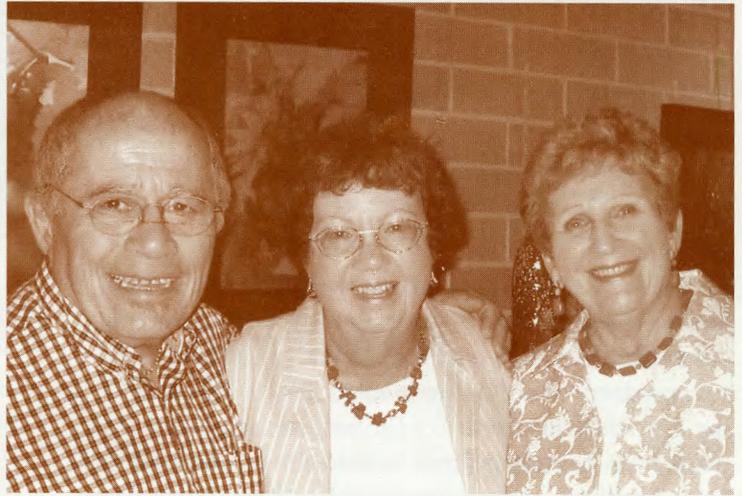


L'Dor V'Dor

from generation to generation • the newsletter of the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society

NJHS Annual Meeting

The NJHS annual meeting was held on Sunday, August 6th in the JCC Theater. New officers and five new board members were installed. Ben Nachman presented Shirley and Leonard Goldstein with the NJHS Mary Fellman Award and Louise Abrahamson presented Nan Katz with the Shirley Berman Outstanding Volunteer Award. A new oral history documentary was shown consisting of interviews conducted in the last year and a dessert reception was also held in the JCC gallery.



Left to right: Tuffy and Helen Epstein with Helen Rifkin Chorney.



Janice Harris (l.) and Vera Lewis (r) at the Annual meeting reception.



Above: (Left to right) Leonard and Shirley Goldstein and Ben Nachman.



Left: (Left to right) Margie Lincoln, Louise Abrahamson and Norman Lincoln at reception.

Small Communities Project Update from Ron Brodkey

In an ambitious project to identify and chronicle the histories and experiences of Jews who lived in small cities in Greater Nebraska, the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society formed a committee of volunteers. Chaired by Ira Nathan, each member of the committee was challenged to select the towns to be investigated.

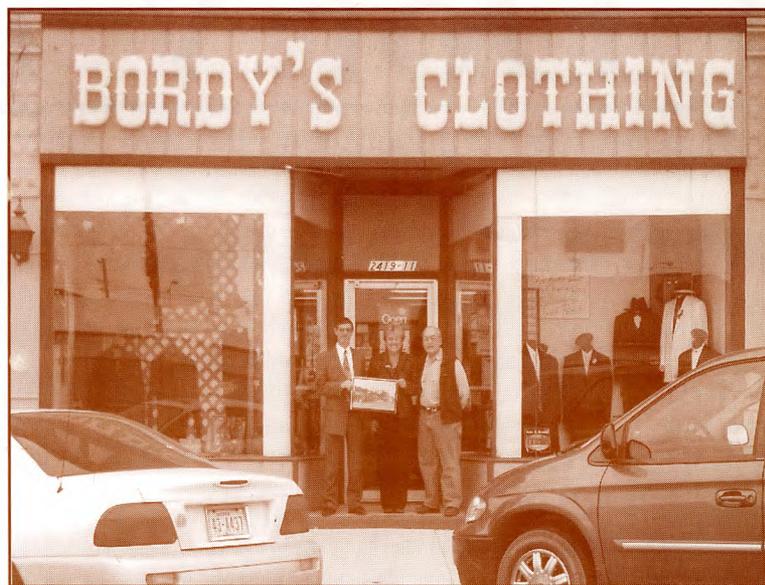
I was happy to accept and chose Columbus, NE. Why Columbus? Fond memories. In the early 1950s my family bought a chain of jewelry stores from Dave Fogel who owned the Rogers Jewelry stores in Grand Island, Council Bluffs, Omaha and Columbus. My first trip to visit the store was with my dad David Brodkey.

We arrived in Columbus and parked in front of the newly named Brodkeys store. Before ever entering our store, Dad insisted we go into Levine's Clothing store several doors east of our corner location. This was my first introduction to Sol Levine, whose brother Pug owned a ladies apparel and bridal shop across the street from Brodkeys. Dad immediately invited Sol and Pug to join us for lunch at Adams Café. My Jewish connection to Columbus was cemented even before I stepped foot in our new store.

Fast-forward 58 years to a gloomy August morning as I sat staring at the Google home page on my computer monitor. I entered "Columbus, NE" and before I could blink I was looking at the town's home page. The world of Columbus was somewhere inside its database and the adventure was about to begin.

My first call was to the groundskeeper of the cemetery to ask if there are any Jewish families buried there. "There sure are!" he says and he followed up with an invitation to visit. He also suggested calling Janelle Kline, the assistant city clerk who has the ability to perform historical scans of the obituaries.

I called Janelle to explain my mission to document the Jews of greater Nebraska and the game of Jewish geography began to unfold. Janelle led me to her best friend's mother Ruth Babka who had worked at Levine's. My call to Ruth resulted in a long conversation. At her high school reunion several summers ago, she collected the names of all of the alumni who returned to Columbus. She dug through the class reunion book and gave me the name of Pug Levine's daughter Ardis who now lives in Brooklyn, NY.



Ron Brodkey (right) and Joe and Linda Bordy in front of their store in Columbus, NE.

At this point, I knew I was on to something big. My call to Ardis led me to a treasure trove of Columbus history as well as the Levine's family history. In Ardis's basement was a box that contained just what I was looking for.

Ardis spends her winters in Florida as do Beth and I. We made a deal. Ardis agreed to bring the box with her from New York to Florida this winter and I happily agreed to make the drive from Naples to Boyton Beach, her home on the East Coast. In February we will go through the contents of her family box together!

Stay tuned. In a few months I'll have more information on the Jewish families of Columbus, Nebraska. A committee of 5 volunteers has identified more than 23 communities that have been home to more than 100 Jewish families in greater Nebraska. If you have any information or would like to help us in our work to chronicle Nebraska's Jewish history, please contact the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society at 334-6441 or 6442..

Moving? Please notify us of your address change!

Profiles and Memories

Dwayne Kushner Lincoln, NE

Dwayne, born on April 17, 1919, was the first of Max and Dorothy Kushner's five children. He and his siblings, Shirley, Gerald, Sheldon and Marshall, were all born in Lincoln, NE.

Dwayne was in the grocery business all of his life beginning in his father's store. In his teens, before graduating from Lincoln High School, he opened his own store and rode his bike to the store after school. He was married to Sylvia Paul of Chicago, IL and had to close the store to serve in the Navy. During WWII he was stationed at Pearl Harbor, after Dec. 7, 1941, which was his base throughout his naval career.

After he returned to Lincoln, he owned a few small grocery stores for several years, and in 1962, with his brother, Sheldon, opened a new supermarket at 27th and Vine Streets named King Dollar. It was the first 'Discount Store', and included hardware, giftware and clothing departments, a pharmacy and an adjacent liquor store as well as groceries. His oldest son, Brin, joined them later. Dwayne was President of the United Associated Grocers for the State of Nebraska, a long time member of the Lincoln Grocers Association, and the Lancaster County Beverage Association.

His commitment to the Jewish community reflected his devotion. Following his parents' and grandparents' service to the Chevra Kadishe he was President of that society as well as Mount Carmel Cemetery and ably guided both for many years. He was a trustee on the Board of Directors of Tifereth Israel Congregation, a long-standing member of B'nai B'rith and the Co-operative Credit Association (Free Loan Society), and was an advisor to B'nai B'rith Youth Organizations and a member of the Jewish Welfare Fund of Lincoln.

Dwayne Kushner passed away suddenly in 1972. His widow, Sylvia, still lives in Lincoln. His children, Brin, Jeffrey, Sherrill and Mark live in different cities in the U.S.



Short Notes from the NJHS

From Louise Abrahamson, Past President

I once again want to urge you to please keep us in mind when you celebrate any special occasion or wish to send a card in memory of someone. A donation to the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society helps us to maintain our office staff and continue our job of preserving the past and ensuring our future for generations to come.

This year we will be sending membership renewal envelopes to our entire membership. We hope that our life members and benefactors will consider making a donation so we can continue our important job. We need your help so we can make certain the NJHS will always be here.

An Oral History Update

The NJHS is very pleased to add the following interviews to our collection of oral histories: Helen Abrahamson, Lee Bernstein, Zena & Bennett Fishbain, Jerry Grossman, Charles "Skip" Kahane, Larry Kavich, Bob Kully, Harriet Lobel, Stan Malashock, Esther Meiches, Phyllis & Paul Rifkin, Sheila Rosen, Betty Sanford, Phyllis Sherman, Miriam Simon, Milt & Maxine Simons, Amy Small, Allen Tully, Stewart Tully and Irv Veitzer.

If you are interested in having your history recorded for you, your family and our archives, please contact the NJHS office.

History Of Jewish South Omaha Available

Additional copies of the NJHS 13th volume of Memories of the Midwest, Jewish South Omaha, Founding a Neighborhood, Fostering a Community can be purchased for \$15.00. Every NJHS member received a copy of the journal but if you would like another copy or a copy sent to someone please contact the office, 402-334-6442.

Message from the NJHS President, Midge Bowers

The mission of the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society is to preserve the histories of the Jewish families of Nebraska and Council Bluffs, Iowa. Three staff members, a board of directors and the generosity of many community members accomplish all of the projects of the Historical Society. We are very fortunate to live in a city where people care that their family memories are preserved.

The Historical Society's annual meeting was held August 6, 2006. The Board of Directors named Shirley and Buddy Goldstein as recipients of the Mary Fellman Award. The Goldstein's have been committed to supporting the Oral History program by making the funds available to purchase the equipment, supplies and expenses that are needed. Nan Katz received the Outstanding Volunteer Award. She has worked on many of the projects and worked in the archives weekly.

Ben Nachman worked with his son-in-law to present a new Oral History documentary for the annual meeting. He continues to do his interviews tirelessly for the Oral Histories. He currently has been working with Jewish families from Lincoln and will be presenting his work to the Lincoln Jewish Federation.

All members of the Historical Society were sent the journal "Jewish South Omaha" written by Rita Shelley. The project was started many years ago with an idea from Louise Abrahamson who said, "The stories of Jewish North Omaha are well documented. What About South Omaha?"

When you are in the auditorium at the JCC, please look at the new panels on the walls. Doug Hartman produced them from information that Nan Katz found in the archives. It is an ongoing project.

Avi Katzman, a Westside High School student, did her senior project on Omaha Jewish cemeteries. She contacted all the synagogues for information on where people are buried and compiled an alphabetical report. She donated the report to the Historical Society, which will be updated periodically.

Harold Abrahamson encourages anyone who is interested in doing his or her families genealogy to call the office for an appointment with him. A computer in the office is dedicated to the genealogy projects.

Tuffy Epstein, Emily Meyer and Ozzie Nogg presented the Ann Rosenblatt Ronell musical program December 3, 2006. Ann Ronell was a former Omahan who composed music for Broadway productions and movies. A reception followed. It was great to see you all there.

The committee, headed up by Ira Nathan, for the Small Nebraska Communities project has been working with great enthusiasm. If you know of anyone who was a former Jewish Nebraskan or some one who now lives out state, Ira will be interested in having the name to contact.

We have recently been advised that the photographs taken by Gary Gerelick through the years will be available to display. Gary was known for always having his camera with him at events. If anyone is interested in helping with the project in the next few months, please call the office.

The Historical Society has new board members announced at the annual meeting. We welcome Stuart Giller, Debbie Josephson, Joanie Kaiman, Ozzie Nogg and Susan Rothholz.

Best wishes for a Happy and Healthy 2007!

Can You Identify These Photos?



Donations to the NJHS:

Anniversaries

Ilsa & Marcel Kahn, Noddy & Ira Epstein from Helen & Tuffy Epstein;
Marlene & Don Dandy from Joanne & Jerry Freeman;
Barbara & Jerry Cohen from Renee', Dan & Ashley Corcoran, Sheila Rosen;
Audrey & Morrie Shapiro from Etta & Bae Epstein.

Birthdays;

Stewart Tully from Bernice Kaplan & Robert Kaplan,
Toni Rosen & Tony Roth;
Jerry Gross from Sally & Ed Malashock, Bev Gendler;
Ron Brodkey from Elaine & Bob Krasne.

Recovery;

Roie Meyers from Helen & Tuffy Epstein;
Doris Cohen from Renee' & Mo Handleman.

In Memory of:

Norman D. Rips from Karen & Oliver Pollak, Myrna & Kevee Kirshenbaum;
Frances Plotkin from Doris & Bill Cohen;
Miriam Mayer from Toni Rosen; Gary Gerelick,
Margy Schneider from Karen & Oliver Pollak;
Barbara Gorelick from Renee' & Mo Handleman;
Evelyn Spiegal Victor from Helen & Dave Chorney,
Sheldon Balick from Sally & Bernie Jonisch;
Mickey Simon from Doris & Al Abramson, Nan Katz,
Carol & Ira Nathan, Helen & Tuffy Epstein;
Harold Goodman from Helen & Tuffy Epstein;
Alice Mashbein, Mel Linsman from Harold Siporin.

Other Occasions:

NJHS Mary Fellman Award to Shirley & Buddy Goldstein for their continued support of our Oral History Project, from Steve & Gail Machov, Steve & Margo Riekes, Iris & Marty Ricks, Bob & Selma Cohen, NJHS Board of Directors and Staff.
Congratulations on the birth of a granddaughter to Karen & Oliver Pollak by Margo & Steve Riekes.
Congratulations to Iris & Marty Ricks on their son's engagement from Louise Abrahamson.
Thank you to the hosts of our anniversary celebrations from Janie & Jerry Dann.

From NJHS Board of Directors and Staff:

Birthday of Jerry Gross; birth of grandson of Ann & Don Goldstein and great grandson of Shirley & Buddy Goldstein.

In Memory of: Norman D. Rips, Gary Gerelick, Margy Schneider Searson, Barbara Gorelick, Bernice Miller, Hannah Aizenberg, Mickey Simon.

Congratulations to Janice & Shelly Harris - a new Goodwill building has been dedicated in their honor.

NJHS Veterans' Exhibit Wins Federation Community Service Award

The NJHS Exhibit honoring veterans and active service people received the Jewish Federation of 2005 Community Service Award at a special reception on September 5th. The Award recognizes creative programs sponsored by Federation agencies or Jewish organizations that have made a significant impact on the community.

The Exhibit opened for two days after Veterans Day on November 13, 2005 and then traveled for a month to Beth El, Beth Israel and Temple synagogues. It was again displayed in the gallery of the JCC for the month of February 2006, exhibiting veteran's memorabilia from the NJHS archives.

The Anti-Defamation League, Beth El, Beth Israel and Temple Israel Synagogues also sponsored the exhibit. It was made possible by the support of the Special Donor Advised Fund of the Jewish Federation of Omaha Foundation.



Left to right: Beth Dotan, Renee Corcoran and Rosie Zweiback, Co-Chairs of Veterans' Exhibit.

New NJHS Members

We gratefully acknowledge and welcome our new members and life members. Thank you for your generous and continued support.

New Members

Gloria Jones
Linda Abrams Tederman

New Life Members

Kaye Turner

Message from Kevee Kirshenbaum, Membership Chairperson

Membership renewals will be mailed shortly after January 1, 2007. Our membership year is January 1 through December 31st.

Without your continued support the NJHS would be unable to staff the office, and plan programs and exhibits. Please help us to continue our mission to preserve the history of our Jewish community and future generations by renewing your membership and/or making a donation.

NJHS Wish List

The following items are on the NJHS wish list. If you can help by making a donation or would like more information please call 402/334-6442 or email njhs@jewishomaha.org.

Streaming Video Clips\$ 75,000
(This would be a new exhibit of continuous viewing of oral history interviews)

Complete archiving of photographs and manuscripts in Carl Frohm Archival Center\$ 30,000
(Third dimensional objects have been archived and catalogued so this would complete the process.)

Computerized, interactive, touch screen video equipment\$ 25,000
(This would include a plasma TV.)

Internet Website\$ 20,000
(This would include production and maintenance.)

Bravo 2 disco publisher, DVD burner/copier & label Printer plus 2 jig computer\$ 10,000

The NJHS is offering to name the "Society/Facility" for the individual, family or business that make a gift of \$1 million or an irrevocable pledge for 5 years (\$200,000 per year). Recognition would also include a large photo of the donor(s) to be displayed as part of the permanent exhibit "Framing Our History for Future Generations".



2006-07 NJHS Officers

President: Midge Bowers
Secretary: Rocky Stern
Treasurer: Ira Nathan
Past President: Helen Epstein

Founders: Mary Fellman & Oliver Pollak

Board Members

Harold Abrahamson
Ron Brodkey
Robert Evnen
Stu Giller
Caryl Greenberg
Gary Javitch
Debbi Josephson
Joan Kaiman
Nan Katz
Janie Kulakofsky
Sheldon Kushner
Ed Malashock
Max Neiden
Ozzie Nogg
Vicki Perlmeter
Caryn Rifkin
Larry Roffman
Susan Rothholz

Ex Officio

Louise Abrahamson
Bob Belgrade
Joanie Bernstein
Lois Friedman
Helen Rifkin Chorney

Membership Chairperson

Kevee Kirshenbaum

Board Advisory on Oral Histories

Ben Nachman

Board Advisory on Archives & Exhibits

Doug Hartman

Legal Counsel

Hugh Abrahamson

Office Staff

Executive Director:
Renee Ratner Corcoran

Staff:

Dottie Rosenblum
Kathy Weiner

Newsletter Co-Editors:

Renee Ratner Corcoran
Dottie Rosenblum

Carl Frohm Archival Center

The Carl Frohm Archival Center exists because of donated memorabilia such as photographs, certificates, objects, etc. that tell the history of Jewish families, synagogues, organizations and businesses.

The NJHS collection of Jewish owned businesses is very limited. We need your help to add information to our records. We are looking for photographs, letterhead of businesses, awards or any kind of records concerning past and present businesses.

The following people have made donations to the archival center during 2006: Lois "Ducky" Milder, Phyllis Sherman, Nebraska State Historical Society, Paul Nathan, Leo Sivin, Phyllis Roffman, Sheldon Bernstein, George Shafer, Bruce Lewis, Janie & Alan Kulakofsky, Rocky Stern, Solomon Schwartz, Esther Simon, Normand Roffman, Nan Katz, Mrs. Jay Stoler, Norman Harris, Lee Bernstein, Shirley Greenberger, Harold Siporin, Lorraine Silverman, Etta Epstein, Peggy Chasen, Ashley Corcoran, Dr. & Mrs. William Rosenbaum, Ina Rosenblatt, Marshall Kushner, Gerald H. Meyer, Ben Nachman, Murray Newman, Louise Abrahamson, Sandy Kohll, Renee Corcoran, Carole Lainof, Shirlee & Norman Smeerin, Dee Goodman, Lynn Saltzman, Danielle Epstein, Helen Epstein, Steve Dean, Rosalyn Zoob, Beth Israel Synagogue, Mary Fellman, Jewish Community Center, Larry & Sivi Roffman, Estate of Gary Gerelick, Leonard Goldstein, Marjorie Somberg, Stuart Muskin, Florence "Tootie" Simon, Audrey Epstein, Ruth & Irwin Goldenberg, Bea Premack, Denise Ipock, Marvin Hornstein, Ellie Batt, Eunie Deneberg.

With Your Help

We Have a Great Past Ahead of Us!

The ongoing campaign to raise money for the "Mary Fellman Permanent Enrichment Fund" is continuing with many generous gifts. The goal of this effort is to provide a permanent fund for the year-to-year operation of the NJHS as well as programs and projects. We are attracting three to five year pledges and gifts from private and public sources.

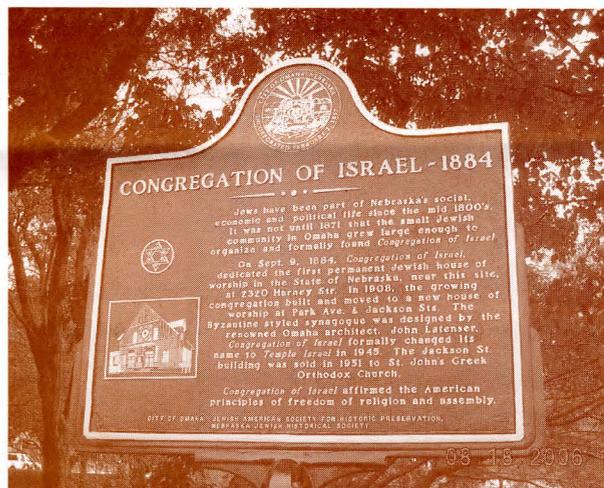
Donor photos and plaques are displayed on the FRAMING OUR HISTORY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS wall outside the NJHS office at the Jewish Community Center. The following names of early donors have been included on the wall: Roz Friedman, Iowa West Foundation, Audrey & Joe Kirshenbaum, Rosalie & Milt Saylan, Frances & Norman Batt, Maury Udes, Mickey & George Shafer, Northern Trust, Lois & Lloyd Friedman, Norma & Stan Silverman, Gary Javitch Family, Patty & Steve Nogg, Sheldon & Marcia Kushner, Sandra & Ed Belgrade, Etta & Harold Epstein, Stanford Lipsey, Sheri & Steve Idelman, Rose Blumkin Foundation, Inc., Edward & Beth K. Smith Fund and Shirley Kulakofsky

For brochures describing the goals of this effort, naming opportunities or further information please call 402/334-6442.

The First Jewish House of Worship in Nebraska Marker Dedicated

On August 18, 2006 the historical marker was dedicated. This event came about through the generosity of Jerry Klinger of Virginia who created the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation for the purpose of recognizing the first Jewish house of worship in each of the United States, and 'marking the spot' in each city. The site in the state of Nebraska was 23rd and Harney Street and The Congregation of Israel was the first synagogue, dedicated on September 18, 1884. The name was officially changed to Temple Israel in 1945.

Jerry Klinger researched the information from Dennis DePorte at Temple Israel, the NJHS archives, city officials, and a representative from the Federal Reserve Organization, who now owns the land, and made it happen. The cost and setting of the marker were donated by Jerry and his Society.



Pictured (above) (below) l-r are Jerry Klinger, Mayor Mike Fahey, Wendy Goldberg, Temple Israel President and Rabbi Aryeh Azriel.

Can You Identify These Photos?



What Nazi Ideology Can Teach Us About Islamic Extremist Terrorism

Michael R. Gendler, an Omaha native, is currently Associate Professor of History in the humanities division at the College of Saint Mary.

In his 1967 classic, *The Fascist Tradition*, John Weiss argued that “If fascism is to become a tradition, then it will find its most likely social base, I believe, in . . . underdeveloped countries. Comparative studies on a truly international scale are absolutely necessary.” (132). Weiss’s counsel was wise then and holds today. I believe, notwithstanding the inherent logical hazards of using analogies, that there is much to be gained by placing Nazi ideology, as adumbrated by Hitler, side by side with the recent views expressed by Osama bin Laden and subjecting their ideas to comparative analysis. Most importantly, such analysis can place in relief precisely what kind of enemy we face today.

This essay begins with the assumption that ideas often set the foundation for actions that follow. In the case of extremists such as bin Ladin or Hitler, that assumption is particularly difficult to refute. And yet, we in the academic community are frequently reluctant to state clearly and distinctly that we know things. Of course, there is an intellectual vitality and precision that is very positive in this regard. Specialization brings with it a sense of caution and rigor that understandably shies away from sweeping generalizations. They are seen as over-simplifications in the face of complex data. And after all, since Thomas Kuhn, we all know that even in the sciences, general theories about the natural world operate on a tentative basis allowing scientists to practice “normal science” until the next “revolution” hits. And yet, in the face of all this, we must surely recognize that after many decades of work in both the humanities and the sciences, there is some pretty solid information out there ready to be mined and employed for the benefit of us all. Never has anything been so well documented as the destruction perpetrated by those who acted under the aegis of Nazi ideology. Therefore, as we encounter links between bin Laden and the Nazis, it should serve as fair warning about what we can expect should he or those who sympathize with him achieve positions of power.

It is often difficult, even for the intellectually oriented, to believe just how serious and powerful ideas can be. I recall back in the early 1970s, listening to the historian Peter Viereck talk, at Mount Holyoke College, about how tough it was for him, at first, to get his doctoral dissertation, *Metapolitics*, published. The book deals with Nazi ideology and its links with German romanticism and neo-paganism. Viereck, having written the work just as World War II began, argued that Hitler, with all his extreme sounding

rhetoric, should be taken at his word. These were, he argued, not simply words written for propaganda purposes, but rather arose out of Hitler's genuine passion to remake the world according to his twisted ideals. Publishers told Viereck that he was naïve to believe that Hitler meant these things literally. As World War II progressed, Viereck's book was indeed published. Unfortunately, his assessment of Hitler's intentions was correct.

We could do worse than to keep our eyes just as wide open to bin Laden's rhetoric. As Thomas Friedman points out in his most recent book, *The World Is Flat*, just as so many Germans, including Hitler, felt deep humiliation after the Treaty of Versailles, so the leaders and followers of al-Qaida, feel similar humiliation over the fact that their part of the world (Arab-Muslim) seems to be falling behind Europe and America in economic and technological terms. Hitler and the Nazis took refuge in their concept of the Volksgemeinschaft—or a “people's community.” The state must be more than a government with boundaries. It must represent a people of common blood holding common goals. As Hitler put it in his autobiography, “The State is only a means to an end. Its end and its purpose is to preserve and promote a community of human beings who are physically as well as spiritually kindred.” (Mein Kampf, Volume II, Chapter 2).

The conceptualization of a kind of nation by bin Laden is clear in his 2003 “Sermon for the Feast of the Sacrifice” published by the Middle East Media Research Institute (March 5, 2003).

“This sublime Prophetic tradition [hadith] embraces all Believers. Since we are Believers, we are [necessarily] Mujahideen for the sake of Allah on behalf of Islam. Hence, a Muslim who is unable to engage in Jihad with his hand or tongue must engage in Jihad in his heart. This means that he should incessantly hate Allah's enemies and curse them, [just] as he should constantly be loyal to the Believers and the Mujahideen; he should pray for them and feel the brotherhood of belief that binds him to all Muslims everywhere in the world, in both east and west. He should feel that the Believers are in one tent and that the infidels are in another, until Allah bestows on the [Islamic] Nation one government which will unite all Muslims under its banner, God willing. (underlining added) He [who engages in Jihad in his heart] should [at least] urge himself to engage in Jihad with his hand and his tongue. This [Jihad of the mind] is the weakest kind of Islamic faith. He should boycott products [manufactured by] the Americans and their allies. The Believer should be particularly careful not to support falsehood because assisting infidels against other

Muslims [even] if only verbally is flagrant unbelief, as has been determined by the scholars. He should beware of those of whom Allah said: ‘Allah knows those of you who hold the others back; who say to their brethren: Come, join us! and seldom take part in the fighting. He should not add the grave sin of discouraging [others] to the grave sin of avoiding Jihad.’”

It is clear in this passage, that bin Laden, like Hitler, seeks an organic bond among members of the kind of nation (Ummah) that he seeks. The emphasis for bin-Laden is, of course, not on the development of a nation-state and empire, but upon “all Believers.” For both men, the goal is not to create a united entity for the purpose of protecting individuals within it, but rather to create that entity as a fulfillment of part of a larger world-view for which the individual counts little. In the case of bin Laden, the difference is that rather than looking at race as the determining factor in his vision of the future, he replaces that with a brand of religious fanaticism. Also, like Hitler, he retains a preoccupation with the ongoing importance of struggle and of the role of himself as a leader in this struggle. Both bin Laden and Hitler encourage a contempt for bourgeois material life.

In Mein Kampf, Hitler noted the following. “It may be that money has become the one power that governs life today. Yet a time will come when men will again bow to higher gods. Much that we have today owes its existence to the desire for money and property; but there is very little among all this which would leave the world poorer by its lack. It is also one of the aims before our movement to hold out the prospect of a time when the individual will be given what he needs for the purposes of his life and it will be a time in which, on the other hand, the principle will be upheld that man does not live for material enjoyment alone.”

In his Declaration of War Against the United States (August 23, 1996), bin Laden had this to say. “Our talk with the youth is about their duty in this difficult period in the history of our Ummah. A period in which the youth and no one else has come forward to carry out the variable and different duties. While some well-known individuals have hesitated in their duty of defending Islam and saving themselves and their wealth from the injustice, aggression and terror exercised by the government, the youth (may God protect them) are steadfast and raise the banner of Jihad against the American/Zionist alliance occupying the sanctuaries of Islam. Others who have been tricked into loving this materialistic world, as well as those who have been terrorised by the government, choose to give legitimacy to the greatest betrayal, the occupation of the land

of the two Holy Places. We bemoan this and can only say: “No strength and no power acquired except through God”. We are not surprised at the actions of our youth. The youth were the companions of Muhammad (God’s Blessings and Salutations be on him), and was it not the youths themselves who killed Abu Jahl, the Pharaoh of this Ummah? Our youths are the best descendents of the best ancestors.”

The words of both men celebrate heroic acts of young followers willing to die in order to deliver blow after blow against what they regard as the corrupt opposition that they face. Both also seek to place much of the blame for the world’s corruption upon the Jews and their American allies. Both seek to use the blood of their youth to cleanse what they see as the corruption caused by their enemies (for Hitler—Jews, communists, and later Americans, for bin Laden, communists, Jews, and Americans). In his “Letter to America” (November 24, 2002), bin Laden blasted American culture as a whole as he appealed to the American public.

“We call you to be a people of manners, principles, honour, and purity; to reject the immoral acts of fornication, homosexuality, intoxicants, gambling’s, and trading with interest. We call you to all of this that you may be freed from that which you have become caught up in; that you may be freed from the deceptive lies that you are a great nation, that your leaders spread amongst you to conceal from you the despicable state to which you have reached.

(b) It is saddening to tell you that you are the worst civilization witnessed by the history of mankind:

(i) You are the nation who, rather than ruling by the Shariah of Allah in its Constitution and Laws, choose to invent your own laws as you will and desire. You separate religion from your policies, contradicting the pure nature which affirms Absolute Authority to the Lord and your Creator. You flee from the embarrassing question posed to you: How is it possible for Allah the Almighty to create His creation, grant them power over all the creatures and land, grant them all the amenities of life, and then deny them that which they are most in need of: knowledge of the laws which govern their lives?

(ii) You are the nation that permits Usury, which has been forbidden by all the religions. Yet you build your economy and investments on Usury. As a result of this, in all its different forms and guises, the Jews have taken control of your

economy, through which they have then taken control of your media, and now control all aspects of your life . . .

Included in this litany is this now infamous declaration. “The Nation of Martyrdom; the Nation that desires death more than you desire life”

Again, like the Nazis, there is a sharp contrast made between what they see as the decadent enemy with their own pure self-sacrificing warrior character. Most importantly, of course, comes the question, so what? We can go on and on analogizing— but to what end? For one, we can be intellectually armed against even well-meaning mistakes— such as that found in the September 11, 2005 New York Times Magazine, in which Mark Danner writes, that “Fundamentalist Islamic thought took aim at America’s policies, not at its existence.”

To Danner, bin Ladin and company are simply using terror as a call to action—a way to stimulate all possible allies of the “Ummah” (Muslim People) to act against its enemies. Back in the 1930s it made sense to many that Hitler was simply seeking justice for Germany after their ill treatment at the Treaty of Versailles, which burdened them with reparations and occupation by foreign troops on part of their territory. However, once engaged in the fury of World War II, Hitler’s actions took on the character of his extreme ideology, rather than strategic concerns for his country.

As Joachim Fest, in his biography of Hitler, so well put it, Hitler practiced a kind of “aestheticization” of politics. So does bin Laden. For both men, politics and war are forms of artistic expression for which no compromise can be allowed. We need to constantly remind ourselves that the attack on 9/11 was an attempt to inflict as much damage upon us as possible. If bin Laden had the resources to murder 80 million Americans, he would, notwithstanding his statements that his grievances lie with American troops being stationed in Saudi Arabia and Iraq and the United States government’s alliance with Israel. His rhetoric soars way beyond these particular concerns. Bin Ladin’s statements, as well as those of his followers, carry a message that resonates with a bitter hatred for so much of what we are as Americans. That he would exercise restraint of any kind if he had one hundred times more power is doubtful. This is a hard learned lesson that we dare not overlook today.

Given the increasingly diffuse nature of al-Qaida, the battle for the hearts and minds of average citizens becomes ever more important. Terrorist cells within the United

States obviously thrive on recruiting those from within the United States who share their resentment for America and what it stands for. One of the lessons we might learn from the Third Reich comes from the work of Friedrich Meinecke, who, in his book, *The German Catastrophe*, wrote about his regret that those who supported the Weimar Republic during the late 1920s and early 1930s did not have the same intensity and dynamism that was to be found in the Nazi Party and its allies. Today, we should be aware of the importance of highlighting the virtues of constitutional democracy and limited government. Mainstream values of religious toleration, individual liberty, and free enterprise need to be not only well understood and subjected to analysis, but also celebrated. Whenever we hear attacks on the “bourgeois” values of America, we should read them carefully and be prepared to defend what has been and is an essentially decent society. Needless to say, the shortcomings of our nation should not be whitewashed. But at the same time, we ought not create an atmosphere of cynicism that reinforces the nihilistic and ultimately naïve view that America is the center of the world’s problems. Indeed, quite the opposite is the case. But this needs to be taught to our young people not as a reflex super-patriotism, but rather, as a realistic assessment when placing America in an international and historical context and understanding its key role of having protected itself and the world from the two major threats to individual freedom in the twentieth century—Nazi fascism and later, Soviet communism.

Those who have contempt for our liberties have always been willing to exploit them in order to destroy us. We must, again, learn from history and not allow this to happen. When Joseph Goebbels was legally elected to the Reichstag, the legislative branch of the Weimar Republic, in 1928, he wrote in his diary about what a joke this was and how he would use his election to destroy the Weimar Republic from within. In an article for the Nazi Party he wrote that the Reichstag was “a stinking dung heap” and added that his election would simply permit the Nazis to “equip itself with democracy’s own weapons from the democratic arsenal.” (from *Der Angriff*, April 30, 1928). This diary entry is a reminder of why measures like the current Patriot Act are sometimes necessary. We should not forget that the ultimate goal of our Constitution is to preserve the liberty of the citizens of the United States—not to avoid ever taking temporary measures that modify civil liberties that exist under normal circumstances. If the civil liberties of Goebbels and company had been “violated” more readily we may have been spared 40 million dead in World War II.

A final lesson that rings out from the study of Hitler and his time, is how critically important leadership was

to the Nazi movement. Despite the much greater diffusion of al-Qaida, the elimination of key individuals is of critical importance. A movement that is characterized by dynamism, charismatic leadership, and recruitment of the young is especially vulnerable to loss of its key recruiters. The more of such individuals we can neutralize, the better. In summary, al-Qaida, like the Nazis, presents an ideology that emphasizes organic national identity, anti-Semitism, cosmic struggle, charismatic leadership, a special appeal to youth, a contempt for bourgeois middle class life, a celebration of blood and death, rejection of the modern in its propaganda while using modern technology for its own ends, a contempt for constitutional liberty but an opportunistic willingness to take advantage of such liberties in their opposition, and an overall rejection of any sense of limits in terms of their own goals and what they are willing to do to achieve them. The analogy, with all its limitations, should call upon us to do what we can to make sure that this organization never has the opportunity make its dreams come true. Wars are, of course, never “good.” However, like the struggle against Nazi Germany, the war against Islamic extremism is necessary. Should we ever doubt that we are the “good guys” in this conflict, imagine if the power relationships were reversed—bin-Laden has our power and we have his. Then, the world would know what terror really means.



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