

CLAL

The National Jewish
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PERSPECTIVES

ON THE HOLOCAUST

- CONFRONTING THE HOLOCAUST & ISRAEL
- THE NEED TO REMEMBER
- THE FIFTH CHILD
- EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

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THE HOLOCAUST

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*Transcripts of original presentations

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CONFRONTING THE HOLOCAUST AND ISRAEL

I

An encounter with Israel inevitably brings with it an encounter with the Holocaust. This is partly because Israel is a land of survivors, and partly because one cannot begin to comprehend the creativity and the reality of Israel without first recognizing its subterranean relationship with and its profound roots in the Holocaust.

Yet there is another reason why one must encounter the Holocaust. To be a Jew, classically, since the very beginning, has been to live by the great events of Jewish history. To be a Jew has meant a commitment not just to understand such events, but to live them in one's personal life. These events are not just for ourselves but for the world. Thus from the Exodus, the Jewish people learned that the world was meant to be free. From the Exodus we learned to free the slave, to be concerned for the weak, the poor, the outsider—because we were outsiders in the Land of Egypt.

In this generation, we have lived through two events comparable to the magnitude of the Exodus and the destruction of the Temple—those events which set Jewish life and gave the content to Jewish faith for thousands of years. The modern events are overwhelming, deeply mutually contradictory and yet deeply related. They are the Holocaust and the rebirth of the State of Israel. To be a Jew one must understand and live by both. To be a Jew is to live through these events, just as to be a Jew is to live through the Exodus of Egypt. A thousand years from now it will be clearer that these events not only shaped our personal lives but decided the content of the Jewish way and faith for the following millenia.

To encounter this event, we would first have to relive it together. We would have to go through 1933 to 1939, when the Jews of Germany, very much like the Jews of America—a successful, highly westernized, integrated community participating fully in national political life, were first legally isolated, then removed from national life, then gradually stripped of their property and of their legal right to function, with occasional violence and terror along the way.

And those were the good days. From 1939—the outbreak of World War II—to 1941, the second stage started. The stage of ghettoization and the crowding. In Warsaw half a million Jews lived in an area of approximately two square miles—thirty-seven percent of Warsaw's population in an area covering four percent of its land mass. It is estimated that there was an average of fifteen people to a room in the Warsaw ghetto. Ghetto means a

community cut off and, in this case, with no mail, no telephone. It means eight hundred calories a day as the official ration, when it takes approximately three thousand calories in that climate to live a normal working life. It means that by 1942 the crowding and the cold (there being no coal for the winters) resulted in Jews dying at the rate of one and a half percent a month. The birth rate had dropped so sharply that deaths out-numbered births by forty to one. At that rate, all the Jews would die in six to eight years—but that was too long for the Nazis.

On June 22, 1941, with the invasion of Russia, came the next stage of the final solution. The Einsatzgruppen were unleashed. These were specially trained groups, provided with special transport by the army so they arrived just behind the advance columns of the Wehrmacht before people could flee. They posted notices, rounded up the Jews, took them nearby and shot them. Read the record of these groups—day to day from 1941 to early 1942. Einsatz Commando A and Strike Commando 3 reported its daily activities as follows:

Executions and shootings

8/23/41	Panevezys	1,312 Jewish men 4,602 Jewish women <u>1,609</u> Jewish children 7,523
8/25/41	Obelisi	112 Jewish men 627 Jewish women <u>42</u> Jewish children t, 160
8/26/41	Zarasai	767 Jewish men t, 113 Jewish women t Lithuanian Communist 687 Jewish children <u> </u> t Russian Communist 2,569
8/26/41	Kaisiadorys	1,911 Jews (men, women and children)
8/27/41	Prienu	1,078 Jews (men, women and children)

One can get these figures for every day of that period. There are no comments, no observations. There are simply lists.

Afterwards, the Russian government took testimony which flesh out the reality behind the numbers. For example, in Bobruisk, the Jews were lined up at the lip of a ditch and the guns were set up to shoot high enough to kill the adults. As a result, many children were not killed because the bullets went over their heads; all were swept into the ditch which a bulldozer covered. The neighbors reported afterwards that for two days the ground settled and turned from the cries and writhing of those still alive and superficially buried under the ground.

In time, the Einsatzgruppen were deemed too slow, too expensive, too problematical. Then came the transports and the gas chambers. When we speak of transports, we speak of people jammed into cattle cars so tightly they could not sit down for the three days and two nights from Westerbork to Auschwitz—that is from Holland to Auschwitz. The lucky ones were the Jews who went to Treblinka because it is only six hours from Warsaw to Treblinka. Think of traveling three days and two nights and not being able to stand or sit, freezing where you are, with children thrown over the heads of adults in many cases; people having to defecate on the spot because they could not move. There are even records of children who were trampled in the muck on the floor because their parents could not move to save them.

Then came that fundamental experience of every Jew in our life time—the gas chamber itself. According to the eye witness report of a guard, “the gas rises gradually to the ceiling, forcing the victims to claw and trample upon one another in their struggle to reach upward.... Those on the top are the last to succumb.... Corpses are piled one on top of another in an enormous heap. At the bottom of the pile are babies and children, women and old people”.

One of the questions one has to ask oneself constantly in Jewish life is: “What is it worth to ensure that this will not happen again?”

II

When we speak of confronting the Holocaust, the confrontation must be at the deepest level of our own being and understanding. For example, we have to admit to ourselves to what extent it has shattered many of our hopes and dreams as well as illusions. It has certainly shattered the dominant drive that many Jews had in the past 200 years (and is still perhaps the dominant drive of American Jewry). I speak of that drive to escape into a world of universalism, an insistence that since human rights are indivisible, people are not really Jews, or non-

Jews, or what have you; we are really all citizens of one world. It followed that, in some sense, the lines between humans were false or artificial. We then had to apologize for the distinctiveness of our own concern and interest.

We now know that although the Jews were ready and are still ready to join a world in which we are all equal, it turns out that there are some more equal than others. When it came to being eligible for the cattle cars to Treblinka, Jews were more eligible—and there were very few volunteers. It turns out that the recognition of our own distinctiveness and responsibility—our ability to stand alone—is not merely an act of graciousness or even an act of religious commitment; it becomes the reality of our fate, and the dignity of a human being who understands his own integrity.

In fact, the ideology that seeks to sweep the Jews into universal concerns, and insists that we justify what we are—that ideology of liberalism, which I share and believe in and was raised on, can easily become the ideology of genocide and of justification of genocide.

Let me give a very specific example. When American Jews heard the reports of what was happening in Europe, they pleaded repeatedly with the United States government to speak out, to warn that those who were doing this would be held responsible. Their requests to bomb the concentration camps were turned down on the grounds that this was a war for democracy, for mankind. Therefore, one could not ask for special privileges for the Jews. One could not make a special effort; when the war was won for democracy, then the Jews would also be saved. But by the time the war was won for democracy, the Jews were gone.

In November of 1943, under the pressure of Jewish concern, the Allies did issue a statement on war crimes. They did warn the Nazis that they would be held responsible for the atrocities against civilians which they were carrying out. Only there was one catch: the Allies listed atrocities against Poles, against French, against Dutch, etc. The critical question then became: shall we include Jews on that list? The argument and the conclusion was: no. Jews are not Jews; Jews are Hungarians, Poles, Germans, French, etc.

We have from the German side the understanding of that announcement: the Nazi leadership were frightened and concerned about it. However their reaction to the announcement was as obvious as it was simple: They would be held responsible for killing the Poles, the French, the Dutch, but not the Jews. How could an announcement of this sort mention all the nations but not Jews? Here was a quiet signal that what was happening to the Jews was

not so terribly important. That is the signal they got repeatedly throughout the years, from the beginning of the persecution to the genocide at the very end. Although the Allied Airforce said it could not bomb the tracks to Auschwitz because of all kinds of military difficulties—there was in fact a synthetic rubber factory near Auschwitz which was bombed repeatedly in 1944. But while 12,000 Jews a day were being stuffed into the gas chambers, the same airforce could not fly the few extra miles to bomb the gas chambers. That lesson was not lost on the Nazis either. I say this not simply to complain or be bitter—that is useless—but to understand where we stand today. We see today how the shards and dregs of that “universalist” ideology, the putative opinion of mankind, are used at the United Nations to cover for creating new possibilities of genocide. And whenever we stand with Israel alone, to that extent, it is our act of participation in that Holocaust reality. For me, it is an act of accepting my fate and welcoming the challenge of my fate, rather than a favor that I do for the Land of Israel.

I would go beyond that. The Holocaust is the classic expression of that reality of Jewish existence, namely, that we are in fact singled out. In the ancient tradition we called it being “chosen,” although Jews today prefer to avoid that term. To be singled out means, quite simply, that my fate as a Jew is my fate. Therefore, I cannot hide behind the fact that I am an American, or an Israeli, or a German, or a Russian. The recognition that this is my fate becomes the beginning of liberation. It becomes the beginning of responding authentically with integrity. It moves on to give dignity and content to that life, to express it in the sense of responsibility and understanding of what is happening. To be singled out is to become a member of Israel of the flesh. It means to understand suddenly that I, personally, am on the line and not just doing this voluntarily.

I will tell you who taught me this lesson. It was a Christian theologian, a very great man named Roy Eckardt, a person deeply shattered by the Holocaust. He said that he was taught by Christian theologians that Christians are superior to Jews for one reason: the Jews are Israel of the flesh. Jews were born of the seed of Abraham, inherited the Bible and its promises and the Covenant—but Jews inherited it by birth. You don’t have to be committed or observant to be a Jew. But to be a Christian you have to believe. Christians have taken over the Jewish belief by faith—they are Israel of the spirit. It is not a question of birth; it is a question of commitment. Is not commitment superior to the accident of birth?

Then, Eckardt said, Hitler came along and taught him a profound lesson.

When a totalitarian government was set up that sought to totally dominate human life, that sought to destroy the dignity of humans, then it felt that the existence of the people of Israel, the people of God, if you will, was a denial of its own claim to absolute power. It had to destroy that people. It occurred to Eckardt that Israel of the spirit was as much an enemy of the Nazis as Israel of the flesh, or even more so. If one was truly a believing Christian, if one truly practiced Christianity, one would also have to be a sworn enemy of the Reich and of Hitler and of Nazism. In fact, there were good Christians who were sent to Auschwitz and elsewhere because of their beliefs and practices. But, said Eckardt, it dawned upon him that there is another difference between Israel of the flesh and Israel of the spirit: Israel of the flesh *had* to stand up. Its very existence was a challenge to the Reich. It had to identify as Israel whether it wanted to or not. A person could deny that he was a Jew, but his being still stood for something that was too threatening to totalitarianism, and he had to be destroyed.

(There were Jews who violently denied that they were Jews; there was a church in the Warsaw ghetto until the very end. The congregation of the church consisted of Jews who had apparently converted, who insisted to the very end that they were not Jews; they were good Catholics. They were still good Catholics when they were jammed into the cattle cars going to Treblinka. When the Lodz ghetto was transported, several war veterans went to their fate in their uniforms wearing their iron crosses. During the years they were in the Lodz ghetto many would not mix with those East European Jews. They insisted that they were good Germans and that they were mistakenly lumped together with these no good Eastern European Jews. Some day they hoped the Nazis would realize the truth, that they were good Germans and not cursed Jews.)

Eckardt learned that the Jew who is supposedly not committed, who does not understand what he stands for, still speaks and testifies with his very life, whether he wills it or not. The people of Israel of the spirit, however, had a choice. They could make believe that they were good Germans, or good Nazis and they could live happily ever after. They could even participate in the acts of Nazis.

Today, all Jews confront that reality of Israel of the flesh—it means that I suddenly understand that I stand for something, and that I am kidding myself if I think that I can hide behind some other characterization. This is the beginning of understanding how we have responded in 1967 and 1973 to each other, as Israelis and American Jews.

In 1967, Israelis suddenly confronted the reality of Holocaust, a reality which they had sought to put aside, saying it could only happen to other *galut* (diaspora) Jews. They suddenly realized that their fate was not divisible from other Jews, and vice versa. American Jews have begun to grasp the fact that we Jews are, after all, Israel of the flesh and not Israel of the spirit. If the Israelis go, then we go—and there will be no clever divisions. We mean that literally since we would be fools to think that the second Holocaust would not be easier to consummate than the first; and after that, a third would be a lot easier than the second.

The reality of Israel of the flesh has profound implications. It means I do not give or work as a volunteer because I am nice. In 1967 in my community, somebody gave five times what he had given before 1967. In 1973 he gave three times what he gave in 1967. To do that he had to take out a mortgage on his home. When I asked him why he did that he replied that before this he gave because he felt strongly about it, he felt emotionally involved. This time he felt the same as if someone kidnapped his child and asked for ransom. In such a case one would take out a mortgage on one's home. He wasn't giving to *them* anymore—he wasn't even giving as a favor or as a good deed. He felt somehow that his life was at stake—and he would borrow to save his own life. That is Israel of the flesh.

Elie Wiesel once pointed out that in 1944 when the Holocaust was going on, when they were killing Jews in incredible ways, American Jews went on with bar mitzvahs, annual dinners, and parties. It was probably because we were good Jews. The parties were to raise funds, I presume, for relief. The bar mitzvahs were part of the expression of Jewish loyalty. But they could go on because we could think we were Israel of the spirit, and not Israel of the flesh. We were helping *them*; it was not happening to us.

After the Yom Kippur war my wife and I talked about it a lot. We felt somehow that one had to be physically present in Israel to express that feeling of Israel of the flesh. Here the terrorists taught us something. When they started to attack the planes, or when they started to shoot or try to attack Jews abroad, it seemed to us that they were trying to give the same message. It was the same feeling that Russian Jews communicated when in the time of war they wanted to come to Israel even more than ever. They wanted to go from a country where they were persecuted but safe, to a country where their very life was at stake. Indeed, Israel's own life is at stake in part because of the Russian government's resentment of Russian Jews' behavior.

Here is the extraordinary paradox of the reality of the

Holocaust. Each one of our lives is so totally bound up in the other that in all cases, *my* life is at stake. This is what is involved in coming to Israel as opposed to the fact that one can stay in America and give too. It is somehow an ineffable sense that we have to be there personally. I begin to understand the biblical commandment that the Jew is supposed to go personally to the Temple and appear before God three times a year. Coming to Israel is the contemporary expression of a biblical *mitzvah*. The *mitzvah* is to be present personally, to share to that extent the experience, the risk, and the suffering, and to communicate that sense of personal participation. That is Israel of the flesh. It will take a serious confrontation with this *mitzvah* to carry us through the next period.

Our own country is a key to life and death for Israel. In a way, this situation is morally wrong. In the Holocaust we were taught the hard way that nobody should have to depend for their existence on the goodwill of even the best people in the world. Even good people are only human. They may be too far away to understand the urgency or too preoccupied with their own concerns.

But if we bind up our lives with those of our brothers and sisters, if we communicate fully by our own commitment, if our urgency and teaching is in our very flesh, then the entire American people will share the vision and significance of Israel's life. In the words of Mordecai in the Bible: "Who knows, perhaps it was precisely for this very moment that you came to this realm?" (Esther 4: 14).

III

There is one other dimension of this confrontation with the Holocaust which must be understood in order to grasp Israel itself. The Holocaust is the most radical challenge to Jewish values and Jewish belief and faith that ever occurred. In a sense, it is a total contradiction of everything that Judaism stands for. If there is one belief that, more than any other, characterizes Jewish life, Jewish religion, and Jewish practice, it is the belief in the dignity of man. We speak of the human being in the image of God, of the absolute value of human life. To save one life is like saving the whole world. Think of the radical challenge to that statement in the presence of the Holocaust.

Thirty years ago in 1944, in the final stages of the war, the Nazis were determined to finish off the Jews. Hungarian Jewry was the last major Jewry on the agenda. So in the summer of 1944, every day tens of thousands of Jews were shipped to Auschwitz where they were gassed and put to death immediately. The pressure to kill them was so powerful and so strong that German troop reinforcements were pushed to the side while the Jewish trains were let through. The Nazis were short of rolling stock, yet they took

it away from their own ammunition transport needs to hand it over to get rid of Jews. At that point, mass killing became such a problem that they began to have a problem of running short of gas itself.

The Nazis, in the summer of 1944, in order to make the gas stretch far enough, cut the gas supply used in each chamber load in half. Medically speaking, Zyklon-B operates by cutting off the breathing centers, causing dizziness, nausea and asphyxiation. The victims typically have a kind of panic of gasping and choking before they die. When there is a high concentration of gas, people die quickly; when the concentration is lowered, people die more slowly. To cut the gas in half is to triple the time it takes to die—from three to seven minutes, to fifteen to twenty minutes.

In the mad orgy of death of that summer—an orgy which the allied nations perceived but did nothing directly to stop—even that was not the final statement of the cheapness of human, that is, Jewish life.

Hear the testimony taken from the Nuremberg trial record of a Polish woman who was a guard in Auschwitz in the summer of 1944:

Witness: Women carrying children were (always) sent with them to the crematorium.

(If separated from their mothers some children would cry and get hysterical—so it was decided to keep the children and mothers together, even if it meant condemning able-bodied mothers to the gas chambers also. The killers could not chance a panic or rioting which would slow up the "production" line.)

The children were then torn from their parents, just outside the crematorium and sent to the gas chamber separately.

(At that point it was too late to slow up the process, but crowding more people into the gas chamber was the most urgent consideration. Frequently, children were thrown over the heads of the adults in order to pack in more people.)

When the extermination of the Jews in the gas chambers was at its height, orders were issued that children were to be thrown straight into the crematorium furnaces or into a pit near the crematorium, without being gassed first.

Smirnov (the Russian prosecutor): How am I to understand this, did they throw them into the fire alive or did they kill them first?

Witness: They threw them in alive. Their screams could be heard at the camp. It is difficult to say how many children were destroyed in this way.

Smirnov: Why did they do this?

Witness: It is very difficult to say. We don't know whether they wanted to economize on gas or if it was because there was not enough room in the gas chambers.

We have to understand that language, "to economize on gas". What does economy involve? The Germans were a very efficient and reliable people; they kept good records of their gas production. Degesch, a respectable firm that produced the gas, was owned by three major German chemical firms. It was a highly profitable business which paid 100 to 200% dividends every year in 1942, '43 and '44. The bills for Zyklon B in 1944 came out to 195 kilograms for 975 Marks, or 5 Marks per kilogram. Approximately 5.5 kilograms were used on every chamber load, for about 1500 people. That comes out to about 27.5 Marks per 1500 people. With the Mark, then at a quarter—allowing for inflation and such things—that comes out to \$6.75 per 1500 people or approximately 2/5 of a cent per person. In the summer of 1944 Jewish children were not worth 2/5 of a cent to put them out of their misery before one burned them.

What can one say religiously to such a reality? In what kind of language can one talk about God or faith after such an event? I submit there is nothing that can be said. But there is something that can be done. There is one fundamental religious act that Judaism speaks of after an event of such destruction—an act that one has the right to do ethically and religiously. The great religious act is the re-creating of life. It is the act of taking human beings whom we say are in the image of God and restoring that image; it is to take away the blankness of the concentration camp victim, to take away the degradation of that life of which we read and saw, and to restore it to absolute dignity. That is the one testimony to religion and to God one can make. I would submit that it is indeed the fundamental understanding the Jewish people had after the Holocaust. The great religious act was the act of re-creating life. It was expressed a thousand different times: the D.P. camps after the war had the second highest birth rate in the world.

To have a child after Auschwitz. I know a woman who was on the undertaking detail at Auschwitz for 2½ years. She collected bodies, many of which died of disease so the guards hesitated to come near them. But the undertaking detail had an advantage. They were the only group

which could circulate around the camp freely because people were dying all over.

When a woman became pregnant at Auschwitz she would be put to death immediately. If her companions could not abort her, they would try to hide her and cover for her. Imagine what that meant for nine months in a camp where there were constant roundups and selections and searches. Then, when a woman was ready to give birth, the undertaking brigade would put her in a wheelbarrow and cover her with dead bodies so no one should see her in order to take her out to the field where she would give birth. But, if she came back with the child, she would be put to death anyway. This woman, my friend, risked her life everyday to make one birth possible. After the woman she helped keep alive and saved all this time gave birth, it was my friend's task to take the baby and drown or strangle it.

After the war my friend had two Jewish children. She is a "typical" Jewish mother—she worries too much and she is nervous. Her daughter wants to be a doctor, yet she fears that her daughter will find no boys who will marry her. (I keep telling her that liberation has struck and Jews are different now!) Yet, in the life of this "middle class", overconcerned mother who has frequent migraine headaches, is the secret of a daily heroism, of a triumph of faith and life over death whose grandeur overwhelms me. The heroism, the courage in her creation of life after that event is the reality of Israel we have to understand together.

It is a half a million survivors who were taken in. I remember talking to youth aliyah people who told me that they had problems with mice for ten years after the war. They had children in the village who had arrived in the camps at the end of the war. These children never believed that they would have food tomorrow, so they would sneak food out of the dining room to hide in their barracks. They would tell them: you're going to have food tomorrow; it's not going to happen again. The children couldn't believe that. Maybe tomorrow what had happened before would happen again. Their family, well-to-do and well-fed, might suddenly disappear and they would be on to hunger and starvation. So then they forbade the children to take food out of the dining room. The kids—after all they survived in concentration camps—would find ways of smuggling out food from the dining room. They would bury it in places no one knew. Being well fed, the children would forget the food and thus there was a mice problem for years after. Multiply this example by 500,000 survivors who came and you begin to grasp Israel.

The response to the Holocaust is to have taken in 800,000 Jews from Arab countries. It is to take in 30,000 or 40,000 or 50,000 Russian Jews a year. We have to understand what that process means, after the Holocaust;

what it means to take an old person or a cripple and to be concerned for them. This is not just UJA, or just giving. This is the fundamental religious statement of our time and there is no other comparable religious statement—words are meaningless.

This is why I would say the whole notion of the secular Israeli is a false one. How many American Jews have complained about Israeli secularity? As long as they are in America, Jews expect all Israelis to be religious. (Israelis should be like Paul Newman as Ari ben Canaan, but they should be religious—Paul Newman with *tzitzis* hanging out in the back!) When they come to Israel they are unprepared to see someone riding in a car on Shabbat. To see through the eyes of the Holocaust is to understand the falsity of such a notion of religion—of who is religious. After the Holocaust, there is deeper sacredness to every divine commandment and a new challenge to embrace Jewish tradition but the category of "religious" is utterly inadequate.

In 1967 Jean Paul Sartre, the great atheist, supported Israel even though he was pro-Arab and a strong supporter of Algerian liberation—because after the Holocaust he understood that never again could there be another Holocaust. Pope Paul IV who is so religious he wears a yarmulka all the time, said nothing. What, then, do we mean when we speak of religion?

We have to understand the fundamental reality of Israeli life in which a so-called secular Israeli gives his life—stakes his life that the people of God will survive. Without such a people there can be no faith in God, no belief, no Torah. This is the fundamental religious act you and I are involved in. It is the act of personally being responsible for rehabilitating a life, creating it, and protecting a people's existence.

This is a fundamental theme in Israeli life which comes up a hundred times. When Israeli pilots are trained, they take them to Yad Vashem and say: If you fly well, this will not happen. When soldiers are trained how to treat the conquered population, they are reminded of the Holocaust: If you remember what it was like to have been on the receiving end, you will act differently when you have other people who are weak under you. That is the extraordinary dialectical confrontation with the Holocaust in Israel.

This is why the Israeli military cannot just be seen in military terms. There is a sense, after the Holocaust, the significance of a Phantom jet or a tank must be grasped beyond the military framework. (First of all, it is necessary to do this for fear that we come to 'worship' these armaments). Secondly, because we must understand that the acquisition of military power also is part of the expression of life. Eldridge Cleaver taught me this lesson.

Cleaver, before he became a "prophet" and before he turned against the Jews, once spoke about his experience of the Holocaust. When he grew up, he was taught—if you are a "good nigger", if you go along, everything will be alright. Then he came across the experience of the Holocaust. Something very obvious dawned upon him. Thanks to modern progress, if you go along, if you don't protect yourself, if you depend on the good will of others for your own existence, there is no limit to what will be done to you. In the good old days they would persecute you; they would punish you and let you go. Suddenly he realized that thanks to progress, they can put every last one to death. So he decided there was only one solution—black power. In that fundamental sense he's correct: this is why Jewish power is so critical. This is Israel's reality: the reality of the creation of life and power used responsibly to protect that life. In turn, the Israelis' ability to be humane conquerors and be restrained in the use of power surely grows out of the vivid memory of the Holocaust and the not-forgotten taste of being on the receiving end of unparalleled abuse of power.

IV

Finally, confrontation with the Holocaust means not just a new depth of understanding of Israel and of religious life in Israel, but the sense that I personally am living through it, together with my fellow Jews. I am convinced that a thousand years from now, Jews will re-enact the Holocaust; they will eat the rotten bread of Auschwitz, or the potato peelings of Bergen-Belsen and tell the story—as do we now eat the matzoh and the bitter herb of Passover, so that each one of us will know how to act accordingly. The fundamental act is that act of putting our own lives on the line, of giving as if our lives are on the line for that act of creation of life. Emil Fackenheim once said that the act of having a Jewish child after Auschwitz put the Jew above Abraham our Father, the great founder of the Jewish people, the great symbol of Jewish faith. In the Bible, the great peak of Abraham's life was when he prepared to take his only child and bind that child to the altar in faithfulness to his people, his covenant, his God.

I would submit that each one of us—by having a Jewish child, by coming to Israel, by participating—binds our lives. We bind not just our own children, but also our grandchildren, says Fackenheim, because the Nazis came for grandchildren too. The act of affirmation, with all the faults, limitations and real weaknesses of Israel is nothing less than a messianic act.

The ultimate Jewish statement is the messianic statement. We say this world will be redeemed; we say that human life will ultimately be worth everything. Anne Frank

wrote in her diary that if she survived the war, she understood that she would have to make something of her life. The rabbis told us that the messianic act is achieved when, in the face of total destruction, people choose to take on the grubbiness, the difficulties, the complexities of recreating life at all costs.

The rabbis tell us that the Messiah's ancestry starts in the city of Sodom.

When Sodom was wiped out, we are told in the Bible, Lot survived with his two daughters. These two women were convinced that the whole world had been wiped out again, a Holocaust had taken place. Yet, they were absolutely determined to have children. There was only one man left in the world and it was their father. So they got him drunk and they seduced him—drunken incest! Yet the rabbis say that here is the origin of the Messiah! From that intercourse came Moab, from Moab came Ruth, from Ruth came David and from David comes the Messiah.

What the rabbis are trying to tell us is that this life-affirming response to an overwhelming outburst of death and destruction is messianic, as is the Jewish people working to create the State of Israel in response to the Holocaust. In such a response, one takes on all the grubbiness of life, all the complexities of life, all the failures of Israel, all the frictions of people of many different backgrounds and varieties. If you take that kind of ambiguity on yourself and still say: I will create life above all, then it is a messianic act.

The rabbis said: if you want to create human life, if you have a dream that the world will someday be perfected, you have to have the capacity to love that grubbiness, to accept all the failures and all the fallacies, all the difficulties and the nitty-gritty, and love that too, and keep trying to perfect it. This commonality, this union of Jews that is determined to create life is the faith that is reborn, purged by the fires of Auschwitz, and determined never to forget them. A faith that is based on the total reality of that kingdom of night can never be broken by setbacks; it can never be destroyed by encounters with the realities of human beings with all their failures and complexities. Such a faith will yet bring redemption.

Someday the world will not isolate Israel, but will thank it. In a generation of unparalleled brutality and degradation, Israel testifies that humankind can overcome death itself by the love and giving which re-create life again and again.

* * *

THE NEED TO REMEMBER

On Memory

It is memory that makes us human. Humans act not only on programmed instincts, as animals do, but out of internalized memory which guides response.

To be a Jew is to have a memory—a Jewish memory.

Jews remember the Exodus: "We were slaves ... in the land of Egypt and the Lord, our God, took us out ... " (Passover Haggadah). Because we remembered, we shared the needs of the poor; we let our slaves go free. Because we remember the Exodus, we see widows and orphans differently.

We know we have the power to rule over these people; we are strong and they are weak; we are establishment and they are outsiders. But then a memory comes back—a memory of the powerlessness of Jews in Egypt — and we surrender that power and we treat them as equals. Out of the memory of the Exodus, Jews are commanded to treat people with love and compassion. We are told to do so in Exodus 22:20ff.; 23:9ff., in Leviticus 25 and in other passages.

Without memory, we act one way. With memory, we act another way.

Jews are not the only people with memory. If I remember the Alamo, I am a Texan. But if our memories are Jewish, then we are Jews. If I remember Amalek and I feel the pain of my people, weak and oppressed, attacked from behind, then I am a Jew. It is the distinctiveness of the memory that makes us what we are.

Today we have a paradox in Jewish life. It is now more than 30 years since the end of World War II. After 30 years, memories begin to fade. When memories fail, along come people like Arthur Butz who deny that the Holocaust ever took place.

Yet, precisely in this period when the survivors begin to die and the prospect of the last of the survivors looms before us ... we remember more.

The memories from the kingdom of night come flooding back: The memories of the Musselmen and the countless unburied dead. As Primo Levi wrote in his memoir of Auschwitz: "They [the Musselmen] flood my memory with their faceless presences. And if I could enclose all the evil of our time in one image, I would choose this image which is familiar to me. An emaciated person with head dropped

and shoulders curved on whose face and whose eyes no trace of a thought is to be seen."

A Decade of Memory Recovered

In 1963, the first time I had the chutzpah to teach a course on the Holocaust at Yeshiva University, I checked catalogues of other universities and found that only one in the country had a course on the Holocaust: Brandeis. Even at Yeshiva, a major center of Judaism, at the heart of Jewish scholarship and learning, there was resistance to the course on the grounds that the Holocaust was not an "academic course."

By 1975, when Dr. Zvi Gastwirt finished his survey on modern Jewish studies in American universities for the Institute of Contemporary Jewry, he found that the most frequently offered course was on the Holocaust. That statistic reflects the recovery of memory of this decade. The result is all the more striking because that search for memory was essentially student-initiated: people who were born after the event insisted on reclaiming its memory. Why?

The Lesson of Memory - I

Why has this decade recovered the memory of the Holocaust? First and foremost, because in this decade we discovered that the Holocaust was not mere history; indeed, it was not over.

Jews saw in that three week period waiting for the Six-Day War to break out that the Holocaust was a genuine alternative, for the world and for ourselves. As Ka-Tzetnik testified at the Eichmann trial: "I believe wholeheartedly that the star of ashes, Auschwitz, is there facing our planet and influencing, radiating towards our planet." The corrosion of hatred, the unleashed violence against the weak and the innocent of the Holocaust continues to pollute the moral atmosphere of this planet.

The Holocaust continues to exist as a model to be imitated. Idi Amin is no mere "gorilla"; Idi Amin is a good student. He admires Hitler because he feels that Hitler's model exists to be imitated, to be integrated into his practices and behavior. In that sense, we must understand that part of the struggle over Israel is that tremendous forces of evil and of destructiveness have been unleashed; like the fabled genie, they are hard to bottle up again.

The attempt to destroy Israel is a final gasp of the evil force trying to destroy this anti-Holocaust, this counter-testimony of life. Jews are struggling not just for our own

survival, but to prevent the total triumph of evil which, God forbid, if it occurs, will then multiply and replicate itself again and again. As Elie Wiesel once said: If there will be another Holocaust (and it is possible) this time it will take the whole world with it.

The other main reason for the growing need to know is because this event is a watershed; it changed everything. As Roy Eckardt has suggested, henceforth we will date time as (B.A.) Before Auschwitz and (A.A.) After Auschwitz.

The Holocaust has changed the human perception of the world we live in. An example: we live in the 20th century. Jews believed, more than almost anyone else, in the 20th century promises of moral progress and universal liberalism and universal rights. Countless Jews concluded: You do not have to be Jewish anymore, because human values have triumphed throughout the world.

In *Night*, Elie Wiesel tells how he arrived in Auschwitz. The group came off the staggering, stupefying train ride—then, in the darkness of Auschwitz surrounded by dogs and guards and whips, they saw up ahead the horrible scene of burning flames and the terrible acrid smoke—the smell of burning flesh.

He could not understand, he could not believe what was happening. A prisoner walked by, emaciated and ragged. Wiesel could hardly believe the kind of person he was seeing, but in desperation he turned to him and asked: What's going on here? The prisoner replied, pointing up ahead: They are going to gas you and burn you.

Elie was so horrified that he could not believe it. He turned to his father in anguish and exclaimed that it could not be. This was not the Middle Ages, this was the 20th century.

Wiesel was right. It was not the Middle Ages. It was the 20th century. In the bad old days of the Middle Ages, a Jew waiting on the line to be burned alive because he was a Jew could get off the line and say: "I'll become a Christian, let me live!" And they would have let him live. But in the 20th century, the age of progress and moral universalism and universal categories, there was no exception. One could not get off the line.

So the Holocaust has changed our fundamental perspective, for Jews and non-Jews; it has shown us the potential for evil in this culture.

If we are liberated, the experience should have distanced us from this culture, so that we can stop worshipping it. This was an age in which Mordecai Kaplan, a great Jewish thinker, could be so shaped by contem-

porary values that he took "the chosen people" term out of his prayer book—because it was undemocratic. It did not fit the standards of the 20th century. But we learned in the Holocaust that a Jew's fate was to be singled out—that all people are equal, but some are more equal than others when it comes to being shipped in cattle cars to Treblinka.

We came to realize that if universalism is falsely universalized to deny Jewish particularity, then it becomes its own opposite, i.e., totalitarianism. We learned, in the 20th century, that universalism, unless it is chastened, challenged and forced to admit its own weaknesses and its own deceptions, becomes a cover for genocide, not a deterrent.

When Alexander Donat asked himself why he and the other Jews of Warsaw did not revolt earlier, he judged that the basic factor was psychological: "We fell victim to our faith in mankind, our belief that humanity had set limits to the degradation and persecution of one's fellow man" (*The Holocaust Kingdom*, p. 103). For liberated Jews, nothing can ever be the same in our attitudes toward contemporary values, toward modernity, toward American culture, toward liberalism.

The Broken Heart

Nothing can ever be the same in our religious attitudes either. In the testimony given in Nuremberg by one of the Sonderkommando members, we are told what happened to the Hungarian Jewish children in the summer of 1944:

"... at that time the children were burned on big piles of wood ... children were crying helplessly and that is why the camp administration ordered that an orchestra be made by 100 inmates and should play. They played very loudly all the time. They played the "Blue Danube" or "Rosamunde." So even the people in the city of Auschwitz could not hear the screams. Without the orchestra, they would have heard the screams of horror, they were horrible screams. The people two kilometers from there could hear those screams ... The children were separated from their parents, they were put in section three. Maybe their number was several thousand. ... One day the gas chambers were out of order ... destroyed by a mutiny of a special command in August, 1944. The other three gas chambers were full of adults. And therefore the children were not gassed but just burned alive ...

"When one of the SS men sort of had pity on the children, he took the child and beat the head against the stone first before putting it on the pile of fire and wood. So the child lost consciousness.

"However, the regular way they did it was just throw the children on the pile."

As Wiesel said: "Never shall I forget the little faces of the children whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky."

The Talmud (Yoma 69b) tells us that after the destruction of the Temple, Jeremiah and Daniel refused to speak of God's might and power. They refused to recite the central words of the Amidah (standing, silent prayer) *ha-eyl ha-gibor v'hanora*, "The mighty and awesome God."

They said: If God's people are torn and destroyed, where is God's might? If God's sanctuary is trampled and people wiped out, where is God's awesomeness? The Talmud explains that these words could not be said again until they were fundamentally reinterpreted. I believe that religion can never be the same after this experience either.

The tradition itself is *more* sacred after this event—but it is shattered. Those who talk and pray as if nothing has happened, I believe, are mocking those children. Recall Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav's famous line: "There's nothing so whole as a heart which is broken." Paraphrasing Rabbi Nahman, I would say: There is no faith so whole as a faith which is shattered—shattered enough to reach out in love to other survivors and help me become one with them.

Of course, if tradition is shattered, then secularism is equally shattered. This is the dialectical change after the Holocaust. In the name of modern values and modern philosophies, we were told you cannot believe in a personal God. That claim itself is outdated.

Whenever I hear that Modernity rules out a particular Jewish practice, I react this way: I am not impressed by Modernity's claims. First of all, I long for the good old medieval days when they only killed 10,000 Jews at a time.

When people tell me "it is not modern," it reminds me of a book by Jerry Della Femina, the great advertising man. Della Femina is the man who broke through American consumer resistance to the Japanese and won acceptance for Japanese products in the American market. He relates that after World War II, the Japanese wanted to sell many consumer items to America, but they could not sell them for love or money. They took a survey and discovered that Americans thought that Japanese goods were schlock, cheesy "five-and-ten-cents" stuff. The Japanese could not sell T.V.s or anything else, because in the consumer's mind, if it is Japanese, it is crummy. The Japanese could not do anything right.

Della Femina then had an inspired idea. A survey was

commissioned to probe the American consumer's mind: Is there anything the Japanese ever did right? They hoped to use that association to sell appliances and T.V.s. Della Femina did the survey. It came back that the only thing that Americans remembered the Japanese doing right was that they wiped out a whole United States Fleet at Pearl Harbor.

In that episode, the consumer believed the Japanese were fantastic. They planned it well; they were efficient, swift and relentless; they blew the whole fleet up. So Della Femina came back with a new ad campaign. He suggested: "Buy Sony T.V.s—from the people who brought you Pearl Harbor."

When I am told, "Don't buy Shabbat or Kashruth—from the people who brought you Auschwitz"—I am not impressed.

So the Holocaust has changed both our self-perception and our perception of the world. And it is not so much that one cannot be a liberal or a secularist anymore; or Orthodox or traditional anymore; it is that each one must be shattered. As I once put it: "After the Holocaust, it is not so important what position you take, as long as you're ashamed of it." If we are 'ashamed' of our position, then at least we know what is wrong with it and we can try to correct it.

The Third Great Cycle of Jewish History

Then where are we if we understand the memory of the Holocaust? If we understand that nothing can ever be the same? I would argue that we are now in the Third Great Cycle of Jewish history.

Looking back, one can say that after the Exodus, under the sign of that event, was the age of Biblical Judaism. This was a period in which the vision of perfection, the messianic dream, the celebration of freedom, the ethics and values of love became the fundamental structure of Jewish religion.

The basic sacred structures of Passover and Shavuot and Sukkot were established. The Temple was the key institution. Priests served before the Lord and prophecy brought messages from God. The Jewish people had a state and struggled for its existence on the one hand and for its moral value and spiritual survival on the other.

That age came to an end in the destruction of the Second Temple - which ushered in the next major great cycle of Jewish history, Rabbinic Judaism. That was a cycle of 2,000 years of exile. In that age, there was no more prophecy. When a Rabbi in the Talmud tried to bring a voice from heaven to support his position, the majority

voted him down, on the grounds that the age of prophecy was over.

In the biblical age, in which God split the Red Sea and brought his children through before the eyes of all people, God could send forth prophets with his messages. But in the rabbinic age, God hides and controls his power and makes it available only in the hidden form. In the age in which the sea is not split, in that age rabbis, human judgments, must discern God's presence.

Therefore, rabbis and not prophets became the new leadership. The synagogue is the central religious institution. It is not a place where God speaks, or in which the awe of the Temple exists; it is not a place where the presence of God is so powerful as to be palpable.

The Talmud tells that when the high priest uttered God's holy name in the Temple, people fell on their faces in awe. In the rabbinic age, Jews had a synagogue which was "secular" compared to the Temple. In it, the human partner in the dialogue spoke in prayer because God had ceased to send messages the other way. Jews had to incorporate the halacha into every aspect of daily life because the message of the religion had to be incorporated into daily life. New institutions and new leadership had to emerge to guide Jews through the exile.

I believe that that same experience of moving from one cycle into another is being reenacted in our lifetime. This is our central religious challenge as Jews.

It is not that we are leaving the institutions of the second cycle behind. Just as the rabbis brought the Temple and its memories with them into the synagogue, just as the traditions of Passover and Sukkot and Shavuot were continued but were infused with the memory of the destruction, just as the wedding ceremony was marked with the breaking of a glass as a reminder of the destruction, so I believe in the third cycle we will mark and remember the Holocaust and Israel.

It takes courage to admit to ourselves that we are entering a new cycle, because it means we don't have the final answers at this time. (I have often said to myself that after the Holocaust, one should be happy that there are no "final solutions.") It is a challenge to Jews to get together, to face the new reality. We must be open to growth with each other and ourselves.

A Holy Secularity

I believe that the style of the third cycle will be a more "secular" style. I would call this style a "holy secularity." It calls for holiness that is even more radically in the world.

On the other hand, this philosophy must understand that when the human being becomes totally secular (as we saw in the 20th century) the human becomes not God, but the devil. It learns from the model of Joseph Mengele, the doctor at Auschwitz, who made selections on Yom Kippur. Mengele would walk up and down on Yom Kippur saying: "I decide who lives and who dies." In the concentration camp, we saw human power claiming to be God. When human beings "become God," they become the devil.

So, our new style will be a holy secularity, a secularity that is willing to experience the religious in daily life, that understands the roots and the transcendent without which it becomes demonic.

The new style will involve the "secularization" of the synagogue in the good sense. It involves moving out of the sacred precincts into every day experience, which is shared together with others. It means the Rabbi stepping off the pedestal and the synagogue moving from the emphasis on prayer to the emphasis on study and action. For it knows that after the burning of those children, there is no longer any *statement* of religion, there is no prayer that can be truly credible—except in the presence of the act of recreating life, except in pulling children out of burning pits and restoring them, except in the State of Israel—or an equivalent "secular situation" in which human beings are given the dignity of God and the image of God is restored.

The Hint of the Divine

The Talmud (in Yoma, cited above) asks: how do we know God exists if God is hidden? If God is going to exercise self-control and not reveal the divine power, how will humankind know God exists? The answer it gives is: The existence of the people of Israel is the hint of the divine, a suggestion. This people is like a sheep among 70 wolves (i.e., the nations of the world). There must be a hidden force field, as it were, that is protecting them. That is the only hint we have of the presence of God.

This talmudic passage means that to talk of religion versus Zionism, to talk of tension between Israel and being Jewish, to speak of the danger that over-emphasis on Israel is undermining commitment to the synagogue, to prayer and to Judaism, is to totally fail to grasp the religious revolution of the third cycle. It is to fail to see that credibility and ability to talk about God comes out of the redemption (of the biblically prophesied redemption) in the reconstruction of Israel. It gives credibility to prayer.

Had there not been this redemption, then the whole Jewish dream of restoration and of perfection would be a hollow mockery. The challenge of the third great cycle is to use the categories not as we have inherited them—the

categories of the standard religious position; to see that it is not Exodus versus Israel but rather that Israel is the re-enactment of the Exodus. In fact, encounter with Israel can lead us back to the original Exodus, if we have the courage to go back.

It is no accident that the Federations have gotten steadily more central in Jewish life in the last 30 years. In a fundamental way, it was UJA that understood that when children are burnt alive (to save the amount of gas and the cost of gassing them) that it is a profoundly religious statement to give money. That Jewish life is worth something is the only credible statement of God's presence. If you have made that statement, you have a right to pray. If you have not made that statement, then your prayers are tormenting, ugly words, making fun of those still burning.

This understanding is not to flatter Federations, but to challenge them. If this understanding is correct, then Federations cannot act like totally secular institutions either. Then Federations cannot claim to be excused from Jewish education or Jewish religion, as if that is the synagogue's bag. Both institutions must understand and grow together to a new identity, a new responsibility and new mutuality.

A fantasy: Inspired by this vision, the Federation is so eager to serve the synagogue that its Board decides to meet on Shabbat morning and pray instead of meeting. The congregation is so eager to be part of Federation's work, that instead of services, they go to attend the Board meeting of the Federation to make sure there is a good campaign this year. This would leave us still with one synagogue and one Federation—but both would be considerably more effective in prayer and in fund raising.

The Lesson of Memory: II

There is a second force which has spurred the recovery of memory of the Holocaust. It was the sense that without the memory, Jews would not know what to do at the most critical time. Not until we burn into our memories the fundamental experiences of the Holocaust will we have the proper memories to guide policy response.

Let me share with you a memory that haunts me personally—a memory from the summer of 1944.

We know from testimony that up to that point when young mothers came in with children, they would separate the mothers from the children. The mothers were young and could still be used for work. The children were always condemned to death, because the Nazis hated Jewish life and they hated those children. Besides, children were "useless" because they could not work.

In 1944, at the height of the extermination process, some children were torn from their mothers and the mothers got hysterical. They began to scream, shout and run around and this held up the gassings. So, the Nazis decided they could no longer afford any delays. They were determined to finish off the Jews to the last person. Therefore, an order came through: any mother with a child was to be sent straight to the crematorium with the children.

Tadeusz Borowski, a Polish prisoner at Auschwitz, gives the following account in his stories from that period:

"Here is a woman, she walks quickly, but tries to appear calm. A small child with a pink cherub's face runs after her, unable to keep up, stretches out his little arms and cries: 'Mama! Mama!'

"(A guard shouts): 'Pick up your child, woman.'

" 'It's not mine, sir—not mine!' She shouts hysterically and runs on, covering her face with her hands. She wants to hide. She wants to reach ... those who will go on foot—those who will stay alive. She is young, healthy, good-looking. She wants to live. But the child runs after her, wailing loudly: 'Mama! Mama! Don't leave me!'

" 'It is not mine, not mine, no!'

"Andrei, a sailor from Sevastopol, grabs hold of her, with one powerful blow he knocks her off her feet. Then, as she falls, takes her by the hair and pulls her up again, his face twitches with rage.

" 'You bloody Jewess - So you're running from your own child! I'll show you, you whore!'

"His huge hand chokes her, he lifts her in the air and heaves her on to the truck like a heavy sack of grain. 'Here, and take this with you, bitch!' And he throws the child at her feet.

" 'Good work ... that's the way to deal with degenerate mothers' says the S.S. man, standing at the foot of the truck ... "

We must understand that mother. We know of hundreds of such mothers: the mother who had blond hair and blue eyes and could have saved her own life, but her boy looked like his Jewish father. Or their boy was circumcised and they knew the boy could not hide safely, so they elected to stay with their child and go to Auschwitz. We know of hundreds of such mothers who could have spoken Polish and survived, but they would not abandon a child who was too young to pass.

I envision this mother going to Auschwitz with her child because she loved him. They were packed into cattle cars to a point where, according to testimony, minds clouded, the will to live took over, people were dazed and half mad and half sane, and the will to live became independent of consciousness. So they came off the train—and there, when she came across the explosion of fire, the burning wood and flesh, when she smelled the burning human fat—she panicked and she ran.

The Ethics of Power

Out of this moment comes the shattering of the cross, the end to the Christian tradition of suffering glorified. There comes an end to the Jewish tradition of *Kiddush hashem* in the form of martyrdom. We now understand that given the overwhelming power possible in the 20th century, even the most idealistic and loving types can be shattered and broken.

This is the fallacy and the ugliness of Mahatma Gandhi, who could say to Martin Buber, when Buber asked him to speak out against the Nazi treatment of Jews, that the Jews should go quietly to show the power of civil disobedience. Gandhi's moral idiocy was due to the fact that he was dealing with the British, who were gentlemen. When Gandhi went on a hunger strike, the British called off the troops. When Gandhi lay down in the streets, the British stopped marching. Hitler would have run a tank over him and that would have been the end of his moral testimony.

The memory of the Holocaust gives one fundamental policy guideline to all of us as Jews and to all potential victims. In the final analysis, one dare not depend on the good will of somebody else for one's own existence. Eldridge Cleaver (in his first incarnation as a Black liberationist in the 1960's) taught me this lesson. Cleaver once spoke of the impact of the Holocaust on him. He had been trained to be "a good nigger." He was taught: don't make trouble. Go along and the whites will throw you a bone. Then he discovered he was living in a century of the Holocaust—where if you go along, they will kill you to the last person and they still won't be finished. So he decided there was only one possibility: Black power. Blacks had to be strong enough to make sure the oppressors did not do it to them. Cleaver was correct.

This memory converted me into a supporter of Women's Liberation. A friend of mine and I have an ongoing debate. He is furious against Women's Liberation because he is very insulted by it. He is particularly offended that the leadership came from Jewish women, like Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan.

My friend argues that it is a well-known fact that Jewish husbands are good husbands. (It is so well known, that it

has become a threat to Jewish survival. There was a survey done at Radcliffe College this past decade which showed that many non-Jewish undergraduates were looking for Jewish husbands, because their reputation was that they are good providers, they do not drink, and they do not beat you. So they wanted Jewish husbands—and it has become a threat to Jewish survival!) Why, then, asks my friend, are the Jewish women demanding liberation?

I told my friend he is wrong—Eldridge Cleaver and the women are right. The lesson of the Holocaust is that, in the final crunch, even men of goodwill like Franklin D. Roosevelt, one of the great liberals, and a man like Pius XII, one of the great Popes of the past two centuries—and even great Jews like Chaim Weizmann, and Stephen Wise, failed. When they were desperately needed, their goodwill was not adequate—and they abandoned those Jews.

The lesson of memory is that the potential victim must not be forced to depend on the goodwill of somebody else, but must be strong enough to protect the self.

This is why, for the Jewish people after the Holocaust, the State of Israel became an absolute necessity. We know that in the 20th century, one does not have access to power to defend one's self unless one has a sovereign state. That is why all Jews became Zionists.

There was a time when Reform Jews were different, but that is over with. In the 1960's and the late 1950's, before the full impact of the Holocaust sank in, Marshall Sklare found that when Reform laymen were asked, "What is the most important aspect of being a good Jew?" they would answer, "To be an ethical human being." By 1972, when Fein and Lenn Associates did their studies of the Reform movement, the answer was, "Support for Israel."

All Jews with a memory now understand that even if we had no intention of living in Israel, we had to have that power available to protect us. We knew the power was needed, even before Entebbe confirmed it.

I was raised as a good American Jewish boy, e.g., I was a liberal academic. Once I was embarrassed by tanks, guns, planes and generals. A General? What kind of job is that for a good Jewish boy? I call my saga of the last 10 years as I lived through the Holocaust together with fellow Jews: "How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Jewish Generals!" This is why no peace settlement and no agreement that ultimately will depend on international guarantees is morally or religiously or politically possible.

Here, one demurrer must be entered immediately. The Holocaust should never be used for moral triumphalism or

total self-justification by us as Jews either. Any time we invoke the Holocaust, we have to challenge ourselves, not just others. This means that the memory of children hungry in ghettos has to arouse in every Jew outrage and concern for all children anywhere hungry in ghettos. Jews have to feel the pain and passion of all refugees, and that includes Arab refugees.

This is my quarrel with the JDL. I affirm its extraordinary contribution in proclaiming the principle "Never again," and in raising the issue of Jewish interests such as neighborhood security. But blatant appeal to backlash or tacit approval when people throw bombs, whether into Russian offices or Sol Hurok's, killing innocent secretaries is not saying "Never again." That is continuing the Holocaust.

The Dialectic of Power and Memory

Therefore the memory of the Holocaust torments and challenges us. It leaves us no choice but to struggle with the ethics and theology of power. Jews must take power, must be strong, but any exercise of power automatically causes pain and suffering.

This means that we are for Black power, but we don't give moral blank checks to its wielders because they are Black. There is no moral blank check because one is a woman or a Third World person—or a Jew. The fact that one has suffered does not justify anything one does. If the erstwhile victim does wrong, he must be checked also. That is the dialectic of power and of memory.

If Jews exercise power, there will be times when the State will have to bomb, will actually kill innocent civilians. If you bomb where it is not necessary, or if you do not feel the pain or the agony of the innocent victims, then you have betrayed the memories of the Holocaust.

This is why being for Israel is a constant state of exaltation—and of guilt. The true theology of power means that we have to challenge the world which has a set of ideal versions of how Israel should live. Ideals are fully possible only in the graveyard or when you are totally powerless. Once you have power, there are bound to be realities which include making mistakes. One of the tests of mature Jews who love Israel deeply is that they love the mistakes.

Memory and Confrontation

In facing the possibility of a confrontation with the United States government, Jews must keep this dialectic in mind. Our commitment is that never again will we American Jews agree to anything which puts pressure on us to yield to any agreement that betrays our brothers and sisters abroad.

I personally feel that the three elements in a peace settlement in the Middle East that President Carter has stressed are potentially viable. This means peace with security, integrity and full normalization of relations with Arab countries. On the second element, the territorial question, I submit that we are flexible. Speaking only for myself, I see no way of ruling a million additional Arabs on the West Bank, and keeping the Jewish character of the State.

The third element is that we too, as Jews with a memory, want to meet the needs of the Palestinians. We would like to fulfill all their dreams of existence. We do not want our nationalism to be at their expense. But, after the Holocaust, we are not prepared again to lie down and die on the grounds that another person has a need which overrules our existence.

Jews must make clear that the overriding concern here is not the desire to pray in Hebron. The critical problem in the case of the Palestinians is that thus far there is no partner to make peace with. Thus far, there is no serious partner ready to make clear an acceptance of full peace. This is the outrage of the American government's focus on the PLO. It shows the lack of a memory of the Holocaust.

Some have argued that Yassir Arafat could become a moderate. My answer to that is that it could happen. With Jomo Kenyatta, leader of the Mau Mau in Kenya, it did happen. They were savagely killing whites with gruesome rituals; now Kenyatta is a leading moderate and a responsible leader. The difference is that Kenyatta made up his mind that he must live in peace because he must have whites in Kenya. He broke with some of his own leadership because they would not accept equal rights for whites.

Let Yassir Arafat repudiate the PLO covenants; let him repudiate the rejection front people and everything is possible. But when the threat of genocide is made, our memory insists that we take it seriously and only public unequivocal statements and decisive actions can overcome the past threats. It is far more likely that when the United States government drops its neo-romantic fixation on the PLO, a responsible partner will step forward.

The crucial point is that American Jews are not going to be faked again with the claim that we have to sacrifice our people to prove our patriotism and our acceptance in this country. In 1944, when the Jewish leadership asked President Roosevelt to bomb Auschwitz and to help the European Jews, the answer he gave was that the war was to make the whole world safe for democracy; therefore, one could not ask for special Jewish concern. We all had

to win the war for democracy, then we would take care of the Jews. By the time the war was won, the Jews were dead.

In 1944, to prove our acceptance of this country, Jews had to stand by quietly. Jews could not protest, or demonstrate; Jews could not confront our own government. Now the memory of that silence is sealed in our minds and we will respond differently. We will not be deceived again by the false claim that we must be silent for the general good.

We remember well the letter written by Rabbi Dov Baer Weissmandl of Bratislava, Czechoslovakia in 1944: "Do not be misled by the encouraging progress of the war in general. Take to heart the possibility that the war will last long enough to permit our total annihilation ... and mark well that the war now being waged against us is independent of the situation on all other battlefronts ... " (Weissmandl, *Min Hameytzar*, p. 129.)

As a community of memory, we tell our government that, if necessary, we are prepared for confrontation; we are not looking for it, but the Administration must understand that we are never going to kiss off our own relatives. America is not the Mafia, that tells people to prove their absolute loyalty by betraying an uncle or a brother or someone they love. We are prepared for confrontation.

If we have to endanger our position, if we have to face the risk of being falsely charged with dual loyalty, then so be it. As a people with a memory we know that we've gone into exile before. The tragedy of German Jewry was that so many could not conceive of another place to go to; they were so rooted that they were willing to accept a ghettoized status under Hitler rather than run for their lives.

A New Understanding of Loyalty

In the classic Jewish tradition, we believe that in confrontation we will not undermine democracy; maybe we will help the American people come up with a new understanding of loyalty. In the new definition, "dual loyalty," far from being a stigma, will be accepted as a mark of honor. The world will realize that "My country, right or wrong" is the false conception which led Americans to kill thousands of American men and boys and additional hundreds of thousands of innocent Vietnamese in the four years after we knew the time had come to end the war.

If we persist, then again the Jewish people will exemplify the true loyalty—loyalty to our country but also to our folk, our people, our God and our morality as well. We believe that if we stand last, millions of Americans will share that vision with us. We believe the Administration will have to

back down and a nobler, more moral concept of loyalty will emerge.

To Communicate the Memory

To do all this, we will have to have Jewish memories. Those who share this memory will find the strength and feel the necessity to stand together.

How then do we communicate the memory? We have incredible models in our tradition and in our faith for the transmission of memory. We have to live it together. Our task is to give life and to incorporate that memory in every aspect of our lives.

To have a Jewish child after Auschwitz is to remember—it is to make the statement of life and faith and ultimate hope. As Emil Fackenheim said: In the Bible, Abraham's greatest moment was when he was prepared to sacrifice his most precious beloved child, to bind his child to the altar out of loyalty to his covenant. Says Fackenheim: Parents who have a Jewish child after Auschwitz know they bind not only their child but their grandchild to the altar, for Hitler came for grandchildren of converted Jews. Only in our lifetime, at the end there was no ram to substitute for a million and a half children.

To raise a Jewish child is the ultimate statement of life. The way we raise Jewish children is to understand the preciousness of their lives after the Holocaust.

A memory: The year 1961, when our first child, Moshe, was born was also the first period I read about the Holocaust for months on end until it saturated my mind. Near the end of our stay in Israel, we had not yet gotten to Masada. We had a chance to go, but Moshe was only nine months old and we could not take him along. He was suffering with diarrhea the whole year we were in Israel, and we just could not take him on the trip. We decided that my wife would go up to Masada and I would stay home and take care of the child.

For two whole days I was changing diapers all the time and I could not get to read. I am a reading junkie. If I do not read for 24 hours, my hands begin to shake. After two days, finally, Moshe went to sleep during the day for a half hour and I began to read desperately. After about 15 minutes, I heard him stirring. He got up and tried to attract my attention. Of course, I realized that, but I was trying to ignore him because I wanted to get a little reading in.

He tried to make more noise to get my attention, and I tried to ignore him. Finally, I took him and put him on the floor, hoping he would crawl around, but nothing helped. He crawled over to me and began to tug at me. I was sort of

irritated that he was bothering me when I was trying to read. He pulled at me; I bent down, and my nose told me why he had been bothering me.

Feeling irritated, I lifted him up briskly and gently put him down very hard on the diaper table. I pulled off the diaper to change him and in that moment, still feeling very irritated, I looked down. I saw that the 15 minutes I kept him waiting had led to a little rash. I suddenly realized why he was kicking and so uncomfortable.

What also flashed through my mind was a scene I had read 10 times but had never understood. It was a scene of people packed in cattle cars so tight that they could not move. Sometimes the Nazis would throw babies in over the heads of the adults into the cattle cars; sometimes there was a baby that could not hold on. As the train swayed back and forth, these children would fall to the floor while their parents helplessly could not respond.

What I suddenly grasped was that after 15 minutes my own baby was crying and irritated and kicking ... what was it for a Jewish child shipped from Westerbork in Holland to Auschwitz for three days and two nights where the parents could not move or change him? By the time the child got there, the agony may have been relieved by being put into the gas chamber.

At that moment, it went through my mind that this is a Jewish child after Auschwitz. That moment I felt a tremendous surge of compassion and sadness and love that I had a Jewish child here. For a moment, I had forgotten what that meant. Suddenly, I tried to change him a little more gently. That is memory.

Common Grief and Destiny

Classically, Jewish memory has been grounded in the Jewish calendar. Therefore, Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) must become a central day of our calendar marked by home rituals and community communication. It must be marked together, as one community, out of common grief and destiny. The attempt to absorb Yom HaShoah into Tisha B'Av (9th of Av), the day of mourning for the Temple, is a fundamental error.

Because of the enormity and radical nature of the attempt to totally destroy the Jews, this catastrophe cannot simply be absorbed into the other. Rather it breaks existing categories and forces us to confront its awesomeness. Let it be noted that the Holocaust does not simply supersede the other either. There is a relationship to the other which forces us to explore, to confront anew, to reinterpret.

In this decade, Yom HaShoah has emerged as the

primary day of expression of Jewish grief and commemoration. It must now be deepened and developed and made universal.

Another fundamental ritual of memory is spreading among our people—the pilgrimage. For many, it is the visit to Yad Vashem when they are in Israel. For a growing number, it is to go to see the Camps—Auschwitz, Treblinka and others—on the way to Israel, for only thus can the fuller significance of Israel be grasped. Some have begun to travel through Eastern Europe to try to sense the life that was snuffed out. Thus, that world is restored to mind and memory.

Memory grows out of every experience of life. I have a friend at whose seder potato peelings are served. His father explained that he survived in Bergen/Belsen because they obtained potato peelings once in a while. That is their memory of redemption at the Passover seder.

On Shabbat—every Shabbat and Yom Tov—there is a memory. Part of the joy and of the sadness of Shabbat now is the memory that every Shabbat and Holiday the Nazis scheduled “Aktions” to round up Jews. They did not just hate the Jews. They hated the Jewish spirit; they hated the Jewish Torah as well.

I have a friend whose memories of Passover have particular poignancy on *Shevii shel Pesah* (the seventh day of Passover). His family follows a Hasidic custom to jump over a pitcher of water on that day to reenact the crossing of the Red Sea. He once told a story about his memory.

He met a survivor who told him that on the seventh day of Passover, he and his family were forced out of the bunkers in the Warsaw Ghetto. The Jews were lined up against the wall and the SS were marching up and down, selecting people and shooting them. This man was yanked out by an SS man, but when the SS man looked away, his father pulled him back in. Twice the SS man walked by and pulled him out and twice his father pulled him back in.

The third time the father stepped forward and slapped the SS man in the face and said to him: “You want to kill my child.” In the fury of his anger, the SS man pushed him back into the wall, grabbed a burning ember from the building and set fire to him. His last memory of his father was of him burning on the seventh day of Passover. Every time by friend jumps over that bucket, he thinks of the seventh day of Passover, the day when God split the Red Sea and the day when God did not split the Red Sea. Both experiences are now part of the memory.

Memory is carried by children's names. In our family each child carries two names. We tried to have one name be the name of a member of the family lost in the Holocaust. You would be amazed how children remember. They often ask you what their name is about, and you tell them a story. Another way is when you search for roots, you collect the names of all your family who were lost and the children keep those lives in their minds.

The late Shraga Arian developed with his students a commemoration ritual for Yom HaShoah using the martyrs' names. They collected tens of thousands of names of the martyrs. Over the 24 hour period of the Holocaust Remembrance Day, a team of students took turns reading the names so that the chain of memory was never broken during the entire day.

In the synagogue, there is yet another ritual of memory. The entire congregation should get up and recite the Kaddish. This is in accordance with the classic tradition that when someone dies without immediate family to say Kaddish, then the nearest living relative will say the Kaddish for them. In the Holocaust, entire families were wiped out and no one survived to say Kaddish; then we, the entire living House of Israel are their next of kin and we must say Kaddish for them.

In order to communicate this memory, we have to use the living witnesses. We still have actual survivors in our midst. We have to bring them in while they are still here to testify. There is nothing to compare to the power of a survivor sharing the experience with you and your children.

Learning to Respond as Jews

Out of this memory, we have learned to respond as Jews. The creation of Israel and the renewal of Jewish tradition, the tremendous search for education and for a Jewish lifestyle which we now share together is part of the response.

This is why the line between the secular and the religious is finished after the Holocaust. If, according to the Talmud, the only way we really know God exists in the world after the Holocaust is because of the existence of his people, then an Israeli atheist who gives his life to defend the State is giving the ultimate testimony to God. (I have often said that the Israeli atheist reminds me of the atheist who, with the help of God, plans to be one for the rest of his life.)

I do not deny that God is equally precious, even more precious, to me after the Holocaust. Kashruth, Shabbat, mikveh—every tradition is more precious to me now. However, I cannot make their observance the loyalty test

anymore. I cannot claim in their name to attack other Jews, and I cannot, in their name, abuse the State of Israel.

If we have enough love and enough concern and enough caring, we will find ways, halachically as well as non-halachically, to live together; that we will be willing to figure out a way in which it can be done as one. The trouble is we have not yet understood that our categories are shattered. So we employ our categories divisively. It is the blotting out of memory that strengthens the divisions among us.

Memory is also communicated through a community. The St. Louis Jewish community has created a model Holocaust Memorial Center. It has started with an educational program with a staff to work with every part of the community to incorporate Holocaust consciousness and learning into their lives.

The goal is to work with the rabbis to incorporate the Holocaust into the liturgy, to work with day schools and Hebrew schools to develop Holocaust curriculum at all levels, to reach out to public schools and Christian parochial schools in the same way, and to include the media and even government in this commemoration.

When the entire environment includes this memory, it will be absorbed by every individual. This is the first of what I believe should be a national network of communities' institutions to spread and deepen the memory.

The New Haven Jewish community has created a model Memorial: a Memorial sculpture has been placed in a park through the joint effort of the Jewish community *and* the city government. This is the first such cooperation and it is of vital importance because we have to make clear that the Holocaust is not just a Jewish issue. It is a moral and religious challenge for all of mankind.

If Christians do not learn the lesson, then Christianity will continue to be a seat of hatred of Jews instead of a source of renewal. If secularists do not learn the lesson, then science will become a source of technology of death instead of life.

The New Haven Holocaust Memorial was done with taste and quietness and that, too, is exemplary. When one speaks of the Holocaust, one must not shout, because words don't help anyway. One must speak with restraint because the truth is so terrible that excessive sentiments become self-defeating.

Recently, anti-Semites, neo-Nazis and others have denied the facts of the Holocaust. The South African

Jewish community has responded by creating a book called *Six Million Did Die*. It goes through the evidence; we have to learn the facts and share them with others.

The National Jewish Conference Center has just launched a Holocaust Quarterly Report and Information Service. This Newsletter, created with the help of a grant from The Connecticut Council for The Humanities (an arm of the National Endowment for The Humanities) seeks to link all the people who actively participate in study and dissemination of Holocaust knowledge and consciousness.

The goal is to link academics, researchers, teachers of Holocaust courses in every type of school and level with the survivors and communities now seeking to create Holocaust Memorials and memories. Research in progress, conferences in preparation, news of programs, and articles on the Holocaust and dissemination of knowledge of the Holocaust will be included.

The aim is to spread effective models which can be replicated, while informing people to avoid unnecessary duplication. It is crucial that communities not duplicate each other's work, but rather specialize and complement each other's programs as part of a national effort. This network of private learning, personal action, community medium, will create the matrix out of which memory grows, is internalized and finally guides our response.

Memory, Hope and Life

Nothing simply comfortable should come out of a confrontation with the Holocaust. However, one statement of consolation can be made in this situation.

The response of the Jewish people to this unparalleled death and destruction has been an extraordinary thirst for life. This horrible event is all death and destructiveness, but the Jewish response to this event is an incredible statement of life.

This is why I believe that we are entering a third cycle of

Jewish history and that it, too, will be marked by a Bible. The stories we are living together, the stories of the survivors in Israel, are nothing less than holy.

I saw a survivor, a woman, who had lost all but one son in Auschwitz. She came to Israel and the child grew up and had a baby, and was then killed in the war of 1956 at Sinai. Then her grandchild grew up and was killed in the Yom Kippur war.

When I asked her in 1973 why she voted again for the Labor government, despite its failures, she said to me that it was because she was afraid at that time maybe Likud would not be as active in a search for peace. After three such experiences, she was so full of a desire for peace that she would not take a chance. That kind of model is nothing less than biblical. It reflects a human being who shows incredible force of character and strength.

The response of this people is the reaffirmation of the ultimate biblical statement that faith is stronger than death, that we have a dream that is so powerful, it is stronger than the limits of life, it is stronger than the anti-life forces around us.

The dream itself, which was challenged and burnt and crushed in the Holocaust, arose and made itself real again. The re-establishment of the State of Israel, the lives we build in these communities, can become a model of human compassion and human concern. They will become a model of religious tradition, a model of Jewish existence.

In the third great cycle, renewed Jewish sovereignty humanely exercised, renewed Jewish life inspired by love of man and God, will transmit these memories and dreams of past suffering and future redemption to a world which longs for the light and hope.

The reborn Jewish people will again testify to the world that love is stronger than death and that life will prevail. Remember!

The Fifth Child

THE ONE WHO CANNOT ASK
שְׁאִינוּ יְכוּל לְשׂאוֹל

בנגד בן תמישי מדברת בנסת ישראל:
בן השואה שנספה ואינו יכול לשאול

לפיקדו אנו שואלים בערו, "מהדעו"

בבן התם אנטונו ומה נאמר, מה נדבר, מה נצטרקו
אין לנו אלא ללכת אחרי רבי אלעזר בן עזריה שאמר,
לא זביתי שתאמר וציאת מצרים בלילות עד שדרשה בן זומא

"למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים
כל ימי תיך ודברים טוב"

"ימי תיך" – ימי האור והטוב;
"כל ימי תיך" – הלילות שבהם אברו לנו בבגורינו ולא בבגורנו בלבד.
ותזכרו אנו לזכור את וציאת מצרים.

בנגד שאלתו אנו יושבין ורוממין.
יושבין ורוממין וזכרין את התשע.
יושבין ורוממין וזכרין ששקמו בני עמנו צלם אליהם במאבק התיים.
יושבין ורוממין וזכרין אנו את לילות הפסת. בעיר, בגטו, ובמתנה.
אנו זכרין את ליל הסדר שבו קמו ומרדו בגטו ורשא.

lift the cup of Elijah

יושבין ורוממין אנו ומעבירין מזר לזר בוס הגאולה, בוסו של אליהו.
אנו מזכרין את שיבת בני עמנו לציון ראשית צמיתת גאולתנו.
אנו מזכרין את הבוס בתקנה שבבות מעשינו תקרב שעת גאולתנו.

נעמר ונפתת את הרגל ונמין את אליהו שזביא קץ ללילות עמנו.
נשיר במותם: אני מאמין

אני מאמין באמונה שלמה בביאת המשיח;
ואף על פי שיתמהמה, עם כל זה אני מאמין

On this night, we remember a fifth child.
This is a child of the Shoah (Holocaust), who did not
survive to ask.

Therefore, we ask for that child – Why?

We are like the simple child. We have no answer.
We can only follow the footsteps of Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah,
who could not bring himself to mention the Exodus at night
until Ben Zoma explained it to him through the verse:

*In order that you REMEMBER the day of your going out
from Egypt, all the days of your life. (Deut. 16:3)*

"The days of your life" indicates the daylight and the goodness
of life. "All the days of your life" means even in the darkest
nights when we have lost our firstborn, we must remember
the Exodus.

We answer that child's question with silence.

In silence, we remember that dark time.
In silence, we remember that Jews preserved their image
of God in the struggle for life.

In silence, we remember the seder nights spent in the forests,
ghettos, and camps; we remember that seder night when
the Warsaw Ghetto rose in revolt.

lift the cup of Elijah

In silence, let us pass the cup of Elijah, the cup of the final
redemption yet-to-be. We remember our people's return to the
land of Israel, the beginning of that redemption. Let us each fill
Elijah's cup with some of our wine, expressing the hope that
through our efforts, we will help bring closer that redemption.

We rise now and open our door to invite Elijah, the forerunner
of the future which will bring an end to the nights of our people.
We sing as they did:

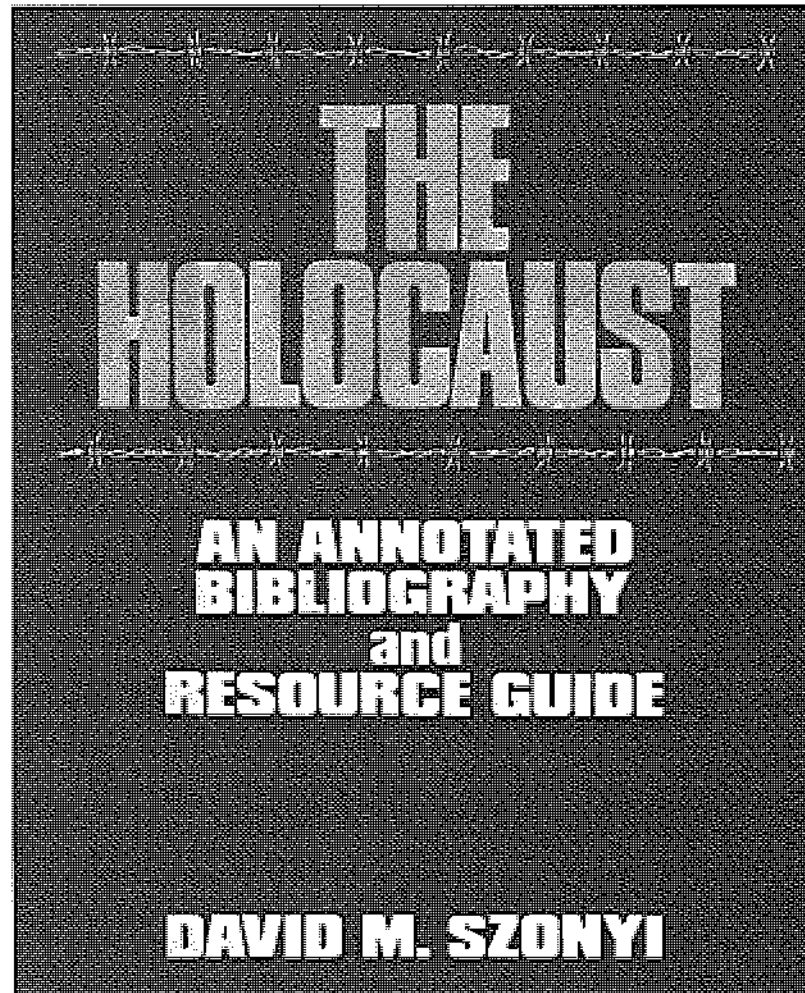
*Ani maamin b'emunah shleimah, bevat Hamashiach,
V'af al pi she yitma'ech, in kol zeli ani maamin.*

*For I firmly believe in the coming of the Messiah, and even though
the Messiah may tarry, in spite of this, I still believe.*

THE HOLOCAUST

The Holocaust: An Annotated Bibliography and Resource Guide (CLAL: N.Y. 1985. 395 pp.) edited by David M. Szonyi is the most comprehensive listing ever published of materials on the Nazi Holocaust. As such, it brings together a wealth of information of inestimable value and will prove to be an important research tool for teachers, and students. *The Library Journal* has called it a "superb bibliographic effort" and recommends it for "public, college and university libraries."

Divided into thirteen sections, *The Holocaust* includes extensive annotated bibliographies of non-fiction works on the Holocaust, of fiction and imaginative literature, and of books for younger readers. It also includes a filmography, a guide to musical resources, a listing of mobile and traveling exhibits suitable for use in schools, synagogues, and other institutions, a list of Holocaust education centers, research institutes, and archives, a list of Holocaust memorials and landmarks in the United States and Canada, lists of survivor and children-of-survivor groups, examples of services for Yom HaShoah and the Day of Remembrance, a guide to doing oral history with Holocaust survivors, sample curricula for public school courses on the Holocaust, and information on obtaining speakers and funding for Holocaust-related programming.



Funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and sponsored by ZACHOR, the Holocaust education project of CLAL: The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, *The Holocaust* includes contributions by Harry James Cargas, Nama Frankel, Sister Mary T. Glynn, Eric Goldman, Rena Septe Goldman, Rabbi Irving Greenberg, Irene Heskes, Dr. Jeffrey Hirschberg, Sara Leuchter, Samuel Moses, Judith Herschlag Muffs, the late Bernard Postal, David Roskies, and Bea Stadler.

The editor, David M. Szonyi, the former assistant director of ZACHOR, previously coedited *Living After the Holocaust: Reflections of the Post-War Generation in America*.

"THE HOLOCAUST" may be ordered from KTAV Publishing Company, 900 Jefferson Street, Hoboken, N.J. 07030, for \$29.50 (hardcover) or \$16.95 (paperback) plus \$3.00 for shipping and handling.

WITNESS TO THE HOLOCAUST

Teachers often say that the most pressing need in Holocaust Studies is for authentic material which shows, in human terms, what it was like to live through the Holocaust. *Witness to the Holocaust* is a powerful series of seven short video documentaries designed to meet that need. Interviews with survivors provide narration to documentary footage and photographs. The effect is a vivid and honest description of how life was lived under the terrible conditions imposed by the Nazis.

A project of Zechor, The Holocaust Resource Center of CLAL: The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, *Witness to the Holocaust* was produced in close consultation with teachers and educators to maintain a balance between vital information and human insight, and to stimulate open discussion about the incredible questions posed by the Holocaust. Collectively, the video programs are designed to serve as the core of a course or unit of study on the Holocaust. Each video can also be used individually as a self-contained program.

"... illuminating and informative for general audiences seeking a nonstatistical, nonsensationalist eyewitness view of the Holocaust... recommended." *Library Journal*

"... well edited and clearly narrated... would serve well as part of a unit concerning WWII or the nature of Nazism, and would also be useful as a basis for insightful consideration of current Jewish political thought and lifestyle." *Curriculum Review*

"... a must for any curriculum dealing with the Holocaust. Each part can stand on its own. Highly Recommended." *The Book Report*

"Priceless for their adroitly produced records of history, these fine programs will be valuable selections for high schools, colleges, public libraries and religious organizations." *Booklist (American Library Association)*

"'Witness to the Holocaust' explores a horrific era with sensitivity rather than sensationalism. These short films constitute an important educational tool, especially because attention is paid to ghetto life and Jewish resistance." *Dr. Annette Insdorf, Professor of Film at Yale University and Columbia University, author, Indelible Shadows: Film and the Holocaust*

"A TIME TO REMEMBER"

This 20 minute overview of the Holocaust opens with scenes of Jewish life of Eastern Europe, lost forever in the Holocaust. The film provides a concise oral history of the Holocaust from the perspective of four survivors. Their experiences serve as narration to documentary film and photographs, describing the Holocaust from the rise of the Nazis through the 'Final Solution' of the death camps.



Ghetto Life

RISE OF THE NAZIS

This episode shows how a violent, extremist group of outsiders and fringe elements rose to power in a democracy, and established political and economic institutions of legitimized terror and mass murder. The videotape documents the economic, political and attitudinal factors which contributed to the rise of Nazism, and the early stages of oppression of the German Jewish population, which culminated in "Kristallnacht," the "Night of Broken Glass."

GHETTO LIFE

The ghetto was one vehicle by which the Nazis planned to reduce the Jewish population through starvation and disease. This episode, which will become a classic on Jewish life in the wartime ghettos of Eastern Europe, describes ghetto conditions, Jewish efforts to continue living, and the role of the Judenrat, the Jewish Council.

DEPORTATIONS

The wearing down of the Jewish population, the collection and deportation of people from the ghettos and countryside to the concentration camps, and the attitude of bystanders are presented in this episode which, in part, responds to the often-asked question, "Why did the Jews go like sheep to the slaughter?"

RESISTANCE

Resistance against the Nazis took many forms. This exceptionally moving episode explores both spiritual resistance, the keeping of the faith in God and Jewish traditions, and the continuation of educational and cultural activities, as well as armed resistance, the fighting by partisans in the woods and in such ghetto revolts as the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

THE FINAL SOLUTION

This sensitive episode avoids pure atrocity footage, yet pulls no punches as it deals with selection and death, as well as daily life, in the concentration camps.

FREEDOM

Liberation of the concentration camps by the Allies marked, for the survivors, a life after death. This film explores the liberation, the movement of survivors back to their homes in Europe, and their subsequent efforts to begin new lives in Israel and America.

REFLECTIONS

In this important afterword to the series, survivors reflect on such questions as how the scope of Nazi atrocities grew beyond 'the Jewish question' to include non-Jews, and what universal lessons can be learned from the Holocaust. This episode also asks the question: "Could the Holocaust happen here?"

Produced by CLAL: The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership
U.S., 1983-84
Directed by C. J. Pressma
Black and white, 130 minutes (each episode averages 17-20 minutes), all video formats
Rental: \$50 each / \$150 aerials
Purchase: \$175 each / \$595 series
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