

"Spy" + "After the Spy" = Big Lie

Part II

When I was born 74 years ago I became the first of my family ever to be born into freedom. I have lived more than a third of our history since the Constitution was adopted. I stem from one of the oldest peoples. Jews are the first monotheists and they risked all to protect monotheism. Yet from then until ours became a free and independent nation there was - for some 2,000 years - no place where my ancestors were free. My parents, who fled the pogroms in the Ukraine and Bessarabia, were never able to talk about their early lives. I know there were paternal siblings who did not survive the pogroms, but how many or the circumstances of their deaths were never mentioned in front of me. I likewise have not the slightest idea how many relatives were slaughtered by the Nazis when they overran that part of southeast Europe. I doubt that many survived. In some ways the Nazis were no worse than the Spanish Catholics who, with the support of the pope during the Inquisition, helped Jews toward heaven or hell by burning them alive for the crime of simply living.

Throughout these 2,000 years of varying degrees of abuse and no freedom as that word is understood today, others were always telling the Jews what to believe, what to do, what was good for them - killing them with their kindnesses. Like the Jews who converted during the Inquisition and were burned alive anyway.

In all instances those who were about to slaughter Jews had to have something to seem to justify such frightful evil. Pretending that all Jews are the same in belief, religion, interests - in every way - and then attributing to all the sins (usually imagined) of one was and remains a common means by which those who hate Jews find justification for the hatred they not uncommonly deny they have. Thus the claimed basis for the pogroms, as religious as that of the Inquisition, was a complete fabrication by the forces of the Russian Tsar who wanted to eliminate Jews anyway. This fabrication, one of history's most disgusting literary forgeries, is known as the Protocols of the Elders

of Zion. Fired up by the forged Protocols, the Tsar's minions believed they were doing their God's work in slaughtering Jews.

Within my lifetime Henry Ford advertised his automobiles with anti-Semitism. He publicized this outrageous fabrication on coast-to-coast radio and by distributing printed copies. Henry Ford and his spokesman, W. J. Cameron, were far from alone. Others, like the Catholic priest, Charles Coughlin, made early and extensive use of radio for preaching religious hatred.

This is propaganda. "The aim of propaganda," as Ronald Reagan's biographer, Garry Wills, says succinctly, "is to mobilize the proper emotions as rapidly as possible - often as crudely as possible." Wills then quotes a number of well-known American writers who engaged in propaganda during World War II as saying that the propagandist's job is to create hatred.

No matter how he tries to disguise it, no matter how much love he professes and all the supposedly friendly advice he pretends to offer Jews, Roy Meachum is an anti-Semitic propagandist and the thrust of his writing is to create hatred.

For several years he has been spewing out race hatred to the captive audience he gets by being published in the only local newspapers.

He ignores, and the papers permit him to ignore, the many errors that are basic to his diatribes. He has yet to retract or express any regret over his defense of the most coldblooded of murderous terrorists as true patriots. How much more patriotic can one be than to order the deliberately cruel murder of an aged, crippled and ill American or to follow those orders? Meachum extolled them as the counterparts of our founding fathers and he remains unapologetic.

Although he misses no opportunity to tell all us yokels how sophisticated, experienced and omniscient he is, he is so utterly insensitive as to be unaware of the transparency of his self-exposures in his sophomoric puffing up of his out-of-control ego.

This unique genius Meachum is also a mind-reader.

In the first of a pair of thinly-disguised anti-Semitic columns, he begins with his reading of the mind of the confessed spy, Jonathan Pollard, embellishes this with the most prejudicial

formulations of misrepresented events of the past, and then he links Pollard to what has no relationship to him or his crimes - report of the Tower board - and he misrepresents what that board concluded. He lied. He wound up with "advice" for the betterment of Jews and of Israel, both the same to him.

What hubris and what a display of ignorance and prejudice!

It is never possible to catch up with all the lies, exaggerations, distortions and misrepresentations without which the kind of hatred Meachum publishes would not be possible. Nor is it possible, in small space, to show the utter irrelevancy of so much in these columns which is dredged up and misrepresented, despite the lack of relevance, to incite hatred. One example is the Israeli attack on a U.S. spy ship. How careless of Meachum, if carelessness only it was, that in all those almost four dozen columnar inches he never once identified the Liberty as a spy ship in the theater of war while the war was at its peak of intensity! Another is the utter insanity that surely normal editing should have caught, Meachum's pronouncement that only orthodox Jews can "secure synagogue membership" in Israel. Another is the line that "every Jew has a primary duty to provide protection to the Jerusalem government." Still another: "many Zionists hold there are no valid Jews who live by choice outside Israel, (t)hus that nation is able to exact support from non-Israeli Jews as compensation for their failure to move to Israel." This is not factual, not reasonable - not even rational. It is Meachum's variant of traditional anti-Semitism, like the Protocols. It is also to those with any maturity and understanding a remarkable self-characterization and a self-denunciation.

The first of his pair of columns is, supposedly, on the spy Pollard, but it is actually a vehicle for Meachum's venom and prejudice. He winds up with - and I do not mince words - a big lie. I use this word because it simply is not possible that Meachum did not know he was lying when he wrote it:

"The commission found that the present scandal besetting this nation had been set in motion by Israel's success in drawing the White House into selling arms to Iran to further Israel's objectives."

Not a word of this apology for the Reagan wimpiness/mischief is true. This scandal was not "set in motion" by Israel and it did not talk the White House into selling arms to the Iranians and there is no evidence that Israel had any purpose other than to help an ally. If Meachum's fabrications were actually true, what kind of children do we have running our government if one of the smallest nations in the world could talk so many, from the President down, into such stupidity and illegality? But it is not true. It is Meachum's lie to further his anti-Semitism. Even if true, Pollard and the Liberty are immaterial - except for the evil.

Meachum makes it up as he goes, with utter contempt for fact, truth, history or the recollections of readers who lived through the tragedies he rewrites. Thus, for all the world as though the minute he makes it up it just has to be true and accepted as true (as, alas! by his editors it is) he prates about the misrepresented tragedy of that attack on our spy ship the Liberty: "The killing and the maiming of Americans happened in the middle of the Six Days War. The story was lost in this country's general exultation over 'underdog' Israel's smashing triumph over the Arab 'hordes.'"

If Meachum were capable of any shame, this lie for so evil a purpose would shame him. All the media gave much and lasting attention to that tragedy. This illustrates the Meachum method of column writing: make it up as you go, the hell with fact, truth and the reader, just so it makes the kind of propaganda you want.

Maybe Meachum believes all he writes as soon as it is on paper but I do not believe he really would, as he says he would, favor the pardoning of Pollard once "it has been determined that the material he stole has become outdated." This is but another propagandist's trick and it is not consistent with the magnitude of the crime. Pollard ran the risk all spies know they run. Separate from the nature of the crime is the usual exaggeration of damage by officials who always have axes to grind. However, Meachum is woefully ignorant of the nature of the dangers from some espionage if he thinks that all such

material can be "outdated."

The reality is that despite his long and boasted-of experiences Meachum is ignorant of much about which he writes with the smug pretense of omniscience. Without this self-concept, he would be ashamed to offer the advice that prefaces his pretended compassion for Pollard. Meachum hopes, again traditional anti-Semitism, treating all Jews as one and a monolith and presuming what is not true, "that Jewish Americans will seize the opportunity to separate themselves and their religion from the domestic politics which govern Israel. They can perform no greater service for the Jewish state." (Naturally, he alone knows what is good for the Jewish state.)

Jewish Americans are as diverse as other Americans. Jewish Americans have no need to separate their religion from Israeli politics because the connection never existed except in the murk of the minds of anti-Semites.

Still looking down on us bumpkins from his private Olympus, Meachum proclaims that "(b)y enforcing dependency upon themselves, American Jews deny Israel the right to grow up."

It is Meachum who has to grow up. Who does he think established the State of Israel, fighting the entire Arab world to do it? Was it babies who needed to grow up when this ancient and experienced people, without any government, treasury, unified leadership or most of the equipment of modern warfare and so enormously outnumbered, did defeat those "hordes" so loved by Meachum, all the attacking Arab armies?

Does Israel have to "grow up" to be able to stage an Entebbe hostage rescue never ever equaled by any other state?

What does Meachum know of Israel's art, science, engineering, agriculture, diplomacy or anything else?

It is his lust for hate propaganda that impels Meachum to such obvious stupidity and sanctimony.

If he were not so insensitive to his own shortcomings and so overwhelmed by his concept of self, Meachum would not make a fool of himself by uttering all the prejudicial nonsense that serves his immediate propaganda objective. Nowhere else could he survive it.

These columns exceed decency; stretch reasonable concepts

of fair comment to if not past the breaking point; are intended to and do foster evil and prejudice in our midst; and they reflect poorly on those responsible for publishing such blatant lies and such incitations to racial hatred and prejudice. This is shameful and we are all disgraced by it.

Hardley