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~~1-50~~ p. 1, 5-6, 10-12Mayer Schiller, "The New Judaism?" Issues of the American Council for
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ISSUES

of the
American Council
for Judaism
SUMMER 1998

Much has been written in recent days about a "crisis" within the American Jewish community, about growing rates of disaffection from Jewish life, conversion to other religions, and a growing rate of intermarriage. In the future, some have said, the American Jewish community will simply fade away. To combat such trends, some have embarked upon a campaign of sending young American Jews to Israel to get in touch with their "roots." Others speak of increasing expenditures on Jewish education and in Israel itself there has been a decision to send aid to the American Jewish community to stem the tide of assimilation.

One respected Jewish leader who does not share this crisis mentality is Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, author of such works as *The Zionist Idea*, *Jewish Polemics*, and *The Jews In America*.

Currently Bronfman Visiting Professor of the Humanities at New York University and Professor Emeritus of Religion at Dartmouth College, Hertzberg has served as president of the American Jewish Policy Foundation and the American Jewish Congress. In his new book, *Jews: The Essence And Character Of A People*, written with the aid of Aron Hirt-Manheimer, the editor of *REFORM JUDAISM* magazine, he explores what it means to be Jewish and makes it clear that if the Jews are the chosen people, what they have been chosen for is to do justice to others, not to contemplate their own numerical strength or physical well being.

Faith in God

Without faith in God, the Jewish vocation loses any real meaning. While there is widespread debate about "Who is a Jew?" and the Orthodox insist that

God's Mysterious Choice: Understanding Judaism's Unique Mission

by Allan C. Brownfeld

JEWES: THE ESSENCE AND CHARACTER OF A PEOPLE

by
Arthur Hertzberg and
Aron Hirt-Manheimer,
Harper San Francisco,
294 Pages,
\$25.00.

those who do not share their beliefs or biology must remain outside the fold, Hertzberg gives quite a different answer: it is God's choice that makes Jews Jews. "God says, I chose you not because you are more numerous or powerful, and not because you are morally, spiritually or intellectually superior. You are not. I chose you out of my unknowable will."

Hertzberg's idea of chosenness denies superiority and argues that God's mysterious choice is a burden more than a benefit, an obligation rather than a privilege. It demands that Jews be a witness to God's truth everywhere in the world, and witnesses to truth often end up in difficult circumstances. Beyond this,

Hertzberg argues that Jewish chosenness is not something which exists primarily for the benefit of the Jews themselves. Instead, the lessons of the Hebrew Bible are for all of the world — "a light unto the nations."

To those who speak of "crisis," and conduct fund-raising campaigns to insure "continuity" and rail against anti-Semitism while it is in precipitous decline, Hertzberg notes that, "The Jews are a peculiar people. In age after age, they have been expected to disappear, and yet they persist. In age after age they have been few in number, and yet they have seemed large to themselves — and to their enemies. In age after age the beliefs and values of the Jews have challenged, and often irritated, the majority society. In age after age large numbers of Jews have been murdered or have been forcibly converted or have deserted their faith by choice, but enough have elected to carry on their Jewish otherness, to continue the journey . . ."

Continuity of Character

There is, Hertzberg believes, a "continuity in the character of the Jews." In this book we find an extensive description of how that character was fashioned and how it has changed, "even as it has remained essentially the same since the time, some four thousand years ago, of the founding patriarch, Abraham. In age after age, Jews have followed after Abraham — by being different, by insisting on their otherness."

The belief that there is a "definable Jewish character" challenges the idea that Jews are, in fact, "just like everybody else." The conceptual framework Hertzberg presents involves three prime concepts: the Jew as the chosen, the factious, and the outsider. He notes that, "The essential Jewish character, we believe, was already present in the person of Abraham. It was reinforced for many centuries by Jews who were willing to

Allan C. Brownfeld is a nationally syndicated columnist and serves as Associate Editor of *The Lincoln Review* and Editor of *Issues*. The author of five books, he has served on the staff of the U.S. Senate, House of Representatives and the Office of the Vice President. He is Executive Director of the American Council of Judaism.

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I have been asked by the American Council for Judaism to respond to Professor Paul Gottfried's *Rising Above Jewish Ethnicity*. This was an assignment which I took as an honor of sorts, having long admired the Professor's scholarly and polemical writings. Gottfried is a insightful and courageous theoretician. He has been willing to suffer and has suffered much for his principles — a rare quality in this age of cowardly conformity. Yet, despite his learning and idealism he remains open to ideas. Discussions with him are never dogmatic and always enjoyable. Therefore, although some of the following comments may be critical, they are all enveloped in respect and affection.

Ultra-Orthodox Zionism?

Before moving to weightier matters there are a few generalizations in Professor Gottfried's piece which need further development. Orthodox Jewry is described as embracing the "Zionist nationalist right." We are told of "the Orthodox obsession with . . . the politics of Zionist ultra-nationalism." In fact, this is only the case among the Modern Orthodox in America and the Religious Zionist camp in Israel, far from a majority of Orthodoxy worldwide.

In its initial stages Zionism was virulently opposed by almost all Orthodox Jews in Central and Eastern Europe. Those who embraced the Mizrahi (religious Zionist) perspective were a tiny fraction of the leaders and masses of observant Jewry. This near uniform opposition to Zionism continued up till the creation of Israel when Agudath Israel, which represented the main body of Orthodoxy (after having opposed statehood for close to half a century), grudgingly agreed to work within the state to safeguard the interests of Torah observance.

However, even this tepid participation was seen as too much of a compromise by many who would shortly thereafter found the Adah ha-Charedis in order to continue the traditional Orthodox, anti-Zionist perspective. Their policy has been one of total non-engagement with the Israeli government. They refuse the many financial benefits offered to institutions and individuals by the Zionist bureaucracy in the spirit of wanting "neither their honey or their sting."

The New Judaism?

by Mayer Schiller

Orthodoxy Is Divided

Thus, Orthodoxy today divides into pro-, non- and anti-Zionist camps. Interestingly, though, it has been precisely those on the Orthodox left religiously who have evidenced the greatest enthusiasms for Zionism and, in particular, its nationalist elements. Of late, in the aftermath of the '67 war there has been an improvement in the observance standards of the Religious Zionists in Israel and by extension in America. Despite these recent trends, though, the media's use of the term "ultra Orthodox" to describe West bank settlers is completely misleading, as images are doubtless conjured up of black clad, hat wearers with beards and *peyos* flying, brandishing machine guns in the streets of Hebron.

Actually the reverse is true. It has been the most "ultra Orthodox" who have opposed statehood since the 1890s and have been violently persecuted for it. For example, their spokesman Dr. Yakov de Haan was assassinated in 1922 by Haganah operatives for assisting the then Rav of Jerusalem's orthodox community, Rabbi Yoseph Chaim Sonnenfeld, in negotiations with King Hussein geared to finding a non-Zionist reconciliation between Jew and Arab. And, in 1948 it was Rabbi Amram Blau, battle scarred veteran of many an anti-Zionist crusade, who marched toward the Arab lines brandishing a white flag, while being fired on by Israeli troops.

Mention must also be made of the vast majority of German Orthodox who, along with their non-Orthodox brethren, were steadfast in their anti-Zionism. This opposition was rooted in traditional rhetoric which rejected any desire for Jewish political sovereignty over the Holy Land pre-Messiah. However, it went beyond this by seeing Zionism as the betrayal of a properly constituted German patriotism.

In passing it is also worth noting that even in the Religious Zionist camp there is an articulate minority which rejects militant Zionism. This group (represented by organizations such as Oz Veshalom and the political party Meimad) has favored a rap-

prochement with the Palestinians and endorsed the Oslo peace effort. They are drowned out by the majority of their co-ideologists but their brave existence cannot be ignored.

Non-Religious Jews

Traditional Orthodoxy rejected Zionism for many reasons. On the practical level it was a movement comprised largely of non-religious Jews. Often an assent to Zionism went hand-in-hand with a denial of Torah beliefs and practices. Thus, Orthodox leaders saw Zionist fervor as another of the myriad ideologies which, in the Enlightenment's aftermath, lured the masses from their ancestral devotions.

Theoretically many viewed Zionism as a denial of traditional Jewish doctrines concerning exile and redemption. In this perspective exile was a punishment for Jewish sins. It was a spiritual state imposed by God. Repentance and spiritual acts were the only methods to be properly employed in order that the Creator should miraculously bring about the redemption. By positing exile as a human condition and the "Jewish problem" as one capable of political and military solution, Zionism was implicitly denying the sacred core of the nation's history. Instead of a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation," Jewry was now to become a nation like all others.

As noted before, German Orthodoxy added to these traditional considerations those of patriotism. In the writings of the nineteenth century German Orthodox leader, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, for example, we find constant references to the "fatherland" and the duty of all citizens to love it with a passion which I'm sure many of the contemporary inhabitants of the Federal Republic would find quite embarrassing.

This original anti-Zionist argument of nineteenth century German Jewry is occasionally heard today in Neturei Karta circles in America and England. A small group, the most strident of all the traditional Orthodox in its opposition to Zionism, they will often carry American flags at their rallies and signs which proclaim they are "Americans — not Israelis."

There are obviously many differences between the patriotism and attendant anti-Zionism of German Orthodoxy and that of the bearded NK sporting their Eastern European dress as they protest against Israel in Washington, New York and London. The most profound of these is

motivation. The Neturei Karta attempt to behave submissively to their host nation. Despite their proclamations of patriotism, they see themselves as members of the Jewish nation, but bound by the terms of exile to be humble, cooperative guests. They deeply fear the gentile and see exile as a time when Jews are to be quiet, non-participants in the general social order. Thus, they maintain Jewish social isolation while behaving deferentially towards gentile society. By contrast German Orthodoxy saw itself as German. (Incidentally so did English and French Orthodoxy.) They viewed a robust identification of the Jew with his gentile nation as the morally correct stance. Theirs was an involved and passionate patriotism. These distinctions are particularly relevant as we now turn our attention to the substance of Professor Gottfried's thesis and some possible alternatives to it.

The New Judaism

Following the lead of the Reform Rabbi Jay Brickman, Professor Gottfried advances the notion "that it is possible to view Judaism as a body of theological convictions with ethical implications." This he grants is not "the only possible formulation of Judaism." However, he feels that it may prove popular amongst a new generation of Jews "looking for spirituality, as opposed to ethnic tribalism or evidence of Jewish victimization."

Perhaps realizing that there is nothing particularly Jewish about this agenda we are advised that in order to attract Jews it should hold "on to familiar ritual and . . . identifiably Jewish points of reference." An example of this is "praying with a head covering, mostly in Hebrew." As an adherent of "a Jewish universal religion," Professor Gottfried sees no necessary link between this faith and any particular brand of Israeli politics. Indeed, logically one wonders whether according to this view there should be any link between Jews in America and Israel, especially if neither embraces the Professor's new faith.

In Professor Gottfried's view, beyond offering a spiritualized faith, the abandonment of a peoplehood-rooted Judaism would have two other major benefits to commend itself to contemporary sensibilities. It would "not permit distinctions to be made between Jewish and gentile neighbor in terms of ethical obligation" which he sees as "Talmudically grounded." Secondly, the retention of "ritual and dietary

observances would only be . . . to the extent that they highlight, not blur, universal obligations . . ." In general, the faith posited by Professor Gottfried aims to embody the "best" of nineteenth century Reform Judaism, primarily its universalism, while avoiding its wholesale jettisoning of ritual.

In sum, it seems fair to say that Professor Gottfried is so distressed by what he sees as the social and ethical misfortunes resulting from Judaism as national faith that he seeks to create a new version of the ancestral religion. My contention is that it is not necessary to do so. The problems, the outline of which I am in essential agreement with, need not be addressed by tossing the baby despite the griminess of much of his bath water.

Inventing A Religion

Although Professor Gottfried admits "that most Jews during the last several thousand years would (not) have identified with his formulation," he skips over this fact a bit too contentedly. I believe that, however alluring it may be to some to strip Judaism down to universalist ethics with a few (self selected) rituals (which somehow are to highlight ethics!), there is no doubt that this new creation is not Judaism nor can it serve as the basis for Jewish identity.

Judaism is the faith of a specific nation. It is so presented not only in the Talmud but in the Bible as well. The "children of Israel" are a people. Those who backslide in the Bible are *Israelite* sinners who are punished. The Lord always refers to them as "My people" even as they reject His law by worshipping idols. It is as a people that the Jews wage war against other nations, often brutally. The prophets see the Messianic era as one where this people will be accorded special status. Throughout thousands of years ancestry has determined membership in the Jewish people. The lone exception being the much discouraged convert who is subject to a rigorous ritual before being admitted to *the people*. Every Jewish sacred text takes these facts for granted — Bible, Mishneh, Talmud, Midrashim and continuing down through the centuries.

Professor Gottfried may respond that this is true as far as historic Judaism goes. His task is to invent a new Judaism. Of course, in the Orthodox view this is simply impossible. Judaism is not invented by man. It is revealed by God. We cannot cre-

ate revelation on our own.

Yet, even were we to accept a secularist view of Judaism's basic texts there is still no denying their teachings. Nor is it possible to deny the historic experience of the Jewish people in history. They experienced themselves as people. At times this view was enforced by the non-Jew as well but it was always how the Jew saw things.

Is it possible to reverse this flow in mid-stream and declare via intellectual fiat that there is no Jewry, only a universalist ethics? And then to further declare this ethics to be Judaism by attaching to it a small number of non-binding rituals? Would we not by so doing be stripping this faith, this people of everything which might inspire and thereby provide a survival mechanism? Indeed, it is far from clear to what degree Professor Gottfried has an allegiance to Jewish survival as it is commonly understood. To most committed Jews, survival means that Jews and their descendants should remain part of the Jewish people and believers in its faith. To Professor Gottfried the former can no longer have much relevance, while the latter becomes a volitional matter, a choice of whether to accept a universalist, ethical creed.

Dual Morality?

Although I am constrained by my orthodoxy as well as by my understanding of the social and mystical function of religion in history to reject Professor Gottfried's new religion there is still much in his critique which remains potent. He is correct that Talmudic morality, at first glance, strikes us as tribal. I too cringe, as does Professor Gottfried, when endless Jewish victimology is wielded as a club to browbeat the System into submission to organizational Jewish demands. Plus we are left to wonder whether the ethno-national nature of Jewish loyalty must conflict with loyalties to other nations.

There is no doubt that taken at face value Talmudic law (and we may easily add much of Biblical law, with its genocidal wars, collective guilt and mass dispossession of peoples all of which Professor Gottfried ignores) constantly distinguishes between non-Jew and Jew. There is hardly an area of civil, criminal or sexual law where this is not the case. Often denied in popular media the existence of this double standard (always to the detriment of the gentile) is common

(Continued on page 10)

portant and very personal book. Many readers will disagree with some of his conclusions. Few will dispute his thoughtfulness and the breadth of his knowledge of Jewish history and of Judaism's sacred texts. The chosen people, he believes, were chosen for a purpose, and that purpose is not to become a "normal" people like all others, but to do justice in the world, to "be a blessing" to all of mankind.

He is not worried about Jewish "survival," and believes that what Jews should be asking is not how to perpetuate the Jewish people, but what God expects of them. If God still has some role for Jews to play, they will, in some mysterious way, find themselves able to do it. If there is no belief in God or in Judaism's uniqueness, there will be no Jews.

Today's frenzy of activity in pursuit of an answer to the question of Jewish "survival" puts Jews in the position of discussing themselves, not what God intends them to do and be. Worshipping false idols and messiahs — whether it be Shabbetai Zvi in the 17th century or the State of Israel at the present time — is an evasion of the real mission given by God when he declared: "You will be My people." Believing in the same God who spoke at Sinai, Arthur Hertzberg is not afraid of the future and urges his readers not to be either. •

ISSUES OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR JUDAISM

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Allan C. Brownfeld, Editor

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THE NEW JUDAISM? (Continued from page 6)

knowledge to scholars.

Among Orthodox Jews there have been various approaches to this literature through the ages. In the centuries when gentile law (Christian and Moslem) discriminated against Jews and the animosity of each faith to the other was a theological and social given I think it is fair to say that most Jews saw the dual morality of their own codes as perfectly normal. Most societies had two legal standards for the in and out groups. In fact, the dehumanization of the other, the heretic and the non-believer was part of traditional society. It was "us" against "them" and Jews were no different than their neighbors in this regard.

Not Idolaters

There were, however, even in those days attempts made to mitigate the force of this dual morality. Without going into too much halachic detail, mention should be made of Meiri and Rabbeinu Tam (early medieval scholars) who ruled that Christians and Moslems were not to be seen as the "idolaters" referred to in the Talmud. This approach allowed Jews to accept one standard of morality in European and Arab lands. Of course, this would not solve the problem as it applied to the pagan East but it did offer a way out on a practical basis. Since the original Talmudic texts generally referred to "idol worshipers" not gentiles this approach did not violate the letter of the law. Truth be told, though, until modern times this opinion was a minority view and Christians were generally seen as the Talmud's "idolaters."

Once emancipation changed the nature of Jewish-gentile relations and brought the two nations into close proximity with each other there emerged a much larger literature which sought to remove contemporary gentiles from the exclusions of Talmudic texts. Arguments were made that halachic pronouncements which called upon Jews to deal well with gentiles because of *darkei shalom* (ways of peace) or *kiddush Hashem* (sanctification of the Name) were not merely pragmatic means to prevent group animosities but were reflective of some higher moral standard. In other words, this view saw minimalist ethics as tribal but posited that there existed a

maximalist ethics which embraced all men.

Particularly German Orthodoxy was engaged in a reading of halachic texts so as to eradicate the dual morality standard. Talmudic law is intricate and the finest minds of German Jewry engaged in this task, the goal of which was to embrace the gentile world with the same standards of behavior that Jews had always practiced among themselves. Rabbi Dovid Zvi Hoffman, a leading nineteenth century German Rabbinical scholar, devoted an entire volume to the subject. Its telling title was *The Code of Jewish Law and the Rabbinic On the Relation of Jews to Those of Other Faiths*. Thus, it would seem that within Orthodoxy there is an ample tradition which refuses to embrace the dual morality so troubling to Professor Gottfried.

Victimology

Throughout European lands today as the majority culture abandons any claims to a distinctive identity, power is seized by an assortment of other forces, not the least of which are the forever increasing number of "victim" groups. Sensing that the majority has strangely ceased to regard itself as a group, except in order to publicly proclaim its own sins and seek penance for them, the "victims" realize that the more evidences of majority "evil" they can produce the higher they will rank in the battle for social power. (Of course, the whole strange system is predicated on the mainstream culture's existence, for it is called upon to forever make good the "victims" demands upon it. Today we are already somewhat into the next phase where, inevitably, the "victims" will battle amongst themselves.)

Jewish proponents of the "victim" card are aware not only of its social effectiveness but of its usefulness as a means of insuring Jewish solidarity and, hence, survival. If we were forever hated by all and are doomed to be forever hated by all, then we'd best stick together and make the best of it. All peoples are out for themselves. It's a Hobbesian world out there and the sooner we recognize this the better. (Incidentally this perspective dovetails nicely with the views of the just discussed "dual morality" proponents.)

Personally, I have never found this view of the eternally-hating gentile to have any resemblance with reality. It seems a myth, pure and simple, and an ugly one at that.

Is it a good means of social control? Perhaps, but at what cost? It strips the faith and history of Jew and gentile alike of all but their moments of antagonism. It wallows in evil imagery and postulates a forever morally superior Jew, victimized by the forever morally inferior "goy." I see Jewish-gentile battles as a two way street linked to the strange phenomenon of a nomadic nation's presence in the midst of host nations, while rejecting the host people's faith and regarding them as antagonists. It is not a case of forever virtuous "victims" pursued by maniacal oppressors but an existential tragedy somewhat inherent in the nature of galut (exile).

Perhaps, the greatest victim of victimology is Judaism itself. I have spent most of my adult life amongst Hasidic Jews, almost all of whom were Holocaust survivors, and I've heard almost nothing of the relentless harping on victimology and our need to forever memorialize it. Instead the attitude is constantly forward looking, centering on Torah study, prayer, good deeds and the enthusiastic pursuit of faith. Victimology, on the other hand, allows Jews to bypass their own faith and offers the national allegiances of Holocaust/Israel in its place.

The tragedy becomes amplified as we move on to view Jewish-Gentile relations today. In fact, there we will discover that "victimology" has real victims but it is not those of popular mythology.

Jews As Citizens

There have of late been certain hesitant attempts within Orthodoxy to scrutinize our dealings with gentile individuals. These efforts are commendable but they fail to touch on gentile group identity. This failure is potentially dangerous since the non-Jew is as desirous as we are of experiencing the consolations and fulfillments of peoplehood. Jewish communal relations toward the non-Jewish world which ignore this basic human need are morally insensitive and sure to provoke resentment.

Assuming, based on our above discussion that our existence is national-religious, transcending borders and civilizations, then the inevitable problem becomes, how are we to relate to other nations amongst whom we find ourselves?

What is a nation? There are two types of national social contracts with which we are familiar. The first is identity based. It sees society as rooted in a commonality

beyond that of mere ideas. Shared ancestry or religious fellowship is the raw material from which the social fabric is sewn. Think of England and Spain or Iran and Zaire in this regard, to cite some otherwise diverse examples. Israel is also an example of an identity based society. A far smaller number of nations are (or, at least, attempt to be) idea based. America today (although not, to be sure, at its founding) would be an example of this. According to this latter view the nation is seen as devoid of specific identity. It is composed of many peoples and faiths, all pledged to the national *ideology*. In America, for example, this ideology has been variously defined in our two hundred year history as a limited, constitutional republic at the founding and a multicultural, global crusade for egalitarian democracy today.

The great ethical dilemma for Jewry since the emancipation has been how to approach the non-Jew's sense of his own identity and social cohesion. Traditionally, our public advocates and organizations have attempted to convince the gentile that he would be best with idea based societies. We fear — and with much evidence from history — that gentile societies rooted in identities be they of faith, race, culture or ethnicity will see us as a different people and persecute or, at very least, treat us in some ways as strangers.

Is this advocacy duplicitous? The obvious question — whether this policy is good for the survival of gentile group identities or their faiths — is never raised. The answer — again based on history — is obviously, no. Secular, heterogeneous, multicultural, capitalist societies devoid of commitment to peoplehood inexorably destroy the group identities of their inhabitants.

Independent Nations

In *Nezach Yisrael* (Chapter 2) the Maharal of Prague posits that in pre-Messianic days all nations are deserving of independence because, "God created them all separately, therefore, none should rule over the other." Thus, all nations by virtue of a process which "inheres in creation" should have their own existence. It is easy to view self-determination favorably when we as a people are not affected by it. (Tibet should be free of the Communist Chinese or Kurdistan from Iraq.) It is more difficult when self-determination is asked for by those whom "mainstream" media despises (the Afrikaner and Zulu in South

Africa, the Scots-Presbyterians of Ulster or Quebecois in Canada). It is most difficult when nations among whom we dwell seek to preserve their peoplehood.

The inevitable, vexing question then — Is it moral to publicly promote pluralist models for the Other? May we zealously guard our group loyalty (and in the case of Israel see our Jewish identity as the nation's core) while seeking to strip gentiles of their identities in the name of global capitalism, open immigration, multiculturalism, egalitarianism and the like?

Until we attempt to deal with this question honestly, Jewish social activism is doomed to be merely Machiavellian maneuvering for our own good, masquerading as social concern.

There are four moral answers to this problem: 1) Zionism, that is, living in Israel. This is the end result of proclaiming our peoplehood and answers the question of "Are Jews English, French or German?" with a resounding "No". 2) Patriotism, a loyalty and sense of identity with the nation, people, culture, history where we dwell. This approach was that of German Orthodoxy. It saw Jews as being a part of both peoples; Germans as well as Jews. 3) Autonomy, no longer discussed as an option today, in which Jews would have their own authority structure within gentile nations but be excluded from the gentile governing procedure. This was to some degree the position of G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc as well as the many streams of Jewish Bundism. It is essentially how the Jews lived in Christian Europe. 4) Absolute universalism which seeks to obliterate all distinctions between peoples.

Of course, the last approach, were it sincere, would mean the end of our people along with all others in a global homogenization and must be ruled out. The current approach is to "homogenize the non-Jews" in order to protect ourselves. This view may be legitimate if we grant a Hobbesian view of intergroup relations, where all are seen as forever at war with each other and any means to survive, fair or foul, are demanded. Morality then becomes that of the tribe's survival and is neither universal nor ultimate.

Fraught with Danger

Currently this is the across-the-board Jewish organizational approach. To me it is unconscionable and fraught with danger, for the non-Jew is not as oblivious to

the facade as it sometimes seems. Its recification, following any of the above four options, should be at the top of our group agendas. Yet, this would require an openness of soul which we are seemingly incapable of at present.

Two trends compete today for the allegiance of mankind. The first which has humorously been labeled "McWorld" sees reality as economic (global capitalism) or political ("rights", "pluralism", "multiculturalism") and views national, religious, ethnic, racial, cultural, historical and local loyalties as meaningless relics of earlier ages. The second, decidedly non-cosmopolitan, is rooted in the lands, peoples and cultures of mankind and seeks to preserve them. Although the former has money and power in the West today, the latter, both in the Third World, Europe and North America has the dedication which extra-personal, group loyalty brings. Jews, who know the blessings of peoplehood, should be careful never to deny them to others.

A cautionary note: It should not be assumed that the option of patriotic attachment to one's homeland is not devoid of difficulty. There is no doubt that Jewish survival demands a certain degree of social isolation. For example, in America, those Jews who, having come from Europe with their faith intact, enrolled their children in the public schools were essentially stating that they did not regard their loss via assimilation as too horrible. Thus, Orthodoxy which rejects public schooling, has the lowest rate of intermarriage of all the "branches" of Judaism.

Accordingly the ideal paradigm, as I see it, is one in which Jewry would remain largely among its own socially but maintain a deep emotional, political and cultural tie to the national identity or (if it be legitimate) ideology. As historian Steven Lowenstein writes concerning pre-Holocaust German Jews, "The bulk of Jews in Germany, even the Orthodox, viewed themselves as German by nationality. This meant not only that they felt a loyalty and patriotism for the pre-Nazi state but also that they felt that they shared in German culture and language. The idea that being Jewish meant cultural separateness, national minority status, a national language or a national culture markedly different from that of other Germans was rejected by all but those with a strong ideological commitment to Zionism."

Obviously the patriotic approach automatically rules out any education which endorses double standards of morality or portrays the gentile as a hate-filled adversary. Thus, although dwelling largely in isolation, Jews would cherish their patriotic identity and participate in the national discussion, caring about the whole body politic not just themselves. In the 1881 words of the *Israelit* (a German Jewish Orthodox journal), "When voting we should merely consider what is good for the fatherland . . . and thus demonstrate that we are German by birth and by conviction." Jews would thus join in the rites and rituals of patriotism and see them as a primary obligation far exceeding those of Israel or any other foreign power. This is admittedly a fine line to follow but it is the only one possible given our unique historical and religious circumstances.

Jews In America

America presents us with a very different situation than does Europe. In the old world it is clear (despite recent World Cup propaganda to the contrary) that nations are based upon peoplehood, that is, racial and ethnic identity. Here, we are told, this is not the case. America is the world's "first universal nation" as some commentators have put it. Thus, it would seem that Jews may exist in America without the tensions of their religious/national identity which inhere elsewhere.

However, the truth is far from so simple. America has actually redefined itself three times in its history. The original nation was an overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon one and in all likelihood the Founders never envisioned that it would become anything else. In the 1830s and 40s German and Irish immigrants came here in large numbers. This trend was opposed by the American Party on essentially religious grounds. The opposition was defeated and American "identity" embraced all Northern Europeans. Similarly in the 1880s to 1920s the definition of America was stretched to include large numbers of Eastern European Jews and Southern Italians. This influx prompted large scale opposition from those who wished to maintain the Nordic "identity" of America and, in fact, this time proved triumphant when the 1923 immigration law was passed, which effectively brought to an end non-Nordic immigration.

This notion, subconscious at times and

alternatively made explicit, that America was not merely an idea but a people and their culture, was accepted in varying degrees throughout the nation's history until the Immigration Act of 1965. It was then, although the act's advocates denied it at the time, that America accepted, perhaps irrevocably, the idea that anyone in the world was potentially an American provided he came here legally. (This last requirement is also questioned by some!)

The post-1965 America, a political entity of competing group identities, is a place where all are now encouraged to remain primarily loyal to their group identities under the auspices of "multiculturalism" and similar ideologies. (The lone exception is, paradoxically, the Northern European.) In fact, it is no longer even demanded that the original state ideology of Republican virtue and responsible citizenship be accepted. What remains is a free-for-all, a group-versus-group scramble for power and money in which the national interest is not only ignored but simply nonexistent.

The Need To Serve God

At this stage of the game in a "nation" of diverse and often antagonistic peoples, in the name of which unifying identity or principle should the Jews abandon, compromise or add to their own peoplehood? There is no longer an American nation to which patriotic obligations as originally understood apply. The very least, though, given the current American disunity which may be asked of Jews is that they not become enraged when others, whites and Christians, in addition to the standard "victims," demand to be dealt with as groups, with survival needs and parochial agendas all their own. Alternatively Jews may see themselves as part of the effort to preserve European identity at this late date. In any event, what they simply may not do is advocate a faceless, democratic capitalism of pop culture for the non-Jew while zealously safeguarding their own rich, cultural particularism.

In general, Professor Gottfried has done us a great service (as he always does) by addressing matters that others fear to uncover. I'm afraid, though, that his new Judaism will not solve the very real problems he discusses. Yet, as we search for other solutions, let us heed his cry to practice universal morality, stop whining, behave patriotically where applicable and above all, serve God. •