then presented to the world some highly questionable evidence of mass extermination of Jews. A similar conscious fabrication may also have taken place at Auschwitz. In any event, intentional or not, all was now ready for the story to take off.

Any story, true or false, is easily spread if there are fabricators, peddlers and believers and this is all the more so if all three are combined. The Holocaust had plenty of all three. Moving down the chain of command we find plenty of examples at the Nuremberg trials where the alleged crimes of the vanquished were formalised by the victors. The Nuremberg investigators, as they worked their way through the mountains of alleged eyewitness testimonies believed that there were gas chambers as they strove to establish the truth. The army interrogators, as they punched and pummeled their way through the hapless defendants believed that there were gas chambers and that they were merely trying to get at the truth. The lawyers, as they presented highly questionable documents as hard evidence believed that there were gas chambers and that they were only trying to get at the truth. And the survivors of the deportations, raw and traumatized, full of unimaginable feelings including hatred and a thirst for revenge, were surely perfectly capable of believing that there were gas

chambers and that they were only telling the truth. After all, was not all Europe, including the camps, rife with reports of gas chambers and anyway, had not so-and-so seen them? And as for the defendants, many unsure of the truth themselves and possibly themselves totally bewildered by the extermination claims, they may have seen it in their best interests to go along with what the court had already decided. Some may even have found some comfort in their moment of world-class notoriety as they mounted the gallows and anyway, stopping the pain was motivation enough - the solitary confinement and sleep deprivation, the floggings, the threats to family and loved ones and the constant humiliations, perhaps it was just easier to confess.

Nor do we need much to persuade us that the Jewish leadership might have been ready and willing to propagate and believe such a tale. Jews suffered terribly under National Socialism - nobody denies that, neither revisionist or non-revisionist. They had been persecuted, expelled and assaulted. They had been forcibly deported and incarcerated in brutal labor camps where thousands upon thousands had died from exhaustion, malnutrition and maltreatment. In the East many Jews had been shot. Jews had little reason to love the Germans.

Nor would it be the first time that Jews have accepted and propagated stories, true, false or a mixture of both, of their suffering. The Holocaust is only the latest, albeit the worst of a series of tragic calamities to have befallen the Jewish people and Hitler sits well with Pharaoh, Amalek, Haman, Tomas de Torquemada and Bogdan Chmielnitski - all enduring hate-figures in the Jewish martyrology. Nor would this be the first time that Jewish chroniclers (or any other chroniclers for that matter) have used some poetic license in describing their suffering. The Talmud tells that at the time of the destruction of the second temple – held in Jewish history to be the one historical precedent for the Holocaust - the Romans slew ‘four billions,’ the blood of the Jewish victims was so great that it became a ‘tidal wave carrying boulders out to sea’, and staining the water for four miles out. The bodies of the Jews were used as ‘fence posts’ and Jewish children were “wrapped up in their Torah scrolls - and burned alive all 65 million of them.” In a context like this, the utterances of Elie Wiesel, become a little more understandable.

Not far from us blazed flames from a pit, gigantic flames. They were burning something. A lorry drove up to the pit and dumped its load into the pit. They were small children. Babies! Yes, I had seen it, with my own eyes... Children in the flames (is it any wonder, that sleep shuns my eyes since that time?). We went there, too. Somewhat further along, was another, bigger pit, for adults. 'Father", I said, ' if that is so, I wish to wait no longer. I shall throw myself against the electrified barbed wire fence. That is better than lying around in the flames for hours." (19)

But for a story of this magnitude to be spread, many more believers were needed, than a few over-mighty politicians and soldiers and thousands of traumatized and broken survivors, and, save for a few insightful cynics at the very top of the British, American, Soviet and Jewish leaderships, believe it they did. True, there was little hard evidence, but what there was could so easily be made to fit. After all, everyone knew that the Germans had engaged in purposeful mass extermination of Jews therefore “special treatment” and

“deportation to the East” must be euphemisms for extermination, and any sealed chamber attached to a crematorium especially if used for disinfestations by gas, must have been a homicidal gas chamber.

Once momentum is achieved all that is needed is an extended game of Chinese whispers to result in a Holocaust narrative, conceived in the real and terrible wartime suffering of Jews, portrayed as imagined in newsreels and photo-reportage, framed and formalized at Nuremberg and subsequent trials and then, most critically of all, later turned into religious dogma. Set all this in the context of a western world obsessed by Jews and its own ambivalence about Jews and Jewish suffering, a Jewish population traumatized by its very real and recent suffering, an immensely influential Jewish culture which places suffering at the core of its self-identity and a Zionist leadership desperate to win world sympathy for a Jewish state in Palestine, and the idea of such a story, even if false, gaining near universal acceptance, really isn't that hard to believe.

After all, people once believed the earth was flat and sat on the back of four elephants riding on a turtle. They believed the earth was the centre of the universe and persecuted skeptics with the same fervor and with about as much justification as they do today's Holocaust revisionists. People today believe that JFK was assassinated by a lone gunman with a magic bullet. They believe in astrology and fortune telling, in bodily auras and out-of-body experiences. They believe that the Children of Israel were guided in the desert by a pillar of smoke by day and of fire by night, that Jesus was born of a virgin, died and was resurrected, and that the Prophet Mohamed ascended to heaven after seeing Mecca and Jerusalem. Why, they even believe that Palestine was a land without a people for a people without a land! So what is so hard to believe about the planned and premeditated slaughter of six million Jews by modern industrial methods, loaded in their millions onto trains and taken to industrialized killing centers where they are done to death thousands at a time in huge slaughter halls, their bodies burned to ashes and their bones ground into dust? People believe in heaven and they believe in hell so why not the hell of the Holocaust?

The War for the Spirit

A friend and colleague in solidarity with the Palestinians wrote:-

(Your writing) ultimately serves the same forces of racism that allow Israeli soldiers to kill Palestinians in cold blood. The Nazis not only articulated – they took daily, direct action to implement -- their conception of a racial hierarchy. They killed people they believed threatened Aryan racial purity and superiority -- the physically and mentally handicapped; gypsies; homosexuals; Slavs; Poles; Jews. Tinkering around trying to establish whether or not millions were gassed or killed by other means seems to me to be simply running away from the central political point: that racist ideologies are fundamentally murderous, and when people who espouse them get into power, they become literally murderous. What else matters? Do you really think that 'proving' that a few hundred thousand Jews/Slavs/Poles here and a few hundred thousand there were shot rather than gassed, will make any difference at all to how the state of Israel is perceived, or how

Israelis perceive themselves, to Europe's sense of culpability (displaced onto the Palestinians, of course), or whether or not Europe and the US decide to implement sanctions against Israel, or withdraw financial support to Israel.

These are difficult questions. Does writing about Holocaust revisionism give it a credibility it does not deserve? Does revisionism give to National Socialist ideology a credibility it does not deserve? Is Holocaust revisionism inextricably linked to fascism, racism and anti-Semitism and if so, should we then not investigate it? Is National Socialism worse than many other ideologies such as Stalinist Marxism which we do deem suitable for objective investigation? Does confirming the truth or otherwise of the Holocaust have any bearing on the struggle of the Palestinians against Israeli oppression?

For what they're worth my views are: Writing without prejudice about Holocaust revisionism must inevitably give it some credibility but in my view, for reasons now obvious, this is deserved. Holocaust revisionism is not inextricably linked to fascism, racism and anti-Semitism, though I can see how it might seem that way. Revisionist scholarship inevitably gives increased credibility to National Socialism, in that it allows the possibility that the National Socialist regime was not quite as unspeakable as it has been painted. Whether this is deserved or not depends on the result of the scholarship. As for whether National Socialism is worse than the many other ideologies that are considered worthy of unbiased study, the answer is that I don't know.

But we are entitled to search for the truth. The real crime committed by the National Socialists – the exclusion, disempowerment, deportation, enslavement, death by omission and by commission and expulsion of a people simply because they were that people – was a terrible one. One does not need gas-chambers to make the targeting of Jews just because they are Jews, extraordinary and unacceptable. Nonetheless, if this targeting did not extend to extermination, if there were no gas-chambers and if six million Jews did not die, then we should know it and, if necessary address the implications. If there is some reason why we should not investigate this matter then the onus is on those who would deny us that right, to say why. Those who would deny us that right have tried to say why, but in my view they have failed miserably.

But what does it matter how many Jews were murdered and in what way and with what intention? A murder is a murder and one murder is one murder too many. What difference will it make whether the Holocaust is proven or not? Will it have any affect whatsoever on the status and attitudes of Israel or on its behavior towards the Palestinians – issues on which we pressingly need to focus?

But the Holocaust is not just murder. Nor is it just mass murder. Nor is it even just genocide. There have been plenty of murders, mass murders and even genocides but none have been memorialized like the Holocaust. The Holocaust is held to be the worst crime in human history, and this is not because more people were killed or because they were killed more brutally or more senselessly. Three million Polish Jews are held to have died in the Holocaust. Three million Polish non-Jews also died in the same period of history yet the

Jews, as evidenced by the memorialisation accorded them, are seen as more important. Fifty million people died in the Second World War, including twenty million Russians, ten million Germans and Austrians and six million Jews. Yet only the Jews warrant a "Holocaust".

Is this because it was only Jews who were targeted for obliteration simply because they were Jews, and because it was only Jews who were exterminated in such a cool, premeditated and modern fashion by such an advanced, liberal and enlightened nation in the heart of Christian Europe? If the revisionists should prove their case that Jews were not targeted for extermination, that there were no gas-chambers and there was no six million, would there then be no Holocaust? Would Jews become just more tragic victims of a tragic period of history, on a par with the millions of other victims, including the thousands upon of thousands of German civilians slaughtered in the terror bombing of German cities by the western allies?

The revisionist community has probably said just about all it can say and proved all it can prove and have probably made the case sufficiently to at least cast doubt on the veracity of the Holocaust narrative. Future historians may well reject the Holocaust as history but, the Holocaust may yet go on, no longer as history but as ideology and even theology. Even though the evidence may lead us to accept that there never was intent to eliminate every single Jew from Europe, or any gas-chambers at Auschwitz or anything near six-million victims, this may not make one iota of difference any more than archeological evidence might prove that there was no Exodus from Egypt and medical science might throw doubt on the virgin birth.

Because there is another possibility - that the suffering of the Jews is held to be the worst crime in human history not because of the nature of the crime but because of the nature of the victims. Maybe Abe Foxman had it just about right when he wrote:-

(The Holocaust is)... "not simply one example of genocide, but a near successful attempt on the life of God's chosen children and, thus, on God himself" (20)

Because it may be that the Holocaust is not just special, it may be that the Holocaust is sacred. It may be that speaking of the Holocaust alongside other atrocities is like speaking of the Passion as being the crucifixion of one troublemaker and two thieves. It may be that the Holocaust is a narrative of suffering greater than just of one person on a cross.

If Auschwitz is something other than a horror of history, if it goes beyond the 'banality of evil', then Christianity totters on its foundations. Christ is the Son of God, who went to the end of the humanly endurable, where he endured the cruelest suffering... If Auschwitz is true, then there is a human suffering which simply cannot be compared with that of Christ... In this case, Christ is false, and salvation will not come from Him..... Auschwitz is the refutation of Christ.

Claude Lanzmann

So the Holocaust and Jewish suffering, no longer history now theology, have become a religious imperative for Jews, and more critically for all Jews, even for those Jews who regard themselves as secular, who haven't been near a synagogue since they were children, even for those Jews who don't much consider themselves Jews. Take ten Jews today, maybe three will worship God, perhaps nine will worship the state of Israel, nine-point-five may worship "The Jewish People" but nine-point nine-nine-nine recurring will worship Jewish suffering and the Holocaust. The Holocaust resolves the great dilemma of modern Jewish life - how to be a Jew when you no longer believe in the Jewish God. Secular Jews have found many gods to replace the one they reject – Marx and Trotsky, atheism, psychoanalysis, multiculturalism, human rights, money and success, and of course, Zionism – there's lots to choose from but only one that serves as a catch-all for everyone. And if you don't believe it, try this - go find the most educated, secular, progressive, enlightened, perceptive, sensitive Jew you know - deny the Holocaust and then stand back.

But the Holocaust is not confined to Jews. The Holocaust is not only the central martyrdom and therefore a religious focus in modern Jewish history but also, if not in world history, then certainly in American and European history. All over North America and Western Europe: Holocaust museums - cathedrals to the new religion with their own priests and priestesses; Abe Foxman, Deborah Lipstadt, Elie Wiesel, Simon Wiesenthal, abound – the biggest and best in Washington DC with all the other symbols of American nationhood and power. Holocaust Chairs at major universities, memorials, foundations, conferences and symposia, books, magazines, films, TV documentaries. The further we travel in time from the actual events the greater the sacralisation. But these are only the outward manifestations. The Holocaust, the ultimate in suffering is a paradigm for all Jewish suffering and for all intolerance, discrimination and hatred against Jews and this is in itself is a paradigm for all suffering and all intolerance, discrimination and hatred against all people. That's why a major Holocaust Museum in the U.S. is able to style itself as simply "The Museum of Tolerance" and that's why those who dare to challenge the Jewish claim to a particularity of suffering are nearly always accused of "intolerance" or of "promoting hate". The Holocaust may be the ultimate symbol of Jewish power, the most visible means by which the Jewish will in this world is enforced and displayed to a cowering non-Jewish world. It proclaims that Jews are suffering and Jews are innocent so Jews can do what they like and, by association the state of the Jews is also suffering, is also innocent and can also do what it likes.

The Emperor's new clothes

But the world doesn't jump because it feels sorry for Jews. As Israel Shamir says, compassion and guilt may get you a free bowl of soup but not a lot else, and certainly not the ninety billion deutschmarks paid in reparations by the Federal Republic of Germany to the infant state of Israel, the billions of dollars paid by successive US governments to maintain that state, nor the free pass given to Israel by just about everyone to do pretty much what it likes to the Palestinians. The power of the Holocaust is not the power to arouse pity and

compassion in the rest of the world. Anyone can see that Israel has no need of our pity or compassion and neither have Jews. Israel is not weak and Israel is not innocent and neither are Jews. What is harder to see is how anyone could ever have thought otherwise. Could it even be the same with the Holocaust? Is it not by now plain that there is very little evidence to support the Holocaust narrative, that the extermination narrative just doesn't add up, and that the issue of the gas-chambers could, as Ingrid Rimland reminded us, be settled easily by forensic investigation.

I suggest that forensic science ought to settle that disagreement about what Germans did or did not do in World War II in an open public forum

Why has this not been done? Everyone must know that if the establishment could disprove revisionist claims they would, so why haven't they? And anyone can visit any number of websites and find mountains of evidence against the veracity of the Holocaust, so why don't we?

The reason is the same reason why courtiers have, since time began, acted as if a stark naked emperor was beautifully attired - because they have to. The power of the Holocaust is the same power as enabled a few thousand Englishmen to rule hundreds of millions of Indians; a few hundred French aristocrats to rule a few million French peasants and a Czar and a few hundred Russian nobles to rule millions of Russian serfs. It is the same power that all over the world and throughout human history has enabled the prosperous few to rule over the impoverished many. It is the very essence of power in this world; the power of bluff. As the unclothed Emperor can force people to believe that he is clothed, so the Jewish and Holocaust establishments can make us believe that black is white in the Holocaust narrative and that Jews and Israel are suffering and innocent. And if they can't make us believe it, they can at least make us say that we believe it. To the wannabee dissenter, the power behind the Holocaust says this, "Watch it! If we can enforce this we can enforce anything!"

But why should we care if Jews choose to create for themselves such a mythology, even if that mythology has been accepted by so many others? The answer is we must care because if the Holocaust is false then there are those who suffer under that falsehood. First, if the special status of Jews is removed, then the equal status of every single non-Jew who died in that same time, till now demeaned and denigrated, is immediately restored to its rightful and equal place. And there are other victims too. The German people stand accused and found guilty of having committed the worst crime in human history. The Poles, Ukrainians, Latvians, Lithuanians etc. etc. stand accused and found guilty of aiding, abetting and even applauding the commission of the worst crime in human history. Add to them the Catholic Church and the Pope, the Americans and British who stand accused and found guilty of not having done enough to prevent the commission of the worst crime in human history. Add to them Christianity and Christians who throughout the ages stand accused and found guilty of laying the foundations for the commission of the worst crime in human history. And finally you may as well throw in pretty much the entire non-Jewish world accused and guilty of what amounts to simply not being one of the chosen victims of the worst crime in human history, and therefore condemned forever to hush their voices whenever the word 'Jew' is mentioned and to stand silently

as the myth of Jewish chosenness in the Holocaust is propagated.

The weapons of the poor...

There is one other victim: a present, pressing, ultimate victim. The Palestinian people -denied, denigrated and abused by a power which uses the Holocaust as a shield behind which any and every atrocity may take place - are surely the primary sufferers under the Holocaust.

On March 22 2001 Robert Faurisson wrote a paper for the proposed Beirut Conference on Revisionism and Zionism, which he knew would never be presented. He was right. The conference was cancelled due to external pressure largely by Jewish groups. In his paper for the first time, Faurisson addressed the Arab world. First he put it to them that an intelligent adversary may say that they fear something when they don't, and that they don't fear something when they do. Thus their enemies' firepower is deflected from those places where it may do real damage to those areas where it can do little damage.

Then he listed those things that Zionists do not fear: They do not fear military power – they've more than enough of their own and anyway, they know that anyone who has military power is far more likely to support them rather than oppose them. They do not fear anti-Semitism – on the contrary they feed on it to create sympathy for their cause. They do not really fear denouncers of Holocaust exploitation – the Norman Finkelsteins and the Peter Novicks – so long as they do not challenge the Holocaust itself. After all, the fiercest critic of something can (albeit often unwittingly) become its staunchest guardian – (If Norman Finkelstein says it, it must be true.) They do not even fear anti-Zionism since Zionism, like Jewish power itself has the wondrous ability to transform itself into anything it wants – left/right, religious/secular, one-state/two-state – all provide fertile ground for Zionism and Jewish particularity. Nor do they much fear attacks on the founding myths of Israel – that is, all of them except one. Finally, they do not even fear being called Judeo-Nazis. On the contrary, being labeled by one's adversaries as a Nazi merely affirms that 'Nazi' is the very worst thing imaginable.

He then told his audience what Zionists do fear: They fear the weapons of those who have nothing left to lose - the poor and the weak. They fear the stones and suicide bombers of the Palestinian Intifada – and they fear the weapons of that other intifada - the words of the revisionists.

Zionists truly fear the weapons of the poor (children's stones, their slingshots like that of David against the giant Goliath, the suicide attacks) and all that may endanger persons and business; they fear a demeaning of their brand image. But they are above all apprehensive of "the poor man's atomic bomb", that is, the disintegration, by historical revisionism, of the lie of the gas chambers, the genocide and the six million; they dread this weapon that kills no-one but that would not fail, if properly used to explode their big lie like a bag of hot air.....to lose the "Holocaust" is to lose the sword and the shield of Israel as well as a formidable instrument of political and financial blackmail; (21)

Despite their honourable intentions and dedicated efforts, the solidarity movement, which includes many Jews of conscience, has had little success in

stopping the Zionist juggernaut. The truth is that the only thing that has stalled it has been Palestinian steadfastness and Palestinian stones. Although they will never say so, Palestinians must know that they are not just facing the might of the Israeli state but also the power of organized world Jewry and its primary arm, the Holocaust. Perhaps Palestinians should consider lobbing a few stones in that direction. Perhaps we all should.

Paul Eisen
December 2004

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On March 2nd 2005 Ernst Zundel was deported to Germany where he faces a five year prison sentence for Holocaust denial.

- (1) http://www.nimn.org/Perspectives/american_jews/000308.php?section=American
- (2) Complaint under the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights Against Canada - January 4, 2005
- (3) "Jewish Power" by Paul Eisen
- (4) <http://www.ihr.org/main/journal.shtml>
- (5) The Fate of Jews in German Hands"
- (6) http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v12/v12pl67_Webera.html
- (7) Robert Faurisson, Press Conference, Stockholm, March 1992
- (8) Robert Faurisson
- (9) Paul Rassinier, Le Drame des Juifs europeans, Les Sept Couleurs, 1964, reprinted by La Vieille Taupe, Paris, p. 79.
- (10) The ADL website
- (11) The Niskor website
- (12) Klara Obermueller Weltwoche series, "Auschwitz und die 'Auschwitz-Luege'", 9, 16, and 23 December 1993, 3 articles.
- (13) Deniers, Relativists and Pseudo-Scholarship – Deborah Lipstadt. Published in Dimensions, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1991.
- (14) *ibid.*
- (15) *ibid.*
- (16) Extract from the Denial of Holocaust (Prohibition) Law 5746/1986 passed by the Israeli Knesset July 8th 1986 quoted in Hayward P 25 <http://www.resistance.com/Hayward/hay1.html>
- (17) <http://www.freewebs.com/joelhayward/thesisaddendum.htm>
- (18) <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Rhodes/5338/psa/cole.html>
- (19) Elie Wiesel, Night, 1960, in The Night Trilogy, 1985, pp. 40-43)
- (20) Abraham Foxman quoted in Peter Novick "The Holocaust in American Life" by Peter Novick, published by Houghton Mifflin Co. 1999. Pp.195; 199.
- (21) Paper written by Robert Faurisson for Beirut Conference on Revisionism and Zionism – March 2001

<http://democratsinairplanes.blogspot.com/2005/06/paul-eisen-on-holocaust-revisionism.html>

Autres articles de la plume de Paul Eisen, qui réside en Grande-Bretagne:
<http://student.cs.ucc.ie/cs1064/jabowen/IPSC/php/customSearch.php?m1=1&m3=1566&sMask=yynnyn&lv=2&d0=1&d1=n&w5=Paul+Eisen&c4=e&o1=n>

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<http://vho.org/aaargh>

<http://aaargh.com.mx>

<http://litek.ws/aaargh>

Le site <daaargh.narod.ru> a été touché-coulé par les malfaisants.

Allez chercher des anonymiseurs:

http://www.freeproxy.ru/en/free_proxy/cgi-proxy.htm

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TAPEZ

<HTTP://ANON.FREE.ANONYMIZER.COM/HTTP://WWW.AAARGH.COM.MX>

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OU: <HTTP://AAARGH.COM.MX.NYUD.NET:8090>

OU: <HTTP://VHO.ORG.NYUD.NET:8090/AAARGH>

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