Chapter 8

EARLY WARNING, INTERVENTION, AND PREVENTION OF GENOCIDE

by Israel W. Charny

The Foreseeability of Genocide

After a genocide has occurred, there are many people all around the world who care very much about the fates of the victims, the unbearable pain of the survivors and their extended families, and the survival of their national, ethnic, or religious group. However, human society has thus far failed, one can say almost completely, to take strong and effective stands against ongoing events of genocide or genocide which threatens to occur in the foreseeable future.

It can be argued that some or perhaps even much of the Holocaust could have been prevented had the world taken notice of the information that was coming in about the incredible murders of the Jews. To this day, for example, there are many who are critical of both the United States and British governments at the time for failing to commit any military resources to bombing the supply lines to Auschwitz, if not sections of Auschwitz itself—as Jews had requested of the Allied governments at the time. Similarly, there are many criticisms of the International Red Cross, which maintained silence about its knowledge of Hitler’s death camps.¹ There are even criticisms of Zionist organizations, in the United States and in the Jewish community of then-Palestine, for failing to take sufficient actions against Hitler in the 1930s, the years when the discriminatory Nuremberg laws were being passed and persecutions were occurring daily, even before the actual full-blown death machinery was launched. In each of these cases, the parties who could have helped had their own
No Cooperation with Mass Killers

In each case, there was a "reasonable" argument why Hitler could not be opposed more openly because of what it would have "cost" to do so: America and England needed their full resources for the war effort and did not want to "waste" one soldier or one bomb on missions that weren't critical to the war effort; the International Red Cross was concerned not to be barred by Hitler from rendering its important services to other people in need in the various countries of Europe that Hitler occupied; and the Zionists were concerned before the outbreak of the war about getting out as many Zionist Jews as they could from Germany and Europe, and wanted the cooperation of the Nazi officials for this purpose.

To fight genocide, one has to have a conviction that, at no point in history and despite any self-interest, one must never cooperate with any form of mass killing, genocidal massacre, or genocide.

It is interesting that in personal situations of murder, most people would not hesitate to choose the principle that murder must be opposed even if it costs them something. Would you agree to be paid off to remain silent about the murder of your neighbor? Would you agree to "forget" a murder that you saw in your community in order to protect yourself from the retaliations of the murderer against yourself and your family?

Somehow when the patterns of murder are larger, involving thousands and millions of people, it is easier to persuade people to watch out for their own interests and to avoid the risks of intervention.

The Record of Governments Is Very Poor

The record of governments on genocide is often, if not virtually always, very poor. At the level of international government, following the sincere hopes of much of humankind in creating the UN and in passage of the United Nations Convention on Genocide in the wake of World War II, the real record, as described by Professor Leo Kuper of UCLA in The Prevention of Genocide, is a sorry one of indifference, cynicism, impotence, and most outrageous manipulations by member nations. Thus, former Amnesty America President David Hawk has done intrepid research on the genocide in Cambodia and created a Cambodia Documentation Commission which undertook to prepare a legal brief to bring charges against the government of Cambodia before the World Court in fulfillment of the procedures of the UN Genocide Convention. After several years of arduous work in preparing the necessary legal materials, the Commission found that it could enlist no country in the world which was a member state of the United Nations to formally bring the charges.

There are two reasons why even governments of democratic societies do so poorly. The first is that, insofar as a government itself is a perpetrator of genocide, its reflex reaction is to defend itself from scrutiny and criticism, and therefore correction becomes unlikely. In the case of totalitarian governments, the intention of the government from the outset will be to deceive everyone including its own people and suppress protest and opposition to its genocidal policy.

The second major obstacle is that the overwhelming consideration of governments is, always, one of pragmatic self-interest and realism, which, of course, is what we mean by Realpolitik. This situation is not unlike that of major tobacco companies that go on promoting their products in the face of the overwhelming scientific evidence that smoking brings death to millions of people.

Governments have been known to rationalize their policies of "playing ball" with other genocidal nations on the basis of every possible consideration: business needs, protection of one's own nationals, even the idea that maintaining a presence in the genocidal country will make it more possible to moderate the genocidal policy sometime in the future! Almost invariably, the truth is that underlying these policies of collaboration with a genocidal nation we will find a) a value system that places cynical realism and ambition above any consideration of genuine ethical or spiritual commitments to other peoples' lives, and b) indifference, if not contempt, for the minority that is being victimized.

Ugly Behaviors in the Bastions of Democracy

In this essay, I use examples particularly from the two countries in which I am privileged to be at home and about which I care deeply. Both are proudly committed to the deepest democratic values: one is the greatest power on earth today, the United States; the other is a struggling tiny nation built on the ashes of the most severe instance of genocide in human history, Israel. The ugly behaviors and values that surface even in these outstanding bastions of democracy teach us that the evolutionary challenge for people and nations to commit themselves to genuine protection of all human life is a huge task that basically is still far beyond our Earth-civilization.
The U.S. and Pol Pot

Government complicity in mass murders is far from ancient history. In our times, we have the continuing example of the United States maintaining diplomatic recognition of Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge party as the legitimate ruling authority of the nation of Cambodia. This situation would be akin to the United States continuing to recognize Hitler and his Nazi party, had he lived following World War II. Why did America continue to recognize Pol Pot? America could not bear the alternative of recognizing the Communist regime installed in Cambodia by the government of Vietnam, which is the hated Communist government that America had been unable to defeat in the Vietnam war. The parallel to this situation in the World War II scenario would have been that America had chosen to continue recognizing Hitler in order to avoid doing any kind of business with the Soviet-installed Communist rulers of East Germany. Pol Pot and his Khmer Rouge party had killed between 1 and 3 million Cambodian people out of a population of 7 million—cruelly, bizarrely, as was described so vividly in the movie "The Killing Fields." Was there any justification whatsoever for continuing to recognize him, even if it did "cost us something?" As this article was being written, there were more than a few indications that Pol Pot may yet reconquer Cambodia and create a new ruling government. If he does so, it will be due in no small part to American recognition and actual material support given him these many years despite his despicable crimes.

The U.S., Israel, and China

The nations of the world today face the same question with regard to the People's Republic of China. In July 1989, the government of China massacred an estimated five thousand students in Tiananmen Square in Peking. Within a week, the government of China was denying that a massacre had taken place. China has given the world a living example of how governments deny their actions and then rewrite history. In the year that followed, it is reported that ten thousand people have been jailed for their participation or sympathy with the students' movement that had been demanding greater freedom. Yet there are nations today that are cultivating relations with China, and the United States is one of these. Even though Congress insisted that the U.S. suspend relations with China, President Bush used his executive authority to renew cordial relations with them. Israel is another country that has cultivated contact with China in its eagerness to gain recognition from this mammoth power and to cultivate with it economic relationships that would strengthen her security.

Israel, the U.S., and the Armenian Genocide

Perhaps the most troubling example today of the inherent tendency of government as a bureaucratic organizational process to cultivate indifference to victims is found in certain actions of the Israeli government. Many of us would have expected this government to be the outstanding exception in our era because of the Jewish people's profound awareness of the horrors of massacre, the dangers of corrupt government, and its own outrage at the indifference of nations when Jewish victims were being led to their deaths in the Holocaust.

Yet Israel's Foreign Ministry ordered its diplomatic staff in the United States to lobby in 1989 against passage of legislation in the U.S. Senate introducing a commemorative day for the Armenian genocide. The government of Turkey bitterly opposes such legislation and any public confirmation of the Ottoman Turkish genocide of the Armenians in 1915-1922, and even threatens to withdraw from NATO if such legislation is passed. Both the Reagan administration and the Bush administration have bowed completely to the Turks; in fact Bush did so after having given a pledge to the Armenian community during his campaign to support such legislation. Israel's explanation is that it must protect its interests with its nearby Moslem neighbor, Turkey, that Israel is a small nation, and Jews have learned from history that they must take care of themselves.

Another explanation that has been reported in the press, which to the credit of Israeli society roundly criticized the government position, is that "we don't want other nations like the Armenians and the Cambodians comparing their genocides to the Holocaust," meaning that nobody else's genocidal tragedy should be allowed to be compared with the unique tragedy of the Holocaust of the Jewish people—an argument which I have heard myself from a senior Foreign Ministry official when we were arguing back in 1982 over the ministry's demands that we remove any papers on the Armenian genocide from the agenda of the International Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide which we were convening in Tel Aviv.

The Responsibility of Individuals

Both the United States and the State of Israel obviously should know better about doing any kind of business with mass killers, no matter how "practical" it may be. I hope this article will inspire some readers to choose to stand up and demand that their government
take consistent ethical actions against any genocide. The responsibility of individuals also includes taking a stand against human rights violations and dehumanization of any people, and having the courage to refuse to follow any orders, even when one serves in a military organization, that call for the murders of innocent people. It also means refusing to accept assignments to plan such actions for the future. Some years ago, a graduate of one of America's great military academies was ordered to prepare plans for preemptive strikes against the cities of the Soviet Union and refused; he was ordered to quarters, court-martialed, and then given a dishonorable discharge from the military. In the context of the fears America held of Soviet nuclear attacks, it was ostensibly legitimate for the United States military to be planning scenarios of defense against a possible enemy, but this young military officer knew that the planning of self-defense cannot include preparations for murdering hundreds of thousands and millions of civilians. He was prepared to pay a price for standing up for what he knew to be a true principle of American democracy, the universal principle of respect for human life.

The Courage to Withstand One's Own Nation

There is no easy way for an individual to make an enduring commitment against genocide. For when the time comes, if we are citizens of a state that is committing genocide, it means that we must have the courage to stand up against our own nation, society, perhaps even our own families.

This was the choice Germans had to make during World War II, whether to follow the orders to commit the murders that Hitler and his staff demanded of them or to defy those orders and attempt to circumvent their own government. Interestingly enough, in recent years a study has been reported of some hundred Germans who did refuse to follow orders, and to everyone's surprise it has turned out that the majority were not made to pay for their refusal. But of course it is not always possible to count on this. On the contrary, the choice of standing for principle has to include thinking about whether or not one would be prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice of oneself rather than participate in killing innocent others. All the information we have from public opinion studies and social science studies suggests that the majority of Americans, and the majority of all human beings in this world, would do what they were told if they were commanded by their superior officers in the military, or their government officials, to go and kill masses of helpless men, women, and children of another people. I want this essay to raise the question for you the reader whether you are the kind of person who is willing to be different in principle. The chart on page 154 indicates what a willingness to be different entails.

Proposal for a World Genocide Early Warning System Foundation

The concept of a Genocide Early Warning System has been published in a variety of articles and chapters, and has earned strong positive reviews from human rights specialists, social scientists, and some national leaders. Willie Brandt, former Chancellor of West Germany, wrote, "Your plan to develop concepts and proposals for disseminating the information on the genocide and human rights data bank sounds fascinating. I would like to assure you that I am ready to give my moral support." A former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, Roberta Cohen, says, "Your proposal to establish a Genocide Early Warning System is an excellent idea. Had such a system operated effectively in the past, countless lives might have been saved in many parts of the world."

The purpose of the Genocide Early Warning System is to collect information on three levels. First and foremost, it is to assemble information of ongoing genocides and massacres in the world on a regular, authoritative basis. Second, it is to maintain a continuous monitoring of information on human rights violations. Third, it is to be the basis for a series of searches to understand more of the patterns through which massacre, mass murder, and genocide build up in a society, so that we will learn how to predict and alert people to the increasing dangers of mass murders in different societies well before they happen.

There is no data bank for human rights information in the world today. Moreover, there is no responsible ongoing information source for the news of severe conditions of massacre and mass murder. What happens characteristically is that the information is reported episodically in certain newspapers. At the time of these reports they are often, characteristically, described as "unconfirmed" or "alleged." In any case, having printed the news, these newspapers tend not to follow up with many subsequent stories because, after all, the story has already been printed! In other words, from the point of view of the news that "makes news," once a massacre has been reported, even its continuation may not be that "interesting" to those news sources that see such "unconfirmed" massacres as "interesting" to their news sources that see themselves as having to provide a kind of entertainment quality with "new" stories for their readers.

The problem goes deeper, however. Even if the news tracking is more complete—as happens when some country or area of the world seizes the imagination of the rest of the world—the reader is still left with an experience of learning that something terrible has happened that he or she can do nothing about. Such
The purpose of creating a Genocide Early Warning System Foundation is to help to develop a center that not only will receive, house, and make available on a continuous basis information of ongoing massacres in the world, but also that will be an international agency on behalf of human society as it speaks for the intention of humankind to care about and protect human life. The informations to be delivered to society by the early warning system are not only to maintain updated factual information, but also to convey the presence of an international agency that represents the evolution of a humane society which intends to keep a spotlight on the wrongdoings of mass murder. Sadly, the millions of words written about genocides to date represent essentially crying after the task is over. The real purpose of early warnings of genocide is to help the world develop new energies and new forms for attacking mass murder long before the murderers have completed their horrible task.

The Genocide Early Warning System we have planned is built on a conceptual structure that assembles information over a long term about the basic processes in each society which support human life and those which are moving towards the destruction of human life. Both processes are known to be present in all societies. An equal balance of these processes favors the protection of human life as the desired hallmark of a society which will be unavailable to engage in mass murder. Clearly, in some societies long before any mass murder has been executed, the balance in some societies is very much tipped towards destruction of human life.

The Genocide Early Warning System identifies ongoing processes as differentiated from critical incidents, which are also recorded; the first refers to, for instance, the degree of protection of free speech, or the degree of discrimination of minorities, while the second refers to dramatic events such as a major turn in policy as a result of the emergence of a new leader, the impact of going to war, or economic breakdown.

Another level of analysis assembles informations about societal processes as a whole such as previously described in the way of a free press, or the role of law, along with the roles of leadership or the major decisions and implementations by presidents, prime ministers, dictators, church leaders, and heads of states or cultures.

These levels of information are studied along a time continuum that begins with the ongoing situation in a culture long before there may have developed what we call the genocidal fantasy or ideology. The monitoring continues by tracking when an idea of genocide begins to be widely proposed and approved in a society, and gains political support of groups of people who actually try to organize to implement the genocidal plan. Thus, when Hitler speaks of destroying the Jews long before actual Holocaust events have come into reality, these moments are tracked by the Genocide Early Warning System as dangerous moments that already go beyond underlying historic patterns of antisemitism in the society. When even in the great American democracy, an ethnic religious leader such as Louis Farrakhan openly celebrates with his black community the burning of Jews in the ovens, this is a category of information that signals increased danger in the Genocide Early Warning System. The early warning system is responsive to any ideas that refer to keeping other groups of people "in their places," "kicking out" an ethnic, national, or religious group from the society, and certainly any ideas about eliminating them in a "final solution." Even in a society under siege from its obvious enemies, such as Israel which is surrounded by several Arab states that have a long history of intention and have never given up the idea of destroying the Jewish state, plans that are proposed in the Israeli society for getting rid of the Arabs in a forced migration or "transfer" will be registered in the early warning system as a formulation of a genocidal fantasy or ideology that has to be watched carefully.

The Genocide Early Warning System continues by observing any events in a society which can become triggers or precipitants for further escalations of the destructive trends and genocidal fantasies present in that society. Often these involve rumors of terrorist events that have been directed at one's people which understandably fan the retaliatory instincts of the population. This is the classic prescription of pogroms throughout history; for example, rumors that Jews killed a Christian sparked many pogroms or violent massacre of Jews. What are natural feelings of revenge are taken as a basis for unleashing the virulent genocidal mentality that has been awaiting in the society—as ultimately it awaits in all human societies at this point in our evolution as a species.

Finally, the Genocide Early Warning System tracks those situations and events where actual legalization and institutionalization of genocide in a given society begin to take place: the military give orders to kill the targeted group; the legal system justifies those who do the killing; the church system ignores or trains students to applaud the killing. In this manner the various institutions of society are coopted and corrupted as supporters of genocide.

As the accompanying typology shows, the Genocide Early Warning System has identified ten major early warning processes which are studied along the axes described above.
Chart: Taking a Stand Against Genocide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing about genocide</td>
<td>Knowing about genocides that have taken place</td>
<td>Knowing about genocides that are taking place today or are imminent</td>
<td>Knowing about ethnic hatred and major human rights violations and other early warnings of possible development of genocide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing to take a moral stand as an individual</td>
<td>Combatting denials of genocide (&quot;There were no gas chambers in the so-called Holocaust. &quot; There was no Armenian genocide.&quot;)</td>
<td>Refusing to participate in, approve, or allow prejudice, intolerance, dehumanization, human rights violations, and violence toward others</td>
<td>Refusing to follow social norms or to obey direct instructions or orders to commit genocide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a stand against in collective political responses to one’s government and in other collective areas such as work and church</td>
<td>Honoring memorials of past genocides</td>
<td>Supporting public commemoration of past genocides out of respect to the victim people and to establish more positive traditions of &quot;man’s greater humanity to man&quot;</td>
<td>Opposing, through public protests, nonviolent resistance or revolution, legal genocide or any policy of mass murder or genocide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Early Warning Processes

Early Warning Process 01. The Valuing of Human Life. The valuing of human life refers to the basic norms in any given society with respect to the degree to which human life is to be valued or not. Life is cheap in totalitarian societies. It can also be held cheap in other ways, such as in societies that provide medical and rehabilitative services indifferently or callously, after a nuclear accident. The respect and value which are placed on human life are important aspects of a society when it must face the possibility of being drawn into committing mass murders of a target group.

Early Warning Process 02. Concern with the Quality of Human Experience. The second indicator is the concern that a society shows for the quality of human experience, and whether and to what extent the norms of society are that people should be given the opportunity to live out their lives as comfortably as possible with respect to basic shelter, food, medical treatment, opportunity to work, freedom from oppres-

sion, free speech, and so forth. Societies that do not care about their own people are hardly likely to care about others.

Early Warning Process 03. The Valuing of Power. This early warning indicator refers to the ways in which power is valued in a society. Power in the sense of self-affirmation is necessary to work the engines of life of both individuals and groups, but when the goals of power are to gain control over other people, dominate them, enslave them, and exploit them, such a power orientation is inherently a harbinger of policies of torture, disappearance, execution, and genocidal massacres.

Early Warning Process 04. Machinery for Managing Escalations of Threat. This early warning process refers to the development of a machinery for managing escalations of threat. Objective threats are omnipresent in human life, but there are also dangers of subjective exaggerations and distortions in the human experiences of threats, so that there is a serious need for cross-
Every person and every society must decide how much to curtail the natural humor of ethnic differences, especially when these become manifestly prejudicial statements openly devaluing and degrading another group. When in a society there develops an actual choice of whether or not to attack and exterminate a given minority group, the extent to which that minority previously has been assigned a role of sub-human or non-human will play an important role even in the readiness of the soldiers on the front line to execute such a policy.

**Early Warning Process 08. Perception of Victim Group as Dangerous.** This early warning process is the perception of the potential victim group as dangerous. Incongruously, many of the minority groups who have been targeted as less-than-us or not-human at the same time are treated as if they were a most dangerous force that threatens to wipe out an entire society. In other words, the dehumanized are also invested with super-human powers. As groups they are alleged to have physical, economic, religious, or racial powers to destroy us, and this situation naturally means that it is proper to invoke self-defense mechanisms against them, and to seek to "destroy them before they destroy us." The fact that these people also have been defined as not-human then allows one to be cruel and brutal to them. Genocide is now fully possible.

**Early Warning Process 09. Availability of Victim Group.** The early warning system continues with a dimension of the availability of the victim group. This topic is very difficult to speak about. There is no justification for any degree of excusing victimizers as if their victims were "asking for it" or were in any way to blame for being available to be victimized. Responsibility for the victimization by the perpetrator stands in its own right and must be totally condemned. However, without losing respect for the victims or empathy for their plight, it has to be noted that groups and nations that are, to begin with, defenseless, weak, naive, and susceptible to being bullied and terrorized do make the victimization process more possible. Thus, the State of Israel represents a necessary historical corrective process by which the Jewish people have moved from being naive scholars of the Bible and romantic believers in the goodness of God to being a strong nation with an excellent army that will, legitimately, never again allow Jews to be killed en masse. The fact also is that, when former victim-peoples become strong, they must also learn not to overuse their power as other nations have done to them.

**Early Warning Process 10. Legitimation of Victimization by Leadership Individuals and Institutions.**
This indicator refers to an advanced stage in development of genocide when a society's leadership actually endorses and ratifies the mass destruction. The strongmen of the government or the cabinet authorize and praise the killing of the targeted victim-people. The courts dismiss or simply do not bring charges against perpetrators, the churches bless in the names of their gods, and so on.

**Other Proposals for Preventing Genocide**

A variety of thinkers and groups have made similar proposals for early warnings of genocides. Speaking for the Bahá'í International Community, a great faith that holds as a cardinal principle the oneness of humankind, in an address given in London in March 1982, Gerald Knight called for the development of an International Genocide Bureau. He said then what is still true today:

At the moment there is no focus, no central clearing house for cases of genocide. No agency exists for concentrating world attention specifically on genocide. A Genocide Bureau would pay particular attention to countries during times of national crises—war, revolution, political conflict, economic emergency—because genocide is especially likely to be attempted under the cover of nationwide disorder and confusion and when international attention is focused on other issues. As soon as genocide was suspected, the Genocide Bureau would immediately investigate.

Secrecy is the greatest ally of any government involved in genocide, and one of the functions of the Genocide Bureau would be to mobilize public opinion and put pressure on the guilty government by exposing its activities.

Attorney Luis Kutner created a proposal for what he called a World Genocide Tribunal. Political scientists Louis Beres and Barbara Harff have written, independently, about the need for legal principles that would justify humanitarian intervention by one nation into situations when another nation has entered into a policy of mass killings of a targeted people. As noted earlier, David Hawk created the Cambodia Documentation Commission and has attempted to create a legal brief to bring charges against the government of Cambodia.

**International Alert**

Leo Kuper of UCLA, the doyen of scholarship on genocide in the world today, proposed some years ago creating a new organization, International Alert, which has since come into being. The first secretary-general of International Alert in London was Martin Ennals, a former secretary-general of Amnesty International for many years, who believes now that the time has come to begin dealing not only with government imprisonment and torture of individuals which is what Amnesty specializes in (although it is also concerned with some broader aspects of extra-judicial executions by governments), but also with governments committing mass murder and genocide. International Alert seeks to intervene at the level of government and the international system as soon as possible after news of mass murders arises. It is also noteworthy that the United States Department of State issues an annual report on human rights in countries around the world, and increasingly the European Parliament takes stands on violations of human rights.

**Conclusions**

There is no question but that a variety of people and institutions are groping towards articulating a new worldwide awareness of human rights and genocide, but most of these initiatives are in their infancy, and are highly irregular, relatively unsupported, and unsystemized. It is not yet clear if any of them will be able to generate a momentum that will support the development of a permanent system for monitoring genocide in this world.

Our proposal of a Genocide Early Warning System was hailed by Choice, a library review magazine, as "brilliant." It was noted by the New York Times Book Review as a "noteworthy contribution to thinking about the condition of humanity on the earth." And it has been recognized and hailed by a United Nations study on genocide, which wrote as follows:

Many welcome the establishment of early warning systems of potential genocide situations in order to prevent recurrence of the crime. Intelligent anticipation of potential cases could be based on the databank of continuously updated information, which might enable remedial, deterrent or avert measures to be planned ahead. Reliable information is the essential oxygen for human rights: this could be facilitated by the development of the United Nations satellite communications network. The Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Israel has proposed such a body.

A Lutheran minister, Pastor Niemoeller, who was a victim of the Nazis, spoke out about the importance of all of us caring about all other people. The beautiful poetic statement attributed to him has become a profound source of inspiration. It is a statement that
goes to the heart of what the proposal to monitor genocide in the world involves:

First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for the communists and I did not speak out—because I was not a communist.

Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak out for me.

NOTES


10a. The concept of a Genocide Early Warning System was formulated by me some years ago and then developed in detail in collaboration with Chanan Rapaport, then director of the Szold National Institute for Behavioral Sciences in Jerusalem.


CHAPTER 8: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

* 8.1 *

An Israeli psychologist, the son of a German-Jewish physician who fled Germany at the beginning of the Holocaust, returned to his father's homeland to conduct his research on the children of Nazis who had been active in the Holocaust. Bar-On's findings show that most of the children of perpetrators not only were protected by their families from knowing the truth about their parents in the Holocaust, as was German society as a whole even from knowing about the Holocaust, but that they themselves also set up walls of denial of the truth so that between parent and child there were "double walls" of denial. This study has important implications for those who want to create educational or preventive programs against genocide.

* 8.2 *

The rhetorical question, "Who remembers the Armenians?" has been widely attributed to Hitler, speaking to his officers on the eve of World War II. Bardakjian provides the documentary substantiation that Hitler indeed did address his officers in this way. The failure of the world to punish the perpetrators of the Armenian genocide, including the Allies who had pledged to try the Turkish leaders of the Armenian genocide but then set them free, was a grave injustice against the Armenian people which also set the stage for the Holocaust.

* 8.3 *

Butz, a tenured professor of engineering at Northwestern University, has written an ugly, poisonous book that, in part because of its powerful title, has become one of the flagships of the "revisionist" movement, which denies that there ever was a Holocaust. Many Americans have demanded that Northwestern revoke Butz' tenure on the grounds of his flagrant violation of the basic standards of intellectual integrity and truth, but the university and many others believe the damage that would be done to academic freedom would be greater if he were dismissed. It is relevant to recall that, increasingly, many countries, and the courts in many countries, are creating and enforcing laws which make it illegal to deny the Holocaust or another known genocide.

* 8.4 *

Historian Frank Chalk and sociologist Kurt Jonassohn have collaborated for many years in co-teaching a pioneer college course on the history and sociology of genocide. This is their comprehensive collection and analysis of case histories throughout human history.

* 8.5 *

In a satire based on predictive references to the future in 2018, Charny speculates that by then the universe will have seen not only continued instances of genocide as we know it but also of *planeticide* and attempted *planeticide*. He examines the follies of attempts to restrict current-day definitions of genocide.
to pure or ideal terms and to exclude various instances of mass death from equal consideration.

* 8.6 *
The second volume of this definitive series contains a special section on denials of the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide, including a chapter by Vahakn Dadrian on documentation of the Armenian genocide in Turkish sources. Other sections cover law and genocide; education about the Holocaust and genocide; other topics include the language of genociders, total war, and genocide; the roles of professions and professionals in genocide; righteous gentiles in the Holocaust; and museums and memorials of the Holocaust and genocide.

* 8.7 *
This important collection, the first in a series, contains encyclopedic-like essays and critical annotated bibliographies. It presents several cases of genocide—including the Holocaust, Armenian genocide, Cambodian genocide, Ukrainian famine, and many other genocides in the twentieth century—and the long-term history and sociology of genocide, and also treats several fields of the study of genocide—including the development of scholarship in genocide and its prevention; the psychology of genocidal destructiveness; the philosophical study of genocide and especially nuclear dangers; and the literature, art and film of the Holocaust, other genocides, and the future of nuclear and other "futuristic destruction." Hailed as brilliant and pace-setting, the book has also been adopted as a text for college courses.

* 8.8 *
Charny proposes a humanistic definition of genocide rather than a restrictive or legalistic particularization: any organized killing of masses of human beings in non-combat situations, whether on the basis of religious, national, political, or any other basis of differentiation of people, as if such and such people deserve to be victims of mass death.

* 8.9 *
This is a seminal book on the psychology of genocide in the individual, its origins in family psychology and in collective processes, and especially the psychology of peoples’ readiness to sacrifice other humans. Second, it is a seminal book because it formulates a major proposal for a World Genocide Early Warning System. The press, political officials, and social scientists have hailed the proposal as capable of saving human lives.

* 8.10 *
In a satirical playlet—which can be read-performed on stage as well as read quietly—Charny shows how genociders will always seek to "get away" with their actions. Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Talaat, and Idi Amin are seen going together to consult a group of international lawyers, "Satan, Conformist and Whore," on how they could hope to avoid prosecution for genocide as international law against mass murder expands. They are advised to consider taking advantage of the biggest loophole in present law by killing many different peoples including their most desired victims all together, so that it may be possible for them to conceal the specific intentional target of their genocide.

* 8.11 *
An incredible number of people as well as organizations and governments in many different countries around the world devote themselves, and huge financial resources, to denying that one or another known genocide ever took place—examples include Turkish insistence that there never was an Armenian genocide and neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic claims that there never was a Holocaust. In this comprehensive study of the forms and dynamics of such denials, the author also calls for more concentrated attacks against those who deny known genocides for their obvious incitements.
to horrible new acts of violence against still further victims.

* 8.12 *

The historic first International Conference on Holocaust and Genocide was held in Tel Aviv in 1982. This selective volume of its proceedings contains key papers, including reports and reactions to government efforts to stop the conference from taking place. Also included are case studies and analyses, including Soviet Union genocide, and the Nazi genocide of the Gypsies, dynamics of genocide and its prediction, education about genocide, and prevention. It is a widely used source-book and college text.

* 8.13 *

Charny and Rappaport provide a concise but detailed outline of the purposes and major content categories of a proposed Genocide Early Warning System. They include summary charts of ten Early Warning Processes.

* 8.14 *

Under a grant from the United States Institute of Peace, a U.S. government agency in Washington, DC, the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Jerusalem has assembled a worldwide team of scholars to create a first computerized bibliographic database on Holocaust and genocide, largely for the period 1980-1990. The first product of the Institute should be available through the Library of USIP [1550 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005] in 1992, and may also be available for direct purchase on IBM diskettes from the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide. The institute is also advancing in its work towards creating a first thesaurus of Holocaust and genocide terms.

* 8.15 *

Chorover has created a chilling document on behavior control and fascism. His book is an excellent starting place for anyone who is unfamiliar with the Nazi traditions of superiority and philosophy of genetic improvement of the species, and with the blood-curdling history of the Nazis, first program of actual mass destruction, namely of the mentally ill and mentally defective as well as many handicapped children.

* 8.16 *

An intrepid researcher of the Armenian genocide turns his attention to the prediction and prevention of future genocides of any of the many peoples of our world. Dadrian proposes that the sources of potential genocide are in: a) the type of the groups locked in conflict and their standard relationship to each other; b) the nature and history of the conflict; and c) the degree of disparity of power relations between these groups.

* 8.17 *

Published by B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League, this very readable magazine about the Holocaust generally chooses a thematic focus for an issue such as journalistic reports of the Holocaust or the rescuers of Holocaust victims. It also presents excellent short and long reviews of books and articles on the Holocaust and genocide.

* 8.18 *

Professor Leo Eitinger of Oslo was one of the first European physicians to describe the terrible impacts of the concentration camp syndrome following World War II. Joined by Canadian psychiatrist, Robert Krell, he provides a systematic bibliography of the literature about victims of the Holocaust through 1984.

By removing the actual names of the victimizer and victim peoples, and also the names of countries and geographic locales of each genocidal case history, and then substituting unfamiliar made-up names for all of the above, Fein generates a series of templates or basic scenarios for how genocide has come about and how it can come about in a wide variety of historical, political, and ethnic circumstances. Hers is a brilliant pedagogical tool as well as a worthwhile collection for scholars and researchers of generic forms or scenarios of genocide.


In this 104-page monograph, Fein provides a comprehensive review of the field of genocide study, which she follows with a 225-item bibliography of the main literature of the field, accompanied by numerous brief critical annotations. Fein is a passionate spokesperson for a precise and rigorous definition of genocide. She is also the author of an award-winning study of the differential outcomes of the Holocaust in different cultures, Accounting for Genocide (New York: Free Press, 1979).


"If you begin your resistance to a Hitler, only after he has won his victory, then you've lost before you've even begun. For to offer resistance you've got to have an inner core, a conviction. You have to have faith in yourself to be able to think critically, to be an independent human being, a human being and not a sheep." (p.133) "Anyone who takes this path will learn to resist not only the great tyrannies, like Hitler's, but also the 'small tyrannies,' the creeping tyrannies of bureaucratization and alienation in everyday life." (p133)


Using the step-by-step method, the authors analyze the sequence of desensitization through which people are trained to be members of a secret police (in this case in Greece) who are prepared to torture and cruelly kill their victims. Their findings are consistent with earlier observations of how the Nazis trained their feared SS Deathhead squads.


The authors survey forced migrations or forced transfers of populations and provide details of the tremendous losses of life that inevitably accompany such steps.


Harff, a political scientist, has written a poignant, caring monograph about natural law as well as the evolving technical legal basis for humanitarian intervention of one nation in another's affairs for the specific purposes of stopping genocide. Such intervention can be without exploitation for national gain.


Political scientists Harff and Gurr are pioneering in the development of computerized empirical information on two critical aspects of genocide: Harff reports on a databank of politicides, or mass killings on the basis of political identity since World War II; Gurr reports on a databank about minorities around the world and monitors the extent to which they are at risk of mounting persecution and genocide.


This is probably the flagship scholarly journal in the field of Holocaust and genocide studies, although it is heavily biased towards scholarship primarily of the Holocaust and towards "purist definitions" of the Holocaust. It publishes much less about the genocides of other people.

Horowitz’ typology is a useful starting point for the examination of the roles and functions of bureaucracy, government organization, and national policy in the making of genocide. His is a classic work on the nature of government in genocidal societies.


Hovannisian has brought together an outstanding collection of papers on the Armenian genocide. In addition to historical analysis of the genocide, there is consideration of the impact of the events on literature, the psychosocial sequela for survivors and their families, a study of oral histories of survivors, and an analysis of the Turks’ unending efforts to deny the Armenian genocide.


*Book One* is a photocopy-printed softcover book that includes the full program, abstracts of papers, evaluations of participants, and comments by the world press. It also contains extensive reports of the crisis that erupted when the governments of Turkey and Israel sought to censor reports of the Armenian genocide, if not to close down the entire conference.


This invaluable newsletter reports studies, projects, and developments around the world relating to genocide and its prevention. It is distributed on a voluntary subscription basis by the Institute, which is interested in making the publication available to younger scholars who have limited funds.


An American high-school history teacher succeeds superbly in teaching his students about how the Holocaust came about by creating a parallel process of group identification with power, conformity, and ideology in the classroom and high school. The written report has been followed by a video film, *The New Wave*, which is an excellent instructional tool for students, community groups, teachers, and even professional scholars for genocide.


In an important study, Kelman and Hamilton analyze the crucial issue of conformity and obedience to norms of destruction. Even after Lt. Calley had been convicted for his role as commander of the U.S. forces at My Lai, 67 percent of Americans replied to a research questionnaire that they believed most people would follow orders, and 51 percent said that had they themselves been at My Lai, they too would have obeyed orders to slaughter the villagers (see also 7.99).


In this beautiful address, a representative of the Baha’i International Community proposed an international mechanism for monitoring and responding to signals, threats, and reports of genocide. Although the paper can be difficult to locate, it is such a thoughtful and creative proposal that I believe it is well worth trying to access. Baha’i International later created International Alert.


Collaborators Kren, a historian, and Rappoport, a psychologist, claim in this excellent book that human life can never again be the same after the Holocaust.
Thus, they argue that no field of human inquiry and scholarship remains relevant or meaningful unless it inquires into how and why the bizarre destruction of human life that took place in the Holocaust came about.

*8.35*

Kren is an articulate analyst of the ethical implications of the Holocaust. Among his important observations, he notes the following: "There is something very strange and odd in the fact that almost all of the perpetrators of what arguably is the most radical horror of this century, while awaiting execution, argued, with obvious sincerity, that they had done no wrong. A recurring theme found in all the trial records of individuals who had participated in mass killing is the indignant surprise they express that anyone should blame them for their actions, since they were only doing their duty." (p. 56)

*8.36*

Kuper's is the single most comprehensive and important assembly of case histories of genocide in the field.

*8.37*

The Minority Rights Group in London is an organization that has pioneered in the study of the ethnic histories and conflicts of minority groups around the planet. This pamphlet is an excellent brief introduction to definitions of different types of genocide and to concepts of international intervention.

*8.38*

In a critically honest analysis of the history of international intervention in cases of genocide, especially by the United Nations, Kuper concludes that the UN has been virtually a total failure. He analyzes which basic revisions will be needed in the UN Convention on Genocide—many of which were later adopted by the UN Whitaker Commission. Based on his realistic view of the international system, Kuper proposes strengthening and expanding non-governmental international organizations. He also proposes a new organization, International Alert, which has since come into being. For more information, write to International Alert, Box 259, 1015 Gayley Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024.

*8.39*

The authors are attorneys who are concerned with developing legally correct procedures for reviewing allegations and early reports of massacres according to proper rules of evidence, but at the same time they are courageously concerned with creating an international agency that will respond quietly and meaningfully to emergency situations of genocide. Luis Kutner is well known for legal work on a principle of international habeas corpus. He has been nominated several times for the Nobel Peace Prize.

*8.40*

Raphael Lemkin was the originator of the concept of genocide, and certainly the person who can be credited almost singlehandedly with proposing and gaining the acceptance of the UN of the U.N. Convention on Genocide. A Polish-Jewish attorney with a prominent post in the Polish Prosecutor's Office before World War II, he was the only member of his family to escape the Holocaust. Arriving in the U.S., he devoted his entire being to the push for the adoption of the Convention. Not long after its adoption, he died, sick and penniless for having given his life to this immense cause. Axis Rule in Occupied Europe is Lemkin's monumental summary of the reign of the arch fascist regime.

In the coming years, several of Lemkin's exciting unpublished manuscripts, including his autobiography, Uncommon Warrior, which was rejected by several U.S. publishers in his lifetime on the grounds that it would not sell, will be edited by Rabbi Steven Jacobs. The first volume is scheduled for publication by Edwin Mellen Press.
In this intelligent and humane book, psychiatrist Robert Lifton and sociologist Eric Markusen collaborate in calling for a new step in the evolution of our species, that we exercise our capacity to choose and shape our lives towards a life-caring mentality as opposed to a genocidal mentality.


The fact that so many healers were ready to kill teaches us all how many of us human beings can be corrupted by the lust or opportunity to have power, maim, and kill others. In this study, Lifton originates new concepts of "doubling" and "healing-killing" which are certain to become basic new conceptual tools in the field. For other interpretations, see annotations 2.30 and 7.27.


In perhaps the single most important social science experiment of our times, Milgram demonstrates that a majority of human beings, from all walks of life, are available to do serious, possibly lethal harm to others. The context of the study is a simulation of a psychological experiment in learning where actors play the role of subjects who must memorize nonsense syllables, while the real subjects of the study are instructed to assist the researcher by giving progressively stronger electric shocks up to dangerous lethal doses, when the learning subject makes an error. No actual shock is given, but because the actors pretend to be hurt, the teaching subjects are not aware that their pain is simulated. It is worth mentioning that the crucial point Milgram makes has been amplified and supplemented in other essays and studies of which the following two entries are examples.


In this study college students manifest a readiness to agree to the execution of mental defectives. See also the next item.


Charny and Fromer examine the readiness of students in the Israeli health professions to participate, as professionals, in a government plan for forced migration of the Arabs out of Israel.


In a brilliant fictional treatment, Perec satirizes a nation where Sport is King and where citizens are forced into life-and-death competitions, and losers are punished, tortured, and murdered. Perec has creative insight into the tragically common possibilities of madness in societies—and the absurdity of the definitional basis for identifying target groups as deserving of legal extermination. See 8.19 for Fein’s fictionalized but very real historical scenarios of genocide.


Porter’s important collection of studies of genocide includes his own excellent analysis of the conditions under which genocide is most and least likely to occur; for example, genocide is likely when a minority group is an outsider, when there is a racist ideology. The contributors make an outstanding effort to define genocide and to summarize the conditions that facilitate its occurrence and conditions which work against genocide taking place.


Rapoport, a renowned philosopher of science, warns against the ultimate madness where seemingly rational people will yet undertake and justify the use of nuclear weapons which threaten to destroy our very species. "The planners of nuclear war—that is, primarily the personnel of the military establishments of both superpowers and their political entourages—satisfy two criteria for madness: they are immersed in an imaginary world of their own making, dissociated from reality,
and their activities constitute a clear menace to humanity." (p. 525)

* 8.49 *

"Roiphe courageously concludes that it may be time to stop particularizing the Jewish experience and begin to generalize it because to insist forever on its unique exclusivity deepens rifts among nations, religions and individuals. To admit that the monstrous lessons of the Holocaust have a universal application in no way diminishes the horror. In fact, that acknowledgment may be the first step toward a broader and deeper humanity... Roiphe's book can be read as a reminder that humanity itself has become an endangered species." From a review by Elaine Kendall in the Los Angeles Times Book Review (27 November 1988).

* 8.50 *

Salk calls for humankind to move forward in evolution by adopting new values and new ethics. "The essential requirement for such a value system would seem to be the creation of an identity of interest rather than a conflict of interest, between the individual and the species, between the citizen and society, and between nations and mankind. This basic issue must be faced lest men in their greedy competition... destroy themselves and their planet." (p. 101) Salk is the world-renowned creator of the Salk vaccine for polio.

* 8.51 *

This seminal and relatively early post-Holocaust work contains the most inclusive effort ever made to look at the roles of professionals in a series of fields—universities, law, medicine, physical sciences, technology, government, and the church—in participating in or collaborating and enabling the Holocaust to take place. Much more research is still needed on this subject today even many years later, but the book is still well worth reading for the integrity of its effort to bring together these important subjects.

* 8.52 *

*Shofar* is an excellent all-around review of contemporary Jewish thought that includes long and briefer annotated reviews of the literature on the Holocaust.

* 8.53 *

Staub theorizes that individuals and collectives such as nations move in a continuum of steps towards becoming genocidal destroyers. He analyzes four case histories, with an impressive combination of psychological and historical detail. The four cases are the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, the Cambodian genocide, and disappearances in Argentina. Staub, who as a child was rescued from the Holocaust by gentiles, writes with special eloquence about human beings' potentials for caring and rescuing.

* 8.54 *

Taylor's wonderful play shows the "becoming" of a vicious Nazi. The protagonist is a pleasant, friendly academician whose closest friend is a Jewish psychiatrist, but power corrupts more and more, and he becomes more and more self-serving, charged up by his growing power. Ultimately he is transformed into a willing destroyer. The bad in him has won out over the good.

* 8.55 *

Tec, herself a Holocaust survivor who became a sociologist in America, reports on studies of gentiles who saved Jews in the Holocaust. She found any number who did not like Jews, even disliked them, yet had no question about their responsibility to save them, despite great personal risk, simply because they were fellow human beings. For another interpretation, see 2.80.

In this research, Thompson studies the history of violence in Ireland, but the larger significances of his work are these: 1) theoretically, he conceives of violence as a continuum that extends to genocide and must be monitored against development into genocide; and 2) in the process of the research he creates and works with original measures of violence, such as the degree of public outrage at various types and degrees of cruelty and violence, that can be useful to other researchers of genocide.


"Teaching and learning about genocide is not easy, for it is both a complex and horrific subject," write Parsons and Totten in this special issue. "However, if teachers across the globe taught their students about genocide and helped them to understand their responsibility in our global village, they could possibly make a major contribution to humanity."


This is an admirable hard-hitting proposal by a formal UN research group for revision and expansion of the UN Convention on Genocide. In the process of this formal report, the document presents a remarkably vivid and comprehensive overview of the history of genocide, and the emergence of international governmental and non-governmental policies and initiatives towards punishment, intervention, and prevention of genocide.

The Whitaker Report is also deserving of special commendation for its formal correction of earlier UN denial of the history of the Armenian genocide. Whitaker succeeded in stewarding his report, which affirms the Armenian genocide, through a maze of Turkish and other government efforts at denial. The Whitaker Report is the second full-scale investigation by the UN of genocide and of UN law on genocide since the inception of the world body. An earlier report was submitted by Nicodeme Rusashyankiko in 1973 and revised in final draft in 1978, following which the commission chairperson returned to his native Rwanda and is reported never to have been heard from again. See also the following entry.


Elie Wiesel is a child-survivor of the Holocaust whose autobiographical novels, such as *Night* and *Dawn*, have shaken the world, and whose inspiring ethical orientation to protesting past and future dangers of genocide to all peoples have earned him the awesome Nobel Peace Prize. In *The Oath*, using the form of a novel, Wiesel describes the brewing of a fictional genocidal massacre in a village. The story is a gripping small-scale parable of the development of the Holocaust.