



profits and executive salaries), but they've also cut corners by skimping on staffing, supplies and care. A *Consumer Reports* survey of nursing homes last summer ranked most for-profit chains near the bottom in quality. Also, cost-cutting and understaffing contributed to a 55 percent increase in occupational injury and illness for nursing-home workers between 1983 and 1993, making it twice as dangerous as the average private-sector job, worse even than in the construction or manufacturing sectors.

Unions have been successfully organizing nursing-home workers despite the hardball anti-union tactics employed by for-profits and not-for-profits alike. Still, less than 15 percent of nursing-home workers belong to unions, and more than half of them are with SEIU. As part of its Dignity, Rights and Respect campaign, the union hopes to improve wages, benefits, training, security and workloads for employees, thereby creating career-oriented workers who will have more rewarding employment and will be able to provide better care.

The union recently won breakthrough victories at two big chains, GranCare and the Sun Healthcare Group, bringing SEIU closer to its goal of setting stronger regional and national standards in negotiations. It is embroiled in a similar battle in California with Hillhaven, the nation's second largest chain, and soon, in coordination with the Food and Commercial Workers, SEIU will take on Beverly Enterprises, the country's biggest chain.

SEIU has prepared for these contract showdowns over several years. The union carefully coordinated the timing of negotiations at its facilities so that two-thirds of its 900 nursing-home contracts would expire this year. That allowed

SEIU leaders have made the quality of care in nursing homes a leading issue in their latest campaign.

SEIU's big San Francisco health care local. The contract provides workers an industry rarity, pensions, which will be paid by the company into the union's pension fund. As an experiment in several facilities, GranCare will also pay for a patient-care representative—chosen by the union—to help solve problems of staffing and quality of care. Seeking to use its bargaining power to help organize the unorganized, the union got the company to agree to a "code of conduct" that limits anti-union activity and ensures union access to workers in organizing drives. The company also agreed to accept the results of expedited representation elections. These elections will not be overseen by the National Labor Relations Board, which means that balloting won't be subject to the legal delays that companies often exploit in labor-board elections.

In contract negotiations with several smaller companies, SEIU persuaded employers to recognize the union immediately if a majority of workers in a facility simply signs union cards; those agreements also press employers to remain neutral in organizing drives. "Using the power of organized workers to circumvent legal restrictions on workers and to counter the boss's power is extremely important," says Paul Kumar, the political director of SEIU's New England Local 1199N. "This is a cornerstone of future organizing."

Though workers in the unorganized homes show strong

SEIU to apply more unified negotiating pressure on nursing-home operators. (The union hopes to establish national standards for contract issues such as worker retraining, union recognition and employee input, says David Snapp, SEIU's national nursing-home campaign director. But because states establish Medicaid reimbursement rates, the union intends to establish uniform wages only for each state.)

The GranCare contract, which covers workers in Michigan, Wisconsin and California, dramatically moves toward national standards. "It's the single most important victory in our nursing-home division" in many years, according to Sal Rosselli, the president of



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interest in unions, it is tough to win an initial contract—or a better contract later—targeting one facility at a time. Nursing-home workers have little traditional union power, since employers can quickly replace most of them if they strike. SEIU has mobilized workers at all the chains this year for possible full-scale strikes, but so far it has called only selective, one-day strikes.

Primarily, the union has had to rely on other tactics. Among those employed at GranCare were workplace demonstrations of solidarity. Union members refused to participate in an “appreciation” lunch since the company neglected to show its appreciation in the contract. And at one facility, the union conducted a “work-in,” with 100 union members protesting understaffing by showing up to volunteer their services. Recently, SEIU sponsored a freedom train ride with Jesse Jackson from Sacramento to San Francisco that picked up hundreds of Hillhaven workers along the way for a final rally in support of workers at five homes on a one-day strike. Hillhaven retaliated by permanently replacing about 20 strikers, most of whom were rank-and-file leaders, according to the union. The company also locked out 60 other workers. Local 250 responded immediately with protests directed at Hillhaven management.

Throughout its campaign, SEIU has emphasized its commitment to quality patient care, noting that facilities with poor working conditions make for inferior treatment of patients. By making this link, the union has recruited support from advocates of better patient care, such as state legislators, who are under pressure to raise industry standards and prohibit corporate gouging while still ensuring adequate reimbursement. SEIU has also compiled and published data on corporate mismanagement and inadequate patient care. Union exposés and pressure led Healthnet, a major HMO in California, to stop sending patients to Hillhaven.

In Connecticut, Local 1199N eventually boosted top pay for CNAs to a national high of \$12.45 an hour and took out two ads in the *Wall Street Journal* calling attention to federal investigations of fraud and other legal violations at Sun Healthcare. When the company's stock value dropped, it retaliated with a lawsuit against the local union.

Republican Medicaid cuts will put new pressure on the industry, workers and the union, but cuts may also give workers new incentives to organize. “No one in their right mind wants Medicaid and Medicare slashed for vulnerable Americans,” Snapp says, “but I can imagine how we could organize in either scenario.”

However the industry is restructured, the union is now better positioned to influence it and to carry on long-term battles. “We’ll fight as long as it takes,” Rosselli says of his Hillhaven campaign, which has already lasted most of the year. “The homes, residents and workers will stay there, but we’ll drive Hillhaven out of California if we have to. We have no choice.”

ISRAEL

Aftershocks of an assassination

D

espite the tremendous shock and massive outpouring of grief that have convulsed Israel in the wake of the November 4 assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the troubled course of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process seems unlikely to change. To be sure, many short-term signs suggest that the assassination may have shifted political opinion back toward the Labor camp and the cause of peace. Many Israelis have made the remembrance of Rabin an occasion to draw together in mournful introspection. More than one-fifth of the country's population filed past his body as it lay in state in the Knesset plaza or paid respects to the cortege leading to Rabin's grave site on Mount Herzl. The Kings of Israel Square in Tel Aviv where Rabin was shot has already been renamed Yitzhak Rabin Square; and thousands of young Israelis, between the ages of 10 and 20, contin-

ued to hold vigils there and outside Rabin's homes in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem for more than a week after the assassination.

Yet the assassination and its aftermath probably will not alter the landscape of Israeli politics. The peace process with the Arab states and the PLO—the focus of Rabin's government and the central theme of Israeli history this decade—will likely continue undeterred. Negotiations with Syria will proceed as planned. In the coming months, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) will gradually withdraw from the West Bank's main cities and, shortly afterward, the Palestinians will hold general elections. Israel and the Palestinians will begin negotiating (probably in May 1996) a final peace settlement.

The Labor government moved with alacrity to resolve many of the immediate questions raised by Rabin's murder. The refashioned cabinet, under the leadership of former Foreign Minister and one-time Prime Minister Shimon Peres, will, if anything, be slightly

more dovish in composition than its predecessor. The government will remain in its full four-year term of office, with general elections to be held as scheduled next November.

In many respects, the assassination of Rabin bears comparison with that of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt, who was gunned down by Islamic fundamentalists in Cairo in 1981. Sadat was murdered in part because he had signed peace agreements with Israel, bringing to an end the belligerence that had characterized Israeli-Egyptian relations since Israel's founding in 1948. Rabin was murdered because he—and Peres—had recognized the PLO and promoted the peace process.

Many Israelis who had opposed the Egypt accords had argued in the late '70s that Israel should not give up the Sinai peninsula in exchange for peace and that the Egyptians could not be trusted, even if Sadat himself could. The moment he was removed from the scene, the argument went, his successors would tear up the treaty and Israel would have neither peace nor land to show for it. But Egyptian and Middle Eastern history confounded these dire forecasts. Sadat's successor, President Hosni Mubarak, stuck to the letter of the agreement, and peace, sometimes lukewarm, sometimes chilly, but peace nonetheless, has governed relations between the two countries ever since.

The upcoming elections, more than any realignment spurred by the assassination, will decide the future contours of the Israeli political scene. Between now and next November, any number of events—bus-bombings by Muslim terrorists, for example, or the start of final-stage negotiations with the PLO—could dramatically sway minds and votes. At best, the assassination may have lastingly tilted leftward some portion of the 10 percent or so of Israeli voters who traditionally have floated between left and right.

Yitzhak Rabin's death won't change much in the Middle East—and the subculture of violence that spawned the murder may still go unchecked.

By Benny Morris
JERUSALEM

But any such electoral gain on Labor's part will most likely be counterbalanced by the loss of its greatest electoral asset, Yitzhak Rabin. Peres today may enjoy more popularity than when he led Labor to defeat in successive elections in 1977, 1981, 1984 and 1988. But he will probably never have Rabin's electoral appeal. Rabin inspired a great deal of trust among Israelis. His distinguished military record projected a core sense of no-nonsense devotion to Israel's security that no right-wing politician was able to challenge or undermine.

Precisely for this reason, in fact, Peres will probably try to emulate Rabin's course in setting both the substantive terms of the peace and the pace of its implementation. In order to "sell" the upcoming peace moves to the Israeli public and to secure the re-election of the Labor government next year, Peres must appear to be moving toward peace in measured, ultra-careful strides rather than in a headlong, conciliatory rush. Above all, he must not appear "soft" on the Arabs or "weak," a sure-fire recipe for electoral disaster.

In the long term, Rabin's assassination is unlikely to move any hearts or minds among the politicians, party activists and supporters of the opposition. The allegiance of these opposition forces covers a wide spectrum on the right: from the Likud and its sister parties—Tzomet (meaning "crossroads," led by Greater Israel supporter and Reserves General Rafael Eitan), the National Religious Party (NRP) and Moledet (meaning "home-land, led by Reserves General Rehavam Ze'evi) to the fanatical and semi-fanatical extraparliamentary factions and movements. Rabin's assassin, Yigal Amir, and his accomplices emerged from this latter grouping, which includes Gush Emunim ("the bloc of the faithful"), Zo Artzenu ("This is our country"), Eyal (an acronym for Irgun Yehudi Leumi, or the National Jewish organization), and Kahane Hai ("Kahane Lives"). Right-wing opponents of the peace may harbor some remorse over the destructive form, but not the ideological content, of Amir's action: Activists on the right will continue to believe and preach—as Amir does—that the peace process is leading to the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and to withdrawal from the Golan Heights that will endanger Israel's existence.

To be sure, the right will probably temper many of its harsher political pronouncements and utterances in the coming months. Indeed, the Israeli police and judicial authorities have already begun a crackdown against the unrestrained, hate-filled rhetoric that allowed Amir and his friends to feel that they were merely carrying out the popular—as well as the divine—will. No longer will right-wing crowds be able to chant "Rabin (Peres) is a murderer," "Rabin (Peres) is a traitor" and hold aloft placards showing Israeli ministers in Nazi dress while Likud, Tzomet, the NRP and Moledet leaders look on approvingly and offer their own singular contributions.

Likewise, many of the right's more confrontational

actions may be reined in, at least in the short term. No longer, one assumes, will the police and the IDF allow West Bank (Judea and Samaria) settlers and their supporters to run riot against Arabs in downtown Hebron, illegally squat on West Bank hillsides, block traffic on Israel's highways or harass peace-supporting MKs, as they have done freely during the past two years.

Nevertheless, crackdowns seem unlikely to reverse the startling deterioration of Israeli political debate. The differences of opinion over vital, indeed existential, questions, remain deep. Since the 1993 Oslo accords, Israeli politics



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The hate-filled rhetoric of the Israeli right helped prepare the ground for Rabin's assassination.

has suffered an extreme lack of restraint and absence of civilized discourse, especially on the part of the right. In their efforts to derail the peace process and bring down the government, right-wing politicians have mounted a systematic campaign in the Knesset and in public rallies to delegitimize the main coalition parties, Labor and Meretz, their policies and their leaders—in short, to delegitimize the government. Likud leaders Binyamin Netanyahu, Yitzhak Shamir and Ariel Sharon, Moledet leader Rehav'am Ze'evi, Tzomet leader Rafael Eitan and Mafdel leader Zevulun Hammer all participated in this incitement, variously branding Rabin and his government "criminals," "Nazis," "Quislings," and likening them to Ernest Bevin (the reputedly anti-Semitic British foreign secretary from 1945-1951), the collaborationist Vichy regime of World War II and the Judenrat (the Jewish committees in the ghettos of Nazi-occupied Europe that cooperated with the Nazis).

Most Israeli commentators agree that this rhetoric of delegitimization and "criminalization" has helped forge the mindset of Amir and his co-conspirators. But this analysis obscures more potent and direct influences on their action—a tradition of illegal political activism and a group of spiritual mentors who mapped out religious justifications for political extremism.

Amir and his friends were educated in the national religious school system—Amir attended the Kerem DeYavne yeshiva and Bar Ilan University—that was, and remains, the seedbed of Gush Emunim, the settler movement that heralds the continued growth of “Greater Israel.” Here, teachers and rabbis brought home the message that fealty to the Land of Israel is the supreme divine command, outweighing all other imperatives, including “Thou shalt not kill.” Here the young Amir and his friends learned that the Law of God (“Halacha”) is more important than the Law of Man, that God, rather than the state, must be obeyed. Whole schools of rabbis brought up in this system taught, advised and preached to a generation of disaffected Israelis, interpreting the Halacha in a narrow, ultranationalist manner.

Throughout the late '60s and '70s, Gush Emunim continuously broke the law in its campaign to set up Jewish settlements on the West Bank. The Labor-led governments of the day, under prime ministers Eshkol, Meir and Rabin, continuously bent to their will, and the settlements grew and multiplied. During the '80s, even though the Likud-led government of Menachem Begin promoted settlement, groups of settlers seeking to counter the growth of Palestinian nationalism set up the Jewish “Underground,” a terrorist organization that murdered a handful of Arab students in Hebron, severely injured a number of Arab mayors of West Bank towns and planned to blow up the mosques on the Temple Mount in order to facilitate the construction of the Third Temple in Jerusalem. These terrorists were eventually caught—but successive Israeli justice ministers and presidents commuted their sentences and pardoned them. Within six years of committing multiple murders, none of the convicted “Underground” members was in jail.

The return of Labor to power in 1992, together with the news of the Israel-PLO negotiations, triggered a renewed campaign of Jewish terrorism against Arabs in the West Bank—in large part a reaction to Arab terrorism against Jews—as well as a sustained effort to vilify the government. The settlers and their supporters, with rabbinical sanction, almost daily broke the law in attacks on Arabs and Arab property, and continuously mounted illegal demonstrations in the Occupied Territories and in Israel proper.

The most important milestone in this longer buildup to the assassination was probably last February's slaughter of some 30 Arab worshippers in the Mosque of Abraham (the Tomb of the Patriarchs) by another religious, right-wing fanatic, the American-born Baruch Goldstein. The subsequent failure of the government to crack down on the Israeli right's lunatic fringe only aggravated the climate of extremism. Indeed, with official sanction, the settler movement turned Goldstein's grave in the Hebron Jewish suburb of Kiryat Arba into a lavish memorial and point of pilgrimage.

Since then, rabbinic support for anti-government agitation has grown more strident. Less than a year ago, a convocation of the rabbis of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District issued a ruling (*psak halacha*) calling on IDF soldiers to disobey orders to evacuate settlements or camps in the West

Bank. In another, secret ruling five months ago 11 (or more) rabbis gave a green light to the assassination of Rabin and Peres by agreeing that their fate should be that of *rodef* (one who hunts a Jew in order to kill him) or *mosser* (one who hands over Jews or parts of the Land of Israel to non-Jews). Less than two months ago, a number of rabbis and Kabbalists issued and published a curse (*pulsa de'nura*) against Rabin, calling for his murder and consigning his soul to utter darkness. It is likely that Amir personally, or directly through one of his co-conspirators, received sanction for the planned assassination from one or more rabbis.

This national-religious tradition of lawlessness clearly dovetails with an older tradition of right-wing “Revisionist” terrorism that dogged the Yishuv and Israel from the '30s through the '50s. Revisionist Zionists formed the right wing of the Zionist movement, countering its predominantly socialist leadership. In 1948, the Revisionist movement became the Herut party, led by Menachem Begin; in the 1980s, Herut changed its name to the Likud.

Revisionist Zionists may have murdered the director of the Jewish Agency's political department, Chaim Arlosoroff, back in 1933 (in the end, no one was convicted). They certainly murdered hundreds of Arab pedestrians (and occasionally Jews) in terrorist campaigns in the late '30s and '40s. Occasionally they committed, or tried to commit, acts of terrorism after the establishment of the state (one Likud MK, Don Shilansky, tried to plant a bomb in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem in reaction to improving German-Jewish relations; other Revisionist supporters killed Dr. Israel Kastner, a Hungarian Judenrat member and Labor Party official, in 1957).

In 1983, another right-winger, Yona Avrushmi (who has since turned religious), threw a grenade into a Peace Now demonstration in Jerusalem protesting the Lebanon war. One demonstrator, Emile Greenzweig, was killed, and 10 were wounded; Avrushmi received a life sentence. (It's worth noting that Avrushmi, like Amir, is a Sephardi Jew; both of their crimes highlight an important, but little-discussed, tension between Israel's Sephardim, who are disproportionately represented in the Israeli working class and frequently complain of ethnic discrimination, and the Ashkenazi elite who make up much of the leadership of the Labor Party and the peace movement.)

Ironically, Israel's subculture of political violence has burgeoned at a time when it was much on the mind of “Kaf,” the now much-criticized head of the Shin Bet, Israel's security service. In 1990, Kaf submitted an M.A. dissertation to Haifa University on the roots of right-wing terrorism that briefly discussed the possibility of a lone fanatic assassinating a leader and thereby sparking a civil war. In Israel, however, the specter of civil war lingers deep in the polity; it settled in long before Rabin's death and will continue to haunt the country through the final stages of the peace negotiations. ◀ **Benny Morris** is a historian at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He is the author of *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949, Israel's Border Wars* and, most recently, *1948 and After*.

I N P R I N T

The senior circuit

By Robert Westbrook

Studs Terkel has been talking with those unwilling to go quietly. "This is no time to relax," says veteran environmentalist David Brower, now 79. "They say you've reached the retirement age, but if you're this old, damn well, there's no real reason to retire and to be put on the shelf and forget what you've spent all this time learning." Brower is one of 70 Americans over the age of 70 who tell their stories to Terkel (himself now 83) in *Coming of Age*, the latest in his extraordinary series of oral histories. Nearly all of Terkel's respondents share Brower's view of retirement, if, sometimes it seems, little else.

Unlike the best of Terkel's books—*Hard Times* (1970), *Working* (1974) and *"The Good War"* (1984)—*Coming of Age* lacks a clear historical or topical focus. The result is a set of disparate memories and reflections that fail to hang together very well. Terkel admits that all of his subjects share only a lengthy life span and an obstinate determination to hang onto it, which is hardly grounds for much of a collective sensibility. He assembles his interviews into four parts of no discernible cohesion and divides these parts into chapters along more or less occupational lines, a category that seems merely convenient.

There is, to be sure, a great deal of common ground among some of those whose voices are heard here, for they are battle-scarred soldiers of the struggle to build the modest American welfare state currently under demolition. They include in their number labor organizers, environmentalists, reform politicians, radical priests and ministers, pioneering proponents of gay and lesbian rights, and veterans of decades of struggle against racism. These respondents subscribe to the "credo and recipe for longevity" of 92-year-old Robert St. John: "Continue to harass all establishments." And like Kentucky gadfly Joe Begley, they are determined that "the last flicker of my life will be against something that I don't think has to be." Yet to this dominant chorus, Terkel adds the strains of corporate lawyers, investment bankers, public relations pitchmen and homicide detectives. He even includes a relentlessly upbeat Iowa businessman, Russell Knapp, who thinks "we live in the most wonderful time in history," and a wealthy nonagenarian of no identifiable occupation, Margot Jacoby, who allows as how she "never in my life mixed with another class of people ... with

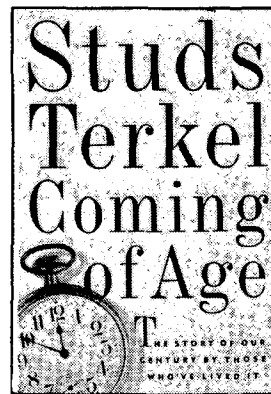
people I considered inferior." Perhaps these two interviews are here to remind us that we need not necessarily respect the views of our elders.

One is never sure what sort of questions Terkel asks of his conversation partners, for he rarely reveals them. But in this case, the perfunctory questions one can glimpse between the lines—such as "What is your average day like these days?" or "Are you religious?"—elicit few memorable responses. As Terkel says, his subjects "are, in a sense, living repositories of our past," yet the historical memories offered here are fragmentary and fleeting. Terkel is right to worry that Americans are suffering from "a national Alzheimer's disease," and to lament, in particular, the truncated historical sense of the young. But if you are searching for a gift for youthful amnesiacs, you would best put a copy of *"The Good War"* in their hands. It remains Terkel's masterpiece.

Nonetheless, *Coming of Age* is not without considerable rewards. Many of these old folks are sharp observers of the changes that have transformed American society in their lifetime, and few are as sanguine as Russell Knapp is about what they see. For example, no teacher can fail to register the aptness of the observations of Timuel Black, who says of his students: "When I look at their basic skills, reading, writing, and even in conversation, they are much more limited than they were when I first started teaching [in 1952]. ... They talk in short, curt sentences. They write, even if legibly, in phrases that are short, vague, and often not to the point."

Even the Republicans Terkel talks with lament the collapse of workplace solidarity, institutional loyalties and civil society. Charles A. Bane, a one-time partner in a prestigious Chicago law firm who lost his pension in an unfortunate merger, comments perceptively on the cruel effects of corporate downsizing: "When my son started in the banking business in Palm Beach, he was put on a six-month consulting basis. Somewhere along the line it was suggested that he be put on as a one-month consultant. That's not very far removed from being hired day to day as a laborer. 'Consultant' is just a title for someone doing an employee's work without the benefits."

Many of Terkel's subjects are bewildered by technological change, and they can be forceful in expressing their concerns about an increasingly "virtual" reality. Painter Jacob Lawrence lovingly fingers a collection of hand tools and reflects on the loss of tactility in computer art. "Some students feel good about not coming into contact with a canvas or paper," he says. "It's done by machine. ...



Coming of Age: The Story of Our Century by Those Who've Lived It

By Studs Terkel
The New Press
468 pp., \$25

Hammer? Chisel? Feel of the hairs of a brush? They don't want to be accused by their peers of succumbing to this human thing: touch." In similar fashion, Dr. Quentin Young offers a brilliant tour of the postwar transformation of American medicine, and laments the manner in which doctors have grown literally out of touch with their patients. As he puts it, "When you look at the lab sheet, you avoid the laying on of hands. If you approach a doctor-in-training program today and ask him how Mrs. Smith is doing, he'll instinctively go to the computer and punch up the latest lab stuff. 'Did she have a good night's sleep? Is that pain in her chest different?' 'Oh, I didn't check that.' Distant? You bet."

The crisis of the American labor movement looms large in this book, reflecting Terkel's own center of gravity (even though he twice misidentifies the IWW as the "International Workers of the World"). He himself rages about an encounter with a yuppie couple at a Chicago bus stop who greet his appreciative anticipation of Labor Day with the curt assurance that they "*loathe* unions." Terkel's response—a vigorous lecture on their unwitting debt to those union men and women who fought for the eight-hour day—elicits only the stricken flight of the youngsters. Ernest Goodman, a Detroit labor lawyer, sums up a century of struggle, accomplishment and defeat as he looks out upon the grim vacancy of Cadillac Square. "The emptiness of Cadillac Square is a metaphor for the changes that have taken place in our economy and society," he observes. "See the old County Building at the end of the square? It was built in 1898. There is a stool in front of it, so the person standing on it could exercise free speech. Trying to exercise that right, you'd get arrested as easily as not. After all the battles were over, the tool remained as a symbol: the stool on which you could stand and speak to the masses below. But there are no masses anymore. There's nobody. In 1930, free speech had a hard time. Now there's plenty of freedom of speech—if you want to address an empty square."

Despite this bleak prospect, few of the left-wing elders here are prepared to throw in the towel. Though very few would trade places with the young, fewer still are inclined to write off their children and grandchildren, and many remain participants with their juniors in a wide range of local activism. Farm labor organizer Jessie de la Cruz speaks for many in the book when she remarks that "You get older and you realize there are many things you can do besides just staying home, besides feeling sorry for yourself. There is always something to do, no matter what age, as long as you can get up and walk and talk. There's always hope."

Even though material such as this is clearly meant to rouse the battle-worn troops of the left, a few of the best interviews in the book have little to do with politics. Occasionally, when asked to reflect on aging and dying, Terkel's subjects offer something other than a quick recital of the latest word from their doctor or time-worn clichés about death, and one catches a glimpse of the much different book Terkel might have composed had he been as interested in such matters as in the legacy of the American left.

The finest of these off-beat interviews is that with Sophia Mumford, the 94-year-old widow of Lewis Mumford, in whose shadow she lived most of her life. Mumford's remarks are a moving reflection on the experience of those who live private lives and who, as a consequence, are able to live on beyond their mortal lives, not in the public record like her husband but in the frailer memories of those among the living with whom they have shared their lives. She opens by saying that she "never thought about being remembered," but it soon becomes apparent that being remembered is precisely what concerns her. Until she was in her 70s, she tells us, "I honestly thought of myself as a second-rate person. I didn't have the oomph. I wasn't the sort of woman men made a pass at. Men never did. Not when I was young and not when I was old. They accepted me, as a friend. I was treated nicely, but I wasn't a sex object ever. And that was a black mark."

Among the men who shared this assessment was Lewis Mumford, if his most recent biographer, Donald Miller, is to be believed, and I suspect Sophia Mumford has used her interview with Terkel to convey something of the extraordinary affection and partnership she and her husband shared, despite his sexual wanderings, which Miller has documented in graphic detail. "When Lewis came into my life," she recalls, "conversation, good conversation, became part of our natural selves. It wasn't just talk, it was an exciting back and forth. ... We read poetry out loud. We read novels." But conversation is evanescent, and as Mumford told her, "No one is ever going to know the amount of intellectual stimulation you gave me." And, with Mumford's death, the one person whose memory could take the sting from this "accolade" was gone. No wonder she then "felt there was no sense of my being here," a sense that has passed only with new friendships with young people eager to share in her own memories and keep them, and her, alive.

Near the end of her interview, Mumford offers a poignant meditation on the death of her son, Geddes, killed on the battlefield in World War II at age 19. Like many of Terkel's subjects, she has outlived one or more of her children, yet she is among the few who have much to say about what this might mean. "When I'm dead," she says, "there will be nobody who knew my son to carry his essence on. Those of us who remember him will be gone. That's the only time in which immortality, or the lack of it, troubles me."

If for most of us it is private memory that provides whatever measure of immortality we hope for, we must nonetheless be aware that memory is a fickle guardian of the past. That is why even the best oral history—and Studs Terkel's is among the best—must be greeted with a measure of skepticism, lest we confuse memory and history. We would do well to remember that those who consent to such interviews are, like Sophia Mumford, not only trying to recover the past but also to craft an epitaph.

Robert Westbrook is a professor of history at the University of Rochester and the author of *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Cornell University Press, 1992).

The god that flailed

By James Weinstein

In the four years since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening of many closely guarded archives, a spate of specialized histories, memoirs and documentary collections has appeared. Some, such as *The Unquiet Ghost*, Adam Hochschild's gripping account of Stalin's victims and victimizers (see *ITT*, April 4, 1994), are accessible to the non-specialist, and must reading. Others, such as David Holloway's *Stalin and the Bomb* (see *ITT*, March 6, 1995) and Stephen Kotkin's *Magnetic Mountain, Stalinism as a Civilization*, are comprehensive accounts of their subjects that provide fascinating details and important insights into the contradictory nature of the Soviet experience. Still others, such as Pavel Sudoplatov's *Special Tasks*, offer a useful peek into the bureaucratic mind and culture of Stalin's Soviet Union.

All these books, and even ideological exercises in Cold War self-congratulation—or simplistic Soviet demonization—such as Peter Schweitzer's *Victory*, tell us something useful about the nature of this century's most important historical experience. But none makes sense of the rise and fall of what Soviet leaders liked to call “real existing socialism.” That task has been left to Moshe Lewin, whose most recent work, *Russia/USSR/Russia*, brilliantly elucidates how Stalinism and then the bureaucratic Soviet state developed—and why it ultimately collapsed. I know of no history that can match Lewin's analysis of this unique social experiment in its many heroic and tragic dimensions.

In the most general sense, Lewin sees Soviet history as a richly complex process of forced transition from a near-feudal peasant society to a predominantly industrial urban one. Realizing that awesome ambition took a mere 40 years, but it was achieved at a terrible cost. And by the 1960s, when the goal was reached, the reasons for the Soviet Union's eventual collapse from within had already become apparent.

Lewin's narrative is driven by two underlying ideas, the first theoretical (or ideological), the second historical. In his introductory chapter, he states flatly that from day one “socialism had no chance” in Russia because “the conditions were not ripe for it.” Lenin and the other Russian revolutionary leaders understood this, Lewin explains, because their initial ideology was “German-made.” To them, as to Marx, this meant that capitalism prepared the ground for socialism. It did so by exploding the traditional feudal rela-

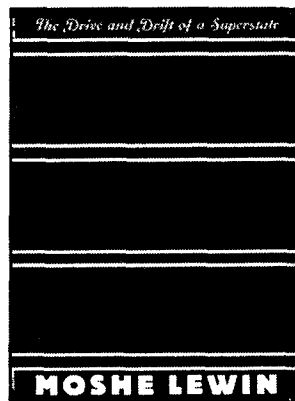
tions that blocked modern development, for without the urban markets, class systems and the struggles for democracy that were characteristic of capitalism, socialism was unimaginable. In this sense, as Lewin notes in the title of one chapter, “Russian socialists firmly believed in capitalism.”

Even so, as early as 1880, Marx and Engels speculated that the weakness of the tsarist state might allow Russian socialists to seize power in order to act as a catalyst for proletarian revolution in the West. And in 1917, Lenin adopted this notion to convince his comrades to act. Lewin concedes that the Bolshevik initiative can be seen as “premature,” and that by leading the Communist coup, Lenin could be accused of causing a “catastrophe.” But Lewin maintains that the logic of this critique ignores the actual historical situation the Communists faced. Coup or no coup, catastrophe was already in the cards in 1917. It had been brought about first by tsarism's collapse, “almost of its own weight,” and then, later that same year, by the Provisional government's fall in much the same manner.

When the Bolsheviks prepared to seize power, Lewin tells us, Lenin still believed that the “most realistic scenario for Russia” was to replicate a “version of the ‘bourgeois democratic revolution’ that had brought or was pushing developed countries into a democratic era.” Unfortunately, however, the Provisional government's inability to establish political democracy made the chances for such a scenario slim indeed. The Bolsheviks, as a result, seized power almost by default.

By 1921, the Bolsheviks had managed to win the civil war in Russia and to hold onto power—though they incurred extraordinary casualties in the process. But the New Communist International had failed to spread the revolution to the West, and the Bolsheviks were left alone to govern a country devoid of the social prerequisites for the society they envisioned.

Indeed, Russia was far more backward, and its situation far more desperate, than Lenin could have foreseen in 1917. The suffering of the peasants during the civil war, Lewin tells us, entailed a social retreat throughout the vast reaches of rural Russia. And even though the peasantry survived the war in better shape than did the more modern sectors of the country, the war pushed the countryside backward “into its age-old shell, characteristic of much more primitive times.” In the process, the peasants “reacquired traits that had been on the wane in the pre-revolutionary period and that ran counter to the developmental path of the times.” The sketchy beginnings of a capi-



**Russia/USSR/Russia:
The Drive and Drift of a
Superstate**
By Moshe Lewin
The New Press
368 pp., \$30

talist market economy now broke down entirely, and the peasants transformed themselves into “a family-oriented ocean of microfundia—institutions that calculated ‘mouths to feed,’ rather than productivity and market opportunities.”

In other words, when the regime finally got the chance to lead the country toward its declared goals, it faced conditions not seen since the 19th century. And, as Lewin observes, the civil war and the seemingly endless series of crises in its aftermath also transformed the party from a democratic political organization in which policy was vigorously debated into an increasingly bureaucratic arm of the state in which orders from on high were followed without question.

Lenin responded to this deepening crisis by reworking and readapting his conceptions and programs. He had wanted the revolution to be radical, but once the Bolsheviks were firmly in power, he “insistently demanded” profound moderations of his party’s program. His main goal, Lewin tells us, was to stimulate economic development. And that, he believed, required capitalist enterprise—albeit under tight state supervision. Thus, in 1921, the New Economic Policy (NEP).

Not surprisingly, many party members opposed this effort to encourage capitalist market relations. Nevertheless, Lenin continued to argue for such a program “to prove to the peasants that the new masters know how to run things to the peasants’ advantage.” At the last party congress he attended, in 1922, he urged his followers to take lessons “from international and local private capitalists.” In substance, Lewin writes, Lenin warned that “either we pass the exam of competition with the private sectors, or there will be a [flop].”

The NEP did not exactly flop, but it was short-lived. The most relaxed and democratic period of the Soviet experience—at least until glasnost and perestroika—it survived Lenin, who died in 1924, by only four years. The problem was that even under the NEP the Soviet Union was being left in the dust, becoming even more “backward” as it crept slowly forward. Then, too, war threatened from both West and East, increasing the pressure on party leaders to accelerate modernization. Within the party, a sense of crisis grew and a powerful battle raged among the elite on this issue. And as the battle raged, the party became, in Lewin’s words, “ever more bureaucratized, centralized, and depoliticized.”

With Stalin’s ascent to power in 1928, the NEP was abandoned. Then, utilizing the statist traditions of Russia’s tsarist past to consolidate his rule, Stalin ruthlessly forced the growth of heavy industry and the collectivization of agriculture on a largely inert population. In the 12 years that followed—from 1928 until Germany invaded in 1941—

forced industrialization created some 8,000 huge and “presumably modern” (in Lewin’s words) enterprises. But the process entailed a massive disruption of Soviet society, during which socialist ideology was increasingly used as camouflage for nationalist and statist credos.

It was during these years—when Stalin proclaimed the goal of “socialism in one country”—that the Soviet leadership fully abandoned socialism, and that Stalinist terror took root. Lewin closely examines the workings of Stalinism, explaining not only how it functioned but also the way it helped Stalin move the bureaucracy, and why it was accepted and even supported by many on all levels of society.

The idea that the Soviet Union was not socialist is hardly news to most Western socialists. Yet politicians, the media and even scholars have eagerly accepted the Soviet Union’s



self-definition. Even a good historian like Stephen Kotkin, in his admirable *Magnetic Mountain*, ridicules Lewin’s claim that Stalin abandoned socialist principles. “Such a perspective,” Kotkin writes, “ignores the fact that at no time did the Soviet regime declare or seek to effect a counterrevolution—a turn of affairs that would not, in any case, be tolerated by the Soviet population.”

But, of course, neither Stalin nor his successors made such a declaration. As both Lewin and Kotkin amply demonstrate, the declared principles of socialism were essential to the regime’s popular support. As Lewin argues, the

leaders boasted of socializing industry, but they nationalized everything in an all-powerful state. And they talked about the working class as the owners of all property, but they allowed workers fewer rights than those enjoyed by their counterparts in capitalist society. Indeed, the workers who built Soviet industry, while glorified in song and film, were treated as what Lewin calls *rabsila*, servile forces.

Kotkin himself testifies to this. And he tells us that while party leaders at the Magnitogorsk steel complex talked incessantly about socialism, they could never define it in any way except as "not capitalism." Moreover, when it came to planning the new steel works, party leaders copied the only model they had, corporate capitalist industrialization. Thus, to plan Magnitogorsk, they hired the company that had designed the United States Steel works at Gary, Ind. And the focus of their "new socialist city," as at Gary, was the steel works.

The appeal to socialist ideals became especially important to Stalin as he whipped the country into a frenzy of industrialization. But industrialization had never been socialism's goal before the Russian Revolution. Marx, and pre-Stalin Marxists, saw that as capitalism's great historical contribution. And they saw socialism as a democratic, non-statist form of what is now called postindustrial society.

Stalin, of course, turned all this on its head. His socialism adopted the bureaucratic statist traditions of Russia's most brutal tsars. And his vision was narrowly nationalistic. This has led some to equate Stalin with Hitler. But, as Lewin points out in a chapter devoted to the two dictators, Stalin's national socialism had little in common with Hitler's National Socialism. Hitler's fascism was built on a firm capitalist base. Stalin's "socialism" was his adaptation of an anti-capitalist revolution to an idiosyncratic, backward society in fundamental flux.

Accordingly, while Hitler had an aggressive, explicitly expansionist program, Stalin's ideology was essentially defensive. Unlike Hitler, who was the founder of his movement, Stalin was one among many contestants for leadership. Partly for this reason, Stalin was constantly on guard against his followers and apparatchiks. He directed his aggression inwardly, against his own people, where he saw nothing but enemies, the more so after he had successfully eliminated all of his real rivals. To Lewin's mind, Stalin's "concoction of 'enemies'" was "the real heart of Stalinism and specific to it."

Cold War ideologues, of course, painted Stalin and the Soviet Union as insidiously aggressive. But, as Lewin's portrait implies (he doesn't discuss this), Stalin saw foreign Communist parties only as defenders of the Soviet state. He consistently reined in foreign Communists who threatened to become rivals, or to cause trouble by attempting to take power in their own countries. In China, for example, Mao was ordered to subordinate himself and his party to Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang in 1926. Obeying that directive

almost led to the Chinese party's annihilation by Chiang. Only by breaking with Stalin and striking out on the Long March was Mao able to take advantage of World War II and gain power—and to become the rival Stalin feared.

The rush to industrialize also spawned a sprawling bureaucratic Soviet state, a process that Lewin traces in two stages: the Stalinist state, and the post-Stalin bureaucracy. Initially, he observes, Bolsheviks did not think much about the state apparatus. Only when ex-tsarist officials manning government offices went on strike in 1918 did they begin to see a problem. However, bureaucracy per se did not concern them. Rather, they were alarmed that these experts from the previous regime were nonproletarians who lacked socialist ideology. Yet as Soviet-educated apparatchiks began to fill the ranks of the ever-growing bureaucracies, and as the number and complexity of government-run bureaus, agencies and commissions proliferated, inefficiency and rigidity grew apace.

Under Stalinist industrialization and rural collectivization, bureaucracy burgeoned because the Soviet economy was governed by "the plan," rather than by the depoliticized consumers. "Massive overproduction of bureaucracies," Lewin writes, was a spontaneous side effect of the state's "sudden imposition of large-scale industrialization on a pre-bourgeois peasant society." At first, as a parallel structure, the party exercised some control over the always-suspect apparatchiks. But gradually the Bolsheviks themselves were "sucked into the bureaucratic maze." And as the bureaucracy became denser and denser—and more and more difficult to control—Stalin's ambition put him at greater and greater odds with the monster he helped create. Seeing bureaucratic foot-dragging as the work of class enemies not to be trusted, he tried to keep his apparatchiks on their toes by terrorizing them. As Lewin argues, the Stalin years were unique: A dictator hell-bent on transforming the entire society with a bureaucratic creation of his own making, increasingly unable to get things done.

Stalin could give orders but he frequently could not get them carried out. Even his use of terror, designed, in part, to get results, was unequal to the task. Afraid to offend their superiors by acting on their own, apparatchiks were paralyzed by the constant fear that to become conspicuous might make them candidates to disappear in the middle of the night.

No surprise, then, that when Stalin died in 1953 the bureaucracy breathed a collective sigh of relief. Free, at last, of its only constraint, it now came into its own. As it moved from terror to peace, from turmoil to order, from constant change to routine, the bureaucracy, now fully merged with the party, achieved full control of the country. Now all that was left for it was to move from corruption to stagnation—and then to collapse.

Stalin's ambition put him at greater and greater odds with the monster he helped create.

Stalin's death, which occurred at about the midpoint of the Soviet experience, ushered in the Soviet Union's longest and most stable period. Yet, presumably because they were years in which a stultifying bureaucracy inexorably followed a predetermined course, Lewin devotes relatively scant attention to the years from 1953 to 1990. For example, he mentions Nikita Khrushchev—whose speech at the Soviet party's 20th Congress in 1956 was the first official acknowledgment of Stalin's crimes—only twice in the body of the book (and once in an appendix). Lewin credits Khrushchev with attempting to reinvigorate the system with a new dynamism in society and the polity. There had been some 580,000 gulag inmates, sentenced for “counterrevolutionary acts,” in 1951. Khrushchev cut this number to 11,000 shortly after he assumed office. As these figures imply, “terror actually subsided and changed forms appreciably after Khrushchev came to power”—though the overall system of controls continued largely unchanged.

But Khrushchev did not stay in power long. “The ruling bureaucratic power grid, on its way to its own pinnacle, stalled reforms,” replacing “the cult of Stalin” with “the cult of the state.” After Khrushchev was deposed, some observers abroad and analysts inside saw that “the regime was heading toward a full-fledged and generalized crisis.” Indeed, under Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin, open and internal debates on reforms continued. And “the intellectual and professional level of the participants,” as well as “the level of their hope and commitment were [sic] impressive and promising.” But this movement of “the men of the sixties” was also doomed. Squelched in the crackdown that accompanied the Soviet crushing of the 1968 “Prague Spring” uprising, it was to be the last serious reform attempt until glasnost and perestroika opened the floodgates in the late '80s.

In the post-Stalin years, the Cold War was the bureaucracy's key ideological weapon. Lewin argues that the opponents of serious reform thrived on the Cold War. “A less conflictual environment,” he writes, “would have diminished the importance of the military-industrial complex” and deprived the conservatives of their appeal to a patriotic defense against an enemy hell-bent on their destruction.

If the Eisenhower-Khrushchev détente had not become a casualty of the downing of the American U-2 spy plane in 1961, Lewin suggests, the nuclear arms race might have been stopped at an early stage. If that had happened, and “an international environment of increased economic and cultural exchanges with the West” had been established in the early '60s, “the structural inadequacies of the Soviet economic system would have been exposed much earlier and the cover-up that ‘patriotism’ offered to the regime's conservatives would have lost its appeal.” The result then might well have been the avoidance of 25 years of Cold War and a smoother breakup of the Soviet state.

This argument, of course, undermines the self-congratulation of defenders of the Reagan-era arms buildups. They believe that the arms race bankrupted the Soviet Union and forced its demise. But, as Lewin argues, the Soviet Union

was already bankrupt, politically as well as economically. In its last decades it was kept standing only with the crutch provided by American Cold Warriors. In other words, the Soviet Union died from natural causes: “No one toppled it; it fell from its own excessive weight.”

And what now, now that Russia is Russia again? This is the question for which no one, Lewin included, has the answer. But Lewin is certain of one thing: Just as nothing happened suddenly in the Soviet Union—not the decomposition of the regime, nor the wave of reforms, nor the dismemberment of the Union—neither will the current situation find a quick or easy solution. As Lewin writes, the crisis took decades to develop. It was already acute when Leonid Brezhnev, “already dead for all practical purposes,” traveled to Germany to represent the USSR. And the fact that he was replaced by two mortally ill general secretaries before Mikhail Gorbachev came into office added “another touch to the morbidity of the situation.” In short, the complexity of the current situation is an effect of “inherited long-term decay,” exacerbated by the efforts of those now in power to get rid of the old structure and replace it with something else. The problem is that there is little basis for something else, because by “denying political involvement to society, the system denied itself the capacity to enter the modern world.” And by creating an economy that was completely owned and operated by the state, “the collapse of the state system damaged, rather than liberated, the economy.”

The Soviet experience, Lewin asserts, proves one thing: “History does not go away; it stays with us in many ways—and it had better be mastered.” Decrying the tendency of many Russians to reject the Soviet experience in toto, Lewin warns that “making sweeping rejections without good knowledge is a prescription for destroying what works and replacing it with what does not.” This is what happened after October 1917, but it need not happen again. In the end, Lewin's optimism rests on all the forces that were developed but stifled under the fallen regime—on the much better-educated population and pools of talent that are not yet fully deployed.

The process of “relearning how to become a nation, a state, and a system” may take years or decades. In this process, the country's “political complexion may still change several more times.” But much is happening in local governments, in and around schools, in business initiatives, study groups, neighborhood associations and a multitude of professional associations. Tens of thousands of these exist and may help create a new leadership and a more democratic future. They are a countervailing force to “so much that is antiquated and backward-looking” on the political scene today. As in the United States—where political institutions have been corrupted for dramatically different reasons—proposals for democracy in the new Russia depend largely on newly politicized citizens reclaiming the country's embattled civic culture, for themselves and for the future of humanity. ◀

Strip mine

By Joseph Levine

In one sense, whether or not Palestinians have gained economic advantage from the Israeli occupation is beside the point: It is simply wrong, as a matter of principle, for one people to deny self-determination to another and occupy their land. But the diplomatic dance of Middle East statecraft—to say nothing of the question of Palestinian well-being—demands that we take full account of the economic effects of the Israeli occupation. Many Israelis argue that theirs has been, unique in history, a “benign occupation,” which has introduced important economic improvements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. One should always suspect those in power who claim unprecedented benevolence, but it’s also nice to have the facts to back up the suspicion. Thanks to Sara Roy’s new book, we have the facts and more: a new theoretical lens through which to view them.

In a careful, scholarly and thorough analysis of the economic impact of the occupation on the Gaza Strip, Roy builds her case that Gaza has suffered not just underdevelopment, a fate common to the Third World as a result of exploitation by the First World, but “de-development.” Roy, now a visiting scholar at Harvard, collected data over the course of eight years, covering the period preceding the intifada through the granting of limited self-rule to the Palestinians. Roy has spent a lot of time in Gaza, intensively researching conditions there. Her study—while not exactly a spellbinding read—is a major contribution to our understanding of the Gaza Strip, the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and also to the general question of the relation between the industrial powers and the remainder of humanity.

According to Roy, “de-development” is qualitatively different from underdevelopment. Where the latter allows, though in a distorted form, structural transformation, capital accumulation and coordinated institutional development, de-development completely obstructs these processes. The de-development strategy produces an economic structure totally lacking in the requisites for genuine, independent development. This aim stems, in turn, from Israel’s will to assert and extend national sovereignty. “Prior to 1967, underdevelopment was a characteristic feature of Gaza’s economy,” Roy writes. “De-development commenced only

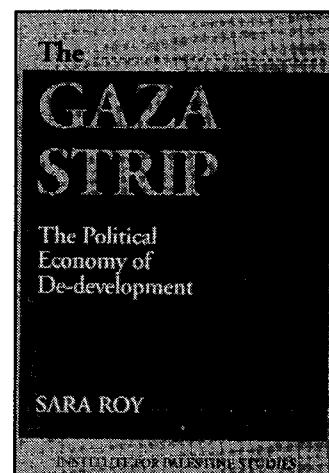
under Israeli occupation.”

The bulk of the book is devoted to explaining how the specific workings of Israeli occupation policies (unintentionally abetted by the Palestinians themselves and the surrounding Arab states) fostered de-development. But Roy also offers a welcome focus on the nationalist nature of Israel’s rule in the Occupied Territories. De-development policies, in her view, logically result from the irredentist character of the Israeli state: “The imperatives of expanding Israeli sovereignty produced an economic policy that prioritized [economic] integration over separation, and dis-possession over exploitation.”

This policy has wrought considerable structural damage to the Gazan economy. Israel has confiscated Palestinian productive resources—primarily land and water—while channeling Gaza’s other economic activities into serving the highly industrialized Israeli economy. Meanwhile, the Israeli administrators of the occupation have strictly prohibited development of an institutional base, whether professional, financial or political, which could guide independent economic development.

Roy persuasively dispels the data adduced by the occupation’s defenders to demonstrate the ostensible rise in Gaza’s standard of living since 1967. It’s true that personal income and levels of consumption climbed significantly in the early years of the occupation, as did the provision of services. Employment in Israel also contributed greatly to increased prosperity. But the price for this improvement was steep. As Roy demonstrates, Israel appeased the Palestinian workforce with rising personal income and services while systematically dismantling and weakening the indigenous economic base. The effects of this policy are clear today: Cut off both from employment in Israel and significant subsidies from abroad, Gaza’s population has become deeply impoverished since the onset of the intifada, with virtually no local resources to take up the slack.

Gaza’s principal economic resource, both prior to 1967 and after, is agriculture, especially citrus production. For agricultural production to grow in proportion with the needs of an expanding population, there must be sufficient land and water. But Israel has severely limited Palestinian access to water in Gaza, both for personal and agricultural use. In 1986, annual per capita water consumption



**The Gaza Strip:
The Political Economy
of De-development**
By Sara Roy
Institute for Palestine Studies
372 pp., \$27.95

for Arab Gazans was 142 cubic meters, while for Jewish settlers it was 2,240 cubic meters. A similar proportion held for agricultural use. What's more, the water that was available to Palestinians suffered from exceptionally high salinity and nitrate concentration, damaging to both personal health and citrus production.

As for land, by 1990 58 percent of Gaza's territory was under Israeli control. Extension of agriculture and provision of adequate housing have been impossible with the loss of so much land. In fact, land and water confiscation has devastated the local economy to such an extent that it's now a leading cause of Palestinian emigration. This, in turn, drains the region of badly needed human capital and fuels the remaining population's dependence on Israel for employment.

Such conditions plainly render the terms of Palestinian self-rule in the 1993 Oslo accords a far cry from true independence and sovereignty. Most local production is—and will likely remain—oriented toward Israel's needs; industry tends to be made up of small, labor-intensive firms doing sub-contracting work for Israeli business. Restrictions on farming ensure that Gaza will not compete with Israeli agriculture, while keeping agricultural production, like all other enterprise, directed away from domestic needs. Failure to invest adequately in infrastructure or industry has retarded Gaza's potential for internally directed growth. The local economy's addiction to external transfers made the interruptions of labor flowing into Israel during the intifada—together with the cutoff of income transfers from the Arab states after the Gulf War—economically devastating.

Other forces in the political culture of the Occupied Territories—which Roy groups together under the term “de-institutionalization”—have further tightened Israel's grip on the region. De-institutionalization, in Roy's account, thwarts any civic or economic group that “could plan for and support productive investment over time.” And indeed, a survey of Israel's dealings with Gazan municipal councils, chambers of commerce, professional associations, educational institutions and finance and credit institutions reveals a systematic policy of restriction and harassment. The effects of three decades of de-institutionalization are apparent now in the inability of the Palestinian Authority to chart an independent course for Gaza's development.

Will any of these conditions change once the Oslo plan is finalized? Roy sees no prospect here for basic change. As she puts it: “Israeli policy in the Gaza Strip continues to be defined by what it does not allow rather than by what it does. What it does not allow is real Palestinian control over key economic resources.” Though the notion of de-development may have theoretical shortcomings, this conclusion stands as a powerful indictment of the kind of agreement likely to emerge from a peace process now thrown into more turmoil than ever.

Joseph Levine is an associate professor of philosophy at North Carolina State University and is a member of the Raleigh Coalition for Peace in the Middle East.

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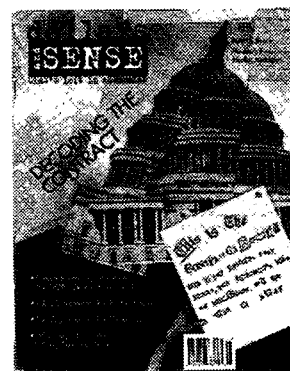
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SPEED READING

Subversion As Foreign Policy: The Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia

By Audrey R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin

The New Press

318 pp., \$25

Three years before a CIA-sponsored exile brigade was crushed at the Bay of Pigs, a larger and more complicated CIA operation was quietly launched in Indonesia. Hidden for decades from Congress and the American public, the operation has been expertly reconstructed by Audrey and George Kahin, who note that to this day it remains one of the “most zealously guarded secrets in the history of U.S. covert overseas operations.”

In 1957 the Eisenhower administration, haunted by the “loss” of China, feared that Indonesia would be the next domino to fall. The country’s proud, charismatic president, Sukarno, enraged the U.S. State Department by maintaining Indonesia’s neutrality in the Cold War, opposing residual Dutch colonialism and refusing to ban the large, anti-Soviet Indonesian Communist Party, which sought a parliamentary road to power.

All this prompted the United States to formulate a policy aimed at toppling the government and replacing it with one more favorable to the West. Said one CIA agent, “I think it’s time we held Sukarno’s feet to the fire.”

By relying on newly declassified documents and countless interviews with many of the key American and Indonesian participants, the Kahins have produced a powerful indictment of Cold War ideology and the people who sustained it. The attitude of Eisenhower’s secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, who tersely advocated the dissolution of a sprawling archipelago comprising more than 13,000 islands, was typical: “As between a territorially united Indonesia which is leaning and progressing toward Communism and a breakup of that country into racial and geographical units, I would prefer the latter...”

The grievances of disgruntled military officers on the

islands of Sumatra and Sulawesi—who resisted government attempts to streamline the army—and the impressive performance of the Communist Party in the elections of 1957 gave the Eisenhower administration a pretext to intervene. The Kahins show how the CIA financed and armed several thousand dissident soldiers with bazookas and recoilless rifles while U.S. submarines transported rebel leaders to covert training sessions at American military bases at Okinawa and Saipan.

In early 1958, war erupted between the Indonesian army and the dissidents. But government forces routed the strongest rebel divisions. Stunned by the defeat, which stood in stark contrast to the success of the CIA-backed coup in Guatemala in 1954, the Eisenhower administration belatedly concluded that its staunchest ally against communism in the archipelago was the Indonesian army itself and began to provide the government with token amounts of military and economic assistance.

However, determined to prevent the total collapse of a movement it had done so much to create, the United States simultaneously supplied B-26 jets—as well as American and Taiwanese pilots—to small groups of rebels holding out in northeastern Indonesia. Government forces eventually defeated the dissidents, but not before thousands died in the fighting. In one incident in May 1958, several hundred civilians perished when an American military pilot bombed

a church and marketplace before government forces downed his plane.

The authors argue persuasively that the civil war of 1957-58 permanently altered the Indonesian political landscape by strengthening the military and destroying the country’s fragile parliamentary system. By 1965, Indonesian society had become increasingly militarized, and the army, in the wake of an abortive coup

attempt, unleashed its fury on the Communist Party’s millions of unarmed supporters in the trade unions and peasant organizations. At least 500,000 people were killed in the carnage; 750,000 others were imprisoned. The CIA proclaims its innocence in the events of 1965, but the agency’s files on the matter remain sealed.

Of the U.S. officials involved in the events of 1957-58, not one was held accountable for his activities, although one former U.S. ambassador, too weak to write his memoirs, cooperated with the authors in an attempt to “set the record straight.” For the 200 million people in the archipelago, including the beleaguered East Timorese, the American intervention of 1957-58 is much more than a historical footnote: 1995 marks the 30th anniversary of military rule in Indonesia.

—Scott Sherman



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THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES, headed by historian Gar Alperovitz, seeks talented interns for research on alternatives to capitalism and socialism. Background in democratic theory, radical political economy and ecology desirable. Internships generally unpaid, with possibility of promotion. Résumé, cover letter and writing samples to NCEA, 2040 S St. NW, Washington, DC 20009.

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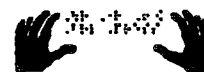
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Continued from page 4

asbestos industry in Milwaukee. Indeed, our work in Milwaukee is the first construction industry organizing drive using Organizing Institute interns. Laborers are building a strong labor and community coalition for fair wages, safe working conditions and asbestos-removal procedures that will safeguard the health and well-being of our communities. We have fashioned an organizing campaign that is expensive and labor intensive. However, we anticipate real benefits for our members, the workers in the industry and the Milwaukee community. Can we get some credit?

Michael R. Ryan
President

Wisconsin Laborers' District Council
Madison, Wis.

Editor's note: The references to the Laborers were lost in the editing process. A full story on the union's Milwaukee campaign is in the works.

All bets off

Please stop wasting print on William Upski Wimsatt and his fatuous self-promotion ("What bet? Which America?," October 30). His muddled essays and wrongheaded "Bet with America" at best cloud the issue of race and poverty, and at worst suggest that he is guilty of the vilest sort of exploitation.

Wimsatt's project relies on the most manipulative of literary devices—the threat of violence—wherein he puts his white ass on the line to prove ... what? That there are humans in the ghetto? That the violence there isn't as bad as reported? This is neither news nor insight, and it smacks of an even more appalling literary device: the brave white explorer revealing that the primitives are in fact noble savages.

And now Wimsatt admits that he has been cheating on his bet. He admits that his trip was actually a promotional tour for his book. Please don't continue to let him use your magazine to pimp his book. Surely you could give the space to

someone who actually has something of value to say.

Aaron Shure
Burbank, Calif.

Vanilla Upski

I was blown away by the impeccable logic of William Upski Wimsatt's October 30 article. Wimsatt insists that it's safe to walk around so-called bad neighborhoods because one white person visited a couple of American ghettos for a few hours at a time. This is a great logician at work. Now I finally realize that Vietnam was safe in the late '60s. My father was there for a year, witnessed the Tet offensive firsthand, and came away unscathed. I also know of people who have engaged in unsafe sex and shared needles. They don't have the HIV virus, therefore these practices must be perfectly safe.

Now that these questions have been cleared up, I'm glad that this second-rate Vanilla Ice has the honesty to admit that he felt "silly" during his trip. Sooner or later Mr. Wimsatt is going to get a sound thrashing—probably by letting his guard down during one of his voyeuristic forays into the inner city—get married, have kids and move out to Schaumburg or some similar suburb. If he loses some of his delusions of grandeur, he can go into advertising. He has a vivid enough imagination for it.

Brian Mier
Chicago

Kaiser rules

"Medicine in the Marketplace" ("In Short," October 30) inaccurately portrays Kaiser Permanente. Your readers should realize that Kaiser is a nonprofit organization. It consists of three entities: two nonprofit organizations, the hospitals and insurance segments, and Kaiser Permanente, a for-profit medical group. The "disturbing aspects of the Kaiser plan" to link physicians' bonus pay and leadership compensation should be understood for what it is, a for-profit corporation seeking to control costs and maximize its profits.

Having said that, I'd like to point out that, as a Kaiser member, I've been more than satisfied with the services I have received. As a person with a disability, I receive a very expensive drug (valued at \$900 per month) for a small fee. Never have they tried to eliminate this treatment regime. If I were in an indemnity plan using fee-for-service physicians I probably would not be able to afford the treatment, and I do not doubt that my attending physician would shrug his or her shoulders and say something about how it's a shame.

In closing, let me say that I enjoyed the above issue even as I disagreed with the old, worn 19th-century European paradigm of labor and capital that seems to animate your newsmagazine. Your reporting on the state of labor, on the Million Man March and on the potential for corruption of government scientific agencies through corporate influence was timely, thought-provoking and, sadly, little discussed in meaningful ways in other publications.

Mark A. Conly
Oakland, Calif.

Jim McNeill replies: I thank Mark A. Conly for clarifying Kaiser's corporate structure. I'm also glad to hear that Conly is a satisfied Kaiser subscriber. Unfortunately, not every Kaiser customer is so happy. Another correspondent has written to ITT, conveying reports from members of the Kaiser Permanente Northwest HMO who believe it has begun "reducing health care services for ... subscribers." Readers seeking more comprehensive information about Kaiser can contact the watchdog group Consumers for Quality Care at 10951 W. Pico Blvd., Third Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90064.

Correction

In the October 30 editorial, we misidentified Ralph Estes' new book. The correct title of the book is *Tyranny of the Bottom Line: Why Corporations Make Good People Do Bad Things*. It is scheduled for publication in January by Berrett-Koehler (415) 288-0260.

Winning ugly

By Woody Igou

Desperate times require desperate measures. Now that Colin Powell has left the field, the sagging poll numbers for the GOP's remaining stable of primary nags recently prompted Republican National Committee Chairman Haley Barbour to seek a radical new campaign strategy. After consulting with pollsters, plastic surgeons and fashion designers, Barbour has obtained the composite characteristics of the perfect, electable Republican candidate. Of course, the medical procedures will be painful and complicated. Although the stitches may not heal in time for the primaries, body-donor candidate Charlton Heston is eager to get on with it. All that remains is for the other candidates to swallow their egos and give 'til it hurts.

Brain: Arlen Specter

Capable of creative solutions to intractable political problems. (See single-bullet theory.) Handles pesky women in a snap.

Hair: Newt Gingrich

Metallic silver head of hair promotes futuristic look; can be tinted with blue rinse when courting seniors.

Forehead furrows: Pat Buchanan

Radiate populist concern on command; great place to tuck business cards of potential donors (non-Japanese only).

Eyebrows: Bob Dornan

Afford protection from hurled eggs, rotten tomatoes; give veneer of respectability even to most demented statements.

Eyes: Bob Dole

Poll-driven, heat-sensitive; depending on programming, they rotate independently to right, center or both simultaneously.

Ears: Phil Gramm

Elephantine in the power-hungry mold of LBJ; can hear the soft pad of Gucci loafers on marble at 100 yards.

Nose: Colin Powell

Fox-like, ultra-sensitive membranes programmed to flee the unwinnable. (Although Powell decided not to enter the primaries, his admission to the Republican Party was reportedly contingent upon his providing "unconditional" support for the GOP nominee.)

Mouth: Bob Dole

Capable of growls and darkest sarcasm from either side of orifice.

Bow tie: Steve Forbes

Allows flannel-shirted "man of the middle class" to gain entry to country clubs to kow-tow to industrialists.

Flannel shirt: Lamar Alexander

Paradoxical combination of puny lumberjack and Washington insider momentarily stuns voters, allowing candidate to move in for the handshake.

Stars and Bars: Colin Powell

A great clip-on accessory when touring military bases, or south of Mason-Dixon line.

