

# Discussion Group with Rabbi Marshall Meyer Reported by Evelyn Motzkin, M.D.

Dr. Meyer stressed that all of this happened in a cosmopolitan country, in a metropolis with millions of people, beautiful statues and extraordinary schools and to cultured people, that friends, family and clergy were so afraid to be associated with the families of "disappeared ones," that they left them isolated. These victimized people would be haunted forever. The governments were denounced which, for eighteen years, had essentially been manipulated by the Perons, a family who has finally fallen from power.

On Dec. 10, 1984 Raoul Alfonsín became the new president of Argentina and immediately a national committee for the "disappeared people" was formed to investigate what had transpired in Argentina. They have learned that the horrors occurring in the country were not haphazard but rather derived from an organized, harmonized policy of destruction that included the use of 330 concentration camps and 83 crematoria. They are now working to find the murderers and to bring them to justice via due process of law.

Rabbi Meyer expressed his hopes for a new Argentina where people would realize that they needed each other, that they couldn't afford to be divisive over such differences as religion, that they understand the importance of Democracy in a pluralistic country. His plea was, "Help each other to create a world that will be good for all our children."

Seven years ago in a large audience of concerned American Jews, I first heard Rabbi Marshall Meyer passionately describing the plight of the Argentinian "disappeared ones." He asked that no tape recordings be allowed because it might endanger his life if the wrong parties were to hear his denunciations of the Argentinian government. He was planning to return to Argentina to continue his efforts on behalf of human rights.

In 1978 Dr. Walter Briebl, our institute's champion of human rights, was a member of a panel held in my home dealing with the subject of "Vienna 1938, Argentina 1978." Thus, at our Southern California Psychoanalytic Institute's Human Rights meeting, it was very moving to hear that Rabbi Meyer still had in his possession a supportive letter received from the American Psychoanalytic Association, made possible only through the persistent efforts of our Dr. Walter Briebl, who insisted that we analysts take active roles in the world to prevent human misery, as we try to do in our daily work with suffering patients.

It was also very meaningful to see the changes that have occurred since 1978, that permitted Rabbi Meyer to address our audience at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, now with reporters present to broadcast his message to the world. The old Argentinian government has been replaced by President Raoul Alfonsín's government by the vote of 52% of the electorate. The abuses have stopped as the government began its strivings toward creating a democracy. The Rabbi has just presented a 50,000 page report of past abuses to this new government for purposes of review and prosecution of the former criminals.

The room was hushed and people looked somber as Rabbi Meyer told his story to us as if he were still there in Argentina in the room with victims. He interrupted himself suddenly, distracted by the jarring effect of the opulence in the room, so different from the scenes visualized in his mind. They were scenes of the late night knock on the door, or the machine gun blowing it down, as the secret police came for their victims. There were scenes of a wife's head cracked by a rifle but while her husband was bayoneted across his face, of books being destroyed, or children or parents being killed. There were scenes of parents searching for years for their kidnapped children, unable to ever effect the emotional resolution that can relieve the mourner who at least can bury his dead loved ones.

# On Victimization and Violence—A Psychoanalytic Perspective

Robert Jay Lifton, M.D.

Reported by Scott L. Carder, M.D.

The opening session of the Conference was highlighted by Dr. Robert Jay Lifton's address. President of the Walter Briebl Human Rights Foundation, Dr. Sam Eisenstein opened the meeting and stated that Dr. Briebl recognized the threat to mankind when people do not understand human behavior and appreciate the consequences of one's person's actions on another person's human rights. In their classic exchange on world problems Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein discussed the danger to mankind from human aggression. Freud said, violence is a result of man's innate aggressive instincts and love is the only means of curbing the aggressive instinct. He said communication and identification can also reduce social aggression.

Dr. John Peck introduced the panel of speakers for the morning. The lead speaker was Dr. Lifton. He commented that the study of human rights requires an awareness of both the influences of the mind and of the heart. The ultimate threat, of course, to human rights is from the threat of nuclear devastation. His speech was divided into three areas. First, he reviewed some of his original research concerning the doctors in Nazi concentration camps. The second part was verification of his concept of doubling and the third aspect was genocide itself, with some comments about its origin and possible prevention.

Dr. Lifton recognizes the limits of psychological explanations stating that after all the psychological explanations we still need social concepts such as evil to help clarify and moderate human behavior. In his research on Nazi doctors, Dr. Lifton found three groups of people: twenty-eight Nazi doctors whom he interviewed extensively about their thoughts, feelings and behavior during the atrocity; a group of non-medical professionals also in the concentration camps and what their attitudes were; some eighty survivors of Auschwitz concentration camp who worked in the medical area.

The major focus of the speech was on the question, "How could doctors participate in this horrible process?". Dr. Lifton called it a healing/killing paradox: killing in the name of healing is what the doctors did. How can we understand what leads a physician to participate in genocide? Medicalized killing or clean killing with minimum effects on the killer is one of the factors he mentioned -- and the notion of killing in a sick society in order to cure or heal the country. He recognized how Hitler and the anti-semitics considered the Jews to be an infection in the German country and needed to be removed. Genocide was "applied biology," supposedly for racial improvement.

Nazi doctors, Soviet psychiatrists, American CIA physicians and others are involved in killings for what they consider higher causes. In the same manner the person who made the poison at the Guiana Massacre was the Jonestown physician.

Dr. Lifton commented on his recent book, The Broken Connection, in which he explains his concept of doubling. He deals with the phenomena of our life: death paradigm. The ultimate level of larger human connectedness is the denial of our own death. Living through our children, our work, our religion or through our concept of nature is part of this denial. These defenses are normative immortalizations. Political Darwinism, he said, is the goal of the doctors who were attempting to achieve greater purity in the German race. In the process of doubling, a part of the self becomes the whole self. The Nazi doctors developed an "Auschwitz self" which was separate enough to do the killing but yet connected enough to their true selves to allow them to function with their families and other people in normal situations. The doubling process removed the guilt and changed the moral consequences. Doubling is more holistic and focuses on identity in a more accurate manner rather than the usual concept of splitting as a mechanism for defense. The doubling permits one to be involved in evil without feeling responsible for the evil, to kill without feeling like a murderer.

# The Rehabilitation of Torture Victims

## Inge Kemp Genefke

### Reported by Roman N. Anshin, M.D.

In his discussion Dr. Charles Wahl made several good points about psychoanalysis and its relationship to violence and the abuse of human rights. He stated that the science of psychoanalysis is often called the science of "as the twig bends so the branch doth grow." He spoke of mother's love as a universal process that has healing qualities. If the murderer recognizes that his victim had a mother, and the murderer also had a mother who loved him, there may be greater similarity and less hostility. Freud said religion was regressive because it permitted men to hate without guilt. People killed for religious reasons eight to ten times more than for all other reasons. Dr. Wahl said we hear of many atrocities in the Free World where news reporting is done, but we hear little from the Communist World because critical reporting is not allowed. Twenty-four million Chinese were killed by Mao's Communist takeover. In the providence of Tibet alone, there were seven million killed.

Dr. Wahl said his understanding of Dr. Lifton's concept of doubling is that of particularization or that the good guys are those that are like us. What is the evil in man? For what reason does one kill? And what reasons allow people to kill without guilt? Man, according to Dr. Wahl, stands at more risk from his own species than from any other factor. The aggressive part of the self provides both for the creative positive aspects to life and a horrible danger from man himself. In quoting Freud, he stated that massive groups of people are destructive by nature. Love makes a good person but that same person has evil potential. Nazi doctors are responsible for their evil but are not inherently demonic. It is hard to see the evil in an individual who is carried away by his cause. Thomas Mann wrote, "Nazi Germany is nothing but good degenerated into evil." Dr. Wahl poetically commented, "in dark times time I begins to see."

Dr. Inge Genefke, a Danish neurologist and the first director and founder of the International Center for the Rehabilitation of Torture Victims in Copenhagen, presented a most moving presentation on the evolution of her Center, and upon how the Center is involved in the treatment and rehabilitation of torture victims and their families. I had the feeling on hearing this presentation that there could be no work as honorable and as noble as that being performed by Dr. Genefke and her colleagues. If there are truly angels, not "the great Satans" that the Ayatollah Kohmeini has commented upon, one would see them in Copenhagen in Dr. Genefke's Center.

The rehabilitation center was begun at the request of Amnesty International, and initially started around studies in the forensic medical studies arising in torture victims. The initial patients were Chileans and Greeks. Initial evaluation revealed psychological problems in the following areas: depression, anxiety, decreased concentration, decreased memory span, easy fatigability, headache, sexual disturbances. There are a variety of physical problems that varied with the particular type of torture. Psychological after-effects tended to be of greater gravity than those that were somatic. After much preparation, in 1980 a center for the treatment of victims was founded formally in Copenhagen. Two free beds were received from the University Hospital for patients needing hospitalization for their medical treatment. The physical treatment of these patients involved accurate diagnosis and specific treatment of the various physical problems. A safe "holding" environment was provided and it was attempted to provide the patient with continuity by his or her having the same nurses and doctors in various aspects of their diagnosis and treatment. There is extreme sensitivity to the patient's past experiences and in how they might affect current diagnostic procedures and treatment. For example, there was extreme anxiety around the matter of blood, instruments of various sorts, gynecological examinations, etc., as the victims might have witnessed or indeed been subjected to torture involving blood, various mechanical devices, or in the case of women, bizarre torture involving the genitalia. Physical

treatment centered around a three-day per week program of massage and ultrasound along with other specific somatic therapy. There were ongoing explanations of various patients' physical problems that related to their torture experiences. Family physicians and pediatricians would discuss the patient's physical problems with the family.

Psychotherapy occurred on a two-time per week basis performed by a trained therapist. It was not until this year that a psychiatrist was on the staff of the Center. Psychotherapy centered around the modalities of clarification, education, and catharsis. Emphasis was laid on explaining why victims were tortured in terms of their torturers attempting to destroy the victim's physical and mental identity. Emphasis was laid upon stressing the fact that torture victims were chosen to be tortured because they were individuals who were brave, with ego strength, and were involved in being tortured because they had been involved in various risky and morally courageous activities. Only strong personalities were tortured. Stress was laid upon the fact that victims were often involved with impossible choices, sig. undergoing personal physical torture or mental torture in seeing one's loved ones tortured or hearing loved ones being tortured versus the guilt over betraying others. These impossible choices created anxiety, depression, guilt and ambivalence. Victims were urged to be involved with catharsis in great detail. The undoing of repression was stressed. It was found to be very important to discuss in great detail torture experience, with discussions taking place as many as ten times. Interpretation of dreams and nightmares was of particular importance. Throughout the psychotherapy and somatic therapy, considerable stress was laid on the torture victims being involved in their own help, and stress made on the victims being able to see themselves as strong individuals who are working for physical and mental health. A greater sense of cohesiveness and sense of personal identity was nurtured in all the work.

The paper was discussed by Dr. Louis Jolyn West. Dr. West stressed the nobility and dedication of the treating mental health professional involved in the Center's rehabilitation work. He commented in particular on the fact that these victims almost universally manifested what under DSM-III might be called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Struc-

tured and integrated psychotherapy was necessary in the rehabilitation of the victims to deal with what he commented upon as disability dependency, and dread these unfortunate persons had suffered and experienced. Other centers for rehabilitation are being founded in Sweden, Holland, France and Canada and, hopefully, also will be started in Los Angeles in the future in conjunction with UCLA/NPI. Neither Dr. Genefke nor Dr. West discussed the personality qualifications that might be important in those who are treating torture victims nor, in particular, the countertransference problems that might develop in health and mental health professionals dealing with these persons. It would be important to evolve some understanding of persons who are particularly attracted to this work. I would think, upon reflection, that individuals with a strong and perhaps overriding wish to help others, sig. such as seen in many nursing assistants in mental health facilities, house parents in group homes of juvenile offenders, foster parents, etc., might be able to have the hope, optimistic point of view, resiliency and great desire to help the torture victims. Again, I might speculate also on some of the countertransference problems that might develop around overidentification with torture victims. This is important in this particular situation only in terms of working in a way that might be best for the particular patients in these settings, and where one is not dealing with "pure" psychotherapy victims with "pure" office psychotherapy sessions per se, but rather persons who have undergone severe stress. Dr. West, in stressing the diagnostic issues in torture victims, sig. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, commented upon some similarities in the diagnosis and treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders in persons who were torture victims and other victims of violent attacks, sig. rape victims, robbery/assault victims, combatants in war situations, etc. -- persons who might be seen in office psychotherapy.

I believe psychoanalysts and others who attended this Conference saw this meeting as a demonstration of the humanity inherent in applied psychoanalysis. We have only to look to Freud, Walter Briehl and many others to see the humanism inherent in the psychoanalytic point of view, and I know that all who attended this meeting experienced this fact most eloquently.

# Human Rights Panel

## Reported by Scott L. Carder, M.D.

Chairperson Dr. Evelyn Motzkin introduced Judge Jerry Pacht of the Los Angeles County Superior Court. He gave an interesting commentary on the judicial system's interaction with human rights. He has a tough, no nonsense approach to the process of the importance of courts maintaining human rights pursuits.

Dr. Robin Briehl, the son of Walter and Marie Briehl, was presented. He is an internist who lives on the east coast. He spoke of some memories of his father, mentioning specifically that he father had been a conscientious objector during the first world war and helped Wilhelm Reich get out of Europe before the second world war. Dr. Briehl played an audiotape of his father sending a letter to Amnesty International about the abuses of human rights in Argentina. It was very moving for the audience to hear Walter's voice.

The third speaker was Dr. Larry Pomer who gave some reminiscences about Walter Briehl, the man and the analyst. "He would speak out at meeting after meeting and force awareness of these unpleasant realities that were occurring in distant countries." He was an involved man who did not fear the distortion of the transference. He forced his colleagues to face human rights problems, amazing his friends and members of the institute. Dr. Briehl urged members of the members of the analytic community "as decent people to stand up for human rights." He urged the psychiatric and the psychoanalytic associations to condemn Argentina's abuses. "Walter Briehl was the conscience of the entire psychoanalytic community," Dr. Pomer concluded.

Mrs. Marie Briehl presented a prize to the winner of the Walter Briehl Memorial Essay contest. She called Walter a social critic and a scientific researcher. He upheld the basic principle set forth by Jefferson: The right of human beings to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Walter believed that our treatment rooms were not safe without society upholding human rights. On his death bed he told her, "Eighty-five years I have lived and I did what I could." He died two days later.

The prize went to Dr. Martin Wanhg for an essay entitled, "On the Psychoanalytic Implications of the Threat of Nuclear War." The

award was accepted by his son, Dr. Mitchell Wanhg, a psychiatrist. Mitchell said his father, like Dr. Briehl, wanted to establish a confirmation of life in the face of the potential destruction of humanity.

The next speaker was John Healy from Amnesty International who spoke of human rights in the 1980s. Amnesty has a budget of \$15,000,000 a year and has people around the globe who are able to make a quick response to shed light on the torture of potential political victims. Mr. Healy told the audience, "Do all you can today. This conference is good but it is not enough. We must continue to do all we can."

Following Mr. Healy, Rabbi Marshall Meyer who lives in Argentina talked about the human rights drama in his country. Rabbi Meyer described the disappearance of many people, the horror these people lived under -- fearing that at any moment their house could be invaded by soldiers. "If you were lucky," said Rabbi Meyer, "Your son or daughter was killed in front of you. If not, you wandered and worried spending sleepless nights for months and years never to hear from them again, but always hoping somehow they had survived." Inhumanity to man is greatest under the name of God, he said, "It is too simplistic though to think of it as just due to religious factors." He said that religious man, such as himself, have much in common with psychoanalysts concerning the abuse of human rights. "We should work together and go forward to help eliminate these atrocities."

The next speaker was Amin Banani, Ph.D. who spoke of the policy of extermination of the Baha'i in Iran. This is an ongoing current atrocity that has happened since the Moslem takeover. The storm of religious fanaticism in this medieval Iranian bureaucracy has contributed to the intolerance of other religious faiths.

Professor Maurice Zeitlin, Ph.D. discussed the situation in Chile (instead of El Salvador, his scheduled topic) where he once lived. As Dr. Briehl used to do, he reminded us that it is easy living in Southern California to deny the dreadful acts that go on in other countries. Many horrors have occurred in Santiago since the early 1970s. Some of them contributed to by our government's support, through the CIA, of human rights abuse in order to get rid of communist influences.

# Discussion Group with Amin Banani, Ph.D. Reported by Clinton Y. Montgomery, M.D. and J. Victor Monke, M.D.

Amin Banani, Ph.D., a professor of history and near eastern languages at UCLA, discussed the persecution of the Baha'i in Iran. The Baha'i are the largest religious minority community in Iran where they number approximately 350,000 individuals. The worldwide membership of this religious movement, which originated in Iran in the 19th century, is approximately 3,000,000. The Baha'i faith is a progressive religion which believes itself to be a natural progression and development in religion, and which takes from the major religious groups aspects of its religious philosophy. The Baha'i believe in universal peace, the unity of science and religion and the equality of men and women. They have no clergy as such, and their leaders are elected. The Baha'i faith, unlike other major religions such as Christianity and Judaism, is considered by orthodox Moslems to be a heresy. Development of a new religion incorporating Moslem teachings is not permitted, since they believe religious evolution stopped with Mohammed and the Koran.

The liberal, enlightened views of the Baha'i stand in sharp contrast to the medieval theocracy of the present leadership in Iran. Baha'is are systematically and comprehensively persecuted in Iran with the specific intent to have them recant their religion and return to the Moslem faith. In order to accomplish this there are large scale executions, denial of the civil rights of all Baha'is and exclusion from civil service positions. Baha'is are not permitted to study in the schools; the children are abducted to be raised in Moslem families and young girls are forced into Moslem marriages. Persecution of the Baha'is is a pure example of religious persecution, since they are no threat whatsoever to the state. The Iranian regime frequently extracts false confessions of Israeli espionage to justify their barbaric acts, but there is no basis in reality for these charges. A remote connection between the Baha'i faith and Israel could be construed, since the founder of the Baha'i faith died in Haifa, and the headquarters of the church was founded there.

Baha'is are imprisoned, tortured and executed. Very few recant, and the fate of those that do is uncertain. The persecution of the Baha'i seems to be an example of the brutal omnipotence that evolves from a sense of the possession of absolute truth. The Baha'is for their part show a remarkable resistance to coercion. Dr. Banani felt that several qualities of the Baha'i people may be responsible for this. They have a secure sense of identity in their religious movement and believe that they possess an immortal soul. They do not seek death but welcome it as a relief. They believe further that one does not sacrifice one's principles in order to live.

It is difficult to imagine what can be done to help the Baha'i other than protest their treatment to the Iranian government. After certain protests were made by several world leaders, the Iranian regime, in a perverse fashion, executed several Baha'is. This may have been their immediate response to this type of international pressure but in the long run, as is the case with most situations of torture and persecution, public and official outcries may improve the situation of the Baha'i in Iran.

C.Y.M.



The present Iranian regime is persecuting people of the Baha'i Faith.

In a way somewhat similar to the faith of the Jews before the time of Christ, the tradition of Islam believed that in the "year sixty" would arrive the expected Messiah, Qà'im, to purify the return of the Qur'ān. From among the clerics, the Báb (The Gate) proclaimed Bábism in Shiraz, Persia, in May 1844. Shortly he produced a new Holy Book, the Bayán, abrogating the laws of the Qur'ān, which was militant against new ideas, and stated that he himself was the herald of a greater Manifestation. A man with overwhelming spiritual radiance and beauty, he asserted that the diverse religions of mankind would be fulfilled in one universal Faith.

(Continued on page 26)

# Comments by Edwin C. Peck, Jr., M.D.

## HEALERS AND PARENTS MUST HEAR THE ARGENTINE MOTHER TELL OF HER MURDERED CHILDREN

The woman with raven black hair and voice of sadness, energy, and compassion; on September 22, 1984, told her story which I hope we will never forget.

About fifteen years ago she, a Christian, and her Jewish husband arrived at a small Argentine town outside of Buenos Aires. There, they met the beloved and admired Rabbi Meyer, and their children became friends with the Rabbi's child. One day her son came home and told her a local boy had called the Rabbi's child a 'dirty shit Jew.' The boy went on to say he knew what dirty shit meant, but had not heard the word Jew.

The woman and her husband then conferred and decided to send their child to a private school where there were Jewish students and training in the Jewish tradition.

With quiet, grieving power beyond that of Neruda, the woman went on to say: "The military Junta came to power. Shortly thereafter, my child was kidnapped. We were desperate. We learned about the Junta's kidnappings. We demanded information from the government. In a few days, a sister-in-law and uncle were also kidnapped." (Next, her voice in a deep grieving tremor, she said:) "A soldier next brought my child's chopped-off hands to the house in a bottle." (As moving as the woman's voice was the Rabbi's eloquent translation for us in the audience.) "They kidnapped two other family members. Later, my other boy was kidnapped."

"That was long ago. Now I search. Witness our promising children. I nursed them, fussed over them, and saw to their education."

The Rabbi, with movements as eloquent as his speaking, immediately walked from the platform to the woman, embraced her, kissed her hand; then returned to the platform to cover his face and cry, as did those in the audience who could feel enough through their stunned states.

As Walter Briebl repeatedly tried to tell us over about eight years, approximately 130 analysts and other mental health professionals met similar fates in Argentina.

Argentine woman, thank you for showing us that human rights are not vague, abstract or removed.

The woman's name is Dr. Laura Bonaparte, Specialty Psychoanalysis.

## Discussion Group with Jack Healey Reported by Barton J. Blinder, M.D.

After delivering an impassioned address earlier in the day, Jack Healey, Executive Director of the United States Amnesty International, focussed on a number of organizational and strategical issues in the discussion group.

He noted that there is a fine line behind which the organization must remain essentially apolitical. He made it clear that Amnesty stood for human rights not for a political attitude. Within its structure, Amnesty functions as a democratic establishment. In recent years one out of five political dissidents and detainees whom the organization adopted has managed to be liberated from prison or torture. As an example of even handedness in exploring charges of human rights violation in the Middle East he cited the following: In Syria there have been massive executions in villages and numerous disappearances while in Israel investigations have been made into torture of West Bank residents and Israel's role in the recent massacre of Palistinians in Lebanon. Even within closed societies information can flow-- through refugees, the mail or telephone. However in certain societies, such as China or North Korea, access to information is exceedingly difficult.

When asked by a member of the discussion group, should torture be applied in a country to obtain information to prevent wholesale destruction, the quick reply was that Amnesty's position is that torture should be prohibited regardless of the implications or consequences. On missions to Northern Ireland, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt and other countries Amnesty members have a complete record of safety despite criticism from ideologic groups and government agencies. Healey made some interesting remarks regarding state policy vs. individual pathology. It is important to understand whether those perpetrating human rights are on government pay-rolls or represent individual conspiracies. Often the distinction is obscure. He noted that in Iran families are often forced to buy the very bullet that kills their child. Paramilitary organizations which may represent private organizations directly responsible to the head of state often present great extremes of violence and may reflect pathological suspiciousness and motives of revenge rather than deeper political principles.

Healey noted that often a desire for some type of narcissistic gratification on the part of the leader will create conditions for Amnesty to enter a country. This is a curious form of denial and splitting on the part of both the leader and government which seems to say, "Well, come and visit us and inspect us. Nothing wrong can possibly happen here." Despite the foregoing, often when difficulties are pointed out to such a government, changes may be made. Perhaps it produces a contrived situation in which leaders or governments may notice for the first time violations which allegedly have been unknown to them. Healey said that changes in a positive direction have been noted in Greece, Brazil and, to some extent, Northern Ireland. In some countries, such as Cuba, Amnesty can find no systematic torture, but a pattern of maltreatment and neglect.

In this country Amnesty is organized with a master computer in Denver and attempts to have a seventy-two hour response throughout the world to information regarding human rights violation. Frequently Amnesty attempts to work with unions and other receptive groups within a country. Information is disseminated internationally and is paced so that there is not a bombardment of the media which can be followed by a falling away of interest.

In a final comment Healey said that torture is more common in Western than in Eastern countries due to difficulties with the former in accounting for the whereabouts of individuals and in keeping them contained. In eastern countries, detention and relative exile are easier. Thus overt torture is less often used.

Healey's responses to the questions of the discussion group members were forthright and open, quite often fascinating in details about particular countries and interactions with individual leaders and regimes.

Jack Healey is a very committed man. His background in the Peace Corps was emphasized. His devotion to principles of human freedom and dignity, and his commitment to taking principled action throughout the world regardless of ideology, was evident.



Discussion Group with Maurice Zeitlin, Ph.D.  
Reported by Mauricio Mazon, Ph.D.

ANNOUNCEMENT  
Volunteers to Treat Torture Victims

After giving a spirited Marxist interpretation on Human Rights in Central America, Professor Maurice Zeitlin from the Department of Sociology at UCLA met with a discussion group to continue the dialogue.

Professor Zeitlin invited commentaries and questions from the audience and demonstrated sensitivity to divergent views. He centered his recital on the urgency of taking an activist approach to the issues of Human Rights in Central America and elsewhere. In general, those attending this session were partial to his sentiments -- a mood that diminished the opportunity for healthy controversy.

There was a tangential probe into the parallel between the psychoanalytic concepts of identification with the aggressor and negative identification, and their kinship with the Marxist concept of "false consciousness." The group's interests when it came to psychoanalysis, however, were rather modest and the subsequent discussion failed to achieve any degree of maturity.

In short, Professor Zeitlin was eloquent, compelling, and a fitting last minute replacement for Willie Brown.

Comments on Dr. Zeitlin's Panel Address  
Jerome Rowitch, M.D.

Professor Maurice Zeitlin departed from his announced address. Instead, he delivered an impassioned, somewhat one-sided attack on the United States government for its role in undermining democratic processes in Chile, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Iran in favor of safer, right wing, anti-communist dictatorships. He suggests that the United States government, out of fear of the U.S.S.R. supports the torturers, rather than directly doing the torture. His pleas toward the audience for political action against such U.S. actions were so blatantly directive and demanding, however, as to be offensive to some members of a basically sympathetic audience, thus distracting from "the quest for understanding."

Volunteer physicians are being solicited to provide care for victims of torture in Southern California. There are many thousands of such persons now living in this area. They suffer from injuries inflicted deliberately by governments of various nations where torture is currently a regular practice. Victims need a wide variety of medical care, so physicians of all specialties are urged to participate.

Our roster of volunteer doctors will be assigned to Amnesty International, a worldwide organization seeking to abolish torture and aid its victims. When the list is available, Amnesty International will assist us in making referrals of patients to participating physicians.

Amnesty International  
633 South Shatto Place, #201  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
(213) 388-1237

Rod Gorney, M.D.

# On the Psychogenesis of Human Wrongs and Rights in Leaders and Followers

Luis Feder, M.D.  
Reported by Leon Wallace, M.D.

Dr. Feder is always a stimulating and provocative speaker. He covered a great deal of territory, and I have noted some of the more interesting aspects of his speech. He used mythological stories unfamiliar to me, so that I was not able to integrate his presentation as well as I would like. The individual elements, however, added up to a valid contribution.

Latin American nations are predominantly dictatorships, and this continues because of the willingness of the populations to submit. A significant contributing factor appears to be the use of prolonged breast-feeding as a contraceptive mechanism among the poor. There appears to be a direct continuity from the submission to and dependence upon the 'milk-factory,' to the submission to and enslavement by dictators.

The mother's ambivalence to the child is also transmitted through the prolonged intimacy. "Preconceptive ambivalence" by the mother appears to be an important source of such ambivalences, that is, the mother's negative feelings toward her pregnancy, especially in the unmarried mother. The high incidence of illegitimacy among dictators is particularly striking. When the incidence of "emotional illegitimacy" is added, the children abandoned by their fathers, the numbers are even more striking. The slogan "Heil Hitler" could be translated: "Unwanted children of the World, unite."

On another level the defender of mother takes revenge against the rejecting father. He pursues a crusade in defense of a (maternal) cause against a (paternal) interloper.

Incest is viewed as vengeance with a mask of love. Homosexuality is, in part, a response to pre-conceptive ambivalence, a response to being unwanted. It is manifested, inevitably, by a rejection of the parental role and an expression of a humanicidal impulse (the destruction of humanity by failure to procreate).

To attack violations of human rights on all fronts appears, at times, like trying to hold back the tide with a whip. Yet, we as psychoanalysts are not totally helpless. We are able to investigate and to teach about the links between childhood neurosis and the violation of human rights.

Dr. Saul Brown was the principal discussant. He noted the repetitious psychoanalytic observation that the abuser has been abused in childhood. How do we integrate our understanding into the social system, especially when we have important unanswered questions? We find it difficult to differentiate between what is instinctual and what derives from development. Individual analysis has not provided the answers. Ambivalence is the essential characteristic of human psychopathology, and the emphasis on pre-conceptive ambivalence is questioned,

Dr. Brown observed that the conference evoked hope as well as anxiety. Filicide has decreased greatly during the past two centuries, and this provides hope that a positive trend has been established in human values.

General observations. I attended only the second day of the conference and I felt a great emotional impact from the contributions of the various speakers. This conference represents an evolutionary development in psychoanalytic thinking. The increasing willingness of psychoanalysts to confront issues reflects a greater awareness of such problems in the clinical setting. There were repeated references regarding the ubiquity of sadistic impulses, and we are able to sidestep theoretical arguments regarding the extent to which this phenomenon derives primarily from inborn or developmental factors. We can more effectively turn our attention to problems regarding neutralization and control of aggression.

Although we often feel hopeless when we confront social and political issues, we have available to us the detailed study of the psychodynamics of change in the analytic setting. This provides us, hopefully, with the potential for contributing tools for change in the broader scheme.

# Panel Discussion: The Victimization of Human Rights Reported by Joan Lachkar, Ph.D.

## INTRODUCTION

As a long time friend, observer and active participant in many events given by the Southern California Psychoanalytic Society, I am pleased to contribute a summary of Sunday's panel discussion, "The Violation of Human Rights." As a mental health professional and as a victim of the holocaust, although not a torture victim, I am taking the liberty to comment freely, to share my insights on the material as I heard and understood it. I begin with the first speaker.

I. Dr. Inge Genefke, Director of the Center for the Treatment of Torture Victims, is introduced and given special recognition for her pioneer work in establishing a center in Copenhagen which is now a model for other treatment centers now being established all over the world, including the anticipation of one being started at UCLA.

Dr. Eisenstein poses two major psychological questions to contemplate as he leads us into Dr. Genefke's presentation. Primarily he asks to what extent we can predict the adaptive/maladaptive functioning of the torture victim's personality before and after imprisonment, and how we can determine the extent to which unconscious elements contribute to the way he/she behaves under stress.

Central to this are the psychological defenses and mechanisms of isolation and fantasy as a protection of the human psyche during such tumultuous conditions. According to Dr. Eisenstein, the role fantasy plays in the emotional life of such individuals as Jacobo Timerman (former Argentinian newspaper publisher, victim of persecution, and upholder of human rights) was crucial to his survival.

Dr. Genefke begins by expressing how difficult it is to talk about the experience of torture victims because "only the victims know" what torture is about, and the rest of us can only surmise. Drawing from a wealth of knowledge and first-hand experience, she introduces us to the four major categories. First, there are the Psychological Techniques of torture. Here she carefully and sensitively describes the physical/emotional conditions and inhumane acts that these victims must endure. Beyond the belief and to the dismay of all of us, she tell us the horrors of deprivation techniques, the sensory and social techniques, where restricted physical

activities lead to such psychological effects as cognitive dysfunction, impaired memory and hallucinations. She tells how victims are subjected to such inhumane acts as urination and defecation in their clothing, dirty and isolated cells, and restricted activities. She cites an example of a grandmother who would "hear" the voices of her grandchildren and would talk back to them as if they were in the same cell, left only to feel confused and desperate because she couldn't understand what they were doing there. Dr. Genefke claims that these forms of hallucinations stop when out of prison.

The second form of torture is Compulsive Techniques, where prisoners are forced to comply to strange, harmful and vigorous rules or be punished. Dr. Genefke stresses that these techniques are harmful and endanger the personality because they reduce the victims to humiliation. She suggests that, beyond such acts as defecation and urination before the eyes of others, electrical tortures, witnessing of torture, isolation, neglect of diseases, feeding others and self with human excrement, and betrayal of others, which taxed the identity or integrity of the individual. These sexual tortures often evoked feelings of a religious nature where victims felt their dignity had been lost. In different words, I believe she is telling us about the element of shame and "saving face," and how these forces can lead to self-destruction. The loss of the sense of self can affect intrapsychic survival, and much of the person's inherent predisposition can influence the rehabilitation of the personality.

Finally, there are Communication Techniques. This, she explains, is a paradoxical situation reducing/seducing the victim into a state of total helplessness. This includes the "good man/bad man" torture method, conditioned reflexes such as electrical tortures, and misuse and abuse of psychopharmacological agents.

In her concluding remarks she suggests some procedures which are helpful in treatment:

- a) That the victim is not responsible;
- b) That the victim must choose and preserve a special thought, a thing of great moral value, such as a beautiful painting, a poem,

an image of a child, and never give that idea away (because the torturers try to take away the weakest part of the identity);

- c) To talk to a psychologist or friend to express the humiliation and "even the worst," to help deal with the suffering and the intensity of their feelings; and
- d) The strategy of the victims and how they were able to find various ways of coping with the horrendous events bestowed upon them. Some utilized isolation and avoidance mechanisms, away from danger through daydreaming and turning to ideological thoughts and religious ideals, while others turned to conversion. Here one develops admiration and respect for the warders and even become collaborators.

I wonder if at another level Dr. Genefke is referring to narcissistic and borderline features within these individuals, that is, certain "traits and states" suggesting that some are more inclined to preserve a sense of specialness while others have the tendency toward subjugation of self and even desertion of self. In the latter, I am referring to the borderline tendency to turn to others in order to maintain a sense of belonging (connection), as opposed to the narcissist who can withdraw within to a richer fantasy world. Dr. Genefke does not relate to diagnostic distinctions or pathogenesis as a link to the earlier lives of these victims, but appears to be heading in this direction with her sensitivity and insights into these victims.

Dr. Eisenstein was able to verbalize for us not only the mutual admiration and appreciation we have for Dr. Genefke and our awe of her work, but he was also able to formulate a question which was stirring up in all of us: "Where do torturers go to school?" He suggests that this is instinctive and people do not have to be taught. Given the opportunity, "The sadism is almost universal, and almost anyone can become a torturer." He offers the psychological explanation of regression; that is, the torturers force a rapid regression to a childlike dependency position. Although I basically agree with his conjecture and much of what he implies is confirmed later by the other discussants, I personally prefer the word

"selflessness" because these elements of self evoke a different qualitative experience. In other words, the self-involvement implies there is an interrelatedness with another object. Dr. Lifton and Dr. Loewenberg seem to enhance these points.

II. Dr. Lifton discusses four events in which human rights were violated. He implies there is a collective ideology (often fascistic) and a systematic application which provides justification to instill pain. He recognizes that there are elements of sadism and omnipotence, but more importantly there is an inner rationale to destroy a harmful element of people in order to assure a certain vision in the future. In effect, he states that it is a claim to a "virtuous vision" in the future that underlies the application of pain and violation. Although not much reference was made to Wilfred Bion's study of group phenomena, or to Freud's "group psychology," except in passing by Dr. Loewenberg, I could not help thinking that in Bion's "basic assumption groups" (regressed groups) there is often a collective group myth dominated by group fantasies that somewhere, either within or outside the group, there lies danger, and that danger must be destroyed. Then there is the hope for a future event of a messiah or savior coming to save the group from calamity. It may be viewed, for instance, using this paradigm, that the Jews were regarded as the external danger, and that the only vision the persecutors had was to destroy them, lest they be destroyed by their own retaliatory persecutory fantasies.

I kept this framework in mind as Dr. Lifton continued, especially as he began to describe four human rights events illustrating the "relationship between perpetrators and victims." The first, Chinese Communist Thought Reform, culminating in a form politically called "Totalitarianism," and in psychological terms, "Totalism." This is a form of violation on the part of the perpetrators to control all communication in the environment. I believe he is saying that these governments feel they have the "mystical right" to control all "truth." He states that it creates a master/slave situation,

similar to what Timerman wrote about. The most important feature is that these governments have the right to decide who has the right to exist and who does not. Central to the goals are the "confession extraction" and "re-education." Dr. Lifton explains that beyond the ordinary explanation of drive and defense model is the "life-continuity model" which provides a broader outlook beyond the pain and destruction, where there is hope for a greater human connectedness and other life-affirming images.

Secondly, he refers to the Hiroshima Bomb, the use of an atomic weapon on a populated city without warning. He looks at the "model goal and consequences." On the surface it appeared that was to end the war; however, upon further historical investigation, other influences (such as Soviet influence and economic factors) are found. Again, I believe this notion applies to group phenomena -- particularly the aspect whereby Bion described regressive behaviors and how basic essential tasks become diverted and fantasy/magical thinking dominates and reality is avoided.

The third situation is The Experience in Vietnam, and it is what Dr. Lifton calls the "atrocious-producing situation." The implication is that the average person can become involved with atrocities, claiming that the structure of the war situation and the psychological elements are such that they produce rage and helplessness in GIs; that when these GIs see their "buddies" being killed, this produces such retaliatory responses as "getting back at the enemy." These reactions, however, become so intense that their visions became distorted. Dr. Lifton cites instances where these GIs would see a child or elderly person and view them as the enemy. Using the same model, I refer again to Bion's notion of the need to "get even" or to "teach a lesson" as a distortion and infantile way of avoiding truth and reality (the collective group fantasy to attack and destroy in order to get rid of the danger). Within a larger ideology, Lifton claims there is some idea that the individual was protecting himself against Communist infiltration and thereby helping to create this "atrocious-producing situation." He believes there is an inter-relationship between individual psychology and larger ordering ideologies.

I believe this idea is similar to my position that the explanation of regression is an oversimplification, but for these GIs it is more encompassing to view them as self-involved with grandiose or idealized images rather than merely acting in a regressive way.

The fourth situation, Nazi Doctors (a continuation of the previous day's discussion), reminds us about "doubling" as a part of individual psychology. It sounded to me that he was describing the process of splitting; however, he refers to "doubling" as the creation of two separate selves which operate autonomously. His associations were of humane doctors who were transformed into Nazi doctors and then after the war went back to being regular doctors again. My associations were to my mother's personal experiences in Germany, where the Nazis who were shoving children into gas chambers were the same ones who were cordial and pleasant to her and her infant. He utilizes this "transformation process" as an explanation that underneath the negative elements there lies some "vision of integrity" of the self. I believe that Dr. Lifton is looking for the elements beyond sadism, regression, and omnipotence to offer explanations for these brutal acts. He offers us therefore hope in developing theories which look beyond the "nitty gritty" to the larger human connectedness to understand how people resist torture or why and how people impose torture and victimization.

Dr. Eisenstein poses the question of why there is more torture now. "Have we given up the governing body of the superego allowing the id forces to dominate?" He offers an interesting explanation speculating that "Hitler opened the gates to the return of the repressed" -- that after Hitler people realized that certain things could be done hitherto never imagined as an explanation for the universality of torture and persecution.

III. Dr. Loewenberg begins with a tribute to Walter Briebl. He reminds us that we are speaking of human rights, and indicates that it is the structures of power which ensure human rights. He embraces Walter's major contributions to human rights, while simultaneously bestowing special appreciation to a land where these rights are honored.

He begins with his first point, that torture can be an erotic experience. He refers to Jacobo Timerman's experience with torture in Argentina, who makes the point that in Argentina terrorism and violence were the sole creative potential and the emotional expression of a nation. He explains that it was "conversion from a dark, gloomy place to that of a universe of spontaneous innovation and institutional beauty," and how that was one of the most arousing pleasures for the torturers. I believe he is telling us that the "fantasy" of the power is what constitutes eroticism, not the actual act as a thing in itself. The second point, relating to Timerman's experience of torture, is that the "whole world is at the microcosm of the cell." Loewenberg cites many examples, including Timerman's recollection that the peep hole in his cell became an "inner world" or an "eye" looking from his cell into another.

Dr. Loewenberg makes the point about the universal nature of cruelty and sadistic tendencies in human beings. He continues with the personal discoveries made by Sigmund Freud about the erotic nature of violence. He cites case examples from "Rat Man" and "Dora" to demonstrate Freud's initial insights: "The history of human civilization shows beyond any doubt that there is an intimate connection between cruelty and the sexual instinct." Dr. Loewenberg, in agreement with Freud, suggests we cannot easily get rid of violence since it has genetic roots (anal zone) and it is immortal in the nature of human beings. He states that the psychodynamics in understanding torturers' maltreatment of their victims are similar to those of child abusers, because torturers identify with the victim and want to destroy the despised part of themselves (self-hatred). I believe that Dr. Loewenberg is referring to the dynamics of projection, introjection and projective identification.

To expand further upon these points (that is, the interrelatedness between torturer and victim, and man's natural inclinations toward sadism), Loewenberg articulately and eloquently gives a scholarly account of writers as Goethe, Dante, Shakespeare, Mann, Kafka, and Orwell. In Kafka's story of the Penal Colony, for instance, an explorer is invited to witness an execution of a prisoner on a torture machine. The officer attempts to make human

contact with the explorer and the explorer does not respond. He then puts himself on the bed of the machine and is killed. The central point is that when the officer is asking for some human contact the explorer doesn't give it to him. Loewenberg tells us about the delight and pleasure people have in watching cruelty and sadism, in watching the "submission of the spokesman of liberty" in Thomas Mann's Mario and the Magician. In George Orwell's novel, 1984, the masses are ideologically engaged and the civilized classes are used to tell about the nature of Totalitarianism. This book illustrates the nature of totalitarian governments whereby the civil classes are forbidden the "dangerous exercise of sexuality" because it is a one-to-one activity. The psychological explanations given are that leaders are like parents. The political leaders put themselves in the place of the subjects' parents, thus evoking the earliest love attachment. He refers us to group dynamics of power and how compliance is a force which implicates love. This is why love and sexuality were taboo and why it was considered a crime when two people in love had a relationship. I surmise that he is saying that the only submission that can occur is to the state as "the parents."

In his final comments, he talks about administrators of torturers and something about the backgrounds and histories of perpetrators. There were those such as Heinrich Himmler, Rudolph Hess and Eichmann who never personally committed the atrocities, but who stood behind the orders. What they all shared was life that was cold, mechanical, formal and empty. They lacked love and had strange relationships between parents and siblings. Dr. Loewenberg gives an example of Franz Stengel's father beating him up and his mother's only response and concern was that the walls were getting dirty from the blood splashing on them rather than concern for her child.

One of the most important points made was that a great psychoanalytic truth is not to deal with reality and that this can only lead to disaster, as in the case of Argentine junta, whose lives were dominated by fantasy, and life came down on them appropriately. Similarly, Hitler chose to take on the world and, in the end, found himself and Germany destroyed.

In closing, Dr. Eisenstein asks a most provocative question: Why is it that some groups don't develop torturers? "Why, for instance, during the time the Italians were allies of the Nazis, were there no torturers against political opponents?" The other point he makes is, why can some of these victims survive? In response to the latter, Dr. Eisenstein attributes the ability to preserve a rich fantasy life, i.e., the desire to get out and kill Hitler, as a defense against helplessness and passivity. In the response to the first, I was pleased to meet someone at lunch who had the same response to the question as I. Together we speculated that if the Germans were more "anal retentive" and therefore not as free with their sexuality as the Italians, who we all know to be world-renowned in acclaim for their freedom of romance and sexual expression.

these torturers to such deplorable acts. I believe that Dr. Eisenstein makes an interesting point in the recognition of the increasing instances of violence and terrorism since the rise of Hitler (relating it to superego/id/ forces), and certainly this is an area to be explored. Other psychological insights encompassing individual and group dynamics were applied to explain unconscious motivating forces resulting in such acts as terrorism and violation of human rights.

#### SUMMARY

Throughout the weekend, there were three recurring themes. First, there were those speakers who reminded us of our primary purpose, that is, to show tribute to Walter Briehl and his life struggle to win his battles over human rights. Secondly, there were those who detailed techniques of torture including prevention of torture, treatment and the subjective experience of torture victims. Thirdly, there were those who reminded us that we are psychoanalysts striving to understand human behaviors beyond the depth and scope of historical events and social issues. I believe the consensus is that beyond the instinctual drive theory (drive and defense), repression, sadism and omnipotence, there is a fantasy within the perpetrators for a much "greater vision" in the future, as well as the possibility of an intimate connection between torturer and victim. There is a yearning and expression for ultimate protection or a utopia in the future which drives

Afternoon Session—  
Reported by  
Frank M. Tan, M.D., Rose Fromm, M.D., Kato van Leeuwen, M.D.

Muriel Gardiner, M.D. "My idea of justice as a child and how it influenced my lifelong struggle for human rights."

Prefacing her remarks with the statement that she disliked "psychoanalytic jargon," Dr. Gardiner proceeded in a forthright and engaging manner to attempt to explore factors that led her, as someone born in particularly privileged and fortunate circumstances, to devote her life to an active struggle for human rights.

In the process she recounted several incidents in childhood dating back as early as age three where she had been impressed by the "unfairness" of circumstances: being spanked by her father for hurting her sister, when her sister had actually hurt her as much; hearing from her Irish housekeeper of the starvation in Ireland; peering into the steerage section while traveling first class aboard ship to Europe; meeting the suffragettes in England and hearing the issue that it was all right for men to smoke but "a sin for women." at age eleven, she organized a suffragette parade.

In Austria for medical school and psychoanalytic training, she became actively involved in underground work, using much of her personal fortune and risking her life to smuggle in passports and exit permits for Jews and others endangered by their underground activities. Much of this will be recounted in her forthcoming book, The American Heritage.

We would like to have heard more. Dr. Gardiner was a pleasure.

F.M.T.

Editor's Note. We note with great sorrow the death of Dr. Muriel Gardiner on Feb. 6, 1985 at the age of eighty-three in Princeton, New Jersey.

Ramsey Clark, "Human Rights Today."

In a multifaceted and multidimensional presentation which spanned history, literature, politics, philosophy and, in Mr. Clark's words, "The Gospel According to St. Sigmund," he presented his basic tenet, quoting from Civilization and Its Discontents: Culture has to call up every possible reinforcement in order to erect barriers against destructive instincts of man. If man is to survive, we have to erect barriers against the aggressive instincts of our species.

He disagreed with those who proclaim that human rights interfere with "foreign policy." Rather, he felt "foreign policy must be premised on human rights."

Along the way his remarks touched on torture in Chile, the World Health Organization and infant starvation, battered women, child abuse, the political situation in Haiti, United States policy in Nicaragua, quotes from George Washington and concluded with a plea for peace. His enthusiasm was infectious.

F.M.T.

Beate Klarsfeld, "Neo-Nazism on the Rise."

Beate Klarsfeld, an attractive lady full of charm, a woman of German birth and heritage, a lady with a sterling conscience, in a most fearless way and against incredible odds, constantly exposed to harassment and personal danger took it upon herself to expose to and educate the German people to the inhumanity of the Nazi crimes. Even more so this unsung heroine took it upon herself to pursue and bring to justice the war criminals still at large. In this pursuit she constantly exposed herself to incredible danger to her life. Beate Klarsfeld remained undaunted. She demonstrated in Argentina and in Chile and was arrested in both countries. She knew that Klaus Barbie, the Butcher of Lyon, was in South America and in no small measure was responsible for his final apprehension.

Beate Klarsfeld is a shining beacon who awakens us from the comforts of complacency and steers our conscience to the realization that one person can make a difference.

R.F.



Dennis Prager, "A Look at Human Rights Under Communism."

In a somewhat polemic introductory statement Mr. Prager pointed out that the existence of democracy is more puzzling and rarer than the presence of torture and oppression. His concern is with the United States as guardian of democracy and he posed the question: "What if it crumbles!" He continued to explain that if you love human rights you must loathe not only fascism but also communism. That Russia and China are the worst violators of human rights in Mr. Prager's opinion was illustrated with extensive statistics of deaths, slave labor and cultural genocide.

The tenor of Mr. Prager's remarks contrasted sharply, many felt, with the thoughtful, well informed, reasoned approach of most of the previous speakers in that he appeared to inject a note of propaganda. That authoritarianism of the right or the left uses force and violence to remain in power no one would deny. In the context of the meeting Mr. Prager's admonitions were experienced by and large as inappropriate, inflammatory and polarizing the audience into groups either with Mr. Prager or against him.

K.V.L.

Angela Delli Sante, Ph.D. "Human Rights, Militarization and Responsibilities in Central America."

The last formal speaker of the conference Dr. Angela Delli Sante, Ph.D., a visiting scholar at the Latin American Institute of the University of New Mexico, updated for us the untold suffering of the people of Central America. My report will give some of the statistics and views she shared with the audience.

There has been an increase over the past few years in all forms of torture including the increase of "disappearances," (35,000 in Guatemala alone). Disappearances did not exist in Honduras until very recently but over 100 people have been reported missing. Even refugee workers are arbitrarily arrested. She explained the painfulness of being displaced and uprooted as one's home is destroyed. One and a half million inhabitants of Guatemala, twenty-five percent of the whole country, are forced to live in so-called "model villages" under constant surveillance. Indigenous people in Guatemala are being destroyed, resulting in a loss of culture. Napalm and phosphorous bombs are used in El Salvador on the civilian population. Of those exiled many have come to the United States. A thousand per month are returned and their right to refuge is denied. Mexico has a history of being more accommodating than most countries but now that it is surrounded by military regimes, refugees are often returned. Post World War II national security of the United States equates popular movements with insurgence, insurgence with communism, and communism with internal movements. Missions to save these nations are considered subversive. Legal structures condone and do not punish such behavior. Other governments, especially the United States, train the military but not the people of these countries. Former President Jimmy Carter suspended training courses in San Salvador. However since 1980 the involvement of the United States and our CIA has increased in Central America.

K.V.L.

In sum, the most fundamental of our inborn capacities are not expressed as actual abilities in the absence of requisite learning, including speech, love, and violence. In confirmation of this understanding is the fact that, while there are no known human groups (as opposed to disordered individuals) that do not learn to speak or love, there are a number of entire societies composed of people with the same inborn capacities as the rest of us in which interpersonal violence, so rampant in our world, is all but unknown. Since we regulate learning experiences, these facts have profoundly hopeful import.

We analysts are rarely aware of the gloom we sometimes radiate. For illustration, consider the usually cheerful and hopeful brilliant colleague who at another conference told a lay audience with his characteristic enthusiasm, "The very fact that a baby breathes is evidence of his aggression." In view of the fact that aggression is defined generally (rather than psychoanalytically) as "the fighting instinct against members of the same species," this was a deeply sobering if not discouraging pronouncement. And to my mind a profoundly misleading one. A baby breathes to live. Why not attribute that to Eros? A life-sustaining assertion rather than a death-threatening aggression? Except in the circumstances of air shortage, as in a sunken submarine, breathing cannot constitute fighting against anyone, and certainly not the breathing of an unaware baby. Our conference was liberally salted with similar speculative inferences of despair. I offer the following examples, with respect both toward the speakers and toward my responsibility to be clear.

Bill Wahl is one of our most gifted and eloquent teachers. Fifteen years ago I heard him say something like: if we could apply what we now know about human development, we could prevent 85% of the emotional suffering in the world. Yet on Saturday he attributed human viciousness to the unalterable "evil" of the Id. As one visitor from South America sitting next to me commented, "The torturers are much more motivated by promises of money if they succeed in breaking people down -- and threats that they themselves will be next on the rack if they fail -- than by instinct."

Then there was Dr. Wangh's paper, which drew heavily on the long-since rejected death instinct to account for the danger of nuclear war. And Pete Loewenberg's assertion that "violence is immortal in human beings." Another participant asked me, "Why then isn't violence found in all societies?" I would add, "Why didn't any psychoanalyst or other speaker from the podium take account of the wide variation of violence in human communities or the controllable factor of learning in that variation?"

And there was our justly revered Sam Eisenstein who commented that while we have to learn to be loving it appears that no one has to learn to be a torturer, clearly implying that this knowledge and behavior is inborn. Even Sam doesn't agree with this grim formulation, for he later pointed out himself that for some unaccountable reason, during World War II the Italians seemed to have lacked the presumed innate torturing knowledge and behavior possessed by the Germans!

Kuo showed that a cat and a rat in the same cage are converted from "natural enemies" to deft collaborators by the simple expedient of arranging that both will get their preferred food pellets if both press their separated levers simultaneously. There are reports of profound reductions of intense male Rhesus monkey aggression as a consequence of having been adopted at birth by a non-aggressive langur monkey troop in which many females compete for the pleasure of providing infants an abundance of nurturance.

Survival of the fittest in evolution does not rest on ability to maim and kill the weak of one's own species, but on the ability to outfeed and outbreed them. Aggression functions mainly to disperse individuals over the available feeding and breeding range. An indispensable part of fitness is ability to bring one's young to reproductive maturity, and it would be totally implausible that we, who have survived because we became the virtuoso nurturers and cooperators of the planet, would have also acquired an ineluctable inborn aggressive violence toward our own kind possessed by no other species. That adaptation would have exceeded genetic limits more extensively than would have wings on giraffes.

Isn't it a sad irony that as soon as we confront the unquestioned brutality of much human behavior, as in the torturers, we are compelled to exculpate ourselves by invoking what Montagu calls "the new litany of the innate depravity of man"; and yet when confronted with our nurturant tenderness, as in the moving rehabilitation of torture victims by Dr. Genefke, it never occurs to us to attribute that to our "innate nobility"?

I am not arguing for innate nobility, as naive a notion as innate depravity, nor even for the invincible truth of these ideas, but just for equal time for the opinion of the vast preponderance of behavioral scientists that our behavior is not rigidly foreordained by biology but depends upon how we nurture and select among the panoply of our inborn potentials.

One of our behavioral potentials is nuclear warfare -- another is to notice that the buttons of nuclear missiles are most likely to be pressed not by warriors whose judgment has been overthrown by intra-specific animal aggression, but by coolly dispassionate officials whose "logic" is intact. We must at least consider the possibility that a final nucleastic infringement of human rights would be the consequence not of Id malevolence but of Ego maladaptation.

As we sift results and plan for next year, I hope such widely supported and profoundly hopeful views will find a place in the program.

Roderic Gorney, M.D.

Dear Dr. Eisenstein:

Thanks to the Walter Briehl Foundation for the excellent Symposium on the Violation of Human Rights: The Quest for Understanding. The variety and quality of the speakers were outstanding.

In response to your request for suggestions for future activities of the Foundation, I suggest an ongoing discussion group on psychoanalysis and human rights be set up on a Wednesday or Thursday at the meetings of the American Psychoanalytic Association. It would serve as a forum for interested analysts across the country. Psychoanalysis and human rights would also be a fitting topic for an interdisciplinary colloquium often held on the Sunday of the meetings of the American.

A contribution is enclosed to support the Foundation's important work.

Gerald B. Olch, M.D.  
Seattle, Washington

Editor's Note. Dr. Sam Eisenstein is former president of the Foundation.

Dear Larry:

Without a doubt the conference made an indelible impression of those privileged to participate. The lectures were informative and of a high calibre. The reasoned approach was in sharp contrast to the excruciating painfulness of the subject. The effect of what we heard was to instill in us a will to do more toward counteracting torture as a political instrument. Once delegated, at least in my mind, to the middle ages, modern times have brought a surge in the increased use of torture and a refinement of its methods -- all in the service of ideologies.

The heroism of many of the speakers instilled confidence and provided a model to emulate. In a society with few such models readily available it is difficult to know what to do and to make oneself available to promote justice. There is so much horror and distress in the world that there is not one single cause to devote oneself to or one way to act. Each of us has to make choices as to what we support and where to direct our energies.

Most of us go into action when something happens that either affects us personally or reverberates something of the past. Fear of being overwhelmed by horror and events play an important role in our denial of what is going on. This meeting broke through many defenses to take a close look at what we do not want to know, we do not want to see and do not wish to experience, while at the same time, accurately informing us of what is happening in the world today.

The quiet determination of Inge Kemp Genefke, the young woman doctor of Denmark who has been treating torture victims for ten years; the courage of Beate Klarsfeld, German woman in pursuit of Nazi past and present; the lucid explanations of John Healey from Amnesty International; the modest heroism of Muriel Gardiner; and the scholarly approach of Robert Jay Lifton each gave us a glimmer of hope.

It is sad to learn of our nation's role in teaching weaponry to underdeveloped countries and promoting fascist regimes instead of being the bullwark of freedom and democracy. Do we render the United States a service by denying what is going on? Should we not take a strong stand and speak with a loud voice to counteract injustice? Is it not sad and destructive that we as citizens are forced to be divided in our sense of loyalty!

Kato van Leeuwen, M.D.

The Qur'an established that the legal punishment for apostasy is death. There have been occasional persecutions since the 1860s. The present regime is most threatened by the dynamic views and education of the Baha's and are seeking to undercut its base.

Dr. Banani stated that the current Muslim clergy kidnapped a revolution that was in the making. Without oil money, the Muslims could have done little. The revolution is the outcome of pent-up rage over colonialism which has fueled a resurgence; as of now only politics of rage fueled by money is taking place.

His teachings evoked the implacable hatred of the church-state. None of his seventeen disciples survived this storm of hatred and he himself was executed in Tabriz in July 1850. No religious history records persecution more savage than that inflicted on the Babis. Civil and ecclesiastical groups sanctioned the severest tortures and the killing of 20,000 men, women and children.

Babism existed from 1844 to 1863. A few survivors known as Ezalis continued Babism. The remainder enlarged the Babis' fundamental mission under a new leader, Baha'u'llah. He was imprisoned in Tehran in the 1860s and exiled to Bagdad, Constantinople, Adrianople and Akka in the Palestine. There is a shrine dedicated to him in Akka. He appointed his eldest son, Abdu'l-Baha'. Prior to World War I this man traveled to Egypt, Europe and the United States to establish new religious communities (Encyclopedia Britannica).

The religion has a present membership of over 3,000,000 people, most in Third World countries. There are 350,000 in Iran in all levels of Iranian society, tribal, rural, middle class, urban, upper class. The religion teaches that religion is dynamic, progressive, as in evolution. It states that existing religions birth, flower, decay, weighed down by rigid traditions. When religions have encrusted, it is time for renewal. Since societies evolve, religion must respond to current living needs. Its purposes are to bring moral love, ethical education and living, have the better side prevail over the democratic side, promote a oneness of the human family, achieve an acknowledgment and fulfillment of worldwide interdependency, renunciate war and prejudice, form an intellectual reproach to institutionalized religion, do this without clergyism, and move along in advance of science. Present members of the Baha'i Faith are the fifth generation since it began 140 years ago, living with these principles, a subculture whose work ethics are greater than most others, with a conscious high standards. They are forthright about this. Though persecuted, they are not masochistic.

The percentage of people who break down is small. Resistance is steadfast and heroic. In one instance 300 persons were herded into a stable, the straw set afire. When smoke threatened death, the persons were dragged to a mosque. Very few recanted. In prison, wire whips abrade the skin, persons are dehydrated, caused to see water polluted with feces, and when responding to the offer of thirst-quenching, the vessels are kicked away. Three children are known to have been executed while parents watched. The parents did not recant.

The capacity to resist is attributed to an excellent sense of self which is not relinquished as is evident from "Last message" thoughts. Their belief is that one doesn't die with the body but one is removed from earth to immortality.

Muslim society has no choices of that kind. Rules of the British system. The present can't be repeated. Ghandi worked within the react Ghandi-like. However, the Ghandi model a system which has no conscience. The Baha'i removal from home to break identities. It is cantation, destruction of crops and capital, schools, terrorism, efforts to force removal of the leaders, closing of the death camps as yet. There is calculated re-Outside energy, nevertheless, does seem to have some ameliorating effect. There are no moyal of the leaders, closing of the schools, terrorism, efforts to force removal from home to break identities. It is a system which has no conscience. The Baha'i react Ghandi-like. However, the Ghandi model can't be repeated. Ghandi worked within the rules of the British system. The present Muslim society has no choices of that kind.

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