

Afterword

HEAVEN ONLY KNOWS why an unbelieving Jewish scientist in Los Angeles would be recommending a 1,000-page opus written by a Baptist minister in Corryton, Tennessee (though we both hail from New York City). My reasons for doing so follow. First, I consider Bill Grady to be one of the most unusual friends I have known in my eighty-four years.

Second, though unable to relate to the spiritual content of this book, I concur wholeheartedly with the author's exceptional grasp of America's current disastrous foreign policy, as well as our growing vulnerability in matters of national security. Having been immersed in the "system" for over four decades (my endless protests resulting only in an early retirement), I can assure you that Bill hardly scratched the surface with regard to perfidy and corruption prevailing in our government. In nearly every instance, the underlying motive has been avarice, *especially* at the Defense Department. Albert Einstein was right when he stated (concerning the atomic age), "Everything has changed but human nature."

Most Americans are totally oblivious to their precarious surroundings. Several years ago, my longtime friend and colleague Joe Douglass authored a book (*America the Vulnerable: The Threat of Chemical and Biological Warfare*) whose preface contained the following statement:

While the United States debates the development of a massive defense effort against nuclear attack. . . the fact remains that this nation is almost entirely defenseless against chemical, biological, and toxin weapons of mass destruction. Some of these weapons may already be secreted within our borders; others could be synthesized by our enemies within a matter of hours, or days at the most. Indeed it is doubtful that most biological attacks would even be recognized for what they are. Even if it could be proven with certainty that the outbreak of a particular disease was not a natural

occurrence and instead was deliberately instigated, it would be almost impossible to pinpoint the exact source.

However, the most compelling reason for my incidental part in this book (a part, by the way, which I *volunteered* to contribute) concerns the caliber of Bill's constituents. As a lifetime political conservative, I have associated with numerous evangelical Christians and found them to be highly patriotic and decent human beings, especially the Baptists. Unfortunately, I cannot say the same for many of their leaders—charlatans like Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, for instance—who are governed by little more than self-aggrandizement. *I believe the single greatest weakness among the ranks of the Religious Right is gross naiveté.* Apparently, few have the necessary *chutzpa* to ask the obvious questions.

Along this line of thought I will conclude my remarks by sharing a *Jewish* version of that timeless fable—"The Emperor's New Clothes." The wisest utterance I've ever heard came from a rabbi who lived his life in the last century, in a small village in Lithuania, the land of my ancestors who also lived in small villages (my grandfather was a village blacksmith, his father a peasant tilling soil from dawn to dusk). The rabbi, venerated by everyone in the village for his wisdom, grew old and older and one day he lay dying in his bedroom. In the room were his immediate family, including his loving wife. In the adjoining room were his closest relatives. Outside the house were more distant relatives and friends and all the nice Jewish people of the village who so loved and respected him, who formed a long line going down the street.

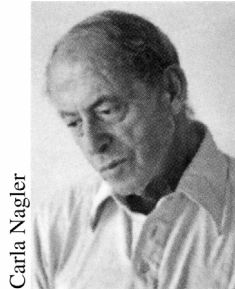
All of them wanted to be kept up to date on the rabbi's condition. One of them at the end of the line, the village idiot, wanted to know whether the rabbi had passed on any last words. So he tapped the person in front of him on the shoulder and asked that the word get off to the rabbi's wife as to what his last words were. The query worked its way down the line and into the bedroom to the wife, who realized there weren't any last words. This was unacceptable. By now the rabbi had slipped into a coma. However, so insistent was everyone on getting an answer that the poor rabbi had to be shaken violently out of his coma. He came to. His wife looked into his eyes and said, "Dearest, what are your last words?" The rabbi pondered a moment and replied, "Life is a cup of tea." And slipped back into a coma.

His last words now worked their way out of the bedroom, into the adjoining room, out of the house and down the street to the village idiot

at the end of the line. The village idiot pondered the rabbi's utterance for a while. Then he tapped the shoulder of the person in front of him and asked, "Why is life like a cup of tea?" This was very disconcerting. The person felt obliged to repeat the question to the person in front of him, and so on all the way up to the rabbi's wife. She too found this question disconcerting and decided an explanation was in order.

Again the poor rabbi was shaken into consciousness and asked the village idiot's question. Again the rabbi pondered, this time a lot longer because he knew how all important his answer would be for the villagers. Finally, he spread his arms, looked up at his wife, and replied, "All right, so life is *not* a cup of tea." With that he expired.

If you are *really* burdened about the future of America, then apply what you can from this unusual *book* written by my unusual *friend*.



Carla Nigler



Sam Cohen
Father of the Neutron Bomb
Brentwood
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