

ISRAEL NEWS

*A collection of the week's news from Israel
A service of the Bet El Twinning Committee of
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation*

Events...

Tuesday February 10, 7:30pm

Harav Mordechai Elon, Rosh
Yeshiva of Yeshivat Hakotel and Founder of Mibereshit, will give a shiur in Hebrew at B'nai Torah. For information on this most dynamic Israeli Torah personality see www.kerenyishai.org

Commentary...

Because, If You Don't Cry, Who Will? By Yechezkel Chezi Goldberg HY"D

The scene: 7:30 a.m. Israel time, Sunday December 2, 2001 --- Eight hours after the triple terror attack at Jerusalem's popular Ben Yehuda Pedestrian Mall.

He walked into shul, synagogue. I nodded my acknowledgement, as I always do. He made some strange gesture, which I didn't comprehend. I continued praying. A few minutes later, he walked over to me and said: "Didn't you hear?" "Hear about what?" I replied.

He grew impatient, almost frustrated. "Didn't you HEAR?"

I understood that he was talking about last night's terror attack on Ben Yehuda Mall, a trendy night spot frequented not only by Israelis, but also Western tourists. I assumed that he obviously was intimating that someone we knew was hurt or killed. I replied: "About who?"

He looked at me as if I had landed from another planet. "About who? About everyone who was attacked last night."

I nodded. "Yes, of course I heard."

"Then why aren't YOU crying?"

His words shot through me like a spear piercing my heart. Our sages teach that "Words that come from the heart, enter the heart." He was right, of course. Why wasn't I crying? I could not answer. I had nothing to say.

He pointed around the shul. "Why aren't all of my friends crying?"

I could not answer. I had nothing to say.

"Shouldn't we all be crying?"

I could not answer. I had nothing to say.

What has happened to all of us, myself included? We have turned to stone. Some would call it "numbness." Some would call it "collective national shock." Some would say that we all have suffered never-ending trauma and it has affected our senses. Frankly, the excuses are worthless. All the reasons in the world don't justify our distance from the real pain that is burning in our midst.

When an attack happens, in the heat of the moment, we frantically check to see if someone we know has been hurt or killed. And then, if we find out that "our friends and family are safe," we sigh a deep sigh of relief, grunt and grumble about the latest tragic event and then, we continue with our robotic motions and go on with our lives.

We have not lost our minds, my friends. We have lost our hearts.

And that is why we keep on losing our lives.

When I left shul, my friend said to me with tears dripping from his bloodshot eyes: "I heard once that the Torah teaches that for every tear that drops from our eyes, another drop of blood is saved."

We are living in a time of absolute madness. It is obvious what is going on around us and yet, we detach ourselves and keep running on automatic in our daily lives. Last night, when it was only ten people who were known killed and just 200 injured, even MSNBC.com referred to the triple terror attack as a "slaughter." (More tragedy, it turns out, awaited us a few hours later.)

And yet, we are not crying.

I know a woman who lost sensitivity in her fingers. When she approaches fire, she doesn't feel the pain. That puts her in a very dangerous position because she might be unaware she is burning herself. If we are being hurt and we don't feel it, then we are in a very risky position. A devastating three pronged suicide attack on Jerusalem's most popular thoroughfare should evoke a cry of pain and suffering from all of us, should it not? Unless of course, we have lost our senses. And if we have lost our senses, then what hope is there?

When our enemies pound us and we don't react because we no longer feel the pain, we are truly in a dangerous and precarious position in the battle and struggle to survive.

Perhaps, my friends, we are being foolish to really believe that the nations of the world should be upset about the continuous murder and slaughter of Jews — if we ourselves are not crying about it. Am I my brother's keeper? The most effective way for us to stop the carnage in our midst is to wake up and to react to it from our hearts. How can we DEMAND that the Creator stop the tragedy

when most of us react like robots when tragedy strikes?

If WE don't cry about what is happening around us, who will?

If YOU don't cry about what is happening around us, who will?

If I don't cry about what is happening to us, who will?

Maybe our salvation from this horrific mess will come only after WE tune into our emotions and cry and scream about it. As King Solomon said, "There is a time for everything under the sun." Now is the time for crying.

May He protect each and every one of us from our enemies so that we will not have to cry in the future. (Jewish World Review Dec 3, 2001)

The writer, a Toronto native who lived in Betar, Israel, dedicated his life to working with kids at risk. He was murdered, along with ten others, on Thursday January 29, 2004 by a homicidal suicide bomber, a PA policeman. With tragic irony, he wrote this article after an earlier suicide bombing.

Did Hitlerism die with Hitler? Book Review by Omer Bartov

Hitler's Second Book: The Unpublished Sequel to Mein Kampf

By Adolf Hitler, Edited by Gerhard L. Weinberg (Enigma Books)

Adolf Hitler's so-called second book was not published in his lifetime.

Written, as Gerhard Weinberg convincingly speculates, in late June and early July 1928, the book's publication was postponed because *Mein Kampf*, Hitler's first massive text, was selling very badly and could hardly stand competition with another publication by the same author. Later, after Hitler was appointed chancellor and *Mein Kampf* became one of the greatest (and allegedly most unread) best-sellers of all times, the second book was apparently seen as disclosing his foreign policy plans too explicitly to allow publication. It was locked away, only to be discovered by Weinberg in 1958. Published in German three years later, the second book came out in a pirated and unreliable English edition in 1962. It is only now that the public can read this text in an authoritative translation, accompanied by extensive and updated notes by Weinberg.

Must we read another ranting book by Hitler? This book is certainly as close to the heart of darkness as a book can be. But it should have been read in its time, and it should be read now. It was an explicit warning to the world of what could be expected from the Führer of what was to become for twelve terrible years the Third Reich. When Hitler wrote it, no one could tell whether his plans and fantasies would ever be transformed into reality. Much of what Hitler put together in this book could already be found in *Mein Kampf*, if anyone had bothered to read it, and other ideas were expressed unambiguously in his speeches. Yet it was difficult to believe that anyone in his right mind would try to translate such rhetoric into policy. It was generally thought that in power Hitler would be constrained by the realities of diplomacy, the limits of Germany's power, the national interests of the Reich, and the military, economic, and political partners with whom he had to make policy.

Today we know that this was a fatal misunderstanding, rooted more in wishful thinking than in the kind of realism on which contemporary observers prided themselves and expected would eventually keep Hitler, too, in his place. Today we know that Hitler said precisely what he meant to say. We can also note, with the benefit of hindsight, that Hitler was neither insane, nor irrational, nor a fool. Several decades ago A.J.P. Taylor wrote that Hitler may have been mad or criminal as far as his plans and policies for world conquest and genocide were concerned, but in the conduct of his diplomacy in the 1930s he acted very much like everyone else, seizing opportunities and moving gradually toward the goals he had set himself. Reading this second book, I tend to agree. Hitler's rhetoric here is not more empty-headed than that of many of his contemporaries; his use of clichés hardly exceeds what one encountered in the newspapers; his knowledge of history, his psychological observations, his criticism of his rivals, are in many respects typical of his place and time.

But of course Hitler was about much more than this. He was also a pathological mass murderer who caused the death of millions and the destruction of Europe, and so it is important to know that he did precisely what he promised to do. For we still do not seem to have learned a simple crucial lesson that Hitler taught us more definitively than anyone else in history: some people, some regimes, some ideologies, some political programs, and, yes, some religious groups, must be taken at their word. Some people mean what they say, and say what they will do, and do what they said.

Most liberal-minded, optimistic, well-meaning people are loath to believe this. They would rather think that fanaticism is merely an "epiphenomenal" façade for politics, that opinions can be changed, that everyone can be corrected and improved. In many cases, this is true—but not in all cases, and not in the most dangerous ones. There are those who

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practice what they preach and are proud of it. They view those who act otherwise, who compromise and pull back from ultimate conclusions, as opportunists, as weaklings, as targets to be easily conquered and subdued by their own greater determination, hardness, and ruthlessness. When they say they will kill you, they will kill you--if you do not kill them first.

Reading Hitler's second book is useful, of course, for students of Nazism. But they will have already read it in part or in whole, and nothing that Hitler says here will come to them as much of a surprise. This is a book that should be read, rather, by contemporary journalists, political observers, and all concerned people who have the stomach to recognize evil when they confront it. For one of the most frightening aspects of Hitler's book is not that he said what he said at the time, but that much of what he said can be found today in innumerable places: on Internet sites, propaganda brochures, political speeches, protest placards, academic publications, religious sermons, you name it. As long as it does not have Hitler's name attached to it, this deranged discourse will be ignored or allowed to pass. The voices that express these opinions do not belong to a single political or ideological current, and they are much less easy to distinguish than in the 1930s. They belong to the right and the left, to the religious and the secular, to the West and the East, to the rabble and the leaders, to terrorists and intellectuals, students and peasants, pacifists and militants, expansionists and anti-globalization activists. The diplomacy advocated by Hitler is no longer relevant, but his reason for it, his legitimization of his "worldview," is alive and kicking, and it may still kick us.

Hitler never had a particularly complicated ideology. He painted a clear picture of the world, distinguishing between the bad and the good, the sinful and the righteous, the guilty and the innocent, the dirty and the clean, the inferior and the superior. He articulated clear goals, as follows. The Aryan race needs domestic unity and freedom from polluting racial elements, and so it must expand into an undefined and likely limitless "living space" in the East. Germany's most important short-term enemy is France, for historical reasons and because it has become "negroized." Germany's most likely allies are Italy and Britain, with whom the Reich should have no quarrel since they also seek to expand in different directions. The greatest long-term enemy is the United States, not least because it is made up of healthy Aryan stock that has turned its back on the fatherland. The Slav states and the nations to Germany's east are to be taken over. The Slavs, and especially the Poles and Russians, are not worthy of ruling themselves, for whatever is great and worthy in the East was created by German colonizers and rulers. The greatest danger to the world are the Jews, who have taken control of the Soviet Union and are behind all the Marxist parties in Europe, and at the same time are the bosses and the manipulators of international capitalism. The Jews rule the world through a global conspiracy, and it is Germany's duty to destroy them before they subjugate humanity forever.

Hitler made no bones about the direct link between his "analysis" of world history and his plans for Germany's policies. For him, as he wrote, politics is not just the struggle of a people for its survival as such; rather, for us humans it is the art of the implementation of this struggle.... Politics is always the leader of the struggle for survival--its organizer--and regardless of how it is formally designated, its effectiveness will determine the life or death of a people.... The two concepts of a peace policy or a war policy thus immediately become meaningless. Because the stake that is struggled for through politics is always life....

Promoting economic autarky and opposing the ills of a global capitalistic economy, Hitler was similarly swift in identifying the agents of globalization whose goal it was to "kill the others through peaceful industry," by way of depriving people of the necessary Lebensraum that would ensure their healthy development. The urban centers created by the global industrial economy were "hotbeds of blood-mixing and bastardization, usually ensuring the degeneration of the race and resulting in that purulent herd in which the maggots of the international Jewish community flourish and cause the ultimate decay of the people." For Hitler, the "Jew" was directly identified with anything international, and internationalism was directly associated with the degeneration of the race, with immorality and corruption. Once a people loses its "genetically conditioned cultural expression of the life of its own soul," he wrote, it will "descend into the confusion of international perceptions and the cultural chaos that springs from them. Then the Jew can move in, and not rest until he has completely uprooted and thereby corrupted such a people."

While he strenuously opposed "internationalism" as a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world and to corrupt the nobler races, Hitler saw no limits to his own aspirations for expansion. As he noted, "Wherever our success ends, that will always be the starting point of a new battle." And as Hitler never tired of emphasizing, he was opposed to a policy of returning to the borders of 1914--that is, of revising the Versailles agreement in which the Reich had been "robbed" of its territories. That restitution would hardly suffice. Hitler argues that the foreign policy of the bourgeois world is in truth always only focused on borders, whereas the National Socialist movement, in contrast, will pursue a policy focused on space. The German bourgeoisie will, with its boldest plans, perhaps attain unification of the German nation, but in reality it usually ends in bungling border adjustments. The National Socialist movement ... knows no Germanization ... but only the expansion of our own people.... The national conception will not be determined by previous patriotic notions of state, but rather by ethnic and racial conceptions....

The German borders of 1914 ... represented something just as unfinished as peoples' borders always are. The division of territory on the earth is always the momentary result of a struggle and an evolution that is in no way finished, but that naturally continues to progress.

So much for the idea of appeasement, of letting Hitler have what he had already declared would never suffice. The racial state that Hitler outlined had certain duties. It could "under absolutely no circumstances annex Poles." It would "have to decide either to isolate these alien racial elements in order to prevent the repeated contamination of one's own people, or it would have to immediately

remove them entirely, transferring the land and territory that thus became free to members of one's own ethnic community." Here again we hear Hitler saying quite clearly that he would undertake the kind of demographic restructuring of Eastern Europe that was indeed managed by Heinrich Himmler after 1939. And whatever might have been the contributions of various German technocrats in the 1930s to molding this policy, as suggested by some historians, Hitler unequivocally and ruthlessly expressed it five years before he became chancellor.

But those who have followed the current wave of anti-Semitism emanating from the most disparate sources in the last few years may sense that they, too, are staring into a mirror, a distorted mirror of a resurrected past, a mutilated, transplanted, transformed, contorted, monstrous specter whose allegedly exhausted powers seem to be increasing day by day.

Hitler is dead, as Leon Wieseltier rightly proclaimed in these pages. What alarmed Wieseltier was the frequent predilection to view every threat as the ultimate threat, every anti-Semitic harangue as the gateway to another Final Solution. Clearly we are not facing the danger of a second Auschwitz. The hysterics need to remember that Hitler and the Third Reich are history. Germany apologized and paid generous restitution. The Nazis were tried, or they hid, or they metamorphosed into good democrats. The state of Israel was established. The Jews have never been more prosperous and more successful and more safe than they are in the United States. (The same could even be said about the nervous Jews of Western Europe.) The last remnants of communist anti-Semitism vanished with the fall of that "evil empire." Jews in our day have reasons to feel much more secure than their ancestors.

But all is not well, not by a long shot. Criticism of Israeli policies against the Palestinians has long been attached to anti-Americanism, and the United States was said already by the Nazis in World War II to be dominated by the Jews. And criticism of American imperialism is often associated with its support for Israel, allegedly a colonial outpost populated by Jews in the heart of Arab and Islamic civilization. Of course, one should never confuse the legitimate criticism of Israeli policies with what all reasonable people agree is the despicable ideology of anti-Semitism.

But this does not mean that we should refuse to see the writing on the wall when anti-Israeli sentiments are transformed into blatant and virulent anti-Semitism. This was precisely the argument made in the report "Manifestations of anti-Semitism in the European Union," as submitted by the Center for Research on Anti-Semitism in Berlin to the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia, which had originally commissioned it. The monitoring center tried to suppress its own report, because it gave a measure of anti-Semitic violence by Muslims in Europe, and because its definition of anti-Semitism included those who call for the destruction of Israel. And these grim truths were politically incorrect.

What we are witnessing today is a broad front of opinion, spanning the entire spectrum of the political and religious scene, whose criticism of American and Israeli policies, and whose fears and phobias about present conditions, utopian dreams of a better future, and nostalgic fantasies of a mythical past, all converge in a bizarre and increasingly frightening way on a single figure, a single cause: "the Jew." I have long believed that it is pointless, and dishonorable, to debate anti-Semites. Such an exchange of "ideas" only confers legitimacy upon them. But there are times when absurdities become political facts and cannot be ignored. They must, instead, be directly challenged--not by explaining their violent ideas and feelings away, but by putting limits to them through all available means, political, judicial, and, if necessary, by the use of legitimate force. For these are people who mean what they say. If you do not destroy them, they will destroy you. There are precedents for this.

Consider again what Hitler wrote in 1928. Yes, it is insane; but take out the word "race" and replace it, say, with "Zionism" or "American imperialism," and replace the references to the Soviet Union with references to the United States, and suddenly the discourse is not only crazy but also quite common. The "soft core" of this poisonous rhetoric is to be found among some sectors of European and American intellectuals and academics. It tends to identify Israelis as culprits, and Jews as potential Israelis. It is obsessed with the influence of Jews on culture, politics, and economics around the world. The partially successful boycott of Israeli academics in recent years is a case in point, not least because it tends to affect precisely those who number among the most determined and articulate opponents of the current Israeli government's policies. The divestment campaign, calling on American and European universities to desist from any investments in Israel, is another example; this campaign provides cover, and even immunity, for all the regimes around the world that have never recognized academic freedom. The sympathetic understanding expressed in academic settings, and in liberal and left-wing publications, for suicide bombers who blow up innocent civilians in Israel creates a climate of tolerance for murder that is cleverly couched in the righteous language of liberation and justice.

Some allegations of an apparent takeover by Jews, or by Jewish themes, of this or that cultural sphere seem to have nothing to do with Israel. In October 2001, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* published an article by Mark Anderson, a professor of Germanic languages at Columbia University. Anderson expressed fears about "the way in which American scholars have distorted the study of German culture" by reducing "the canon of German literature to a tiny handful of teachable authors who often have a Jewish background." This "excessive focus on German-Jewish authors," he argued, "relied on the subtext of Jewish suffering." This "has undermined intellectual freedom in American universities" and is "testimony to an ongoing intellectual paralysis that could and should be relieved."

It is not clear from Anderson's argument who is to blame, apart from an ill-defined "pressure from American culture to focus on minority issues, as

well as our fascination with Hitler and the Holocaust." It is also somewhat ironic that Anderson himself edited a volume called *Hitler's Exiles: Personal Stories of the Flight from Nazi Germany to America*, which testifies to his own fascination with this topic, if not to his recognition of its importance. But one cannot help but detect here a clear connection between the alleged over-emphasis on Jewish authors and Jewish themes "identified" by Anderson and its distorting effects both on the study of German literature and on American intellectual freedom. Somehow the focus on Jewish victims seems to have that effect.

Sometimes this sort of intellectual-academic-journalistic obsession with Jews becomes intimately linked with anti-Americanism. Several best-selling books published in France and Germany by academics, politicians, and journalists have "confirmed" the already widespread belief (held by 19 percent of the German population according to a recent poll, and apparently by a majority in many Arab and Islamic countries) that the September 11 attacks on the United States were orchestrated by the CIA and the Mossad, and that the latter warned the Jews working in the World Trade Center not to come to work that day. Indeed, the United States, attacked by Europeans for its support of Israel, has been repeatedly depicted as controlled by the Jews, whose lobbies, financial and electoral levers of power, and key figures in the White House and Pentagon, are manipulating both the American public and world politics.

At the same time Israel has been portrayed as the perpetrator of Nazi-like crimes even as these very same portrayals carry echoes of the Nazi representation of Jews. Thus the European media, especially its more highbrow representatives, were as keen to portray the Israeli operation in Jenin last year as a war crime and a massacre as they were reluctant to admit that they had been fooled by Palestinian propaganda and in turn misinformed their publics about the nature of the operation, greatly inflating the number of Palestinian civilians killed in order to justify its description as a massacre. The Israeli prime minister was depicted in a cartoon published in *The Independent* in London in the shape of a bloody ogre devouring Palestinian children, his features eerily reminiscent of those popularized by *Der Stürmer*.

Anyone who has access (that is, anyone on the Internet) to racist, anti-Semitic, and neo-Nazi publications in the United States and elsewhere will find almost precisely the same opinions and depictions. These hateful representations are normally not much remarked upon. But there are some important exceptions. Most striking was the speech made by Martin Hohmann, a parliamentary representative of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in the German Bundestag, to an audience of one hundred thirty people, on October 3, 2003. Hohmann argued that one had no right to speak of the Germans as a "people of perpetrators" (*Tätervolk*) because the Jews--presumably those making that argument--were themselves a "people of perpetrators," considering their high representation among the murderous Bolsheviks. This was the first time since the end of Nazism that a member of the Bundestag made an anti-Semitic argument based on the very logic of Hitler's rationalization for war against the Soviet Union. And an elite Bundeswehr general expressed agreement with Hohmann's speech. Under much public pressure, Hohmann was eventually ejected from the parliamentary fraction of the CDU--but 20 percent of his colleagues opposed his removal. And Hohmann knew, like so many fascists before him who said what he said, what many others were thinking. In a poll recently conducted by the University of Bielefeld, it was found that 70 percent of Germans resent being blamed for the Holocaust, and 25 percent believe that the Jews are trying to make political capital out of their own genocide (and another 30 percent say that there is a measure of truth in this assertion), and three-quarters believe that there are too many foreigners in Germany.

Much more publicity has been given to anti-Israeli protests on American campuses, and these have demonstrated a troubling trend. A group calling itself "New Jersey Solidarity: Activists for the Destruction of Israel" called for an "anti-Israel hate-fest" to be held on the campus of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, in October 2003. The group's website declares itself "opposed to the existence of the apartheid colonial settler state of Israel, as it is based on the racist ideology of Zionism and is an expression of colonialism and imperialism."

Richard McCormick, the president of Rutgers University and a former member of its history department, where I also taught during the 1990s, issued an open letter on the planned meeting. He stated that he found "abhorrent some elements of NJ Solidarity's mission." But he went on to say that "intrinsic to Rutgers' own mission is the free exchange of ideas and discourse on a variety of issues, including those that are controversial. This university must remain a model of debate, dialogue and education ... we encourage our students to express their beliefs and analyze the difficult issues of the day." So some may think that destroying Israel is legitimate and some may think otherwise. Some may think that Israel is an apartheid colonial settler state based on a racist ideology, and some may have a different opinion. There are two sides to the question. Through such a "free exchange of ideas" we will all prosper intellectually. This brings to mind Hannah Arendt's observation, when she visited Germany in 1950, for the first time since she fled the Nazis, that the Germans viewed the extermination of the Jews as a matter of opinion: some said it happened, some said it had not happened. Who could tell? The average German, she wrote, considered this "nihilistic relativism" about the facts as an essential expression of democracy.

Throughout campuses in the United States, students associated with Arab and Islamic organizations, Christian groups, and the left carried flags, banners, and posters that were mostly focused on one theme: the equation between Zionism, or Israel, and Nazism. Banners portrayed a swastika joined by an equal sign to a Star of David and an Israeli flag featuring a swastika instead of a Star of David. Placards issued the call to "End the Holocaust," and proclaimed that "Zionism = racism = ethnic cleansing," and that "Zionism is Ethnic Cleansing," and that "Sharon = Hitler." A particularly ingenious sign asserted: "1943: Warsaw 2002: Jenin." While some summarized their views with the slogan "Zionazis," others warned, "First Jesus Now Arafat."

What makes this virulent anti-Semitism respectable is that it presents itself as anti-Nazism. To accomplish this sinister exculpatory purpose it needs only

to declare that Zionism equals Nazism, just as the old canard of a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world is legitimized by its association with American imperialism, capitalism, and globalization. That the vocabulary of this rhetoric is taken directly (whether consciously or not) from Nazi texts is so clear that one wonders why there is such a reluctance to recognize it. In part this is owed to ignorance, which is as rampant today in journalism and political commentary as it always was. In part this is owed to the fact that those who would most readily identify the provenance of these words and ideas are largely liberals, some of whom also happen to be Jewish, and thus are likely to be most harmed, both personally and ideologically, by making this identification. By exposing the anti-Semitic underbelly of this phenomenon, they would expose themselves as Jews and friends of Jews, and would open themselves to the argument that precisely their opposition to this phenomenon is the best proof of Jewish domination in the world.

Which, incidentally, is precisely what Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia said following the Western protests against his warmly received pronouncement to the Organization of the Islamic Conference in October that the Jews control the world: "The reaction of the world shows that they [the Jews] control the world." Mahathir's speech was genuinely astonishing. This was the first time since World War II that a major head of state made a speech--to no fewer than fifty-seven other heads of state and well over two thousand journalists--whose fundamental argument was that the Jews are to blame for all the ills that have beset Islamic civilization. And not a single person left the room in protest.

For Paul Krugman, writing in *The New York Times* on October 21, Mahathir's anti-Semitic remarks were both "inexcusable" and "calculated," made by a "cagey politician, who is neither ignorant nor foolish." Krugman did not elaborate on why such remarks are "inexcusable." Instead he preferred to see them as reflecting "how badly things are going for U.S. foreign policy." Mahathir may be "guilty of serious abuses of power," but he is also, said Krugman, "as forward-looking a Muslim leader as we're likely to find." Hence he should be encouraged, not denounced. His anti-Semitism is merely "part of Mr. Mahathir's domestic balancing act."

Progressive modernizer that he is, in other words, Mahathir cannot possibly be stupid enough to believe what he spouts, and because he does not believe it, and uses it merely as a tool for the good cause of modernizing Malaysia and combating the Muslim clerics who oppose the acquisition of knowledge, his anti-Semitism is in some way understandable. This is reminiscent of what many said about Hitler's anti-Semitism in the 1930s: it was inexcusable but calculated, and thus it was ultimately both excusable and in the service of a good cause, the modernization of Germany and its reintegration into the community of nations.

For Krugman, Mahathir's "hateful words" serve only to "cover his domestic flank." They do not tell you anything about his own thinking, but they tell you "more accurately than any poll, just how strong the rising tide of anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism among Muslims in Southeast Asia has become."

The Malaysian prime minister's speech was both more offensive and more interesting than most commentators (including Krugman) have observed. In many ways it was a restatement of the urge to modernize, and the will to power, and the fantasies of destruction, that characterized fascism. Mahathir proposes to "disprove the perception of Islam as a religion of backwardness and terror." He wants to "restore the honor of Islam and of the Muslims" and "to free their brothers and sisters from the oppression and humiliation from which they suffer today." What sort of action does Mahathir propose? In part, as Krugman pointed out, he was indeed critical of the intellectual and political decline of Islam. He thus insisted that, although according to Islam "we are enjoined ... to acquire knowledge," it was due to "intellectual regression" that "the great Muslim civilization began to falter and wither," causing it to miss entirely the Industrial Revolution. Yet other influences from the West actually subverted Islam, among which he counts "the Western democratic system" that "divided us." Moreover, it was thanks to this democratically induced division that the Europeans "could excise Muslim land to create the state of Israel to solve their Jewish problem." Thus the West both denied the Muslims the means to defend themselves through modern technology and industry and divided them by the introduction of democracy, all with the goal of solving a European "Jewish problem" at the expense of Islamic lands.

This "Jewish problem" is not at all peripheral to Mahathir's argument, a sort of tithe to the masses and the clerics so as to push his program of modernization. It is central to his thinking. Modernization is justified, in his account, by the necessity of destroying the entity that has penetrated the Muslim world and polluted its soul. For, as he says, "we are all oppressed. We are all being humiliated." And thus the numerical and economic strength of Muslims must be complemented by military prowess: "We are now 1.3 billion strong. We have the biggest oil reserve in the world. We have great wealth.... We control 57 out of 180 countries in world. Our votes can make or break international organizations.... [But] we need guns and rockets, bombs and warplanes, tanks and warships for our defense." Hitler used to mock those who were obsessed with obscure Germanic traditions, who were filled with rage at the defeat of 1918 and dreamed up all sorts of harebrained conspiracies in marginal militant fraternities. He wanted to build a powerful modern military. He was, in this way, a modernizer.

Mahathir, for his part, notes that today we, the whole Muslim ummah are treated with contempt and dishonor.... Our only reaction is to become more and more angry. Angry people cannot think properly. And so we find people reacting irrationally. They launch their own attacks, killing just about anybody ... to vent their anger and

frustration.... But the attacks solve nothing. The Muslims simply get more oppressed.... The Muslims will forever be oppressed and dominated by the Europeans and the Jews.... Is there no other way than to ask our young people to blow themselves up and kill people and invite the massacre of more of our own people?

This is the voice of the rational politician. This is not an Arab preaching an endless cycle of revenge, but an Asian Muslim calling for patience and calculation. Suicide bombers will never win the war. There must be another way. After all, "1.3 billion Muslims cannot be defeated by a few million Jews." Hence we need "to think, to assess our weaknesses and our strength, to plan, to strategize and then to counter attack.... [To] devise a plan, a strategy that can win us final victory.... It is winning the struggle that is important, not angry retaliation, not revenge." Is this merely a subtle way of calling on Muslims to focus on their own societies rather than waste their energies on the struggle with Israel? Perhaps. But it is just as possible that Mahathir, like so many before him, means what he says. And Mahathir paints the Jewish enemy in colors taken directly from Hitler's diabolical palette:

The enemy will probably welcome these proposals and we will conclude that the promoters are working for the enemy. But think. We are up against a people who think. They survived 2000 years of pogroms not by hitting back, but by thinking. They invented and successfully promoted Socialism, Communism, human rights and democracy so that persecuting them would appear to be wrong, so they may enjoy equal rights with others. With these they have now gained control of the most powerful countries and they, this tiny community, have become a world power. We cannot fight them through brawn alone. We must use our brains also.

The Islamists need none of the fancy extenuations offered by certain European and American intellectuals. For they have a direct link with anti-Semitism going all the way back to the Nazis. Mahathir's anti-Semitic pronouncement was not simply triggered by frustration with the lack of development in Islamic countries, or by rage at American and Israeli policies, or by some deep-seated traditional Muslim anti-Semitism. The analysis that he presented reflects, rather, the continuing impact of a relatively new and pernicious phenomenon, whose roots can be traced back to the foundation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 1928 and its success in launching Islamism as a mass movement. As the German political scientist Matthias Küntzel has recently shown in his book on "jihad and Jew-hatred", Islamism quickly became a primarily anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic movement that was greatly influenced by European anti-Semitism and directly influenced by Nazism. Indeed, as anti-Semitism lost its impetus as a revolutionary political movement in Europe in the wake of World War II, it was transplanted to the Middle East and from there to other parts of the Muslim world.

This development was responsible for the slaughter of Daniel Pearl in Pakistan, which was explicitly anti-Semitic in its motivation. The reluctance of the Western media to concede that Pearl was not murdered as an American, a journalist, a "spy," or as someone who might have uncovered connections between the Pakistani secret service and Al Qaeda, but first and foremost as a Jew--in what was after all a highly ritualized act of killing recorded on videotape--merely manifests the embarrassment that European and American observers feel upon discovering that one of the dirtiest "secrets" of Christian civilization has been so seamlessly transplanted into the Islamic world. After all, it is more difficult to empathize with the plight of those who are still largely victims of Western economic exploitation if they turn out to be led by murderous bigots flaunting slogans that recall Europe's own genocidal past.

But the most explicit and frightening link between Hitler's anti-Semitism and the contemporary wave of violence, hatred, paranoia, and conspiracy theories can be found, first, in the testimony given by the perpetrators of the September 11 terrorist attacks, and, second, in the official charter of the Palestinian Hamas movement.

As Küntzel writes, citing the Reuters reporter Christian Eggers, during the trial of Mounir el Motassadeq, a core member of the Al Qaeda cell in Hamburg that planned the attacks of September 11, the motivation of the perpetrators was amply documented, but the media have not reported much of what was said at the trial, which took place in Hamburg, Germany, between October 2002 and February 2003. The witness Shahid Nickels, a member of Mohammed Atta's core group, insisted that "Atta's worldview was based on a National Socialist way of thinking. He was convinced that 'the Jews' are determined to achieve world domination. He considered New York City to be the center of world Jewry, which was, in his opinion, Enemy Number One." Nickels said that Atta's group was "convinced that Jews control the American government as well as the media and the economy of the United States... that a world-wide conspiracy of Jews exists... [that] America wants to dominate the world so that Jews can pile up capital."

Similarly, the witness Ahmed Maglad, who participated in the group's meetings, testified that "for us, Israel didn't have any right to exist as a state.... We believed ... the USA ... to be the mother of Israel." And Ralf Götsche, who shared the student dormitory with Motassadeq, testified that the accused had said: "What Hitler did to the Jews was not at all bad," and commented that "Motassadeq's attitude was blatantly anti-Semitic."

There is a history to such statements, which connects the anti-Semitism of Al Qaeda members planning mass murder in Hamburg in the 1990s to the anti-Semitism of Hitler fantasizing about mass murder in Munich in the 1920s. It is not difficult to find. The charter of the Hamas movement, issued in 1988 as the fundamental document of this Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, must be read to be believed. It contains, among its fundamentalist Islamic preachings, the most blatant anti-Semitic statements made in a publicly available document since Hitler's own pronouncements. Citing an array of Islamic sources, Hamas promises that "Israel will rise and will remain erect until Islam eliminates it as it had eliminated its predecessors." The Islamic Resistance Movement has "raised the banner of Jihad in the face of the oppressors in order to extricate the

country and the people from the [oppressors'] desecration, filth and evil." The Prophet, remember, said that "the time will not come until Muslims will fight the Jews (and kill them); until the Jews hide behind rocks and trees, which will cry: O Muslim! There is a Jew hiding behind me, come on and kill him!" Here there is no talk of compromise or reconciliation. The document states plainly that "the so-called peaceful solutions, and the international conferences to resolve the Palestinian problem, are all contrary to the beliefs of the Islamic Resistance Movement. For renouncing any part of Palestine means renouncing part of the religion.... The initiatives, proposals, and International Conferences are but a waste of time, an exercise in futility."

The opposition expressed by Hamas to any compromise over Palestine is also intimately linked with its view of the Jewish-Zionist enemy. These enemies, according to the charter,

have been scheming for a long time.... They accumulated a huge and influential material wealth ... [which] permitted them to take over control of the world media such as news agencies, the press, publication houses, broadcasting and the like. [They also used this] wealth to stir revolutions in various parts of the globe, in order to fulfill their interests and pick the fruits. They stood behind the French and the Communist Revolutions and behind most of the revolutions we hear about here and there. They also used the money to establish clandestine organizations which are spreading around the world, in order to destroy societies and carry out Zionist interests. Such organizations are: the Freemasons, Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, B'nai B'rith and the like. All of them are destructive spying organizations. They also used the money to take over control of the Imperialist states and made them colonize many countries in order to exploit the wealth of those countries and spread their corruption therein ... they stood behind World War I ... and took control of many sources of wealth. They obtained the Balfour Declaration and established the League of Nations in order to rule the world.... They also stood behind World War II, where they collected immense benefits from trading with war materials and prepared for the establishment of their state. They inspired the United Nations and the Security Council ... in order to rule the world.... There was no war that broke out anywhere without their fingerprints on it.... The forces of Imperialism in both the Capitalist West and the Communist East support the enemy with all their might, in material and human terms....

This international Jewish conspiracy to take over the world has also a moral goal. For, as this document goes on to say, the "secret organizations" working for Zionism "strive to demolish societies, to destroy values, to wreck answerableness, to totter virtues and to wipe out Islam." Zionism "stands behind the diffusion of drugs and toxics of all kinds in order to facilitate its control and expansion." To be sure, Hamas has its own expansionist goals, for it plans to control the entire region of the Middle East, promising in turn "safety and security ... for the members of the three religions" as long as they agree to live "under the shadow of Islam." But Hamas "is only hostile to those who are hostile towards it, or stand in its way in order to disturb its moves or to frustrate its efforts" to dominate the region. Meanwhile "Zionist scheming has no end, and after Palestine they will covet expansion from the Nile to the Euphrates.... Their scheme has been laid out in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, and their present [conduct] is the best proof of what is said there." Hitler could not have put it better.

So Hitler is dead, but there is a Hitlerite quality to the new anti-Semitism, which now legitimizes not only opposition to Zionism but also the resurrection of the myth of Jewish world domination. And those who foolishly think that doing away with Israel, not least in a "one-state solution," would remove anti-Semitism had better look more closely at the language of these enemies. For they--I mean the enemies--insist that the Jews are everywhere, and so they must be uprooted everywhere. Their outpost may be Israel, but their "power center" is in America, and their synagogues and intellectuals are in Germany and France, and their academics are in Russia and Britain. Since they are the cause of all evil and misfortune, the world will be a happier place without them, whether it is dominated by the Aryan Master Race or by the ideological soldiers of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Hitler taught humanity an important lesson. It is that when you see a Nazi, a fascist, a bigot, or an anti-Semite, say what you see. If you want to justify it or excuse it away, describe accurately what it is that you are trying to excuse away. If a British newspaper publishes an anti-Semitic cartoon, call it anti-Semitic. If the attacks on the Twin Towers were animated by anti-Semitic arguments, say so. If a Malaysian prime minister expresses anti-Semitic views, do not try to excuse the inexcusable. If a self-proclaimed liberation organization calls for the extermination of the Jewish state, do not pretend that it is calling for anything else. The absence of clarity is the beginning of complicity.

The writer is professor of history at Brown University and the author, most recently, of "Germany's War and the Holocaust: Disputed Histories" (Cornell University Press). (Jewish World Review / New Republic Jan 26)

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