

attempt at return to the status quo ante. Faced by a growing PLO army under the guise of a "strong police force," or a Palestinian alliance with Syria or Iraq, or an intolerable number of terrorist infiltrations into the Green Line, Israel would be forced to risk the world's wrath and invade the new state. But no matter how outrageous the Palestinian provocation, Israel would have to bear the consequences of invading a sovereign country.

At which point I doubt whether invoking the principle of *rebus sic stantibus*, as suggested by Samuel Pollack, would make much difference. After all, even now no one expects Israel to withdraw from the agreement simply because the PLO has not kept its commitment to change the PLO covenant and to combat terrorism. As former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Douglas Feith has pointed out, democracies seldom do anything about the violation of agreements by their dictatorial adversaries. Repeated Soviet violations of arms-control agreements were greeted by hand-wringing or—worse—denial.

When Egypt violated an agreement with Israel and moved surface-to-air missiles to the Canal Zone after the war of attrition in 1970, Israel was warned not to act by the Nixon administration. The missiles almost neutralized the power of the Israeli air force in the initial stages of the 1973 war, which Israel almost lost. Indeed, the world community never showed much understanding for preemptive Israeli actions, even when they could easily qualify as "anticipatory self-defense," as in the case of the Osirak bombing. An attack on the nascent Palestinian state would almost certainly be condemned as outright aggression by the world community.

Ultimately, this might not deter Israel—particularly if the toll of terrorism were to become intolerable. But the price—not only in international standing but in Israeli casualties in a war against the by-then well-armed Palestinians and the massive armies of their allies—might be higher than in any previous Arab-Israeli war.

If there is one thing both supporters of the Declaration of Principles and its opponents agree on, it is the possibility of a conventional and nonconventional regional conflagration. The differ-

ence between the two is that the former, including most decidedly the Israeli government, believe that an Israeli withdrawal to the 1949 lines and a peace treaty with Israel's immediate neighbors will ensure that Syria, Jordan, and Palestine will remain "bickering but peaceful," as Mr. Block puts it. The latter, like Louis René Beres, doubt that a piece of paper will keep the Assads and Arafats of this world from joining in a concerted Islamic effort to crush a dwarfed Israel. So do I.

Holocaust Denial

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Edward Alexander's review of Deborah Lipstadt's *Denying the Holocaust* [Books in Review, November 1993] will be of no slight interest to future cultural historians. He writes that the book deals with "the most highly publicized form of travesty to which the Holocaust has been made subject in our day," but that is not correct. Lipstadt keeps to fringe figures who probably relish the publicity afforded them by their critics, and would otherwise remain in deserved obscurity. But she ignores others, including "the most highly publicized" apologist for Nazi crimes, namely, the author of the review, who [elsewhere] dismiss[ed] the Holocaust with derision as an "exploded fiction"—and to make sure that no one mistakes his values, add[ed] that nothing more than "oppression" was suffered by (in the words of John Quincy Adams) "that hapless race of native Americans, which we are exterminating with such merciless and perfidious cruelty," and by those who endured the pleasures of the Atlantic passage and slavery. On Mr. Alexander's efforts to evade the meaning of what he wrote, once exposed, see the *Nation*, August 17, 1992 and February 15, 1993.

Lipstadt writes (in a letter to the *New York Times*, November 8, 1993) that "a comprehensive analysis of the deniers was necessary." Perhaps, but she has been careful not to provide it.

Mr. Alexander, of course, [was] not referring to the Nazi slaughter of the Jews, rather of the Gypsies—in a similar manner, at the same time, though like his fellow-negationists he denies the facts. I do not want to suggest that the two forms of negationism are morally

on a par; denial of the Holocaust of the Gypsies is, plainly, *far worse*. Jews have defenders; those who deny the crimes against them are universally reviled. Gypsies have few defenders; those who contemptuously dismiss the Nazi crimes against them are considered quite respectable. Furthermore, Gypsies are still being subjected to terror and repression. Germany—Germany!—is sending them back to Romania, to pogroms and violence, right now. Denial of Nazi crimes against the Gypsies has immediate and appalling human consequences.

Naturally, I am honored to be targeted by such authors, both of whom compile impressive fabrications about the "Faurisson affair" and my role in it—all conscious deceit, surely, since every invention has been refuted in print innumerable times, as they know. They also know very well my own views on the matter, expressed in the introduction to my first book of political essays in 1969, and endlessly repeated since: by even agreeing to enter the arena of debate with apologists who claim that "Jews are a cancer eating away at the vitality of the German people" and who attempt to diminish or deny Nazi crimes, "one has already lost one's humanity," though it is sometimes necessary to undertake such degrading tasks.

Both Mr. Alexander and Lipstadt extract a few words from this passage, offering them as proof that I deny freedom of speech to views I do not like—by unwillingness to debate! Both naturally suppress the topic I address—clearly, explicitly, unambiguously, in the words that immediately precede the sentence they maliciously distort for their purposes. In their hands, by expressing my distaste for even debating Holocaust deniers, I am supporting them and denying freedom of speech. These comments of mine "constitute the most accurate assessment" of my behavior, Lipstadt writes; correctly, once we replace fabrication by fact. And this colossal example of lies and stupidity, which would have impressed Goebbels himself, is a typical example of her practice, and of her reviewer's, from whom she borrowed this particular gem.

I will not waste my time, or your space, by once again pursuing Mr. Alexander through the morass of deceit he concocts, though the in-

terested reader will notice his utter contempt for freedom of speech as he repeats with approval a position that one might expect from some mullah in Qom. Rather, I will keep to my own advice of 25 years ago. If any honest reader is interested in the matter, I will be glad to provide details, once again. I would also urge some attention to the wise words of Nahum Goldmann, shortly before he died: it "is a kind of *hillul haShem*, a banalization of the sacred tragedy of the *Shoah*," to "misuse it" for power interests—or career interests, or others.

NOAM CHOMSKY
Massachusetts Institute of
Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:
... Edward Alexander maliciously smears Noam Chomsky for his supposed "immaculate agnosticism" regarding whether the Holocaust occurred, as well as other allegedly bizarre revisionisms construed by Mr. Alexander as support for blatantly anti-Semitic positions. Of course, nowhere does Mr. Alexander make his accusations explicit; innuendo is the tactic of choice. . . .

Unfortunately, in an early chapter of her book, Deborah Lipstadt repeats Mr. Alexander's twelve-year-old lies about Chomsky's supposed Vietnam-era attempts to suppress free speech. These lies now seem to occupy a prominent place in the conventional wisdom of some. Lipstadt's treatment of Chomsky's alleged role in "supporting" Holocaust denial—as a fact rather than as a matter of free speech and academic freedom—certainly calls into question her professional competence. A responsible reviewer would have tasked her for getting this business wrong; Mr. Alexander chides her for smearing Noam Chomsky too little. . . .

PATRICK O'HAYER
Libertyville, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:
Edward Alexander devotes a good deal of attention to Noam Chomsky's defense of the French Holocaust denier, Robert Faurisson. In fact, Chomsky went so far as to write an introduction to Faurisson's book, though he claims that he was merely defending free speech. One wonders, however, whether he has launched similar

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The Importance of Territory. Many believe that in this age of missiles, territory is of little importance. But this is not the case. The Arab states have acquired over \$50 billion of the most advanced armaments since the end of the Gulf War. And those are not just "conventional" weapons—

enormous quantities of tanks, aircraft and much more. The Arab states possess large arsenals of chemical and biological weapons, and all of them work feverishly on the development of their nuclear potential. All of those weapons have only one single target and one single purpose: the destruction of the state of Israel. And that goal is not being cancelled for any agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

For both "conventional" war and for war of mass destruction, territory and topography are critical for self-defense and deterrence. The mountainous territory of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") is

an indispensable line of defense. It totally controls access to Israel's heartland from the east. Israel needs this high ground for defense and to be able to peer deeply into enemy territory. The high ground allows Israel to detect missiles while they are still in the launch stage and to destroy them.

Would the "West Bank" be demilitarized? Even those who want Israel to retreat to her pre-1967 borders are agreed that the evacuated areas must be demilitarized. But that would be useless. Because the Palestinians will have thousands of trained soldiers, camouflaged as their police force. In case of war against Israel, these troops could be helicoptered in minutes to their positions, with armored forces reaching them within the same night. In any case, it is highly doubtful that the surrounding hostile

Arab nations would allow such a military vacuum to exist. And finally, there is the matter of terrorism. There are over fifteen

Palestinian Arab terror organizations that neither Yassir Arafat nor any other Palestinian authority can control. There would be a constant rain of Katyusha rockets launched into the Tel Aviv area and into the entire coastal plain, which contains 80% of Israel's population and of its industrial and military potential. Ben Gurion airport, every incoming and outgoing flight, would be subject to mortar fire or shoulder-held Stinger attack. Does anybody doubt that the Arabs would not exploit that irresistible opportunity?

Without the "West Bank" Israel would be totally indefensible. That is the professional opinion of over 100 U.S. generals and admirals. Israel's strong defensive posture makes it most inadvisable for Israel's enemies to attack her. But once this defensive strength is removed, a coordinated war against Israel can only be a matter of time. The example and fate of Czechoslovakia, which preparatory to the Second World War was dismantled and shorn of its defensive capacity, insistently come to mind. What does all this mean to the United States? In a part of the world in which our country has the most far-reaching geopolitical stakes, Israel is the guarantor of American interests in the area. With Israel in a position of weakness the role of the United States in the area would collapse and radical states such as Syria, Iraq and Iran would dominate. That is why, despite the heady prospect of "peace in our time", neither the purposes of Israel nor those of the United States are served by Israel's relinquishing control over the "West Bank".

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crusades on behalf of specific writers in countries like North Vietnam or Cuba.

A clue to Chomsky's real motive might lie in a little-noticed article he wrote with Edward S. Herman that was published in the *Nation* (June 25, 1977). In that article, he engaged in his own Holocaust denial: denial of Khmer Rouge genocide against the Cambodian people; he also denounced the many reports of mass murder that had already appeared by that time.

I have read much Holocaust-denial literature over the years, and immediately noticed the striking parallels between the deniers and Chomsky's approach. For example:

- Deniers seem to blame Roosevelt and Churchill for the outbreak of World War II and assign no blame to Hitler. They also argue that German concentration camps were not death camps but benign places of detention. Similarly, Chomsky in his article lays the blame for Cambodia's problems on the United States while ignoring the role of the Khmer Rouge. He approvingly cites a book published by the far-Left Monthly Review Press, saying it presents

a carefully documented study of the destructive American impact on Cambodia and the success of the Cambodian revolutionaries [Khmer Rouge] in overcoming it, giving a very favorable picture of their programs and policies. . . .

- Deniers argue that the "truth" about the Holocaust has been covered up by the Zionist-controlled media, which have exaggerated German atrocities. In fact, media coverup is a constant theme of denial literature, and in his article Chomsky argues that the media were covering up America's destructive influence on Cambodia while maintaining "the illusion of an open press and society." He also dismisses reports of Khmer Rouge atrocities.

- Deniers argue in terms of moral equivalencies—that is, while there were atrocities, they occurred on both sides, and the deplorable conditions in German concentration camps occurred as a result of Allied bombings. Chomsky argues that "specialists who have studied the full range of evidence available" conclude that the Khmer executions

numbered at most in the thousands; that these were localized in areas

of limited Khmer Rouge influence and unusual peasant discontent, where brutal revenge killings were aggravated by the threat of starvation resulting from the American destruction and killing. . . . [Emphasis added]

At the time Noam Chomsky wrote the *Nation* article, there was sufficient information about Khmer policies to know what was really happening in Cambodia. Yet he was so blinded by his anti-Americanism that he deliberately ignored the massive evidence and denied it. . . .

JOHN C. ZIMMERMAN
University of Nevada
Las Vegas, Nevada

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I thoroughly agree that the *Shoah*, or Holocaust, most certainly occurred, and only a blind idiot or liar would attempt to deny it. All those I have known personally who attempted to deny the Holocaust fit into the first category; I will not speculate as to their motives, but none were Palestinian or particularly pro-Palestinian. One may legitimately argue as to whether five million or six million is nearer to the exact number of Jewish victims of the Holocaust (of course, if one were to include non-Jewish victims, the figure would be much higher than six million), but there is no way that I could honestly say that the *Shoah*, or Holocaust, never occurred.

However, equally undeniable is the Palestinian *Nakba*, or "Catastrophe," of 1948, which today would be called "ethnic cleansing." To deny the *Nakba* is to be guilty of the same willful blindness, stupidity, and dishonesty as to deny the Holocaust.

Edward Alexander says: "Although it may be impolite to say so these days, articles denying the Holocaust have long been a staple of publications of the PLO." While I cannot categorically state that this is untrue, as I have not read all PLO publications, I do have reason to doubt its veracity. First, I have read a number of PLO publications and have never encountered any such thing. Second, I have known a considerable number of Palestinians; not one of them denied that the Holocaust occurred, though they considered it to be a monstrous injustice that Palestinians should be punished

for German crimes, a sentiment with which I concur. Assuming that articles denying the Holocaust have appeared in PLO publications (which I seriously doubt), I would say that this is both dishonest and a tactical error, because it damages the Palestinian cause by associating it with liars and willfully blind idiots.

The point is this: while the "ethnic cleansing" of the Palestinian *Nakba*, or Catastrophe, of 1948 is not a crime of the same type or on the same scale as the Holocaust, it is nevertheless a gigantic, monstrous crime and injustice. Those who persistently deny the Palestinian Catastrophe of 1948 have no grounds for criticizing those who deny the Holocaust, since both are guilty of the same sort of lies and dishonesty. Some day someone is going to write a book entitled *Denying the Nakba*.

MICHAEL MCCLAIN
Middletown, Ohio

EDWARD ALEXANDER writes:

The passage of time has done nothing to diminish those qualities of mind and character, that unique blend of propagandist's tricks and low cunning, which led Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., in the March 1969 issue of COMMENTARY, to label Noam Chomsky (who had been forced to confess faking "quotations" from Harry Truman) "an intellectual crook." Only the third sentence of Mr. Chomsky's letter refers to anything I wrote in my review of Deborah Lipstadt's book; but I can readily understand his eagerness to avoid the subject of his lengthy collaboration with the neo-Nazis by ponderous ironies about my alleged campaign against Gypsies, American Indians, and black slaves.

The mind of the propagandist is very much like the spider in Swift's fable, "which by a lazy contemplation of four inches round, by an overweening pride, feeding and engendering on itself, turns all into excrement and venom, producing nothing at all but fly-band and cobweb." Those who are morbidly curious about how Mr. Chomsky weaves his cobweb may wish to contemplate the following:

In the May/June 1990 issue of *Congress Monthly* I referred, in the midst of a literary review and with no further elaboration, to "every exploded fiction about the Holocaust—ranging from the notion that not only Jews but also Poles,

Gypsies, Communists, and homosexuals were chosen by the Nazis for annihilation." Here, thought Mr. Chomsky, was meat and drink to batten on at last—the opportunity to project one's own intentions upon the enemy and to claim, as he has done repeatedly since then, that I am the author of "pro-Nazi apologetics."

For the benefit of readers who may find Mr. Chomsky's oracular intuitions here a bit murky, I will volunteer my services as logician-in-ordinary to the sage of MIT, who appears to be saying this: "You people who claim that the Jews alone were singled out by the Nazis for total destruction are the true Nazi apologists, because a genuine anti-Nazi would insist [erroneously, of course] that Hitler planned to annihilate all identifiable national groups except ethnic Germans." There is a kind of logic here, but it is of the sort that Pierre Vidal-Naquet, in his book, *Assassins of Memory*, imputes to Mr. Chomsky: "When logic has no other end than self-defense, it goes mad."

Mr. Chomsky, of course, does not value truth for its own sake, but has now become a champion of the Gypsies in order, so he thinks, to *épater les Juifs* by making Hitler into an equal-opportunity destroyer. Yet neither in the article mentioned above nor anywhere else have I denied Nazi persecution, sometimes extending to murder, of Gypsies (as well as of Poles and homosexuals).

In the case of the Gypsies (Romani), the word "genocide," in the sense defined by Raphael Lemkin in 1943—humiliation, dehumanization, forcible, even murderous denationalization of a group—may be appropriate. Nazi policies toward the Gypsies were unclear and inconsistent. In Germany itself the Nazis murdered the so-called "mixed" or "impure" Gypsies ("pure" Gypsies being thought of as an originally Aryan racial group); in the rest of Europe, the Nazis murdered wandering Gypsy bands but generally left sedentary Gypsies unscathed. Some Gypsy tribes were protected; individual Gypsies living among the rest of the population were not hunted down; Himmler's order of November 15, 1943 for occupied Soviet areas stipulated that "sedentary Gypsies and part-Gypsies are to be treated as citizens of the country"; and many Gypsies served, albeit in

the most horrifically dangerous assignments, in the Wehrmacht. Because of all this, most scholars have distinguished between the Nazi campaign against the Gypsies, an indescribable tragedy, and the Holocaust, the campaign to murder every single Jewish person. The scholarly journal published by Oxford University Press, *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, recognizes this distinction in its title.

But distinctions are not the business of propagandists like Noam Chomsky. For him, everything must be reduced to pellets of ideology small enough to be ingested by—if I may be allowed to change the metaphor I used above—a discursive mouse. One may see this process at work in his construal of a passage in another article of mine which has set his febrile imagination ablaze.

The passage, as any ordinarily attentive sixth-grader reading it would have recognized, was a paraphrase of a statement by Professor Ali Mazrui of SUNY, and read as follows:

He [Mazrui] argues that the term "holocaust" should not be reserved to describe the Nazi murder of European Jewry but should "remain a general metaphor" embracing the oppression of American Indians and black slaves as well.

From this Mr. Chomsky infers (or pretends to) that by using the word "oppression," I was somehow denying the existence of black slavery and the persecution of American Indians. One might be tempted to say of this "interpretation" that no human being ever went lower for a proof, but in fact Mr. Chomsky's crony, the English dilettante Alexander Cockburn, in the August 17-24, 1992 issue of the *Nation*, expressed identical outrage at my use of the word "oppressed."

Whether Mr. Chomsky is indebted to Cockburn or Cockburn to Mr. Chomsky for this contemptible piece of flummery, I cannot say; but the two working in concert remind me of nothing so much as the Yiddish expression *tsvey mey-sim geyen tantzn* (two corpses are going to dance) to describe two persons of equal incompetence joining their talents in an enterprise for which they are entirely unsuited. (I did suggest to Cockburn, in a letter that the *Nation* printed after six months of resistance, that he take up—and this as

soon as possible—his complaint about my [and Mazrui's] use of the word "oppression" with the authors of the old Negro spiritual that epitomizes the experience of slavery in the words, "oppressed so hard they could not stand.")

Like his hero, Noam Chomsky, Patrick O'Hayer prefers to deal with a non-issue—Deborah Lipstadt does not ever say that Chomsky supports Holocaust denial "as a fact"—rather than with the scandal of Chomsky's promotion of a petition riddled with falsehoods and his collaboration with Robert Faurisson and other anti-Semites and Nazis. When Pierre Vidal-Naquet learned, in 1979, that Chomsky was writing a preface to Faurisson's *Mémoire en Défense*, he warned his fellow leftist that Faurisson was a long-time, well-known anti-Semite. This did not prevent Chomsky from going ahead with his preface or from affixing to Faurisson the inane label: "a sort of apolitical liberal." When he was taken to task for referring in the petition to the "findings" that resulted from Faurisson's "historical research," Chomsky had the gall to claim that Frenchmen

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with imperfect English did not understand that "findings" means "conclusions" rather than "discoveries."

As I remarked in my review, Faurisson's right to teach was not withdrawn; neither was he, as the petition falsely claimed, denied access to public libraries and archives. The only important sense in which Chomsky's involvement with the Nazis concerns free speech is that, as everybody knows, Chomsky has a nasty habit of labeling all who disagree with him as enemies of freedom or (in my case) "some mullah of Qom." Vidal-Naquet suggests in his book that Chomsky's zeal on behalf of Faurisson is unlikely to cool until the French republic passes a law requiring that Faurisson's works be read in public schools and advertised and sold at the entrance to synagogues.

John C. Zimmerman's point about the similarity between Chomsky's apologetics for Pol Pot and the methods of the Holocaust deniers may remind us of a controversy of 1984 that sheds light on Chomsky's idiosyncratic idea of free speech. In an article in the *New Criterion* (October 1984), the British linguist (and political radical) Geoffrey Sampson recounted what had happened after he wrote in the English *Biographical Companion to Modern Thought* that Chomsky had "forfeited authority as a political commentator by a series of actions widely regarded as ill-judged (repeated polemics minimizing the Khmer Rouge atrocities in Cambodia; endorsement of a book . . . that denied the historical reality of the Jewish Holocaust)." Sampson was subsequently informed by the book's editors that Chomsky had threatened the publisher, Harper & Row, with a libel action if these words appeared in their American paperback edition of the book. When Sampson refused to mutilate his text, his entry was replaced by one which said only that Noam Chomsky "continued to be involved in controversy" (on unspecified issues).

By way of explaining how this act of censorship comported with his passionate devotion to the free speech of Nazis, Chomsky averred that "With regard to a book, readers can form their own conclusions. But an entry in a reference work is something quite different." As Werner Cohn, whose 1988 pam-

phlet on Chomsky is an indispensable complement to Lipstadt and Vidal-Naquet, acidly remarks: "Chomsky does not revoke his principle of absolute freedom of expression for everyone. It's just a matter of a little exception that he finds necessary." The little exception being, of course, the truth about himself.

I am greatly relieved that Michael McClain, after mental struggle, has concluded that he could not "honestly say that the . . . Holocaust never occurred." If he "seriously doubts" that Holocaust denial appears in PLO publications, let him consider the following: in 1990, the PLO weekly, *El Istiqlal*, published a series of articles denying the Holocaust. One declared that "the burning of the Jews in the Nazi chambers is the lie of the 20th century . . . the gas chambers would have had to operate for 1,300 years in order to burn six million Jews." In the same year, *Balsam*, the publication of the PLO-affiliated Palestinian Red Crescent, called the existence of Nazi gas chambers "a Jewish hoax to bilk money for Israel from Germany." I leave it to Mr. McClain to decide whether the Palestinian cause has now been tainted by "liars and willfully blind idiots."

Mr. McClain's translation of the word "nakba" as "ethnic cleansing" is, of course, incorrect; it has been used by Arabs to refer to the complex of events in 1948 that includes the establishment of the state of Israel, the failure of their armies to destroy that state, and the resultant refugee problem. But never mind. Since the Palestinian Arabs have long aspired to usurp the role of Jews and to appropriate Jewish symbols and Jewish history—the Arab "diaspora," the PLO "covenant," the Arab *Exodus* ship, the United Palestine Appeal—how could they possibly do without a Holocaust, even a second-class one involving refugee status, not death? Mr. McClain may want to suggest to the conjectural scholar who writes *Denying the Nakba* that he ask the Arab nations who brought about the Palestinian-Arab "Catastrophe" of 1948 to underwrite his research as a small act of contrition.

The Future of Democracy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:
. . . Had Bruce D. Porter, in "Can American Democracy Sur-

vive?" [November 1993], looked longer at the evidence in pursuit of his question, he might have felt more alarm.

Mr. Porter cites "declining governability" as an incipient crisis, tracing it to budgetary and other economic problems, but he surprisingly concludes that these problems need not be destabilizing and may be "healthy." There is no mention, however, of even more troubling sources of a grave erosion of legitimacy that is fundamental to democratic governance: the growing recognition among ordinary people of routine lying and deception by the state; the deepening chasm of distrust of officialdom and of officials' explanations and programs; the clientizing of citizens by remote and inaccessible bureaucracies. Loss of legitimacy is extremely serious (and hard to regain) because it strikes at essential allegiance, at respect for governing authority, and at the willingness of individuals and groups to cooperate without crude (and inefficient) coercion.

Mr. Porter's treatment of the "crisis of American values" is also disappointing, and not only because he attempts to dispose of it in a few paragraphs. . . . Conflict (or flight) of values has become a major issue in our country. The insults that provoke it are well known: the increase in lawlessness and violence; the essential nihilism of postmodern academic doctrines trickling down through the media; the bumptious selling of diversity/pluralism; the attempts of the pan-sexual bund to impose its ideas on schoolchildren in the guise of hygiene instruction—and more.

So now we hear admissions such as that recently published in a prominent liberal journal, "We made a mistake in ceding the family issue to the Right." Speechwriters in the White House have taken up the "politics of meaning"; the President now speaks of the "great crisis of spirit" and the importance of "values" and "soul." All this is more striking after years of his party's ideologues denouncing as sexist/racist any attempt to introduce such subjects. Presumably long-exiled values will now be rehabilitated and allowed back in the conversation. Small comfort! The language which once made possible moral and ethical discourse has so fallen into disuse that it has be-