

Anti-Semitism and the Left

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LISTENING TO A TRIBUTE TO MALCOLM X A FEW MONTHS AGO on my local Pacifica radio station, I heard a speaker comment that "Zionist" club owners used to pay jazz players in heroin instead of money. None of the other speakers objected to this remark.

Irrespective of how jazz club owners behaved, surely no one had interviewed them as to their views on Palestine, so we can assume the speaker meant "Jewish" club owners. Aside from the fact that the religion of the club owners was irrelevant to the discussion, using "Zionist" as a synonym for "Jewish" shows that the speaker knew enough not to attack Jews per se, but apparently believed that by calling them Zionists any anti-Semitic claptrap would be acceptable.

I don't mean to suggest that this sort of remark is commonplace in progressive circles—the foreign policy correspondents on the same radio station are scrupulous in avoiding and exposing anti-Semitism. But that it is heard at all on a purportedly left-wing medium is troubling. Moreover, anti-Semitism has appeared in traditional left constituencies in another context: in their enthusiasm for anti-government views and bizarre conspiracy theories, some leftists have been receptive to overtures from right-wing groups, often of a fascist and anti-Semitic bent.¹ A left that is to have any credibility talking about the situation in the Middle East, a left that is to have any chance of putting together broad popular coalitions that can achieve progressive ends, and indeed a left with any moral integrity must be absolutely unequivocal in its rejection of anti-Semitism.

There has been a certain hesitancy in confronting anti-Semitism on the left given that the issue is often raised by those who hope to discredit the progressive agenda as a whole. Back in 1971, for example, the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith issued a report charging that leftists in the medical professions (e.g., Physicians for Social Responsibility) posed a threat to the American health care system; by implication it was anti-Semitic to attack institutions in which Jews were over-represented.² And since that time the ADL has become increasingly conservative, willing to overlook rather serious anti-Semitism among powerful friends of Israel (like Bush-aide Fred Malek who under Nixon had prepared a list of Jews in the Labor Department, some of whom were then

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fired)³ while denouncing any criticisms of Israel as anti-Semitic. But this behavior in no way lessens the left's obligation to deal with any manifestations of anti-Semitism in its own ranks.

This is the issue addressed in *The Socialism of Fools: Anti-Semitism on the Left* by Michael Lerner.* Lerner is the editor of the journal *Tikkun*, a voice for liberal and progressive Judaism now that *Commentary* and much of the mainstream American Jewish establishment have embraced neo-conservatism. The book has some evident virtues. It is unquestionably a critique from within the left, intended to strengthen not attack the left. And Lerner acknowledges at once that by far the most serious danger of anti-Semitism comes from the right, not the left. But there is also an annoying self-promotion about the book, as when Lerner expresses his shock that some leftists don't read *Tikkun* despite the fact that it's taken seriously "by people in the U.S. Congress or state department, by the media or by intellectual and cultural elites" (pp. 84-85).

The book is especially useful in explaining why the oppression of Jews historically has not been parallel to the oppression of various minorities at the bottom of the social ladder: in central and eastern Europe Jews occupied a position between oppressor and oppressed, one that gave them certain privileges vis-a-vis the peasantry in return for serving as the public face of the landlords and nobles. In good times such a role provided relative benefits, but "whenever economic contraction led to a restiveness among the peasantry, the ruling elites could manipulate the anger that might otherwise have been directed against themselves and direct it towards the Jews" (p. 14). The resulting history of periodic expulsions and massacres helps to explain the Jewish feeling of vulnerability despite being better off than many others.⁴

Lerner has advocated the creation of a Palestinian state (though a demilitarized one), and for this stand he has been subjected to vitriolic attacks from conservative Jews. He argues that it is possible to criticize Israeli policies without being anti-Semitic, and that such criticisms must be raised. But not all criticisms of Israel, he points out, are free of anti-Semitic bias. A major purpose of his book, he explains, is to help Jews in social change organizations "learn how to recognize the difference between legitimate and anti-Semitic criticisms of Jews or Israel" (p. xii). This is a worthwhile purpose, not just for Jews but for everyone on the left. Ultimately, however, I find Lerner's effort in this regard unsatisfactory. I will focus my critique on Lerner's discussion of Israel, returning later to make a few observations on his discussion of how the left treats Jews.

LERNER ARGUES THAT BECAUSE OF THEIR SUFFERING, particularly during the Holocaust, Jews deserved some compensation (pp. 44-45). The establishment of Israel is, says Lerner, this compensation. And while it is true that the Palestinians—who have borne the cost of the compensation—did not cause the

**The Socialism of Fools: Anti-Semitism on the Left*, by Michael Lerner, Oakland, CA: Tikkun Books, 1992, 147 pp. \$10.00

Holocaust, neither were they "totally innocent bystanders, with no relationship to Jewish oppression." Palestinians, according to Lerner, are implicated in Jewish oppression in two ways. First, Palestinians have said they are part of the Arab nation and the Arab nation has had a long history of racism toward and oppression of Jews (p. 45). Second, Palestinians denied Jews entrance into Palestine, "an act of unmatched racism and repression" (p. 48). There is something to each of these points, but also considerable exaggeration.

Lerner writes that "Jews were always second-class citizens in Islamic lands⁵—their culture systematically devalued, their property subjected to excessive taxation, and their fates dependent on the good will of whoever was in power. By the standards of the contemporary West, most Jews in Islamic lands lived under conditions at least as harsh as those facing urban blacks under apartheid in South Africa" (p. 11). Jews were severely discriminated against under Islamic rule, but Lerner's South Africa analogy is inflammatory and overstated—black South Africans are confined geographically, restricted occupationally, denied political rights that others enjoy, suffer from worse schooling and living conditions, and have life expectancies many years less than that of whites. Jews lived in many Islamic countries for fourteen centuries, so any generalization about their condition is likely to be wrong. But, to quote Bernard Lewis, a scholar of strong Zionist convictions:

Jews, like Christians, were both in theory and in practice second-class citizens. But this situation was by no means as bad as the modern connotations of this term might imply. As members of a recognized and protected community, they enjoyed limited but substantial rights, which were at most times effectively maintained. . . .

Unlike the Jews of Europe, they were—with certain exceptions, for example in Iran and Morocco—confined in neither territorial or occupational ghettos, but were fairly free in their choice of residence and profession. They enjoyed freedom of worship, and some autonomy in their own communal affairs.⁶

By the end of the 19th century, Christians and to a lesser extent Jews in the Ottoman empire were being favored by the European colonial powers, giving these minorities advantages in education, wealth, and power over their Muslim neighbors.⁷ The situation of Jews in Islamic countries was thus scarcely comparable to that of blacks in South Africa.

Palestinians, it is true, opposed the immigration of Jews into Palestine. But this hardly constituted "an act of unmatched racism and repression." With the exception of the Dominican Republic, every country opposed the immigration of Jews into its territory, so at worst Palestinian racism and repression matched that of other peoples. But if one takes account of the space available for Jewish refugees or the amount of dislocation immigration would cause for the existing inhabitants, then surely large, relatively underpopulated countries like the United States had a greater obligation to accept those fleeing Hitler, and therefore bear a correspondingly greater responsibility for failing to do so. Moreover, Palestinian hostility to Jewish immigration cannot be divorced from the Zionist goal of turning Palestine into a Jewish state. It is one thing to be

asked to open your doors to those in need; it is another thing entirely to be asked to welcome those who plan to set up a state on your land from which you will be excluded.

Wouldn't more Jews have survived if there had been free immigration into Palestine? Yes, but this would have been true if there had been free immigration into any country outside of German control. (And since it was a rather near thing that the British were able to stop the German juggernaut at El Alamein, Palestine was not nearly so safe a refuge as the Western Hemisphere would have been.) And who knows how many thousands might have survived had mainstream Zionist organizations in the United States not opposed some of those rescue efforts that conflicted with their goal of establishing a Jewish state. For example, U.S. Zionists refused to back a congressional resolution calling for more immigration to Palestine unless it included a demand for a state; nor did they support legislation calling for the establishment of the War Refugee Board which saved thousands of Jewish lives.⁸

Lerner states that Palestinians are in an analogous social position to U.S. whites who argue that they have been unfairly punished by affirmative action, though they did not personally oppress blacks and though their grandparents were oppressed in other lands and may not have been in the United States during slavery. "Those of us who support affirmative action argue that although there will be unintended victims who will be economically disadvantaged by affirmative action, they are not simply random victims, but rather people who benefit from the economic consequences of a system of racism and oppression, and therefore have to share some of the burdens when we seek to rectify the consequences of past wrongs" (p. 45). But the Palestinians have not been asked to "share some of the burdens" of rectifying the consequences of anti-Semitism; they have been asked to bear almost the entire burden. Would we support an affirmative action program in the United States that said, say, that the improvement in the condition of African-Americans should come exclusively at the expense of Polish-Americans?

To be sure, poor whites probably pay a disproportionate share of the burden of affirmative action. But they do not pay the entire burden, nor are they especially singled out to pay the burden. Nevertheless, leftists while supporting affirmative action should at the same time urge programs aimed at uprooting class discrimination and try to shift the burden away from poor whites as much as possible. On the other hand, the harm done to Palestinians was not just an unfortunate side-effect of the Christian world's rectifying the immense wrongs it did to Jews. Rather, it was the way that rectification was avoided. Even after World War II, Washington did not open its doors to Jewish refugees; instead U.S. politicians called for opening up Palestine while maintaining the United States' racist immigration quotas.

Lerner states that affirmative action must be carried out with great sensitivity to whoever is going to be disadvantaged and this, he acknowledges, did not happen in Palestine. But the fault, he says, "can be apportioned equally

on both sides" (p. 45). That there has been blame on both sides is indisputable, but Lerner misrepresents the situation in a number of ways.

There were some powerful voices among the Palestinians who were racist and reactionary, most notably the Mufti of Jerusalem and his Arab High Committee. But the Jewish Agency's intelligence department secretly cooperated with these forces. As early as 1938, Ben Gurion said that Zionist expansion would be better served if Palestinians were led by the extremist Mufti than by moderates, and Ben Gurion's motto became "Rely on the Mufti."⁹ And though it is widely assumed that the Palestinians immediately took up arms to forcibly prevent partition, "the decisive majority of them," Ben Gurion privately acknowledged, "do not want to fight us," an assessment shared by all the Jewish Agency's Arab experts.¹⁰

The Zionist settlers, Lerner argues, were not racists and colonialists, any more than whites who move into areas of cities formerly lived in by African-Americans. "When people act legally in accord with the logic of the dominant economic system, one can condemn them to the extent that they don't struggle to change the entire system; but if the system is hard to change, and they meanwhile act as rational agents within it, how culpable are they?" (pp. 42-43). But there's a problem with applying this analogy to the Palestine case. While we don't overly condemn individual tenants, we certainly condemn the real estate interests who raze low-income housing and who connive with political authorities to displace the poor. And while we surely cannot condemn individual Jews fleeing pogroms or Hitler—as Lerner aptly puts it, these Jews leapt "from the burning building of Europe" and landed "on the backs of the Palestinians" (pp. 50-51)—we ought to condemn the organized effort, financed in large part by wealthy Jews, to displace impoverished Palestinians and, in collaboration with colonial powers, to deny them self-determination.

Lerner is quite right to observe that many nationalist movements collaborated with colonial powers. (Arab nationalists, for example, flirted with Nazi Germany during World War II.) Such cooperation, Lerner argues, discredits Zionism no more (or no less) than it does these other nationalisms. But Zionism depended upon colonialism in a rather fundamental way. If at any point between 1917 and 1947 the people of Palestine had been able to exercise their basic right of self-determination, there could have been no Jewish state, given that Jews never constituted more than a third of the population. Thus, for the Zionist project to succeed, it was essential that independence for Palestine be denied.

To be sure, minorities are entitled to basic rights too, including the right of secession, and thus a Jewish state in a limited area of Palestine was not inconsistent with self-determination. But the Zionist movement usually laid claim to far more territory than that on which Jews lived, and not just in abstract statements that referred to the land of Israel as extending from the Nile to the Euphrates. In 1919, the King-Crane Commission reported that Zionist representatives "looked forward to a practically complete dispossession of the present non-Jewish inhabitants, by various forms of purchase."¹¹ When the

British briefly put forward a partition plan in 1937 providing for a Jewish state in a small portion of Palestine, Ben Gurion gave his support, while confiding that the partition would be a lever for "the gradual conquest of all of Palestine;" after an army was formed, he explained, "we will abolish partition and expand to the whole of Palestine."¹² In 1942, the world Zionist movement called not for a Jewish state in Palestine, but for Palestine to be a Jewish state. And when the United Nations voted on partition in 1947, the Israelis determined to expel as many Palestinians from their territory as possible and secretly conspired with King Abdallah of Transjordan to thwart an independent Palestinian state.

IN 1967 ISRAEL OCCUPIED ALL OF WHAT HAD BEEN the Palestine mandate. Lerner claims that it reeks of Jew-hating and double standards to suggest that there is such a thing as Israeli expansionism or that Israel is to blame for the origin of the occupation. Israel took over the territories only "in response to a real military threat." Accounts that blame Israel, charges Lerner, are "usually historically biased and inaccurate" (pp. 87-90).

But Lerner's account is itself inaccurate. For example, he describes Nasser's moving his troops to the Israeli border in May 1967, while Egyptian radio broadcasts raved about pushing the Jews into the sea. "No one knows for sure what Egypt or Syria would have done" if Israel had not attacked first, "but their actions and public statements would have given anyone reasonable grounds for great fear" (pp. 88-89). That the average Israeli had reasonable grounds for fear is undeniable, but the decision to go to war was not made by the average Israeli, but by the Israeli government. And government policymakers knew what the general public did not. There was "no threat of destruction" (Ezer Weizman); "To claim that the Egyptian forces concentrated on our borders were capable of threatening Israel's existence not only insults the intelligence of anyone capable of analyzing this kind of situation, but is an insult to [the Israeli army]" (Gen. Mattityahu Peled); "I do not believe that Nasser wanted war. The two divisions he sent into Sinai on May 14 would not have been enough to unleash an offensive against Israel. He knew it and we knew it" (Yitzhak Rabin); "In June 1967 we . . . had a choice. The Egyptian army concentrations in the Sinai do not prove that Nasser was really about to attack us. We must be honest with ourselves. We decided to attack him" (Menachem Begin).¹³

That Israel has been expansionist was evident even before 1967. In 1956 Ben Gurion proposed to London and Paris that Israel get the West Bank and Lebanon up to the Litani river.¹⁴ When Israel, in collaboration with the British and the French, invaded the Gaza strip and Sinai, Israeli officials declared the former territory to be an integral part of Israel,¹⁵ and Ben Gurion proclaimed: "We have created the third Kingdom of Israel!"¹⁶

It is legitimate, Lerner argues, to criticize Israel for seeking to impose religion on its own citizens. He goes on to say, however, that "Israel has a legitimate right to be a Jewish state in the same sense that Italy or France have the right to be Italian or French states." "Those who are agitated about Israel giving special privileges to Jewish culture, trying thereby to create a Jewish

state, ought to be careful that they are similarly agitated when the Catholic majority of Mexico or the Islamic majority in Algeria or the Hindu majority in India trying {sic} to privilege their religion in their public cultural life" (pp. 92-93).

But Lerner is obscuring a number of crucial distinctions here. When the United States privileges Christian holidays, this is wrong, a violation of minority rights, but not nearly as serious a problem as it would be if the country were declared a Christian state—a demand made only by Mississippi Governor Kirk Fordice and other right-wingers. Likewise, the calls to declare India a Hindu state or Algeria an Islamic state come from right-wing fundamentalists, and are strongly opposed by the left, and properly so. To argue that Israel has as much right to be a Jewish state as France has to be a French state is a false parallel. Someone who isn't French can *in principle* become a French citizen and eventually become French. Millions of people have come to the United States and, in time, become Americans.¹⁷ But non-Jews in a Jewish state never become Jewish. Israel has as much right to be as *Israeli* as France is French, for there can be non-Jewish Israelis; but there cannot be non-Jewish Jews without serious problems.

Lerner acknowledges that there is discrimination against Palestinians who live within the pre-1967 borders of Israel, but he denies that this is in any way "state-sanctioned racism" (p. 100). It is true that, other than the Law of Return, very few Israeli laws explicitly distinguish between Jews and non-Jews (non-Jews are kept out of the army, thereby depriving them of many social benefits). But aside from these, there is still substantial room for state-sanctioned discrimination. In the early 1950s, a set of horrendous laws confiscated the land and property of Israeli Arabs without explicitly mentioning Arabs by name. Until 1965, the vast majority of the country's Arab population was placed under military rule by laws that referred only to geographic location, not religion or ethnicity. And to this day, almost the entire land of Israel is owned by a pseudo-private organization on behalf of the Jewish people that prohibits leasing land to non-Jews.¹⁸ Anyone who cared to see realized that U.S. laws such as the poll-tax represented state-sanctioned racism, though race was never mentioned. The same applies to Israel.

Lerner charges that a "progressive group that gives disproportionate time and energy to criticizing what is wrong with Israel is prima facie engaged in anti-Semitic activity." He acknowledges that the definition of "disproportionate" depends on context: "it seems reasonable for people to give more attention to problems that are closer to home than problems that are further away, or problems in which one's own country is directly or indirectly implicated" (pp. 97-98). There is another context that Lerner ignores: it is reasonable to give more attention to refuting commonly-held misconceptions than to telling people what they already know. Presumably Lerner has given few speeches devoted to denouncing murder as an immoral activity. Likewise, it hardly would have made sense for U.S. leftists to devote a great deal of their energies to condemning Syria for massacring thousands in the city of Hama in 1982—for

who disagreed? To be sure, one should not stay silent; one speaks out to indicate a moral stance. But it would be a false balance to invest "proportionate" time and energy on this issue. Protests by the U.S. left would not have lessened U.S. diplomatic support for Assad's atrocities, since there was no U.S. support. It would have been pointless to organize demonstrations calling for a cut-off of U.S. military aid to Syria, given that Damascus got no U.S. military aid. On the other hand, when Israel marched into Lebanon in 1982, U.S. opinion leaders hailed the invasion, and Washington gave Israel diplomatic, economic, and military backing. This was a situation that critics had a chance of influencing.

Lerner is right that many foreign governments which criticize Israel are deeply hypocritical. Not all hypocrisy is anti-Semitic—there can be other base motives at work—but in any event, hypocrisy cannot be determined by measuring the time or energy spent on denouncing one crime or another. Syrian hypocrisy is demonstrated by the fact that it has done things itself or supported acts by others that are at least as appalling as what Israel has done. If a left group in the United States supported the Hama massacre while criticizing Israel for its handling of the intifada, then its hypocrisy would be evident. Similarly, leftists who supported Soviet crimes while condemning those of Washington could rightly be termed hypocrites—and worse. But those who condemned crimes on both sides, while putting the bulk of their efforts where their influence was greatest, were just being sensible.

Interestingly, Lerner states that "It would be perfectly reasonable to argue for a legal ban on aid—government or individual—to any country that was known to engage in systematic violations of human rights. If this ban were executed equitably, it might pressure the Israeli government" (p. 101). Such a ban would be a great idea. But consider the implications. Aid would be prohibited to a number of nations, but the opposition to the ban would be most vociferous regarding aid to Israel. Those who see Israel as a strategic asset for U.S. interests in the Middle East and those who blindly endorse Israeli policy together constitute a substantial portion of U.S. elite opinion, which is why Israel gets more U.S. public and private aid—in per capita and in absolute terms—than any other country in the world. These supporters of Israel would vehemently argue that Israel was a model of democratic practice. Those aware of the realities of the Israeli occupation would have to expend a great deal of effort arguing otherwise. They would be foolish to waste a lot of effort arguing the case for cutting aid where most everyone agreed (say, Zaire) and so they would be giving "disproportionate time and energy to criticizing what is wrong with Israel." But they would hardly be anti-Semitic for doing so.

Though rejecting Lerner's contention that much of the criticism of Israel from the U.S. left is anti-Semitic, I believe he is right to urge that those who make such criticisms be careful not to play into the hands of anti-Semites. And given the occasional expressions of anti-Semitism in traditional left constituencies, it is important that leftists be more vigorous than they have been in explicitly confronting and disavowing anti-Semitism.

BEYOND THE ISSUE OF ISRAEL, LERNER IS CRITICAL of the U.S. left for its attitude toward Jews. Liberal and progressive social change movements, he charges, have failed to pay special attention to anti-Semitism and therefore they "objectively" play an anti-Semitic role" (p. 82). His specific examples, however, are not very compelling.

Lerner asserts that multiculturalism has been harmful in some respects to Jewish interests. "The linguistic move of substituting 'people of color' for 'oppressed minorities,' coupled with the decision to refer to Jews as 'whites,' becomes an anti-Semitic denial of Jewish history" (pp. 122-23). In fact, Lerner urges people to "interfere with attempts to include Jews in the category 'white,' with the implicit assumption that Jews are *not* oppressed" (p. 115). But to say that some people have been singled out for mistreatment based on their color in no way denies the existence of other forms of oppression. Using the term "people of color" does not preclude the existence of sexism or heterosexism. So why should it deny anti-Semitism?

There are many forms of oppression, but sometimes it is useful to refer to the specific history of U.S. racism and its specific victims. Segregation in the United States categorized people as either white or colored, and Jews—with negligible exceptions—fell into the first category. That other countries had other practices does not change this U.S. reality. "People of color" is often (though not always) the most functional term to describe the victims of one particular form of oppression in the United States. In fact, the term is sufficiently useful that Lerner himself uses it elsewhere in his book (see p. 140).

Another example Lerner gives of how anti-Semitism functions in liberal and progressive organizations is that "to the extent that the Jewish community is seen as just another manifestation of a destructive 'whiteness' or of 'bourgeois values,' the left gives no validation or support to those who do wish to work to change the values and orientation of the Jewish community. In fact, people who put energy in that direction are given no support on the left" (p. 84). What's odd about this charge is that there has long been a group that is part of the left that works precisely on these issues—New Jewish Agenda—and which gets not a single mention from Lerner. Lerner claims that his book breaks with "Protestant etiquette" by including a specific pitch to join the new organization he is setting up—the Committee for Judaism and Social Justice (p. 136). But it seems like more than just bad manners to treat a rival left group as non-existent, making the left seem less diverse than it is.

Of course, most Jews on the left are not members of explicitly Jewish organizations. Lerner suggests two motives for those Jews who have sought to identify themselves in universalist rather than Jewish terms: some have been self-haters, but most have been following a "realistic self-preservative response to the reality of anti-Semitism"; "Jews who desired to play down their Jewishness were not irrational to believe that being Jewish would be an obstacle to success and acceptance" (p. 25). But nowhere does Lerner seem to acknowledge another motive for universalist identification: the Enlightenment view that religion is superstition and an impediment to human development and

that narrow nationalism is a barrier to establishing the human community. Lerner finds much sustenance in Jewish religious texts, and that is his right, but those who do not are not necessarily surrendering to self-hatred or an excessive desire for acceptance. (Atheism is hardly a ticket to acceptance in the contemporary United States.)

Many individuals of Jewish background who are not religious still choose to identify culturally as Jews. Actually, what is usually meant by Jewish culture is the culture of east European Jewry, something that is not common to all Jews; the non-religious customs I grew up with at home, for example, had more in common with the customs of Syrian Muslims than of Polish Jews. Be that as it may, it is anyone's right to choose to identify with Jewish culture however defined, but that many Jews on the left do not do so, that they find such identification narrow and confining, is again not a sign of self-hatred or an obsession with acceptance.

Lerner argues that there is more to Judaism than specific religious beliefs or ethnic dishes: Judaism's essential content, he says, is its revolutionary message (pp. 3-4). My own reading of Judaism is far different from Lerner's; I see it as deeply conservative and teaching blind obedience. It is wonderful that Lerner believes he can get a progressive message from Jewish texts, just as it is wonderful that some read Christian texts as supporting a liberation theology. One can respect these individuals, without accepting their interpretations.

Lerner rightly stresses that people have a need for far more than material well-being; they need meaning in their lives. But meaning can be attained without adopting Judaism in any of its varieties. One can feel connected to a tradition, other than a religious or a national one, which is inherently restrictive. There is a long tradition of people striving to create a better world. This tradition includes Jews, but it includes as well people from every other background. And those Jews who identify with this universalist tradition don't necessarily hate themselves or their parents. And they are certainly not seeking acceptance.

IT WOULD BE WRONG TO ALLOW THE INADEQUACIES OF Lerner's book to obscure the fact that anti-Semitism is a serious problem. While we must not let exaggerated charges of anti-Semitism deflect us from working for peace and justice in the Middle East, we cannot ignore the reality of anti-Semitism. It is gaining strength in Europe and is still virulent in the Islamic world. In the United States it is not nearly as dangerous a phenomenon as anti-black racism, but it persists, not least among some groups which ought to be natural allies of the left. We must redouble our efforts to combat anti-Semitism.

NOTES

1. See Chip Berlet, *Right Woos Left: Populist Party, LaRouchian, and Other Neo-fascist Overtures to Progressives, And Why They Must Be Rejected*, Cambridge, MA: Political Research Associates, 7 Oct. 1992.

2. Irving Spiegel, "Study Finds Leftist Peril to Medicine," *New York Times*, 24 Jan. 1971.

3. For this and other examples, see Micah Sifry, "Anti-Semitism in the American Mind," *The Nation*, 25 Jan. 1993, pp. 94-96; Noam Chomsky, *Chronicles of Dissent: Interviews with David Barsamian*, Monroe, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1992, pp. 283-85.

4. Though Lerner doesn't mention it, there have been other minorities that have occupied this same intermediate position between oppressor and oppressed: for example, the Chinese in Southeast Asia or Indians in East Africa. Both have been relatively privileged and frequently persecuted.

5. Since Lerner's argument hinges on the Palestinian claim to being part of the Arab nation, his reference to Islamic lands shifts the discussion somewhat. It is true that most Islamic countries with a substantial Jewish minority were Arab, but not so Iran and Turkey.

6. Bernard Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, New York: Norton, 1986, pp. 123, 131.

7. Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, p. 136. Discrimination against Christians and Jews in Islamic countries led those minorities to seek foreign protection, which in turn made the majority more suspicious of the minorities' nationalist credentials, exacerbating relations between the religious communities. That minorities became dependent on foreign powers was tragic, but understandable.

8. See David S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews*, New York: Pantheon, 1984, pp. 173, 175, 200.

9. Simha Flapan, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*, New York: Pantheon, 1987, p. 67.

10. Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, pp. 55, 73-74.

11. Quoted in Deborah J. Gerner, *One Land, Two Peoples: The Conflict Over Palestine*, Boulder: Westview, 1991, p. 34.

12. Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, pp. 21-22. See also Shabtai Teveth, *Ben-Gurion and the Palestinian Arabs*, New York: Oxford, 1985, pp. 187-90.

13. These quotes with citations are in Andrew and Leslie Cockburn, *Dangerous Liaison: The Inside Story of the U.S.-Israeli Covert Relationship*, New York: HarperCollins, 1991, pp. 153-54. For further quotations along the same lines, see Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle*, Boston: South End Press, 1983, pp. 28, 100.

14. Flapan, *Birth of Israel*, p. 51.

15. Ben Gurion and Foreign Minister Golda Meir quoted in Fred J. Khouri, *The Arab-Israeli Dilemma*, 2nd ed., Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1976, p. 215.

16. Quoted in Maxime Rodinson, *Israel and the Arabs*, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1968, p. 76.

17. In practice, of course, nativist sentiment in France or the United States may restrict citizenship and cause those who do become naturalized citizens to be treated as outsiders. But this is recognized as a departure from the democratic ideal professed in France and the United States, a departure that can be rectified without changing the fundamental nature of the French or U.S. states. On the other hand, non-Jews never become Jewish and thus in principle will always be outsiders in a Jewish state.

18. See Don Peretz, *Israel and the Palestine Arabs*, Washington, DC: Middle East Institute, 1958; Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs of Israel*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976; Ian Lustik, *Arabs in the Jewish State*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980, pp. 97-109, 123-29, 173-74.