

Mr. Siegel argues that in the event a separate Palestinian state is established, the Palestinians "will be at the gates of Jerusalem and within arm's length of Tel Aviv."

Definitely Mr. Siegel ought to be reminded that the Palestinian people are from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, among other places in Palestine. They were born there. They have their traditions there. They are the native sons and daughters. And they have not only as much right, but a devil lot more right to be there than Russians, New Yorkers, and Rumanians who simply happen to be of the Jewish faith.

If Israel's right-or-wrong supporters continue to support Israel's denial of Palestinian national rights, Israel's bombing, napalming, and maiming of Palestinian children in refugee camps in Lebanon, Israel's military occupation and degradation of one and a half million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, and Israel's refusal to recognize the Palestinians' minimal rights for a separate state, then it becomes outrageous when these same individuals expect the Palestinians to stand there with hat in hand. You cannot expect the victim to give guarantees to the victimizer, the slave to love the slavemaster, the occupied to protect the occupier, and the wound to forgive the dagger.

The assurances, the reaching out, and the plea for peace should come from those who have terrorized and dehumanized a small people for the last twenty-seven years, and not from the Palestinians. They have been robbed of everything. They have nothing to offer.

The Hartford Appeal

To the Editors: My immediate reaction to the theological affirmations repudiating some of the "pervasive themes" and dubious assumptions which have become influential, if not dominant, in some sectors of the Christian Church today was highly favorable. I could at once identify some of my own concerns with many of those which were expressed. In a less articulate and comprehensive manner, I have voiced the same mis-

givings and objections to many of the trends in contemporary theology, although it would be my impression that the "aberrations" deplored by the eighteen signatories to the Hartford Appeal are less prevalent in 1975 than they were ten or even five years ago.

What amazes me is the reaction to the Appeal as published in the May issue of *Worldview* ("The Hartford Appeal: A Symposium—Part I"). The attempted rebuttals, at many points, strike me as distortions and a misreading of the intention and content of the Appeal. Incensed Harvey Cox resorts to abusive satire and labels the whole venture a "heresy hunt." Puzzled Gregory Baum professes to be unaware of any thought patterns or movements within theological circles which could possibly be indicted, or even implicated, in relation to the theses proscribed.

If the thirteen themes formulated at Hartford were allowed to stand alone without the explanatory paragraphs which are attached, that is, if they were severed from the total context of the Appeal, it would be quite understandable that they could elicit some irate retorts and be rightfully criticized as confusing and misleading. Viewed as an integrated whole, however, the declaration in its entirety should be commended for its careful wording and its balanced treatment of the issues to which it is addressed. Only a jaundiced eye, it seems to me, can presume to detect in its statements a relapse into anachronistic concepts or a denial of social responsibility. As I read it, what is being asserted with appropriate emphasis is that unless the capitulation to secularity is renounced, the avowed goals of the humanistic-minded liberators will be undercut rather than undergirded. The powerful resources at the disposal of committed Christians for helping to improve the human situation and to avert total catastrophe are diminished rather than amplified by minimizing or negating the dimension of the transcendent.

As one specific example, the secularizing impulse in the theologies of the sixties, especially in seeking to make Christianity palatable—or at least less repulsive—to Marxist humanists, neglected or abandoned al-

together the New Testament belief in resurrection and the life everlasting. Not only did "Christian" spokesmen of this type concur with Marxists that "otherworldly" faith was the "opiate of the people," they sometimes joined their "partners in dialogue" in limiting human hope exclusively to earthly experience within history or a rationally conceivable future. Overlooked was the contention of many faith-filled Christians that their belief in an ultimate destiny under God beyond death served as an impetus to cope with "worldly" problems and seek social justice. Therefore, they were not "escapists" who merely folded their hands in pious resignation, passively enduring the evils around them while awaiting their "heavenly deliverance." Thus, Theme 13—"the question of hope beyond death is irrelevant or at best marginal to the Christian understanding of fulfillment"—is indeed descriptive of a judgment often pronounced by the self-assured Christian secularists who looked rather condescendingly upon the "unilluminated obscurantists" who were still clinging to "scientifically discredited" notions of a resurrected life which extended into another realm of existence.

Much more could be said from the vantage point of one who served as a campus pastor in embattled Berkeley during the height of the radical movements. The University of California was assuredly a center for both valid and spurious forms of "liberation." What I am compelled to add is that my own observations and experiences, in particular, during the decade of the sixties (including constant association with Protestant colleagues in campus ministry and teaching a class at two different seminaries in the Bay Area) would tend to substantiate, rather than contradict, the applicability of the strictures so aptly formulated by the individuals associated with the Hartford Appeal.

I am somewhat less assured that the Appeal is as pertinent now as it was then.

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