

WebMail - [TelAvivLetters] F. STONE'S WEEKLY letter 35 (the last-how sad!) ✕



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**Subject:** [TelAvivLetters] F. STONE'S WEEKLY letter 35 (the last-how sad!)

**Status:**  Urgent  New

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I. F. STONE'S WEEKLY

It was the first left-wing publication I ever got my hands on and it felt like reading pornography. This muckraker, so grownup and in-your-face, kept arriving at 17 Pagnuelo, even though my brother Ben had long since moved out and had never renewed his subscription. Mother didn't care if I appropriated Ben's copies, and Ben surely had more important things on his mind. Besides, whenever he and my sister-and-law, Louise, came for dinner, and we argued politics at the table, Ben would needle my sister Ruth for being such a flaming liberal, and it was Father's job to mediate between them. I kept my mouth shut, and never mentioned my surreptitious reading. Ju

I still imagine myself that innocent kid brother, who sits among the grownups harboring dirty secrets. That little boy eventually becomes the whimsical, middle-aged, self-absorbed, male narrator of these bulletins of mine from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. What the boy and his descendant have in common is that both sustain their innocence and bemusement by trying very hard to suppress their anger. Amazing how it creeps in, though, as when I recently indulged in gratuitous griping about Hare di Yiddish (and was called for it by one of my male readers). How easy it is to succumb to self-blame! How effortlessly the aggression that we are subjected to daily is turned

Still, even while I romp around Israel inside the Green Line, attend conferences and concerts, meet fascinating women, and eat better than I do at home, I read what others read, watch and listen to the same news, and form my own opinion on the asymmetry of our situation. I note that in Israel, the whole country is mobilized to protect its children, always, and unconditionally, while the Palestinians have mobilized to sacrifice their children. I note that when an apocalyptic explosion in the gas works was just narrowly averted, a sophisticated piece of sabotage, the government decreed the immediate relocation of all natural gas depots situated near heavily populated areas. At the same time, Zahal uncovers, every other day, yet another munition

As for I. F. Stone, one fine day he closed up shop and sold his list of subscribers (living and lapsed) to the New York Review of Books. Their party line? To be very protective of dead Jews (the Holocaust) and to be merciless about the living (Israel). These New-York-based intellectuals do not come by their Jewish self-blame honestly; not like I. F. Stone, who --in my book, at least --did earn the right to excoriate Israel, just as the author of this biweekly bulletin, who is now posting its last issue before leaving Israel -- yet again--has finally, and irrevocably, earned the right to love her.

Jerusalem June 16, 2002

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