

EMOTIONAL “ESOTERICS” AND THE OBAMA CULT

by Lars Adelskog

Of course, there is nothing that could be properly called emotional esoterics. That is why the word “esoterics” is put within quotation marks in the heading. There is something, however, that claims to be regarded as esoterics without having the factual and logical right to it; something that does not have that source and origin from which all true esoteric teaching derives, but is principally a creation of human imagination and speculation.

This paper was written for the necessary purpose of controlling and limiting, if possible, the damage caused by those who disseminate false esoterics and in so doing mislead many people. It is beyond question that many of these disseminators are unaware of the fact that they do esoterics a disservice, it is beyond doubt that many of them are impelled by good will, idealism, and the desire to serve their fellow human beings. That is not sufficient, however. Also knowledge, discrimination, and self-criticism must enter into the equipment of those who want to spread information about esoterics. In addition, they must observe certain esoteric principles and rules.

When teaching esoterics, you cannot merely impart the right knowledge, but you must also point out errors and refute them. Since human beings have a seemingly ineradicable tendency to distort everything they are taught, they have of course made distortions of esoterics, too. Also esoteric students, who are not guilty of such distortions, are often so ignorant or immature that they swallow, hook, line, and sinker, all that is called “esoteric”, even when it is a case of patent deception, such as is represented by the self-acclaimed “world teacher” Alexander Markus, active in Sweden.

The present writer considers that esoteric students, also ignorant and immature ones, are worth a better destiny than being misled by deceivers and distorters.

The falsification and distortion of esoterics dealt with in the present paper is emotionally conditioned. It is a case of thinking controlled by emotion, of wishful thinking “elaborating on” or “developing” knowledge materials that mankind has received from its elder brothers in the fifth natural kingdom, the kingdom of knowledge and unity.

Such emotional “elaboration” or “development” cannot add anything of quality to the teaching of the elder brothers, can only vitiate and degrade it. Many esoteric students, also those who are at an elementary level, would probably realize this in their better moments, when they have it pointed out to them or make the effort to reflect upon it. In moments of emotional rapture and identification, however, reflection is impossible and realization non-existent.

Three Exponents of Emotional “Esoterics”

I have selected three men who are active in the sphere of new age spirituality as exponents of such emotional “esoterics”. The three are David Spangler, an American, and Hardy Bennis and Asger Lorentsen, two Danes.

David Spangler does not call himself an esotericist or labels his teaching esoteric. Yet I have included him because one of Sweden’s most important esoteric institutions, Stiftelsen Tibetanens bokfond (The Tibetan Book Fund), in two recent newsletters (Nyhetsbrev 1:2009, published March 19, 2009, and Nyhetsbrev 2:2010, published May 22, 2010) paid tribute to Spangler and recommended Swedish esoteric students to study his works: “*He simply sets an example by demonstrating to all who have a reasonably serious interest in esoterics how a free-thinking mind may work in this field. He understands that in a new age spiritual life will not be centred around intellectual interpretations of a fixed belief in the fundamentals of esoteric philosophy, but around individual experience of and intuitive communication with the soul and in some cases also with conscious helpers on the other side.*” (Nyhetsbrev 2:2010)

The Tibetan Book Fund goes on to say: “*He [Spangler] only mentions Alice Bailey once when he declares that his book is not a book on ‘esoteric cosmology’ or ‘psychology’ and he recommends all who are interested in such things to read, for instance, Rudolf Steiner, Dion Fortune, and Alice Bailey.*”

By giving precedence to Rudolf Steiner and Dion Fortune over Alice Bailey or even by putting all three of them on a par, Spangler demonstrates that he does not possess discrimination in the matter of esoteric knowledge. Alice Bailey was the instrument chosen by the planetary hierarchy to communicate new esoteric facts to mankind during the years 1919–1949. Neither Steiner nor Dion Fortune had such a position. Steiner was not even a disciple. The little he understood of the esoteric knowledge he received from the theosophists, from H. P. Blavatsky in particular, he “complemented” with his own speculations and clairvoyant “revelations”. No real esoterician does such a thing. His later scornful dismissal of Blavatsky, that great emissary of the planetary hierarchy, is sufficient proof that he was not in contact with the planetary hierarchy or with any of its members.

Hardy Bennis is a writer of books on esoteric subjects and is attached to the group *visdomsnett* (Danish for “the wisdom net”).

Asger Lorentsen and his partner Yvonne Wassini provide teaching within their organization, *Den Gyldne Cirkel* (The Golden Circle, website: www.dengyldnecirkel.dk), which calls itself an “educational centre for star people, angelic people, and disciples of the Great White Brotherhood”.

The Danish activities mentioned enter into an umbrella organization called *Esoterisk Netværk* (Esoteric Network). A Swedish member organization is the Internet forum *Andlig utveckling i fokus* (Spiritual Development in Focus, website: andligutveckling.ifokus.se) whose moderator is Mariann Andersson and whose principal aim seems to be to disseminate Asger Lorentsen’s and Hardy Bennis’ “esoteric” teaching.

I chose these three men as exponents of emotional “esoterics” because of emotionally conditioned statements they made immediately after American senator Barack Hussein Obama was elected president of his country on November 4, 2008. Exaggerated expectations of Obama were certainly voiced by many people on those days. A better display of common sense and insight could be demanded of esotericians or spiritual leaders, however. Instead, those three men laced their euphoric outbursts with “esoteric” information (properly: disinformation), so that their statements were even more grotesque, if possible, than what the “exoteric” adherents of the Obama cult could produce.

By their statements these three men demonstrated that they allowed themselves to be carried away by the same kind of emotional rapture as millions of leftists and liberals indulged in as Barack Obama was elected president of the United States. They used an almost unknown man, one inexperienced in world politics, as a projection screen for their longing and hope for a leader they imagined to have a nearly superhuman power to “change” the world.

In academic psychology, projection is described as an everyday human phenomenon. It consists in the transfer by an individual or a group of their own desires, feelings, and imaginings (often unconscious ones) onto another person, group, thing, or event.

In esoteric psychology, projection is described as a particular expression of identification. Identification is a state of dysfunction (erroneous function) of consciousness and one of the serious hindrances to the individual’s efficient consciousness development. Identification is an emotional disturbance characterized by attention being captured, or fascinated, by some outer or inner object to the extent that the individual in question scarcely perceives anything else. In states of identification, discrimination, reflection, evaluation, analysis, or critique is not working. Even knowledge of facts, familiarity with rules for right conduct and right being

have momentarily vanished completely. Self-consciousness or self-remembrance is impossible in states of identification and projection. Not even self-observation, almost equally important, is possible then.

Spangler: *“Watching the election returns Tuesday night was like watching the moon landing forty years ago. Then, a man took a step onto a new world and all humanity took a step with him. Tuesday night, the voters of the United States of America took a step and because of that, a man took us all into a new world of possibility and hope. Watching President-Elect Barack Obama, I felt like I’d been waiting for this moment most of my life.”*

Bennis: *“When he [Obama] speaks it is like a projector filled with hope and expectation, playing from the one side to the other. Behind the great words he sent out a message of brotherhood and hope to the world that made tears burst out in many people... And why are there so great expectations from him as president of the world power USA? Because his words resound in what is highest in ourselves. A new page is being turned in the political world – not just in USA but in most of the world.”*

Lorentsen: *“Some years ago in Italy I had an experience of the consciousness of a renaissance prince. During three hours I experienced that form of identity where your full potential of intelligence, overview, creative idealism, and power to realize ideas worked as a whole. In this state you can have an enormous overview, solve complicated problems, see clearly where solutions are to be found and so focus on realization. Regrettably, this state vanished again, but when I saw Obama speaking I could recognize the state, and it is probable that it will last during his entire presidency. This means that we shall see great changes, since this affords an unusual ability to influence people in an ethical way and to realize ideas by instilling idealism and trust.”*

In the statements quoted here these three men demonstrate to an esoterician that they have not undergone a basic training in consciousness of the kind that the disciple receives at the hands of his esoteric teacher. Certainly, also those who have received such a training may be temporarily influenced by the emotional illusions of mass “consciousness”. Certainly, they, too, may be carried away by collective projections for the moment. However, if this has happened, they awaken soon enough from this temporary sleep, this passing forgetfulness of who they are, and *disidentify* from it. Subsequently they thank their teacher for having regained that state of wide-awakeness he has taught them to be in as much as possible. They will not remain in sleep and forgetfulness, will not persist in it. Least of all will they teach others in such a manner as if this temporary dysfunction of their consciousness were a positive state, something to be strived after and remembered, a state of higher consciousness or insight. However, this was precisely what Spangler did:

“But then there are those moments, precious and empowering, when we remember. We remember who we are and what we can do and the promise of the light within us. Tuesday night, when a black man of a minority population and of global ancestry was voted into the most powerful office in the world on a wave of transformation and hope, was one of those moments. Tuesday night, we all remembered.”

In esoteric teaching, it is pointed out to you that participation in collective emotional rapture and other such mass behaviour eliminates states of self-consciousness and self-remembrance. It is precisely then, when you lose yourself in the multitude, that you cannot remember who you are. Thus Spangler turns the true condition upside down: *“We remember who we are and what we can do and the promise of the light within us... Tuesday night, we all remembered.”*

The fact that the three “esotericians” fell in with the masses of Obama worshippers is particularly bad because that *persona* which Obama displayed during his campaign and when giving his victory speech, that *persona* onto which the three men uncritically projected their wishful thinking, was carefully constructed by a group of experts on rhetoric and mass

psychology. These experts knew which key words and catchphrases Obama should utter, how he should repeat them for this constructed persona to have the effect intended on impressionable masses of people. They knew which emotional “buttons” to press in order to move the masses in the direction they desired. And these studied tricks had the effect intended even on these “esotericians”. Real esotericians, who have been taught how to “demagnetize” themselves from such mass hypnosis, would not have let themselves be carried away.

Interestingly, Hardy Bennis realized that Obama used mass influence technique in his speech:

“He uses mantric influences – for example... which reveals a strong and conscious 7th ray.”

Bennis’ assumption, that this “reveals a strong and conscious 7th ray” in Obama, is groundless. The victory speech was not written by Obama himself but by Jon Favreau, who heads Obama’s group of speech writers. Favreau has the highest salary of all White House employees. If in this connection anyone has “a strong and conscious 7th ray”, it is consequently Favreau rather than Obama.

Lorensen appears to be the ideal hypnosis subject, not knowing that other people constructed Obama’s *persona* and even wrote his speech:

“Every detail of his speech is a pearl of choice of words, images, and meanings perfect in form. Every one of them appeals to idealism, solidarity, and hope. And together the details make up the most perfect speech imaginable in this situation – and that without a manuscript, notes, or a speechwriter.”

The fact that Obama’s victory speech was written by Favreau was reported by Evan Thomas and Richard Wolffe in their article in *Newsweek*, internet edition, November 15, 2008. But please don’t bring up uncomfortable facts that could disturb the practisers of the Obama cult when happily absorbed in their emotional ecstasy!

It is part of elementary esoteric training to learn how to withhold such mechanical emotional reactions as may come about when you are faced with a new situation; to make an *evaluating pause* before you speak and act. Such an evaluating pause means that using your higher intellectual consciousness functions, available facts, discrimination, and reflection, you work at the impressions you receive, not just allow them to elicit reactions in you mechanically. This is particularly important when those impressions have been sent out from a source with the intention of eliciting desirable reactions, precisely as was the case when Obama gave his victory speech. Not to make such an evaluating pause, not even knowing that such a method exists, is to be a mechanical being who is almost completely controlled by impulses received from without or his own previously automatized ones.

The most important feature of all elementary esoteric training is to transform man from a largely unconscious, mechanical being, a “robot”, into a conscious being who controls his actions, his speech, his consciousness expressions himself. An individual who demonstrates that he is without reflection and self-observation, who shows that he “acts” as external impulses suggest to him, he does not act at all, but is merely the last link of a control system that other people have devised and implemented for their own purposes. The overall purpose of esoteric training is to help man acquire self-consciousness and will. In his untransformed state he largely lacks both. In states of identification he lacks them completely.

The human individual is so thoroughly standardized that an external observer of mankind would not necessarily conclude that each individual has his own independent brain but rather that mankind is governed in large collectives by a few brains beyond the control of individuals. People expose themselves, most often unknowingly, to being influenced by systems of collective mental and emotional control, systems that sometimes have an enormous range: social group pressures, commercial advertising, political propaganda.

Such influence is neutralized in states of self-consciousness, self-remembrance. In fact, such a neutralization is an important practical application of this higher consciousness state. Instead of being hypnotized by a projecting device, as it were, you turn away from its magnetic influence. You make this demagnetization, this self-awakening from hypnosis, even more efficient by studying the device and its way of working, finding out who own it and use it and what they expect to gain by hypnotizing the rest of us.

Therefore, it is justly said in the *Laws of Manu* (chapter 4, 160§): *“All that depends on another’s will is evil, all that depends on one’s own will is good; one should know this brief definition of good and evil.”*

Another aspect of elementary esoteric training, as important as learning how to use the evaluating pause, is learning how to stop making assumptions without sufficient grounds. How strict was this training in the ancient secret schools of knowledge is seen from the fact that the individual was urged to consider even all correct learning received as hypothetical if he could not ascertain it himself. The fundamental rule was and still is: Assume nothing without a sufficient ground!

All the three “esotericians” discussed here offended against this elementary rule. They were guilty of making grotesquely exaggerated claims about Obama’s personal ability and coming presidency, things of which they knew nothing. They made statements on Obama’s spiritual status and position in relation to “higher powers”, or the planetary hierarchy, as if they knew something about these things, whereas in reality they knew nothing, could not even know anything of them. Such twaddle can only bring esoterics into disrepute and harm its cause.

Spangler: *“...I felt for this evening I was seeing the true America, the United States that can rise to be a planetary nation, a place of blessing for all peoples and all life.”*

Bennis: *“... after the election it became clear to millions of people that we are standing here before an unusually soul-oriented person.”*

“I dare say that Barack Obama is a world server of the highest rank. He will set examples to future politicians worldwide, and I dare go so far as to say that great spiritual forces are behind him. He is without doubt an important factor in the preparation for the reappearance of the Christ.”

Lorentsen: *“When Gorbachev appeared in the Soviet Union, he changed from a politician into an initiate with an important global mission. The same has now happened with Obama. His higher mental consciousness has wholly descended, which an analysis of his speech reveals in all details.”*

“...but when I saw Obama speaking I could recognize the state, and it is probable that it will last during his entire presidency. This means that we shall see great changes, since this affords an unusual ability to influence people in an ethical way and to realize ideas by instilling idealism and trust.”

“This is a sign of that basic Christ quality which may be called sharing. That is why he can make such a deep appeal, touch the hearts of most people, and carve new paths for the community of mankind.”

Lorentsen’s article was headed “An Initiate Steps Forward”. Lorentsen’s partner Yvonne Wassini supplied the “information” that Obama was not an ordinary nobody but an initiate, to be sure, for she saw that with her clairvoyance. Writes Lorentsen:

“Yvonne tuned in to the speech with her clairvoyance and saw a broad stream of light going through his consciousness and a protecting space ship close to him. The stream of light came from a council at the masters’ level which is part of the third of the three great departments of the hierarchy. This department stimulates civilization, it is led by the Count/Master R., and the English master, who stimulates a new balance in the world economy and between the rich and the poor, among other things, is a member of that council. The stream of light went on to Sirius and a greater source with the cosmic Logos. When she

asked whether the council would continue to send that stream also on a daily basis when Obama becomes president, she received the answer that this would happen.”

“Now the hierarchy has got a unique mouthpiece on the very top of the political sphere, where enormous power to manifest has been gathered. Let us support the great opportunity that this affords to mankind. Let us strengthen the vibration of optimism, the network of light, and the vision of the community of mankind. In these very days, months, and years we can tip the scale between light and darkness by thinking, feeling, and acting globally.”

The Death of the Obama Cult

When this is written, two years after Obama was elected president and almost two years after his assumption of office, it is only too evident that all this grandiose “esoteric” loose talk about this “world server of the highest rank” or “Initate” in the White House has come to nought, and ingloriously.

Obama has continued all the wars of aggression that Bush started, has added one of his own making, the war on Yemen, and has intensified the drone war in the North-West of Pakistan. His almost daily acts of military aggression in Pakistan have cost about two thousand people their lives. His concentration on constantly expanding war policies hinders him, like it hindered his predecessor Bush, from devoting his powers to the economic and social problems of the United States, which are growing more and more serious. He has not yet closed the torture prison of Guantánamo, which he promised to do immediately after assuming office. He has continued the anti-constitutional extension of the executive power (his own) at the expense of the legislative and judicial powers. He is being accused, not without some justification, of continuing that transformation of the republic into a presidential tyranny which President George W. Bush started. He has given permission to kill American citizens within the country and outside of it on the mere suspicion that they might constitute security risks. In his Middle East policies he has proved utterly incapable of hindering Israel from expanding its illegal settlements on occupied Palestinian territory. Hardly surprising, in the recently held mid-term elections he suffered a crushing defeat, the heaviest one a president in office has suffered in sixty years. Twenty-nine million voters from his own Democratic base turned their backs on him. In his own party, forces are at work to persuade him not to run for re-election in 2012. Obama’s capital failure has brought on the death of the Obama cult. In its stead we see weariness, disgust, and deep disappointment.

It is always easy to second-guess, perhaps some people say. To this it should be retorted that as early as at the presidential election two years ago, it was clear to experienced observers – people who had neither “esoteric” special information nor “clairvoyant” powers – that Obama would not be able to achieve the positive changes projected upon him by adherents of the cult. Read, for instance, the article *Conned Again?*, written by Dr Paul Craig Roberts. I published my Swedish translation of it on my website *Rapporter från fängelseplaneten* (Reports from the Prison Planet) on November 10, 2008, the very day the American original was published in *Counterpunch* magazine. I now republish Dr Roberts’ article, as Appendix II to this paper.

These grave misjudgements on Obama and his future presidency of which the three “esotericians” were guilty when they, in violation of elementary esoteric rules, made groundless statements on things of which they could know nothing, gives us the occasion to ask the questions “What is esoterics?” and “What is not esoterics?”, and to answer them.

What is Esoterics?

Esoterics is exclusively the knowledge coming from the planetary hierarchy, which supervises the evolution of consciousness in the lower four natural kingdoms of our planet. The planetary hierarchy consists of individuals, monads, who through self-realization, their

own hard work at their consciousness development, have reached beyond the fourth natural kingdom, the human kingdom. Those individuals were human beings once but are not any more. They are now superhuman beings in the fifth natural kingdom or divine beings in the sixth natural kingdom.

Only in the fifth natural kingdom does the monad acquire a knowledge of reality, of the lowest three of the seven worlds of the solar system to begin with – those seven worlds being in their turn the lowest seven (43–49) of 49 cosmic worlds – knowledge of the physical world (49), the emotional world (48), and the mental-causal world (47) – later of the essential world (46) and the superessential world (45), the *buddhi* and *atma* of theosophists.

Individuals of the fourth natural kingdom, human beings, can acquire a knowledge of the physical world at the utmost. Certainly there are in the human kingdom so-called clairvoyants, who “see” forms in the emotional world (also called the “astral world”). However, since the emotional world is the material world of desires, feelings, and imaginings, the forms which people can “see” there are products of their own emotional and wishful thinking, except those replicas of the forms of the physical world which the emotional world also contains. In fact, the expressions of human emotional consciousness (desire, feeling, and imagination) constantly shape forms in emotional matter, although only clairvoyants can “see” them. The shaping of those forms is the work of an instant and is done mostly unwittingly.

All kinds of human collective and individual fears and hopes take objective form in the emotional world. The different religions and religious sects have their hells and heavens there, unconsciously formed by millions of believers. After physical death, these believers can dwell in those places of torment or bliss, having no idea of the fact that their self-created illusions could be swept away at once by an act of determined mental will.

Nor is man’s mental consciousness, thinking, able to produce knowledge, but can only ascertain facts in the physical world. Speculation solves no problems of the nature of reality, the meaning of life, the existence of the soul, or any other such questions about which philosophers of all times have held different opinions and will always hold different opinions until they recognize esoterics as the only source of knowledge in all questions concerning superphysical reality.

Man has three principal kinds of consciousness: physical, emotional, and mental. The basic nature of emotional consciousness is illusion – the misleading expectations and false values of desire and feeling (put simply: money, glory, and power). The basic nature of mental consciousness is fiction – views and speculations without counterparts in reality. Only the sense perceptions of physical consciousness afford man some knowledge, but then of the physical world only. Man’s limitation to knowledge of the physical world only, the lowest world of 49 cosmic worlds, has the effect that he cannot acquire by himself a correct knowledge of the nature of reality and the meaning of life. With emotional clairvoyance he does not even get a real understanding of the illusory character of the emotional world. With mental speculation he does not see through the fictitious nature of mental consciousness. Physical sense perceptions, emotional illusions, and mental fictions – those are the resources of human knowledge. And they are quite insufficient to provide him with a correct knowledge of reality and life, to afford him an understanding of why he lives and how he can develop his consciousness. By his own resources man cannot know – this is the basic starting point of all esoteric teaching.

Beginning in the year 1875, some parts of the esoteric knowledge, the knowledge of the planetary hierarchy, are permitted for exoteric dissemination. This has had the result that immature people have made their distortions of the knowledge: added things to it, removed things from it, changed things in it.

There is a certain category of good people who react negatively when you point this out to them. They should ask themselves these questions: Why was the esoteric knowledge kept

secret until 1875, and why was it, before that year, taught only to carefully selected disciples? Was not one of the reasons the knowledge was kept secret that they wanted to protect it from this very distortion, against which leading members of the planetary hierarchy warned before some knowledge was released for publication in 1875? Why should we assume that this phenomenon, which we see fully developed in all fields of human life and work, namely distortion and falsification, would not affect esoterics, too, whenever it became publicly known?

Most simply and most concisely, esoterics can be defined as the essential knowledge of reality and life, a knowledge that no human being can acquire on his own.

It is precisely because no human being, not even mankind as a collective, can acquire the essential knowledge of reality and life, that mankind must have this knowledge given to it.

It is the individuals of the fifth and sixth natural kingdoms who have given us esoterics. In so doing they have obeyed that law of life which is called the law of self-realization and which says that human beings must do by themselves everything they are able to do on their own, and will receive help only in such matters as they cannot do by themselves. This is the same law of life that sensible parents apply when bringing up their children.

If human beings could acquire the knowledge of reality and life on their own, then esoterics would be unnecessary, the planetary hierarchy would be unnecessary, the esoteric teachers sent out by the planetary hierarchy would be unnecessary, the esoteric schools founded by those teachers would be unnecessary.

Now all of this exists, however: esoterics, the knowledge of the fifth and sixth natural kingdoms, does exist; the planetary hierarchy does exist; esoteric teachers sent out by the planetary hierarchy do exist; the esoteric schools founded by those teachers do exist. And since they exist and, indeed, must exist for us human beings to get some knowledge of reality and life, the belief of emotional clairvoyants and mental speculators that they can attain the knowledge is without foundation and absurd.

Each kind of consciousness perceives only its own kind of reality and lower kinds. Physical consciousness (sense perceptions) perceive the physical world, but not the emotional world. Emotional objective consciousness (so-called clairvoyance) perceives the emotional world and the physical world, but not the mental world. Consequently, a lower kind of consciousness cannot perceive a higher kind of consciousness, but this higher consciousness is non-existent to the lower consciousness. A lower kind of objective consciousness cannot perceive material forms of a higher kind. You cannot use emotional clairvoyance to gaze up into higher worlds –quite contrary to what Yvonne Wassini believes and what Rudolf Steiner believed before her.

Consciousness of a higher kind can perceive and judge consciousness of a lower kind. Consciousness of a higher kind can control, govern, consciousness of a lower kind. Emotional consciousness controls physical sense perceptions; mental consciousness controls emotional desires, feelings, and imaginations. However, the mental control works only within certain defined limits. These limits will now be indicated, but first a few basic facts about man's possible consciousness.

There are six main kinds of emotional consciousness accessible to man: 48:2-7. Objectively, they correspond to six regions of the emotional world, each region being filled with its own emotional material forms that can be "seen" with emotional objective consciousness, or clairvoyance. The six kinds of emotional consciousness mentioned are grouped in three lower, 48:5-7, and three higher, 48:2-4. The three lower ones are the most active at man's lowest two stages of development, the stages of barbarism and civilization. The three higher ones are the most active at the two next higher stages of development, which are the stage of culture, or the stage of the mystic, and the stage of humanity (the humanist stage). There are four principal kinds of mental consciousness, 47:4-7, demonstrating in four

kinds of qualitatively ever higher intellectual ability. Of these four, the majority of mankind has activated (developed) only the lowest kind, 47:7, inference thinking from ground to consequence. The intelligentsia of the stage of civilization has activated the second kind from below, 47:6, abstract principle thinking. The mystics of the stage of culture usually have not reached beyond 47:6. Only an élite, rare in numbers, individuals of the humanist stage, the mental stage proper, have activated 47:5, perspective thinking; and still fewer, also 47:4, system thinking. The highest two kinds of mental consciousness, 47:3 and 47:2, are kinds of causal consciousness. They are largely out of reach of mankind and are conquered only as a result of esoteric training according to the methods of the planetary hierarchy.

The mental control mentioned works in such a manner that 47:7 is able to control 48:7 and 48:6. This is apparent in that control of lower emotional impulses which enters into general human upbringing. 47:6 can control 48:5 and 48:4. 47:5 can control 48:3 and 48:2. This implies that only the higher intellect activated at the stage of humanity, 47:5, is able to control higher emotionality, 48:3 and 48:2. This higher emotionality is what subjectively appears in the mystic's states of rapture and bliss; and objectively, in those "divine" and "celestial" desire forms which the mystic "sees" if in addition he is a clairvoyant.

Therefore, at the stage of the mystic, the individual is unable to mentally control his higher emotionality. Consequently, he must believe in what it suggests to him, must believe also in the desire forms he sees in the highest regions of the emotional world.

The most important esoteric understanding of the emotional world (also called the astral world) to be gained is that everything in that world is deception, save the emotional replicas of the forms of the gross physical world existing there (in the lowest three emotional regions: 48:5-7 correspond to 49:5-7, gaseous, liquid, and solid physical matter). Indeed, the mystic may be informed of this esoteric fact, but he cannot put it into practice, for the impulses of his higher emotionality are too strong, or rather, his higher intellect, 47:5, is still too faintly developed to assert itself against his higher emotionality, 48:3 and 48:2, strongly activated as it is.

If he possessed the higher intellect of the humanist stage, 47:5, developed into full force, then he could put the esoteric fact of the illusoriness of the emotional world into practice. Such a practice would then manifest itself in his ability of dis-identification with, demagnetization from, also the highest kinds of "divine" desire forms of the emotional world, unconcern for this kind of illusionism. Then he would be able impersonally, objectively to observe those forms as the interesting phenomena they are, being creations by the imagination of human devotees. But then he would no longer be a mystic, but an esoterician.

Inevitably, people unconsciously make replicas in the emotional world of all such things as they hear of and read about and embrace with emotional adoration. Those who study esoterics emotionally, for example, make such replicas of esoteric teachers they read about. The entire planetary hierarchy exists in emotional replicas. Clairvoyants "see" those forms and take them to be true revelations, particularly if the forms make a lively impression and convey messages to them. Esoteric teacher D.K. warns emphatically against the emotional replica of himself that exists already:

"It is not me, nor is it linked to me, nor do I use it. I have definitely disassociated myself from it and do not employ it as a means of contacting those I teach, for I work from choice entirely on mental levels thereby undoubtedly limiting my range of contacts but increasing the effectiveness of my work. This astral thought-form is a distortion of me and my work, needless to say, and resembles an animated and galvanized shell." (Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 1957, p. 12)

D.K. then goes on to say that this emotional form, which also contains a certain amount of mental matter, can make a wide appeal, that it masquerades as D.K. himself, and that the illusion is complete and real to those in whom the intuition is unawakened. He also says:

“Devotees can therefore tune in with great facility on this illusory form and be completely deceived. Its vibration is of a relatively high order. Its mental effect is like a beautiful parody of myself... Because this is a distorted image and functions in the three worlds of form and has no source of validity higher than those of form, it has in it the seeds of separateness and of disaster. Forms of flattery are sent out from it, ideas of separateness, those thoughts which feed ambition and which foster love of power, and those germs of desire and personal longing (which divide groups) emerge from contact with it. The results to those who are deceived thereby are sad.” (Alice A. Bailey, *ibid.*)

Just as the monads of the fourth natural kingdom, human beings, have three principal kinds of consciousness – physical sense perceptions; emotional desires, feelings, and imaginations; and mental thoughts – so the monads of the fifth natural kingdom, for example the junior members of the planetary hierarchy, also have three principal kinds of consciousness, that is to say: causal (47:1), essential (46:1), and superessential (45:4) consciousness (the higher *manas*, *buddhi*, and *atma* of theosophists). Only when possessing those higher three kinds of consciousness are the monads able independently to acquire a knowledge of reality and of the meaning of life. The monads who have their attention normally centred in those higher three kinds of consciousness are called “second selves” (an abbreviation of “second triad selves”). Human monads, who have their attention centred in the lower three kinds of consciousness are called “first selves” (first triad selves).

Those higher three kinds of consciousness were previously often called “intuition” (as in the statement by D.K. quoted above). Therefore, it is necessary to point out that intuition is a kind of consciousness that actually is not acquired in the human kingdom to any greater extent. Only advanced disciples of the planetary hierarchy, initiates on the verge of the fifth natural kingdom, possess intuition to any degree, and then mostly of the lowest kind: causal intuition. Consequently, intuition is basically a faculty of the fifth natural kingdom.

“In the esoteric literature, the individual is encouraged to acquire intuition almost as though it concerned the faculty of mental judgement. Intuition is a faculty of the second self, however, and to acquire it you must at least be in contact with the essential (46) world.” Henry T. Laurency, *The Way of Man*, 8.20.2

What is not Esoterics?

Emotional imagination is emotional imagination and not esoterics. Emotional imaginings about esoteric things are still emotional imaginings pure and simple. The fact that such imaginings deal with esoteric things does not mean that they are turned into esoteric knowledge. Imagination is an expression of purely human consciousness, which does not exist in the animal kingdom or in the superhuman kingdoms. Esoterics is the knowledge possessed by second selves. Second selves have no imagination, have no need of imagination.

The threefold consciousness that second selves possess excludes, dispenses with, “all too human” consciousness: belief, speculation, expectation, doubt, identification, imagination, enthusiasm, elation, and its opposite, despondency.

The emotional elation that some people feel when reading about higher kinds of consciousness is not an expression of those higher kinds of consciousness. Imaginative experiences they have on the basis of what they are taught about higher consciousness are not that higher consciousness.

Compilations of such emotional imaginings of higher realities are not esoteric teaching.

It is important to see that what determines whether it is esoterics is not the object of study, but the source and origin of the knowledge, subsequently on which level of consciousness study is being done, by which methods, under which discipline of principles and rules, and for which purposes. The object, however, is of no significance.

If the object determined whether it is esoterics or not, then any deluded misconceptions whatever concerning those higher realities, beings, and laws of which esoterics treats would be esoterics as well. If so, esoterics would be both right knowledge and error, both truth and lie. That is patently absurd. By this *reductio ad absurdum* it is thus demonstrated that the object cannot determine whether it is esoterics.

Nor is it possible that conceptions obtained through emotional (astral) clairvoyance is esoterics. Anyone who wishes to controvert what is said here, believing in his clairvoyance, is asked to answer the following four questions:

1) If it were that easy for a human being using mere clairvoyance to know everything he desires to know about superhuman and cosmic realities, masters, the decisions and actions of cosmic beings, etc., as Yvonne Wassini does, why then do we need esoterics, which is knowledge of those things mediated by individuals of superhuman kingdoms?

2) How is it that all human knowledge is difficult to obtain, is easily marred by mistakes and errors, which are eliminated only in a long and arduous process, whereas this clairvoyant “knowledge” is obtained with the greatest facility and reaches the highest worlds and beings?

3) Does it indeed happen sometimes to me as a clairvoyant that I am in error and see it all wrong? And how do I decide when this is the case and what I see is not a real thing or a real being?

4) All esoteric teachers, without one single exception, have warned against the illusoriness of the astral world. One example, D.K.’s warning, was cited above. On what grounds do I then believe that I see it right?

Human beings, that is: first selves, do not possess the consciousness faculties that are required to exercise esoteric disciplines such as esoteric healing and esoteric astrology.

To be able to practise esoteric healing you must possess the faculty of seeing man’s all envelopes with their centres, the causal envelope included, in order to direct currents of energy correctly through all these envelopes and centres. Thus objective causal consciousness is required. Only advanced causal selves possess that, such monads as are preparing to pass to the fifth natural kingdom. These are initiates, conscious disciples of the planetary hierarchy who are in telepathic contact with their teacher and his group of disciples. As for the capacity of their consciousness, they are far above the emotional clairvoyants of the stage of the mystic, far above even the intellectual speculators of the humanist stage (mental stage).

The corresponding is true of esoteric astrology. In order to cast a horoscope of a human being, a nativity that is correct in the esoteric sense, you must be able to determine not only the moment of physical birth, but also the moments of the formation of the individual’s superphysical envelopes and their attachment to that monad. And you cannot do so without possessing the corresponding objective consciousness, that is: up to and including causal objective consciousness. In addition, you must be able to ascertain the influences on earthly conditions of such planets and solar systems as do not exist in gross physical matter (49:5-7), but only in etheric matter (49:1-4). To exercise esoteric astrology in the proper sense, however, it is not sufficient even to possess etheric vision. For there are in our cosmic neighbourhood solar systems that do not exist in lower matter than essential matter (46-matter, the *buddhi* of theosophists), and there are also mightily cosmic collective beings who do not manifest themselves in lower matter than cosmic emotional or cosmic mental matter (42–36, or 29–35 matter, respectively), and those cosmic beings may wield important influences on our solar system, so that their impact must be considered in esoteric astrological computations. The conclusion from what is said here is that the esoteric astrology that is being studied in the planetary hierarchy (the members of which possess at least 46-self consciousness but at the most 43-self consciousness) is of a mere preparatory or elementary character, whereas the true study is reserved for the most advanced members of the planetary government (cosmic causal selves, 29-selves).

It is only in the human kingdom, that kingdom of life-ignorance and arrogance, that an individual may say of himself that he is "one of the world's most recognized esoteric astrologers". In his grotesque self-aggrandizement, such an individual leaves very little to superhuman and divine authorities, such as our planet's truly foremost experts on esoteric astrology – the most advanced and oldest members of the planetary government.

Conclusion

We human beings are first selves. The fact that we have within ourselves the potential of becoming second selves, the potential of developing several kinds of superhuman consciousness with the faculties that accompany them, is quite another matter. However, no human being can on his own, without help, transcend the limit of the human kingdom to enter the kingdom of the second selves, the fifth natural kingdom. No man can without help effect his transformation into a second self. The help required for this transformation is the one given by the planetary hierarchy through their teaching and training, through the teachers they commission and send out, teachers who are also second selves. Only the one who has walked the path himself is able to guide others on it.

The journey to the fifth natural kingdom is long and difficult, also for those who embark on it starting from the highest human capacity: the highest emotional levels of the stage of the mystic (48:2) or the highest mental levels of the stage of the humanist (47:4).

Emotional "esotericians" are unknowing of the character, modes of apprehension, faculties of higher mental consciousness. This higher intellect comprises a series of mental instruments of qualitatively ever higher kinds. This higher mentality they must conquer, its concomitant faculties they must master, before they can acquire causal consciousness – intuition of the lowest kind. No stage, no level can be skipped.

Also those who in their individual consciousness development have covered the stage of the mystic and reached the humanist stage, the mental stage proper, usually have a long way to go before they have acquired the higher mentality in full. They, too, will need esoteric training, generally a long one, before they can gain causal consciousness. Usually they will need to unlearn the tendency to speculation, the belief in their own intellect's ability to judge and understand everything.

This is not to say that the higher kinds of consciousness belonging to the second self do not pre-exist to some extent also at lower stages of development. They do, but to such a low degree that they must be regarded as embryonic, rudimentary, of little use, and generally evanescent in the flow of mechanical emotional and mental associations (the "inner babble") constantly gushing through the human brain. The first significant manifestation of awakening causal consciousness can be experienced by man at the stage of culture, the stage of the mystic, as a realization of his own responsibility, not just for those closest to him or even for his nation, but for all mankind.

Starting at the stage of culture, the higher emotional stage, man can submit to esoteric discipline and begin working at developing his higher intellect and also, to some extent, his embryonic causal consciousness. This causal consciousness manifests itself sometimes spontaneously as brief moments of self-consciousness, glimpses of one's own presence, in an otherwise grey mist of mechanical emotionality and mentality. The human individual may have reminiscences of such moments from early childhood, preserving them to old age. By being trained expediently according to esoteric methods he can learn how to effect such moments of self-consciousness himself, intentionally, purposefully; learn how to make them last longer and reach deeper. Such self-consciousness brought about with will, with intention, is called self-remembrance (Sanskrit: *smriti*, Pali: *sati*, Arabic: *dhikr*).

In fact, causal consciousness, in its lowest aspect, is self-consciousness. In its higher aspect it is self-consciousness combined with group consciousness. Causal consciousness can never occur save in moments of self-consciousness. A measure of how much a man has succeeded

in activating his dormant, potential causal consciousness is how often and for how long he manages to stay self-conscious. It is impossible to cheat at this, pretend to possess self-consciousness, if the individual is honest to himself. Having been trained even for a long time he will manage to do this only briefly now and then. Strenuous work at it, however, unflagging work, without bluffing or bungling it, without negligence, is the one and only path to the kingdoms of the supermen and the gods.

Gautama the Buddha's last words to his disciples before entering nirvana: "*Behold now, brethren, I exhort you, saying: 'Decay is inherent in all composite things. Work out your perfection without negligence.'*"

Translated from the Swedish by the author.

APPENDIX I

Here I append the statements of the three emotional "esotericians" in their entirety. The Bennis and Lorentsen texts are translations by me from the Danish.

David Spangler:

"Watching the election returns Tuesday night was like watching the moon landing forty years ago. Then, a man took a step onto a new world and all humanity took a step with him. Tuesday night, the voters of the United States of America took a step and because of that, a man took us all into a new world of possibility and hope. Watching President-Elect Barack Obama, I felt like I'd been waiting for this moment most of my life. As tears of joy and exclamations of wonder and delight burst forth from Americans of all color and race, I felt for this evening I was seeing the true America, the United States that can rise to be a planetary nation, a place of blessing for all peoples and all life. This was echoed in Senator McCain's gracious concession speech and in President Bush's marvelous and graceful statement of appreciation for the significance of Obama's victory at a news conference the next morning from the Rose Garden.

Obama decreed that no fireworks be set off as a victory celebration over Grant Park in Chicago because he felt it was inappropriate to the solemn tasks ahead of us and because this was not a triumph over an opponent but an opening to working together as a community to meet those tasks. But the fireworks were still there in our hearts and you could see the light of their explosions in the eyes of those who watched the returns and saw a black man – a family man, a loving man – step forth to take on the burden of our common future.

There is hard work and sacrifice ahead for all of us; the promise of the election will not be realized overnight, nor even, as the President-Elect said, in four years. The challenges ahead are immense. But for a shining moment the best in us rose to the surface and said to those challenges and to our future, 'Yes, we can!' It was a truly spiritual moment, a moment transcending politics, a moment that all the world has joined with us in rejoicing. It was – and is – a moment of hope.

And now we all move forward, not into Utopia but into the bright freshness that each day always brings every day of our lives, vibrant with promise even when filled with challenge. The spirit within us is inexhaustible, and to it, each day is like the first day of creation. Possibilities abound, and love is but a choice away from being the radiant power of our lives. We forget this, and when we do, life can press down upon us and we feel shadowed. But then there are those moments, precious and empowering, when we remember. We remember who we are and what we can do and the promise of the light within us.

Tuesday night, when a black man of a minority population and of global ancestry was voted into the most powerful office in the world on a wave of transformation and hope, was one of those moments. Tuesday night, we all remembered."

Editorial commentary. For some reason it is not possible to find Spangler's original text on his website on the Internet. Instead, the text was found at:
http://barakah4barack.blogspot.com/2008_11_01_archive.html

BARACK OBAMA – A World Server
by Hardy Bennis

In the last newsletter headed “The Economic Crisis and the Group of World Servers”, there was a brief description of the growing group of world servers and what characterizes them.

In the United States, Barack Obama was elected president, as expected. Till recently he was pretty unknown in most of the world, but during the election campaign and at his great speech in Chicago after the election it became clear to millions of people that we are standing here before an unusually soul-oriented person. When he speaks it is like a projector filled with hope and expectation, playing from the one side to the other. Behind the great words he sent out a message of brotherhood and hope to the world that made tears burst out in many people. He uses mantric influences – for example... which reveals a strong and conscious 7th ray. And why are there so great expectations from him as president of the world power USA? Because his words resound in what is highest in ourselves. A new page is being turned in the political world – not just in USA but in most of the world.

All around the globe opinion polls were made about the two candidates for the American presidency, and even if this did not have a concrete importance for the election in the United States, many people stated that they would have voted for Obama for president of a united Europe and America.

The Internet and TV demonstrate to us, in good and bad ways, that we are one world. All that happens even in the most remote places is immediately reported in the daily news. There are many indications that increasing numbers of people choose intuitively the leaders of the new age – not so much with their emotions, as they did up to now, but with their growing intuition.

I dare say that Barack Obama is a world server of the highest rank. He will set examples to future politicians worldwide, and I dare go so far as to say that great spiritual forces are behind him. He is without doubt an important factor in the preparation for the reappearance of the Christ.

The entire economic crisis is just a first indication of the revolution that is to be expected in all spheres of life. We cannot enter the new century with the many “skeletons in the closet” as we have taken over from the last century. Those are unfinished wars and hateful disputes, as we see, for example, in the Middle East and in Africa – between extremist Moslems and the Western world. We experience ecclesiastical orthodoxy, enormous problems of hunger in too many places in the world, a bad distribution of the world resources, and the gap between the rich and the poor which deepens more and more. And finally we have got the economic crisis that has clearly revealed the egoism and greed that are at the bottom of this crisis.

The flame of hope has been kindled, and for the growing circle of world servers in all countries it is important to notice the signs that will show at an increasing rate, and they will demonstrate that the power of egoism and resistance is about to yield to... “Yes, we can!”

In his first interview after the election, Obama said that the first action taken by him when he assumes office would be to close the Guantánamo base and to prohibit torture under American auspices, so that faith in American morality and ethics may be restored.

An Initiate Steps Forward

Mariann Andersson's Swedish introduction: *"Here is a letter from Asger Lorentsen for you to read. In it, he describes Obama as an Initiate now stepping forward. Pleasant reading, and if you need any explanations of the Danish words, just ask me!"*

Here on Tenerife I have seen fragments after fragments of Obama's speech. Every detail of his speech is a pearl of choice of words, images, and meanings perfect in form. Every one of them appeals to idealism, solidarity, and hope. And together the details make up the most perfect speech imaginable in this situation – and that without a manuscript, notes, or a speechwriter. I have also heard countless commentators emphasizing positive elements of the speech, but I don't believe that those commentators have grasped entirely the depth and range of the speech.

When Gorbachev appeared in the Soviet Union, he changed from a politician into an initiate with an important global mission. The same has now happened with Obama. His higher mental consciousness has wholly descended, which an analysis of his speech reveals in all details. Impersonal, committed to the community, oriented towards wholeness, occupied with common human values, world citizen. Yes, inwardly he represents neither the black population nor the Democratic Party. He is a human being on equal footing with other people of all parties, races, and nations. And at the same time he is a representative of mankind without precedence of anyone in particular. Therefore, he can give his hand to McCain and to those who voted against him: They are natural friends and members of the same community.

Some years ago in Italy I had an experience of the consciousness of a renaissance prince. During three hours I experienced that form of identity where your full potential of intelligence, overview, creative idealism, and power to realize ideas worked as a whole. In this state you can have an enormous overview, solve complicated problems, see clearly where solutions are to be found and so focus on realization. Regrettably, this state vanished again, but when I saw Obama speaking I could recognize the state, and it is probable that it will last during his entire presidency. This means that we shall see great changes, since this affords an unusual ability to influence people in an ethical way and to realize ideas by instilling idealism and trust. We shall see, among other things, many meetings with other heads of state have great effects. And his ability to get politicians, specialists, and populations together will be quite uncommon.

In addition, Obama has a natural talent for being on equal footing with the outcast of society, the uneducated, and the intellectual elite. This is a sign of that basic Christ quality which may be called sharing. That is why he can make such a deep appeal, touch the hearts of most people, and carve new paths for the community of mankind.

Yvonne tuned in to the speech with her clairvoyance and saw a broad stream of light going through his consciousness and a protecting space ship close to him. The stream of light came from a council at the masters' level which is part of the third of the three great departments of the hierarchy. This department stimulates civilization, it is led by the Count/Master R., and the English master, who stimulates a new balance in the world economy and between the rich and the poor, among other things, is a member of that council. The stream of light went on to Sirius and a greater source with the cosmic Logos. When she asked whether the council would continue to send that stream also on a daily basis when Obama becomes president, she received the answer that this would happen."

Now the hierarchy has got a unique mouthpiece on the very top of the political sphere, where enormous power to manifest has been gathered. Let us support the great opportunity that this affords to mankind. Let us strengthen the vibration of optimism, the network of light, and the vision of the community of mankind. In these very days, months, and years we can tip the scale between light and darkness by thinking, feeling, and acting globally.

With love

Asger Lorentsen

Mariann's commentary: *"Here you see clearly what a light he has in his eyes and what a contact with his own soul and the buddhic plane he has! At least I experience a powerful stream of light 'behind' him.*

I must say that it will be tremendously exciting to follow the immediate future and years, and I hope that Asger's vision and Yvonne's clairvoyance of him are true..."

My commentary: The "buddhic plane" is the theosophical term of the essential world (world 46). Thus Mariann claims to be able to see clearly in Obama's eyes that he is in contact with that world. To do so you must be in contact with world 46 yourself, you must have acquired essential consciousness, be a 46-self. For a lower consciousness cannot ascertain a higher one.

Exciting? Perhaps. But the reality value of it? They never care about that.

APPENDIX II

November 10, 2008

Obama, Rahm-bo and the End of the New American Century

CONNED AGAIN?

By PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS

If the change President-elect Obama has promised includes a halt to America's wars of aggression and an end to the rip-off of taxpayers by powerful financial interests, what explains Obama's choice of foreign and economic policy advisors? Indeed, Obama's selection of Rahm Emanuel as White House chief of staff is a signal that change ended with Obama's election. The only thing different about the new administration will be the faces.

Rahm Emanuel is a supporter of Bush's invasion of Iraq. Emanuel rose to prominence in the Democratic Party as a result of his fundraising connections to AIPAC. A strong supporter of the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, he comes from a terrorist family. His father was a member of Irgun, a Jewish terrorist organization that used violence to drive the British and Palestinians out of Palestine in order to create the Jewish state. During the 1991 Gulf War, Rahm Emanuel volunteered to serve in the Israel Defense Forces. He was a member of the Freddie Mac board of directors and received \$231,655 in directors fees in 2001. According to Wikipedia, "during the time Emanuel spent on the board, Freddie Mac was plagued with scandals involving campaign contributions and accounting irregularities."

In "Hail to the Chief of Staff," Alexander Cockburn describes Emanuel as "a super-Likudnik hawk," who as chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in 2006 "made great efforts to knock out antiwar Democratic candidates."

My despondent friends in the Israeli peace movement ask, "What is this man doing in Obama's administration?"

Obama's election was necessary as the only means Americans had to hold the Republicans accountable for their crimes against the Constitution and human rights, for their violations of US and international laws, for their lies and deceptions, and for their financial chicanery. As an editorial in *Pravda* put it, "Only Satan would have been worse than the Bush regime. Therefore it could be argued that the new administration in the USA could never be worse than the one which divorced the hearts and minds of Americans from their brothers in the

international community, which appalled the rest of the world with shock and awe tactics that included concentration camps, torture, mass murder and utter disrespect for international law.”

But Obama’s advisers are drawn from the same gang of Washington thugs and Wall Street banksters as Bush’s. Richard Holbrooke, was an assistant secretary of state and ambassador in the Clinton administration. He implemented the policy to enlarge NATO and to place the military alliance on Russia’s border in contravention of Reagan’s promise to Gorbachev. Holbrooke is also associated with the Clinton administration’s illegal bombing of Serbia, a war crime that killed civilians and Chinese diplomats. If not a neocon himself, Holbrooke is closely allied with them.

Madeline Albright is the Clinton era secretary of state who told Leslie Stahl (60 Minutes) that the US policy of Iraq sanctions, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children, had goals important enough to justify the children’s deaths. Albright’s infamous words: “we think the price is worth it.” Wikipedia reports that this immoralist served on the board of directors of the New York Stock Exchange at the time of Dick Grasso’s \$187.5 million compensation scandal.

Dennis Ross has long associations with the Israeli-Palestinian “peace negotiations.” A member of his Clinton era team, Aaron David Miller, wrote that during 1999-2000 the US negotiating team led by Ross acted as Israel’s lawyer: “we had to run everything by Israel first.” This “stripped our policy of the independence and flexibility required for serious peacemaking. If we couldn’t put proposals on the table without checking with the Israelis first, and refused to push back when they said no, how effective could our mediation be?” According to Wikipedia, Ross is “chairman of a new Jerusalem-based think tank, the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, funded and founded by the Jewish Agency.”

Clearly, this is not a group of advisors that is going to halt America’s wars against Israel’s enemies or force the Israeli government to accept the necessary conditions for a real peace in the Middle East.

Ralph Nader predicted as much. In his “Open Letter to Barack Obama (November 3, 2008), Nader pointed out to Obama that his “transformation from an articulate defender of Palestinian rights . . . to a dittoman for the hard-line AIPAC lobby” puts Obama at odds with “a majority of Jewish-Americans” and “64 per cent of Israelis.” Nader quotes the Israeli writer and peace advocate Uri Avnery’s description of Obama’s appearance before AIPAC as an appearance that “broke all records for obsequiousness and fawning.” Nader damns Obama for his “utter lack of political courage [for] surrendering to demands of the hard-liners to prohibit former president Jimmy Carter from speaking at the Democratic National Convention.” Carter, who achieved the only meaningful peace agreement between Israel and the Arabs, has been demonized by the powerful AIPAC lobby for criticizing Israel’s policy of apartheid toward the Palestinians whose territory Israel forcibly occupies.

Obama’s economic team is just as bad. Its star is Robert Rubin, the bankster who was secretary of the treasury in the Clinton administration. Rubin has responsibility for the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act and, thereby, responsibility for the current financial crisis. In his letter to Obama, Nader points out that Obama received unprecedented campaign contributions from corporate and Wall Street interests. “Never before has a Democratic nominee for President achieved this supremacy over his Republican counterpart.”

Obama’s victory speech was magnificent. The TV cameras scanning faces in the audience showed the hope and belief that propelled Obama into the presidency. But Obama cannot bring change to Washington. There is no one in the Washington crowd that he can appoint who is capable of bringing change. If Obama were to reach outside the usual crowd, anyone suspected of being a bringer of change could not get confirmed by the Senate. Powerful

interest groups – AIPAC, the military-security complex, Wall Street – use their political influence to block unacceptable appointments.

As Alexander Cockburn said of Obama in a pre-election column, “never has the dead hand of the past had a ‘reform’ candidate so firmly by the windpipe.” Obama confirmed Cockburn’s verdict in his first press conference as president-elect. Disregarding the unanimous US National Intelligence Estimate, which concluded that Iran stopped working on nuclear weapons five years ago, and ignoring the continued certification by the International Atomic Energy Agency that none of the nuclear material for Iran’s civilian nuclear reactor has been diverted to weapons use, Obama sallied forth with the Israel Lobby’s propaganda and accused Iran of “development of a nuclear weapon” and vowing “to prevent that from happening.”

The change that is coming to America has nothing to do with Obama. Change is coming from the financial crisis brought on by Wall Street greed and irresponsibility, from the eroding role of the US dollar as reserve currency, from countless mortgage foreclosures, from the offshoring of millions of America’s best jobs, from a deepening recession, from pillars of American manufacturing – Ford and GM – begging the government for taxpayers’ money to stay alive, and from budget and trade deficits that are too large to be closed by normal means.

Traditionally, the government relies on monetary and fiscal policy to lift the economy out of recession. But easy money is not working. Interest rates are already low and monetary growth is already high, yet unemployment is rising. The budget deficit is already huge – a world record – and the red ink is not stimulating the economy. Can even lower interest rates and even higher budget deficits help an economy that has moved offshore, leaving behind jobless consumers overburdened with debt?

How much more can the government borrow? America’s foreign creditors are asking this question. An official organ of the Chinese ruling party recently called for Asian and European countries to “banish the US dollar from their direct trade relations, relying only on their own currencies.”

“Why,” asks another Chinese publication, “should China help the US to issue debt without end in the belief that the national credit of the US can expand without limit?”

The world has tired of American hegemony and had its fill of American arrogance. America’s reputation is in tatters: the financial debacle, endless red ink, Abu Ghraib, Gitmo, rendition, torture, illegal wars based on lies and deception, disrespect for the sovereignty of other countries, war crimes, disregard for international law and the Geneva Conventions, the assault on habeas corpus and the separation of powers, a domestic police state, constant interference in the internal affairs of other countries, boundless hypocrisy.

The change that is coming is the end of American empire. The hegemon has run out of money and influence. Obama as “America’s First Black President” will lift hopes and, thus, allow the act to be carried on a little longer. But the New American Century is already over.

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