

## *Editor's Page*

**Alan Johnson**

Much of the Winter issue of Democratiya is concerned with four questions.

First, where should we stand on Afghanistan? **Terry Glavin**, founder of the Canadian-Afghanistan Solidarity Committee, sends us a powerful and provocative report on his recent visit, calling for a surge in solidarity with our comrades in that country, to match Obama's anticipated troop surge. **Irfan Khawaja**, reviewing the work of Sarah Chayes, strikes a more sceptical tone, calling for a careful, chastened and strategic rethink of policy towards Afghanistan if we are to avoid the mistakes of the past 8 years.

Second, can President Barack Obama inaugurate an era of hard-headed progressive internationalism? **Will Marshall**, Bill Clinton's 'ideas-mill,' writes on the foreign policy Obama will need to pursue. **Lawrence J. Haas**, Al Gore's ex-Communication Director maps the terrain Obama will have to fight on. **Thomas Hale**, special assistant to Anne Marie Slaughter argues Obama should seize the moment to radically deepen democracy. Labourstart Director **Eric Lee** puts the case for the passage of labour law reform to top the Democrats' legislative agenda in 2009.

Third, what's left? Negatively, **Fred Siegel** reviews Bernard-Henri Lévy's savage indictment of the 'Right-Wing Left' and **Gabriel Noah Brahm** – also reviewing BHL, as well as books on Christopher Hitchens and by Martin Amis – defends the analytical and moral value of the concept 'Post-Left.' More positively, **Elisabeth Porter** argues for the importance of critical feminist perspectives to effective international development, while the indefatigable **Peter Tatchell** writes in praise of Sheila Rowbotham's new biography of Edward Carpenter, the nineteenth century prophetic gay English author, poet, philosopher and humanitarian.

Fourth, what has been the place of the Jews in Islam? **Lyn Julius** reviews Nathan Weinstock's analysis of dhimmitude, and there is an in-depth interview with **Andrew Bostom** on the troubled history and legacy of Islamic antisemitism.

Also in Democratiya 15, **Vivien Pertusot** reviews Hubert Védrine's analysis of global politics in the age of the US 'Hyperpower' (a term Védrine coined), **Mark**

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**Hannam** offers a careful response to James Griffin's important book 'On Human Rights,' and **Inna Tysoe** takes a sideways look at the Walt and Meirsheimer thesis about 'The Israel Lobby' in her review of Gregory Levey.

The Arts section contains sparkling essays from **Juliet O'Keefe** on the feminist vision of Nawal El Saadawi, **Siobhán Campbell** on the political poetry of Kevin Higgins, and a new poem from **Kevin Higgins**, 'His Hour Come Round At Last.'

Our Archive piece is **Sidney Hook's** controversial essay 'Heresy, Yes – But Conspiracy No.' Hook argued that when faced with a totalitarian threat, democrats must learn how to distinguish between heresies against liberal democratic societies, which must be defended, and conspiracies, which should not be tolerated. One does not have to agree with Hook's every conclusion to feel that he posed a question we face again today, and answered it with a seriousness that puts much current debate to shame. Hook's views should be a stimulus to us to work out our own.

The Letters Page carries two exchanges: **Marko Attila Hoare** and **David Hirsh** on Croatia, and **Menachem Kellner** and **Martin Shaw** on the relation of antisemitism to the proposed boycott of Israeli universities.