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disproportionate disservice to the cause of peace in the Middle East and elsewhere by concocting images of people where humanity is divided into two neat camps: the good and the evil. And that latter camp, in the case of the Middle East—the Palestinians, other Arabs and Muslims in general, is expendable in the cause of the Second Coming. The ground is being prepared to impose so-called pre-ordained solutions on the Middle East conflict where racist imagery and warped religious fervor are being mobilized to serve political causes. The fact that *The Haj* is number two on the *New York Times*' best-seller list and is sure to climb to number one soon, gives one cause to wonder what it is that people find so gripping in such works. Do we dare contemplate the answer?

A Natural Alliance? _____

The Transfer Agreement, Edwin Black. New York: Macmillan, 1984, xvi + 382 pages. Photos. Notes to p. 421. Index to p. 430. \$19.95.

Reviewed by **Lenni Brenner**

Edwin Black has written an important book on the Ha'avara or Transfer, the Nazi-Zionist trade pact of the 1930s. As can be seen in his notes, scholars have previously dealt with the curious arrangement; his contribution lies in giving vastly more of the incriminating details (even to the point of boring us) of the negotiations that went into setting it up. Nevertheless, Black must be severely criticized for his deliberate omission of all sources that contradict his judgements on the wisdom and morality of the World Zionist Organization's traffic with the arch-enemies of the Jews. His book will give the lay reader

a false picture of the Zionist role during the 1930s unless it is read in tandem with the excluded literature.

In a nutshell, although Hitler always harbored thoughts of murdering the Jews, the new and still economically and militarily weak regime had to content itself with intimidating the Jews. The goal at that time was to get them to leave, but they and other emigrants had to pay huge flight taxes, and their cash went into blocked accounts wherein they lost yet more money. As early as March 1933, only two months after the *Machtergreifung*, Sam Cohen, a Zionist banker and orange grove developer, acting as a free-lance, worked out a deal with Berlin whereby immigrants to Palestine could meet the monetary hurdles by shipping out their wealth in the form of export goods. The WZO, most notably Chaim Arlosoroff, its Laborite Political Secretary, speedily finessed Cohen out of the operation, and the Nazis announced the accord to a startled world, during the August Zionist Congress. The Nazis gained in that they encouraged Jews to leave, and, more crucially, they now had the help of the WZO leadership in punching a hole in the world-wide Jewish economic anti-Nazi boycott. The Transfer met furious opposition even within the movement—Arlosoroff was assassinated by some Revisionists for his intrigue—and the pact was widely denounced throughout the broad Jewish world.

Black tells us that three questions "haunted" those who read his manuscript: (1) Could the boycott really have overturned the Hitler regime? (2) By undermining the boycott, are the Zionists responsible for the Hitler regime's survival, and, by extension, are they responsible for the Holocaust? (3) Was the continuing economic relationship with Germany an indispensable factor in the creation of the state of Israel?

He gives his own answers: the boycott had an "excellent chance" of bringing down the regime in the first few months; No, the Zionists were not responsible for the subsequent Holocaust, the question being an unreal "what if." And yes, the Transfer was crucial in developing the economic base for the subsequent Zionist state. But nowhere in the book does he come to grips with the real question: knowing what he knows, is he for or against the pact with the devil?

The hints are there. Vanessa Redgrave is duely condemned; his belief in Israel remains "unshaken" (p. xiii). And, to be sure, "The Zionists were the coldest realists—perhaps the only realists—of the period" (p. 381). However, in a March 2, 1983 interview, while the book was still in manuscript, Black revealed his true feelings: he is for the Transfer. It was his editor who counseled against explicitly answering the explosive question.

This crucial evasion aside, Black does not try to hide the hideous implications of the treasonous agreement. To the contrary, he candidly writes that:

It was one thing for the Zionists to subvert the anti-Nazi boycott. . . . But soon Zionist leaders understood that the success of the future Jewish Palestinian economy would be inextricably bound up with the survival of the Nazi economy. . . . If the Hitler economy fell, both sides would be ruined (p. 253).

But the author is so deeply committed to today's Israel that he has to deceive himself, and he invents, after the fact, excuses for the concord: "As many Jews as possible had to be brought over from Germany as fast as possible—not to save their culture, not to save their wealth, but to save their lives" (p. 374). "The only way to continue the transfer and rescue was to bring over large groups of so-called

capitalist emigrants" (p. 376). In an article in the May 1984 B'nai B'rith magazine *Jewish Monthly*, he rescues the Transfer from its blatant class nature by rushing to tell us that their wealth "opened the gates to hundreds of thousands of working class Polish and Eastern European immigrants" (*JM*, p. 22).

Black hired no less than 50 people to assist him on his book, and he boasts of his thorough research. His deliberate exclusion of material from other eminent scholars, therefore, becomes even more reprehensible. In the 1983 interview, he admitted his familiarity with Abraham Margalio's article, "The Problem of the Rescue of German Jewry During the Years 1933-1939: The Reasons for the Delay in Their Emigration from the Third Reich," found in *Rescue Attempts during the Holocaust*, a well known volume put out by Israel's own Yad Vashem Holocaust Institute, yet there is no reference to it in the 38 pages of notes. The reason for this glaring omission becomes apparent when we read Margalio's description of a 1935 speech by Chaim Weizmann:

. . . He declared that the Zionist movement would have to choose between the immediate rescue of Jews and the establishment of a national project which would ensure lasting redemption for the Jewish people. Under the circumstances, the movement, according to Weizmann, must choose the latter course. (Margalio, pp. 255-6).

Margalio also quotes Labor Zionist leader Berl Katznelson's 1933 statement that "we know that we are not able to transfer all of German Jewry and will have to choose on the basis of the cruel criterion of Zionism" (Margalio, p. 255). The then dominant Laborites were building a new Jewish state for The New Jew of the Future, and they did not want "the mob,"

as they called the Jewish masses, in their utopia in the desert. Zionism depended upon the charity of the Jewish capitalists, and these had no money to give in the depths of the Depression. Now, suddenly, German Jewry's disaster opened up a new source of revenue: 60 percent of all capital invested in Palestine between 1933 and 1939 came via the Transfer. However, they wanted the dowry, not the bride. It was London who determined the Jewish immigrant quota, but it was the WZO which then decided which Jews would get the immigrant certificates. Only 22 percent of the immigrants they choose from 1933 to 1939 came from Germany. Margaliot tells us that two-thirds of those German Jews who applied for certificates in the years 1933-35 were rejected by the Zionist movement (Margaliot, p. 253). They either weren't Zionists or, if Zionist, were too old, or didn't speak Hebrew, or didn't have a trade needed in Palestine, or weren't rich enough. And while they were turning down German Jews, no less than 3,743 Zionists from the US were given certificates in 1933-35. During those three years, 6,307 Zionists came to Palestine from the western hemisphere, Africa, Turkey and Britain. Then, no one pretended rescue played any part in immigrant selection.

In his *Jewish Monthly* piece, Black counterposes "fight or flight; the Zionists chose flight" (p. 22). Truth to tell, neither resistance nor rescue was ever their priority, even at the height of the subsequent Holocaust. Building Zionism was always their be-all and end-all. On February 18, 1943, when thousands of Jews were being murdered every day, Yitzhak Gruenbaum, the head of the WZO's Rescue Committee in Palestine addressed the Zionist Executive. After the war he included his bizarre speech in his book, *Bi-mei Hurban ve Sho'ah* (In the

Days of Holocaust and Destruction):

And this time in Eretz Yisrael, there are comments: "Don't put Eretz Yisrael in priority in this difficult time, in the time of destruction of European Jewry." I do not accept such a saying. And when some asked me: "Can't you give money from the Keren Hayesod to save Jews in the Diaspora?," I said: no! And again I say no! I know that people wonder, why I had to say it. Friends tell me, that even if these things are right, there is no need to reveal them in public, in time of sorrow and concern. I disagree. I think we have to stand before this wave that is putting Zionist activity into the second row. Have I said this to glorify my own tenets? And because of this, people called me an anti-Semite, and concluded that I am guilty, because we do not give priority to rescue actions. . . . Zionism is above all—it is necessary to sound this whenever a Holocaust diverts us from our war of liberation in Zionism (Gruenbaum pp. 62-70 *passim*).

There is no doubt that our times have been afflicted with ideologues who are prepared to justify anything if it led, or might lead, to the creation of their peculiar version of the brave new world. Thus Black is far from unique. But there is a concept which all reasonable scholars utilize: normative history. That Hitler was evil is a settled point, and we do not entertain discussions as to whether collaboration with him was justified. In all cases it was either wicked or foolish or both. Therefore, any argument in 1984, claiming that collaboration with Hitler—by Jews no less—was realism, must be dismissed with utter contempt, especially so when such claims are made under a fraudulent rubric of rescue.

This being so, it is only yet further testimony as to the dead-end fanatic character of today's Zionism that the

Jewish Monthly's reviewer, Arnost Lustig, should hail Black's book as "written from a desire for a clear conscience" (p. 24).

A New Look at Old Friends —

Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations With a Militant Israel, Stephen Green. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1984. 258 pages. Appendix to p. 363. Index to p. 370. \$14.95.

Reviewed by **David Lawrence**

As is to be expected, any book that sheds new light on the "special relationship" between the United States and Israel is bound to attract a lot of attention and is just as surely bound to undergo rigorous scrutiny. This is especially true for any book that portrays Israel in an unfavorable light. Stephen Green's *Taking Sides* is such a book, and it has attracted its share of attention from critics and admirers alike.

Taking Sides is based on extensive research of US government archives and relies heavily on previously classified documents released under the Freedom of Information Act. The theme of the book is that US-Israeli relations since the creation of the state of Israel have become increasingly one-sided—in favor of the latter. This situation has hurt US interests in the Middle East, has damaged US relations with the Arab world, has created unending strife in the region, has brought the world to the brink of disaster, and has not created the security for the Jewish people that the founders of Zion had hoped for.

Green outlines Israeli intransigence and presidential willingness, from Truman

to Johnson (although Eisenhower does prove to be the exception), to play up to Israel for political gains at home. The author also details numerous events between 1948 and 1967 which illustrate this theme and raise serious questions about the utility of this thirty-five year "special relationship."

Most prominent of these events are:

1. The assassination of UN Mediator Count Bernadotte by the Stern Gang and the complicity of the Israeli government in aiding Stern Gang members to flee Israel to Czechoslovakia immediately after the murder.

2. The intentional sabotage of Prime Minister Moshe Sharett's secret peace negotiations in 1953-54 with Gamal Abdel Nasser by ex-Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, Minister of Defense Pinchas Lavon, IDF Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan and Major Ariel Sharon. The author asserts that a series of border raids, planned and initiated by these men, were meant to undermine the secret negotiations by creating distrust on the part of Nasser. Green also alleges that the 1954 fire-bombings of Egyptian, British, and American targets in Cairo (the Lavon Affair) were purposely exposed by Israeli intelligence in order to compromise and halt the negotiations between Nasser and Sharett.

3. A secret US Air Force reconnaissance mission carried out by highly sophisticated RF4C Phantom jets during the initial hours of the 1967 Six Day War. Green maintains that a squadron of US Air Force RF4C Phantoms from Ramstein, Germany flew missions out of a secret airfield in the Negev Desert in order to gather targeting information about Arab positions. According to Green, the mission was designed to gather data on the extent of damage done to the Arab armed forces and this information enabled