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RESIST

Newsletter #163

a call to resist illegitimate authority

February 1984

The Reality of Grenada

Recently, Jeanne Gallo, a Sister of Notre Dame and a human rights activist in Boston, participated in a theology and social science conference in Cuba. In this article she describes the effects of the Grenada invasion on the conference and some of her reflections on how religion in the U.S. has to be related to political work here in the U.S., especially any work being done in relation to liberation struggles in Latin America.

JEANNE GALLO

In November, I attended the II International Encounter of Theologians and Social Scientists which was held in Matanzas, Cuba. The theme of the meeting was: *Christians and the New Society: The Processes of Liberation, Option for Life*. Those who participated came from 27 countries; there were people from Latin America, North America, Europe—both East and West. It was a meeting of intellectuals and of people from the “base communities” of Latin America, especially those of Guatemala, Honduras and the “liberated” zone of El Salvador. Only one person could come from Nicaragua (a Mexican nun who is working there). The reason: everyone in Nicaragua was preparing to defend the country against an imminent U.S. invasion.

The tension and the urgency at the conference were great, for the invasion



Memorial Service at the graves of Cubans killed in Grenada.

© Jeanne Gallo

of Grenada had changed all the “rules of the game”—at least those that had been operative since the Vietnam war regarding the direct use of U.S. troops in a foreign country, the so-called “Vietnam Syndrome.”

As one participant expressed it, “When the U.S. invaded Grenada, the whole continent knew that it was not an invasion of Grenada, but signalled the invasion of the whole continent.” Thus, the sense that the invasion of Nicaragua and El Salvador would occur permeated the proceedings of the

event. The only question was when it would happen.

The fact that 65% of the U.S. population supported Reagan’s invasion of Grenada was frightening to the participants. Before the invasion there had been limits to U.S. military action. There had been the need to legitimate intervention. Reagan had needed the political capital to justify any intervention. Along with this political justification, there was also the need for a quick military success. Grenada provided both and the question in the

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MEETING AGAIN

Today we start preparing for our monthly board meeting. We sort through all the grant proposals we've received—thirty of them—and put each proposal into a category: anti-draft, disarmament, Central America solidarity, feminist, Third World, anti-racism, etc. We compile all the pertinent information from each proposal: the cover letter, organizational history, description of the project, budget and some newspaper clippings into a packet, about 160 pages this month. We mail this, along with a letter we have written which briefly describes each group and their funding request, to our board members in Los Angeles, Detroit, New York City, Vermont, Boston, China and England. We depend on our board members for information about organizations in their community or area of the country. We also depend on their long-term experience in different aspects of the movement.

The packet is in the mail and we begin several weeks of phone calling and letter writing aimed at getting additional information and references

on each group which has applied to us for funds. We contact organizations we are familiar with who are doing similar work to the group we are inquiring about. We also contact organizations that may be able to use the resources being developed by the group requesting funds or individuals across the country who we know and trust.

Reading over a grant proposal from a group in Texas that wants to have a rally at a local weapons manufacturing plant, we ask the following questions of them, of our contacts, and of ourselves. What is their track record? How do they raise money to keep going? Have they applied to other foundations for grants? Have they received grants from other foundations? They want to print a flier and we wonder if they have a sample to send us. Who are the speakers for their rally going to be? Have they included women and people of color? What are the group's stands on gay rights and abortion rights? Who do we know in Texas who can give us a recommendation for their work? How

substantially will \$500 from Resist affect their work?

It's four weeks later, 10 o'clock on Sunday morning. The board meeting is about to begin. One by one we go through the grant proposals, discussing each one based on its own merits in relation to other grant proposals we might have in the same category. Questions are raised and discussed. Criticisms and suggestions are made about the way in which a project could be changed or improved. Doubts are raised. We agree to send these criticisms and suggestions along with any grant we make. Or, we decide to withhold funding until a group makes the recommended changes on their project.

By 5 o'clock we are about finished. We have made positive decisions regarding twenty proposals. It's good that we are in a financial position to give most of these groups at least the amount they are asking for—this isn't always possible—because, but for a few exceptions, they are doing exciting work. We grant a total of \$5,000 at this meeting. Tomorrow we will start getting ready for next month's meeting. There are already ten new proposals waiting in the office.

THE UNITED STATES, ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS—

THE FATEFUL TRIANGLE

THE UNITED STATES,
ISRAEL & THE PALESTINIANS

**NOAM
CHOMSKY**

The United States, Israel and the Palestinians—three national entities so disparate in power that it seems absurd to link them in a single phrase. Nevertheless, these three parties have become locked into a fateful triangular relationship, and within it they are drifting toward disaster. This thoroughly documented full length study should be one of the most controversial and hotly debated books of the year. \$10.00

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How to RESIST



ILLEGITIMATE AUTHORITY

Funding social change since 1967

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The Reality of Grenada

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minds of everyone was, "Where next?" Would Grenada commission Reagan to "defend U.S. vital interests" in Central America by sending in U.S. Marines?

For those of us from the United States and the Caribbean countries present, it was a difficult time, for we arrived in Cuba on the day that the Cuban bodies arrived from Grenada. We were coming to Cuba from those countries responsible for the needless deaths of people, not only of Cubans, but also of Grenadans and U.S. people.

On the day following the memorial service in Havana's Revolution Square at which over one million people were present, our group went to the tomb of the fallen Cubans for a memorial service. We remembered the dead and their families, as well as the Cuban people. As Fidel Castro had done the day before, we remembered the families of the Grenadan and U.S. dead as well.

Participants from different countries, many of whom were church people, stood at the foot of the graves and prayed for the dead and for the living. I stood with another U.S. citizen and prayed for all of us: for our country, that its policy in Central America and the Caribbean would be changed; that U.S. people would work to stop the genocide that is taking place in Central America; that we, as a nation, would admit that we are a sinful nation, one which espouses a theology of death and not a theology of life. We asked forgiveness of the people of Cuba, Grenada, Central America, the rest of Latin America, in the name of the citizens of the United States. And we pledged ourselves to the task of continuing to work towards a change in U.S. foreign policy vis-a-vis Central America and the Caribbean.

One person from the Caribbean, who could not bring himself to speak at the gravesite, wrote a poem which he shared with the group the following day. I include it here because I believe it expresses what the reality is for U.S. citizens who are trying to respond to our brothers and sisters in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Yesterday

I wanted to speak

*but words would not come, only tears
so I kept silent.*

Yesterday

*I wanted to speak
while we stood with the living
twice I kept silent...
for how could I say that I am from
Antigua
that I work in Barbados? How?
Shame was too deep
and I couldn't express it profoundly.
How could I tell you of my shame?
My leaders invited a maniac to
rape their
sister
To rape our sister
To rape and destroy her dignity
To plant in her womb
the venereal seed of a deformed
future...*

*How could I tell you this and more?
So I kept silent
and my heart is a tomb of anger
but when anger turns to love
the tomb will burst open...
like a new Easter!
But I know now that freedom and dignity
are experienced more in the struggle
than in the victory... this side of Jordan.
-November 16, 1983*

This is the experience of so many people who sense the wrongness, the injustice in our society, in our world. Feelings within, wanting to speak, not knowing what words to use, what to say. Tears. Shame. Silence. Rape of women, rape of the earth. A future deformed, denied. More silence. Anger. And then—for some—that anger turning into energy, engagement in the struggle for creating a new person, a new society.

The question for us here in the U.S. is how to take that anger that so many of us felt, especially after the invasion of Grenada, and turn it into energy, into the commitment needed in the struggle to create a more human world.

This is so important, for over and over during the conference I heard statements such as: "How do we reach the U.S. people?" "All depends upon the people of the United States." "The hope of all people in Latin America lies in the people of the United States."

What is being asked is so clear. What is not so clear is how to do it. This is not a new question to many of us who have been doing solidarity work here in the United States.

What is new is the moment, for us and for Latin America. Grenada has had a profound effect. There is a new awareness that change for Latin Amer-

ica depends upon the people of the United States. This is also not a new statement, but the way in which it is being said is new.

The revolutionary struggles for liberation continue. The people of Latin America are conscious. The people of El Salvador, of Guatemala, of Nicaragua, of Cuba are awake.

But, the giant to the North can crush them and do so because its people are asleep, or if not asleep, impervious to the cries of the poor, deaf to the cries of their brothers and sisters to the South for peace, for justice, for liberation.

How to unblock those deaf ears? How to give sight to blind North Americans so that they can see "the other" not as enemy but as one who is like them. For many years I had believed that if people but heard, they would act. But, now I know that is not true. It is not so easy, especially when "hearts and minds" of U.S. citizens can be won so readily through the control and manipulation of the media as was experienced during the Grenada invasion. Other things have to happen and much of it on an ideological level.

As the Guatemalan poet Julia Esquivel stated at the conference, "This is a struggle between falsehood and truth; between reality and the distortion of reality."

"The objective of imperialism and of the regimes that cooperate with imperialism inside our countries is to convince people that peace and security are based on war. That is the way they will control any situation in any country. There is no country so small that it cannot be helped by war. There is no person, no village, that is not important to them."

Ronald Reagan when giving his reasons for the invasion of Grenada stated: "...We are a nation with global responsibilities, we're not somewhere else in the world protecting someone else's interests. We're there protecting our own" (*New York Times*, 10/28/83).

It is in this context that we must view the invasion of the tiny island of Grenada. In this kind of worldview, no place is considered small.

"To do our work," as Julia Esquivel has said, "we have to break through the walls of ideology, walls of consciousness, huge walls of daily information, walls of massive communication media, walls of education, walls of

Continued on next page

The Reality of Grenada

church and religious groups, of values, of norms, of tradition...we have to find ways to penetrate these walls, and if it is possible, to destroy them."

Sergio Mendez Arceo, the bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico, spoke of the U.S. reality in this regard. He had originally been asked to come and share his life story that people would be encouraged, supported and inspired to continue in the struggle for the liberation of peoples in the Third World nations. But, because of the invasion, because of the tone of the proceedings, he said:

"I don't feel the need to talk about myself. I don't feel that it is convenient now. I am going to discuss what is most important and that is that everyone of us has to take into account the United States, that a change in the United States will come from the United States...That change will be made by those we call 'Yankees.' They are the ones who will transform their region."

He continued, "That nation, that people has many virtues, but it has a profound defect which is its selfishness. It's a selfish people. That selfishness is cultivated by a habit of consumption, by the idea that time is money...This is what we have to understand."

"The Reagan policy meets certain gripes of the North American people. He uses a false doctrine [that of national security]. But it is a national feeling. He touches upon the aspect of security...and as he touches upon this, the people react favorably to him."

Dom Sergio pointed out that this was the reason that the U.S. people responded to communism as they do. They have been led to believe that communism will threaten their security, their riches, their possessions.

He said, "We have to realize that they are anti-communists." In speaking of how religion is used to reinforce this idea, he continued, "Anti-communism is the greatest disease among Christians." And he asked, "Then...why not put an end to that anti-communism? Let's show how this is really anti-religion and how capitalism is against religious principles...And [let's show] how socialism in the Soviet Union, by making its mistakes, has been against the principles of socialism itself. Historical socialisms have put us into conflict—those of us who want to be socialist. But we have to accept that they are socialist and of course, we pre-

fer that they are socialist."

Dom Sergio also pointed out that there were signs of hope among the U.S. people. He spoke especially about the sanctuary movement, a movement which is a response to the plight of Central American refugees who because of U.S. immigration laws are denied the status of political refugees, thereby being forced into the position of being illegal aliens. "Law-abiding" citizens defy the law in opposition to U.S. immigration policy. The stranger is taken in and given shelter, food, clothing, support, protection—all done in collaboration with the churches.

The work of women in the U.S. was also cited. Especially singled out was the fact that 150 women were going to Honduras for a peace vigil in early December. To the participants at the conference, this spoke so much of a movement among the U.S. people towards making an option for life and not for death.

By way of an update—and not really a diversion, for it points to how threatening the response of U.S. citizens to the people of Central America is to those in power—the women were not allowed into Honduras to pray for peace. Ironically, it seems that U.S. Marines can go in to bring peace by teaching how to make war—how to kill more effectively, more efficiently—but religious women cannot go in to pray for peace. In the doublespeak of the rulers of this world, WAR IS PEACE.

"What to do?" Dom Sergio asked. "We have to see what our role is. How do we make them understand [the U.S. people] that we are not jealous of them? The early Church leaders said, 'The one who is rich is rich because that person or his father were robbers.' We have to say the same thing to the U.S. people. You are robbers, or perhaps your parents were robbers...In Latin America there is much to convince them of this—that they have been robbers."

This is so hard for U.S. people to hear, for we have been brought up to believe that as a nation, as a people, we are blessed by God, that we are to be a "light to the world," that we are elected by God to redeem humanity. So much of our ethos as a people has its roots in language, ideas such as this. This is why U.S. citizens can be manipulated by Ronald Reagan into believing that our nation's actions are always good, while those of the Soviet Union

and Cuba are always evil.

The reality is that instead of "blessing," we are "curse" to others. For people who come out of a religious tradition, that the name of God and religion is used to bless commitment of troops to Grenada, for example, is blasphemous. There can be no doubt that in religious terms the United States is an idolatrous nation. The god that its leaders call upon as they go into battle is not the true God. That God is a God of justice and liberation, a God who stands with the poor and oppressed.

It is clear to many people outside of the U.S. that what the U.S. stands for in our world is not justice, but injustice. The cause of the wealthy and greedy is defended. This is what is seen as the "mission" of the U.S. and it is translated into concepts such as "manifest destiny," "vital interests" or "national interests."

In the U.S., much of our tradition is based on the concept of rights, *not* interests—"the inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." In more recent years, in the U.S. and in the world at large, especially since the founding of the United Nations, the content of these rights has been expanded and, more important, they have been extended to all human beings by virtue of their dignity and worth as human persons.

At this point, conflict is inevitable because as the poor and oppressed in a society lay claim to these rights, they will be opposed by those sectors of society who are privileged and who know only too well that in order for the demands of the exploited and poor to be met, they will have to have limits placed on their privileges. They will have to give up something.

In Latin America, in the struggle for liberation, for human rights, alliances have been made between Christians and Marxists. Here in the U.S., as we struggle in solidarity with the people of the Third World, both at home and abroad, we may have to look to making the same kinds of alliances between people in the movement and people in the churches. This is so because of the power that religious discourse has in U.S. society and because of the way in which religion is now being used as a tool in achieving the national security goals of the United States.

A fundamental struggle which is taking place is for consensus among the U.S. population in the area of foreign

policy. This is the context within which the ideological struggle, of which religion is a major part, is important.

A friend of mine has said, "Depending upon our view of the world, we choose our strategy for making choices in it." I would submit that, assuming this statement to be true, since people, and nations, make such different choices, then their perception of the world must differ. It is important for those of us involved in the commitment to creating a more human world to understand this, for how one sees a problem will determine one's response to it.

Having information is not enough. What lenses one uses to process that information is important to understanding one's response—or another person's response. It has been my experience that people can look, read, hear the same data and yet the response they make, or do not make, varies.

In grappling with the reality of Central America and of a U.S. policy which is each day more destructive of life, I have asked myself, "What do the U.S. people need to hear in order to do something?" But, then I have thought, it is not just the hearing that is the problem. It is not just having "access" to people in the way that Ronald Reagan does, in the way that the sellers of the products that people are convinced they need to have to live "the good life" do.

How to begin to talk about not just life, but what truly is "the good life"? What is the cost of that? Perhaps this is where those people engaged in the churches will be able to make a difference. They will be able to be with the people, to talk with them, to work with them. Their commitment to the things that they talk to will be important to change here in the U.S.

At the end of this article, as at the end of the conference in Cuba, I am still left with lots of questions. What will need to be done to make a difference here in the U.S.?

How can anger be turned into creative energy? How can selfishness be eliminated? And how can the willingness to share the goods of the earth with others take its place? How do we change those systems of socio-economic exploitation responsible for the disparity in our world?

How can concepts of security be given new content? How can words like "riches" and "wealth" take on

new meanings? And yes, how can words like "communism" and "socialism" be understood as not being anti-religion in their essential meanings?

How can all these things happen so that "change" does take place among the people of the United States?

In short, how can people in the U.S. live supporting life, not death? Can it be done so that the U.S. people can become part of that movement in the world struggling for peace, for justice, for liberation, for life?

My gut feeling coming from my own experience is that it will only be possible as groups of women meet in all corners of this nation and speak to the issue of life, respond to the issues of life. As women, who by their very nature are makers of life—creators of life—gather to reflect and act on the problems of our day that new world of justice and peace, of human rights for all people, will be born. But, it will not be born without struggle, without pain. But, bonded together, supporting one another, we shall declare our option for life. ☐

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Disinformation Given on the Grenada Invasion to U.S. People

In order to justify its invasion of Grenada and its subsequent actions, the U.S. government and its spokesmen told 19 lies; Reagan personally told the first 13.

1. Cuba had to do with the coup d'état and the death of Bishop.
2. The American students were in danger of being taken hostage.
3. The main purpose of the invasion was to protect the lives of American citizens.
4. The invasion was a multinational operation undertaken at the request of Mr. Scoon and the eastern Caribbean nations.
5. Cuba was planning to invade and occupy Grenada.
6. Grenada was being turned into an important Soviet-Cuban military base.
7. The airport under construction was not civilian but military.
8. The weapons in Grenada would be used to export subversion and terrorism.
9. The Cubans fired first.
10. There were over 1000 Cubans in Grenada.
11. Most of the Cubans were not construction workers but professional soldiers.
12. The invading forces took care not to destroy civilian property or inflict civilian casualties.
13. The U.S. troops would remain in Grenada for a week.
14. Missile silos were being built in Grenada.
15. The vessel Viet Nam Heroico was transporting special weapons.
16. Cuba was warned of the invasion.
17. Five hundred Cubans are fighting in the mountains of Grenada.
18. Cuba has issued instructions for reprisals to be taken against U.S. citizens.
19. The journalists were excluded for their own protection.

—From the speech given by Fidel Castro at the eulogy for the Cubans killed in Grenada, Havana, November 14, 1983

Palestinians, Israelis and Us

The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians

By Noam Chomsky

South End Press, 481 pp., \$10, paper.

GEORGE SCIALABBA

On June 12, 1982, three-quarters of a million people marched through New York City and assembled in Central Park to demand a freeze on nuclear weapons. At the same moment, a few blocks away, several hundred people gathered outside the Israeli consulate to protest Israel's invasion of Lebanon, then six days old. *The Fateful Triangle*, Noam Chomsky's latest book, raises the possibility that the latter demonstration may have been the more significant one.

How is a nuclear conflict between the superpowers most likely to come about? A "bolt-from-the-blue" first strike (or its equivalent, a Soviet invasion of Western Europe) is clearly suicidal, and therefore unlikely. War through technical malfunction is not unlikely—in fact is inevitable in the long run as both sides adopt "launch on warning" strategies—but at any given moment it is a remote contingency. Far more likely than either of these possibilities is that nuclear weapons will be used in the future as they have come closest to being used in the past: as part of one superpower's response to the other's intervention somewhere in the Third World.

It should be obvious that now, and for a long time to come, the most likely arena of superpower confrontation is the Mideast. As Chomsky argues in this book and in his other recent writings, a peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is, for Americans, a matter not merely of abstract justice but of immediate self-interest. And on this issue, above all others, illusions can be lethal.

But unfortunately, this is exactly where illusions are rampant, at least in the U.S.

In his previous books, most notably *American Power and the New Mandarins* (1969), *The Political Economy of Human Rights* (1979) and *Towards a New Cold War* (1982), Chomsky has pursued a dual purpose: to describe the

realities of domination within the American global system and to analyze the domestic political ideology that conceals or rationalizes those realities. *The Fateful Triangle* continues that dual focus, exhaustively documenting Israeli military, economic and diplomatic policies toward the Palestinians and relentlessly dissecting the abundant illusions about these policies among those who finance them and therefore share responsibility for them—i.e., us.

One way to appreciate the scope and rigor of this extraordinary book is to consider Chomsky's demystification of three terms that loom large in American political discussion about the Mideast: "rejectionism," "terrorism" and "support for Israel."

Rejectionism

The first of these terms means rejection of the right of national self-determination for one of the two peoples who inhabit the territory of Israel/Palestine. In American parlance this term has been applied almost exclusively to the position of the Palestinians and their representatives (the PLO) or sponsors (the Arab governments). This alleged unwavering Arab "rejectionism" is widely held up as the main obstacle to a peaceful settlement.

As Chomsky shows, that view was never more than half true, and since the early '70s has been wholly untrue. For example, in 1970 President Nasser of Egypt declared that "it will be possible to institute a durable peace between Israel and the Arab states, not excluding economic and diplomatic relations, if Israel evacuates the occupied territories and accepts a settlement of the problem of Palestinian refugees."

In 1971 Anwar Sadat offered Israel a full peace treaty on the pre-June 1967 borders, with security guarantees, recognized borders and no mention of a Palestinian state.

In 1982 King Hussein proposed a confederation of Jordan and the West Bank under Jordanian auspices (which is supposedly the Israeli Labor Party's position).

In 1975 three official and semi-official spokesmen for the PLO publicly indicated a willingness to accept a Palestinian state in the occupied territories and thereafter renounce violence as a means toward national unification.

In 1976, at the instigation of Egypt, Syria and Jordan, a UN Security Council resolution was introduced (and vetoed by the U.S.) calling for a Palestinian state alongside Israel and for "appropriate arrangements...to guarantee...the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all states in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries."

In 1977 (according to a report in the *New York Times*) Egypt, Syria and Jordan "informed the U.S. that they would sign peace treaties with Israel as part of an overall Middle East settlement." Later that year the PLO promptly endorsed a joint U.S.-Soviet communique (angrily rejected by Israel and then repudiated by the U.S.) calling for a two-state solution, with peace treaties guaranteed by the superpowers.

Some, perhaps all, of these Arab initiatives were ambiguous or inadequate. But they were all, without exception, ignored or rebuffed by Israel (with U.S. backing) and have subsequently disappeared from the public record in the U.S. Moreover, they were all rejected by Labor governments—which is significant, since the Israeli Labor Party is currently the best hope of most American liberals and even some socialists.

In fact, as Chomsky documents at length, the mainstream of the Labor Party (including every party chief from David Ben-Gurion to Shimon Peres) has been no less consistent than Menachem Begin's Likud in its rejection of Palestinian national self-determination. Rhetorical differences notwithstanding, both Labor and Likud governments have sponsored Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and have suppressed all meaningful forms of political self-organization there. Though the Likud has been more explicit about its intention to retain control over the territories, all Labor programs have envisioned Israeli control over the West Bank (and, crucially, over its resources of water and cheap labor), while denying Palestinian nationhood.

As for the Camp David accords, immediately after their adoption the Israeli Knesset passed a resolution asserting that "after the transition per-

Continued on next page

iod laid down in the Camp David accords, Israel will raise its claim and act to fulfill its rights to sovereignty over Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district [i.e., the occupied territories]."

Chomsky quotes Abba Eban's astonished reaction to this resolution—he said that there was no precedent "in the jurisprudence of any government for such a total contradiction between an international agreement and a national statement of policy." And of course, this "national statement of policy" is well on its way to being fully implemented.

As Chomsky points out, there is now an international consensus for a two-state settlement, with guarantees of security. The only significant exceptions to this consensus are the Rejection Front faction of the PLO, the Israeli government (along with most of the Labor opposition) and the U.S. Obviously, these realities do not exactly square with current American usage of the term "rejectionism."

Terrorism

The term "terrorism" is another curious case. It is properly applied to Palestinian violence against Israeli civilians, which is as futile in practice as it is intolerable in principle. However, that is the only time the term is used in American accounts of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This is oddly restricted usage. What one side in any conflict calls "terrorism," the other side invariably calls "reprisals." And for some reason, the violence perpetrated by states (at least states friendly to the U.S.) is rarely considered by mainstream American commentators as being on the same moral level as that of guerrilla movements.

But what is even more curious about the exclusive use of the word "terrorism" in connection with PLO (or Libyan or Iraqi) violence is the latter's comparative numerical insignificance. According to an official Israeli estimate (cited by Chomsky), 106 civilians have been killed in northern Israel by terrorists since the late '60s; and according to an investigation by a former Israeli police official, 282 Israeli civilians in all have been killed in terrorist attacks since 1967. The number of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians killed by the Israeli armed forces since the late '60s exceeds those figures by an enormous margin (perhaps as much as 50 to 1, though Chomsky makes no

"...demotion of Palestinians from human status made it possible...to bomb refugee camps into rubble and to ship 9,000 Palestinian males to concentration camps in Israel."

such calculations). And this comparison leaves out the hundreds of thousands of Arab civilians involuntarily displaced in wars and "reprisals" from 1948 to 1982.

Semantic dishonesty can be deadly. The Israeli government has attempted, with some success, to eliminate the word "Palestinian" from official Israeli discourse, routinely substituting the word "terrorist." This demotion of the Palestinians from human status made it possible, among other things, to cut off food, water and electricity to West Beirut during the summer of 1982, to bomb refugee camps (towns, actually) into rubble and to ship 9,000 Palestinian males to concentration camps in Israel. The American mass media, through their consistently partisan use of the word "terrorism," also deserve some credit for these events.

Support for Israel

Serious criticism of Israeli state policies is rare in American politics or intellectual life. One device used to maintain this situation is labeling apologists for current Israeli policies as "supporters of Israel"—and in turn labeling opponents of those policies as "anti-Israel." As should be obvious, this verbal gambit is sheer demagoguery, comparable to the branding of those who opposed the Indochina war as "anti-American." Yet it is remarkably effective. Chomsky quotes numerous Israeli doves, many of them near despair over their lack of support from American liberals and American Jews. Their view, as Chomsky formulates it, is that the "support for Israel" (i.e., for its worst excesses of militarism and chauvinism) shown by most American Jewish organizations and by journals like *Commentary* and *The New Republic* should be called by another name: "support for Israel's continued moral degeneration and, quite possibly, ultimate physical destruction."

Taken together, the illusions implicit

in current American usage of the terms "rejectionism," "terrorism," and "support for Israel" form a sort of ideological subsystem within American popular culture—along with other illusions that Chomsky demolishes: that Arab citizens of Israel enjoy full civic equality; that the Israeli occupation of the West Bank has been "benign" and "enlightened"; that the political aspirations of Palestinians in the occupied territories have never been clearly expressed; that the Kahan Commission report on the Sabra/Shatila massacre was a "sublime" moral achievement; and so on.

But like all other ideologies, this one has a basis in interests that are by no means illusions. With subtlety and precision Chomsky explains the official American view of Israel as a "strategic asset," a bulwark against radical regimes in the Mideast (and increasingly elsewhere, as Israel expands its arms sales and military, intelligence and diplomatic support to right-wing regimes in Latin America and Africa).

Finally, drawing on the speculations of American and Israeli political and military analysts, Chomsky outlines some possible scenarios of future conflict in the region, several of which end in superpower confrontation.

The Fateful Triangle is the best book I know of on any aspect of contemporary politics. It is also, arguably, the most important. For the nuclear shadows are lengthening in the Mideast, and they fall on the rest of us as well. We are slouching toward Armageddon. All that can halt this drift toward catastrophe is a popular movement fueled by the sort of unflinching intellectual rigor and generous moral imagination to be found in Chomsky's earlier books, and now *The Fateful Triangle*. □

George Scialabba has written on the Mideast for the Boston Phoenix, Harvard Magazine, and New Outlook (Tel Aviv). This review is reprinted from In These Times (Nov. 23-Dec. 6, 1983). In These Times is published by the Institute for Public Affairs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657.

New England Energy Slide Show Project, c/o Boston Clamshell Coalition, P.O. Box 149, Somerville, MA 02143.

Although the movement against nuclear power has been relatively quiet during the last few years, energy remains one of the most critical issues that needs to be understood and addressed if we are to move away from corporate control of our society. With this in mind, the Boston Clamshell collective spent the past several years researching, script writing, selecting slides and music, editing and taping, resulting in a 45-minute slide show entitled "Changing Demand/Demanding Change." The slide show, which was designed to meet the need for a radical, comprehensive slide show on energy in the New England area, explores the political, economic and cultural effects of energy supply and demand. It takes a close look at the present energy system in New England by examining who is in control of our resources and what affects energy production has on our health, the environment and the economy. "Changing Demand/Demanding Change" analyzes how the interlocking corporate and state mechanisms have a stranglehold on the energy supply as well as our general well-being. An alternative energy program is outlined that stresses flexibility, ecology, efficiency and democracy. Information about the show, which is geared toward high school and adult audiences, can be obtained by writing to the above address. Resist's grant went toward the costs of slide duplication, slide trays and cassette tapes.

Red River Valley Peace Workers, c/o Douglas Knowlton, 1924 River Road NW, East Grand Forks, MN 56721.

Although the Red River Valley Peace Workers have been together for only a year, they tell us that they are "growing by leaps and bounds." This group, which came together after a successful ballot initiative on disarmament, is especially important because Grand Forks is the home of the Grand Forks Air Force Base, which means that the peace issue is indeed a local issue in this community. Since its beginning, the R.R.V. Peace Workers have sponsored or co-sponsored several events including: a peace vigil at the Air Force Base in response to the arrival of the first

cruise missiles, several symposia and public meetings about nuclear weapons and U.S. intervention in Central America, movies and book reviews and a demonstration at the Federal Building to observe the 38th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. They have received a good amount of media attention in their actions as well. A major project and organizing tool of the Peace Workers is the publication of a monthly newsletter which is sent out to individuals from virtually every segment of the community. Resist's grant went toward the costs of producing and mailing the newsletter.

San Jose Peace Center, 520 South 10th St., San Jose, CA 95112.

The San Jose Peace Center, located in Santa Clara County, was founded in 1957 and has operated continuously since then. Last year Santa Clara

County received \$4 billion in military contracts, making the county the highest per capita in military spending in the nation. Over the years the center has concentrated on different issues, including atmospheric nuclear testing in the 1950's, the Vietnam War in the 1960's, the Stop the B-1 Bomber Campaign in the 1970's and now nuclear disarmament, nonviolence, draft counseling and Third World issues. Recently nonviolence has become a focus of the center with its objective being "to provide people with information on nonviolence and the support and opportunities to participate in nonviolent direct actions in order that they may implement a peaceful and nonviolent social order." Resist's grant went toward the purchase of a video forum, featuring Gene Sharp, entitled "Alternatives to Violence."

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