

THE WILD MAN IN THE WINGS: NOAM CHOMSKY



IN JANUARY 1967, with the war against Vietnam well underway, one of the architects of US strategy was analysing its progress. A satisfied McGeorge Bundy, National Security Adviser to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, pointed to the narrow limits of the debate. He acknowledged that “[t]here are wild men in the wings, but on the main stage . . . the argument on Viet Nam turns on tactics, not fundamentals”.¹ Bundy approved of debates on tactical questions of how to fight the war. But only ‘wild men’ would question the right of the US to intervene.

A month later, the *New York Review of Books* published an essay that did just that. Titled ‘The Responsibility of Intellectuals’,² its author was Noam Chomsky, Professor of Linguistics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Rather than argue that the war was a mistake, or too costly, or required different tactics, Chomsky challenged the right – not the ability – of the US to invade. His analysis targeted the bureaucrats, academics and media commentators who were genuflecting before power. Soon after, the ‘wild man in the wings’ participated in landmark protests at the Pentagon and shared a jail cell with the author Norman Mailer. Mailer would later describe Chomsky as “a slim sharp-featured man with an ascetic expression, and an air of gentle but absolute moral integrity”. He was eager to discuss linguistics with Chomsky, who was “considered a genius at MIT”. The problem was that while Mailer had “several wild theories in his pocket”, he “had never been able to exercise” them “since he could not understand what he read in linguistics books”.³ Mailer was not alone in his incomprehension. Closer to home, Keith Windschuttle showed in a recent article that he couldn’t tell linguistics from linguini.⁴

This essay will shed some light on the matter and also outline aspects of Chomsky’s political work.

Avram Noam Chomsky was born in Philadelphia in 1928 to immigrant parents who were devoted to a Hebrew-nationalist culture based on the Hebrew language. He appears to have benefited from this observant if not deeply Orthodox household which nonetheless had a highly unconventional attitude to child-rearing. His mother was a widely respected teacher and his father was a renowned Hebrew scholar who once described the major objective of his life as “the education of individuals who are well integrated, free and independent in their thinking, concerned about improving and enhancing the world, and eager to participate in making life more meaningful and worthwhile for all”.⁵ This is pretty much how Noam, as Avram is commonly known, has turned out. His own son lovingly recalled:

You would read to me at bedtime – from books about relativity theory. You would draw me funny pictures of giraffes – which contained linear equations that you would then teach me how to solve. You pointed me to sources of information for Social Studies reports, without my ever realising quite how different these sources were from what most students were using. You taught me how to sail, and then spent a sailboat outing arguing with me over whether there can be any intellectual justification for spiritual beliefs.⁶

The 13-year-old Chomsky would take the train from Philadelphia to New York by himself, browsing in bookshops along Fourth Avenue. In New York, he came under the influence of his aunt’s husband, Milton Kraus, who ran a newsstand that served as a

venue for intense late-night political discussions. As Chomsky puts it, “[t]he great moments of my life in those years were when I could work at the newsstand at night and listen to all this”.⁷ He came to favour a non-Bolshevik socialism which argued that there were incipient socialist institutions developing in Russia before the Bolshevik coup in October 1917. These institutions were dismantled by the Bolsheviks, who blocked the free development of labour, shut down the workers’ councils and crippled the unions. Under the compelling pressures of ‘war communism’, they tried to replicate capitalist methods in order to survive.⁸

Even before his teens, Chomsky read the proofs of his father’s book about thirteenth-century Hebrew grammar and immersed himself in nineteenth and twentieth-century Hebrew literature. His study of Hebrew culture converged with his political concerns, resulting in a keen interest in Zionism. He became a Zionist youth leader in the cultural Zionist movement, doing “more reading in that area than any other” until he was 16.⁹ The cultural Zionist view was devoted to a Jewish cultural home in Palestine and to Arab-Jewish cooperation within a socialist framework. It opposed “the deeply anti-democratic concept of a Jewish state”,¹⁰ which would inevitably discriminate against non-Jews. In his late teens, Noam helped his mother write and direct a play, *Hevele Mashiach*, about Jewish refugees yearning to go to Palestine.¹¹ It showed the horror of the Holocaust being followed by the formation of Israel. He continued to argue against the partition of Palestine, dismissing “the possibility of flourishing and developing . . . in a partitioned land”.¹² He “felt sure that the socialist institutions of the Yishuv – the pre-state Jewish settlement in Palestine – would not survive the state system”.¹³

At this time, Israel “had remarkably slight effects on the inner life of American Jewry”,¹⁴ and only two prominent American Jewish intellectuals openly identified with it: Noam Chomsky and Hannah Arendt. When Israel was ordered out of the Sinai in 1956, American Jewish leaders ultimately “preferred to counsel Israel to heed [Eisenhower] rather than oppose” his wishes.¹⁵ By contrast, Chomsky had championed Israel and even intended to emigrate there. He “reacted with virtually uncritical support for Israel” during the June 1967 war.¹⁶ However, during the 1960s the US had begun to see Israel as a barrier to nationalist pressure and a guardian of

the corrupt family dictatorships which controlled Middle Eastern oil. The 1967 war confirmed Israel’s value as a strategic asset: at a time when the US was meeting stiff resistance in Vietnam, Israel showed that it could crush resistance in its region. US aid therefore quadrupled in 1970 and has stayed high ever since.

From this point on, some American Jews began to identify openly with Israel, because to do so would allow them into the precincts of power in the US, where they could advance the interests of American elites.¹⁷ Chomsky has suggested that these ‘supporters of Israel’ should more properly be called “supporters of the moral degeneration and ultimate destruction of Israel”,¹⁸ which is now the most militarised society in the world, heavily dependent for its survival on the United States and therefore a reliable asset.¹⁹

Often described as a ‘self-hating Jew’, Chomsky’s concerns in fact place him at the very core of the Jewish tradition. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel’s study of the biblical prophets demonstrated that the prophets were not fortune-tellers who predicted the future. Rather, they were concerned “about widows and orphans, about the corruption of judges and affairs of the market place”.²⁰ Their moral sense was aroused not by “the spiritual realities of the Beyond, but the life of the people; not the glories of eternity, but the blights of society”.²¹ Unsurprisingly, they were hated by those who were committed to an unjust status quo. In the first book of Kings, for instance, the militaristic King Ahab and his elite supporters despised the prophet Elijah, describing him as “*ocher yisrael*” or “hater of Israel”. Chomsky is attacked in almost identical terms. It is no accident that he was the only scientist or philosopher on the Nixon White House enemies list, and that the Soviet Union also imposed a total ban on his works (including in linguistics!). But future generations are likely to view this ‘wild man in the wings’ very differently – as they will his detractors.

LINGUISTICS TO COGNITIVE SCIENCE

In the 1940s Chomsky’s parents had introduced him to Zellig Harris, a linguist with radical political views at the University of Pennsylvania. Chomsky so enjoyed Harris’s politics that he began to get involved with his linguistics as well. At the time, linguistics had produced “recommendations about socially acceptable forms of speech, guidelines for learning

hitherto unknown languages, and . . . data [about] phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics”.²² Chomsky studied linguistics and also obtained a thorough grounding in mathematics, logic and philosophy. He spent much productive time with philosophers like Willard Quine, John Austin and Nelson Goodman. This unusual combination would be a significant factor in his subsequent intellectual breakthrough. As Alfred North Whitehead once observed, “novel ideas are more apt to spring from an unusual assortment of knowledge – not necessarily from vast knowledge, but from a thorough conception of the methods and ideas of distinct lines of thought”.²³

Chomsky spent four years trying to carry out a behaviourist program. He wanted to construct a number of inductive principles that would explain how language was acquired. Like other structural linguists at the time, he was looking for ‘discovery procedures’ in order to describe the grammar and phonology of language. In 1953, he published a technical paper on these discovery procedures and believed that this was the real stuff of linguistics. At the same time, he explored alternative ideas by trying to write a generative grammar as a private hobby. It was purely accidental that he took this up; from his father’s work on medieval Hebrew grammatical texts, he knew that a historical linguist looks for sequences of change, one leading to another, over the centuries. Was there any correlation to psychological processes?

Using his knowledge of mathematics and logic, Chomsky began to construct models for such sequences to represent the psychological reality of language use. He had been fascinated by ‘generative systems’ – the procedures by which a mathematician, starting with postulates and utilising principles and references, can generate an infinite number of proofs. The eighteenth-century philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt may have had a similar concept, referring to language as a rule-governed system, rather than just a collection of words and phrases that corresponded to meanings. Humboldt regarded language as a system which “makes infinite use of finite means”, meaning that an infinite number of sentences can be created using a finite number of words. But Humboldt didn’t possess the mathematical techniques to turn these insights into an explanatory theory. These techniques, especially the notion of recursive systems of rules, would not be

available until two centuries later. Chomsky, by contrast, had received a thorough grounding in modern mathematics and so was able to use its techniques in what was at that stage still his private hobby.

On a trans-Atlantic voyage that year, a seasick Chomsky realised that the attempt to build up analytic procedures was nonsense; generative grammar was the real thing and “seemed to be consistently yielding interesting results”.²⁴ He therefore gave up structural linguistics altogether in order to focus on his hobby, inventing the field of mathematical linguistics in the process. He soon demonstrated that language has all the formal precision of mathematics.

Chomsky’s famous sentence ‘Colourless green ideas sleep furiously’ illustrated his argument that sentence structure could be studied independently of meaning. This sentence is meaningless but not gibberish; it is obviously a well-formed English sentence (as opposed to, say, ‘Ideas colourless furiously green sleep’). The new linguistic science jettisoned meaning, focusing on the pure laws of syntax. Even the simplest sentences, it was then postulated, have an inner ‘abstract’ syntactic form. The linguistics research program then became redefined: how is the inner ‘abstract’ form mapped onto the outer forms accessible to our auditory and vocal sense organs? The idea “that an unconscious level of representation could be mapped at a conscious level” was enormously exciting, turning linguistics on its head.²⁵

Previously, linguistics involved listing, documenting and classifying as many languages as possible. With Chomsky’s breakthrough, the new science of cognitive linguistics became the study of the language faculty of the human mind. No longer concerned with listing and classifying, the new goal was “to establish the psychological basis for Chomsky’s postulates of innate language structure and transformational grammar”.²⁶ This was accompanied by developments in related disciplines such as neuro-linguistics, which looks for the neurological mechanisms underlying different components of linguistics theory. Advances in technology, particularly in brain imaging techniques, have empowered this field.

In this discussion of the relationship between abstract properties and known physical mechanisms, it is worth recalling a previous example from the history of science to help clarify what is at stake.²⁷ In the nineteenth century, chemistry developed abstract representations of complex molecules long before the physicists were able to show, in the early part

of the twentieth century, that such things existed. It was much later that physicists began to discover the physical entities that had the properties corresponding to the chemists' abstract computational ideas. These computational ideas told physicists what to look for. They could not have developed the structure of the atom and the molecule if nineteenth century chemistry hadn't provided the abstract theories. Those theories of the chemist are similar to a linguist's theory of computations of the brain. Cognitive linguistics is to the future brain sciences what nineteenth-century chemistry was to quantum physics. Without information about the linguistic representations and computations, brain scientists of the future will not know what to look for. They will have to rely on the linguist to point to the abstract structures on which to base their physical explorations. Linguistics, therefore, is a theoretical psychology. It is far more profound than much of what today passes for psychology, which is preoccupied with collecting and recording data. Chomsky amusingly points out that psychology is probably the only serious candidate for a science in which there is no job description for "theoretical psychologist". Tenure in this field is obtained by recording data and publishing experimental papers.²⁸

CHILD OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

Since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the legacy of the Enlightenment has become – more than ever before – a contested terrain. Human rights are often used as an ideological excuse for the exercise of arbitrary power. Reactionaries have called for the defence of 'Western values' in an attempt to legitimise the subjugation of Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and North Korea. Given their reliance on the Enlightenment, it is noteworthy that Chomsky, perhaps their most prominent opponent, also declares "I am a child of the Enlightenment".²⁹

The Enlightenment gave rise to the classic liberal tradition, whose emphasis on freedom derives from the particular historical moment in which it arose. It was a product of an age when the primary threat to freedom emanated from state power, and severe inequalities in economic – or private – power were not yet a feature of society. Now that such inequalities are present, Chomsky merely extends the liberal tradition's defence of the individual to the contemporary situation. He argues for an Enlightenment-inspired version of libertarian socialism, with

its commitment to both equality and liberty.

In the absence of material equality, liberty remains an unfulfilled promise because of the compulsion that occurs between unequal actors. Coercion results under conditions of severe economic inequality because politically free people will be forced to 'choose' to rent themselves to an employer rather than make the alternative 'choice' of suffering starvation or poverty. Chomsky cites Simon Linguet, who pointed to the evils of the wage system as far back as the eighteenth century:

It is the impossibility of living by any other means that compels our farm labourers to till the soil whose fruits they will not eat, and our masons to construct buildings in which they will not live. It is want that drags them to those markets where they await masters who will do them the kindness of buying them. *It is want that compels them to go down on their knees to the rich man in order to get from him permission to enrich him.*³⁰

A lack of liberty, however, necessarily involves compulsion in determining the terms and conditions of material equality. Meaningful equality must include equality in decision-making processes as part of the realisation of liberty. The two terms are logically interdependent.³¹ Chomsky points out that the Enlightenment resulted in ideas that "people had natural rights, that they were fundamentally equal, that it was an infringement of essential human rights if systems of authority subordinated some to others, the insistence that there were real bonds of unity and solidarity among people across cultures".³² Although these ideas were "broken on the rocks of industrial capitalism",³³ their promise endures. This historically informed understanding of the Radical Enlightenment is anathema to power-worshipping reactionaries, who are also infuriated that – due to his calm but uncompromising stance after September 11 – Chomsky's writings and speeches are being accessed in record numbers by people who are new to politics. Naturally, the growing public interest in Chomsky's analysis is a serious cause for concern among reactionaries.

INTELLECTUAL SERVILITY

Chomsky's outspoken advocacy of the Radical Enlightenment is matched by a deep personal commitment. The journalist and aid worker Fred Branfman happened to be in Laos in 1970 when

the US subjected Laos's peasants to one of the most intense bombings in history. Branfman tried to raise international awareness of the bombings, taking dozens of people to camps where refugees could be interviewed. Chomsky, he says, was "the only one, besides myself, to cry". It should be noted that Chomsky's is not a scattergun approach. He does not appear to see himself as some kind of 'public intellectual' or 'commentator on world affairs'. Rather, he takes the view that, as an American, he bears special moral responsibility for the actions of the United States. His energies therefore focus particularly on the regions where US policy is at its most oppressive. When Indonesia invaded East Timor with US support in 1975, Chomsky joined other activists in a tireless campaign of international solidarity. His speeches and publications on this topic were prodigious and widely read, but his financial support is less well known. When the US media were refusing to interview Timorese refugees, claiming that they had no access to them, Chomsky personally paid for the airfares of several refugees, bringing them from Lisbon to the US, where he tried to get them into the editorial offices of the *New York Times* and other outlets. Most of his financial commitment to such causes has – because of his own reticence – gone unnoticed. A Timorese activist says, "we learnt that the Chomsky factor and East Timor were a deadly combination" and "proved to be too powerful for those who tried to defeat us".³⁴

By contrast, some intellectuals became willing dupes of the Indonesian propaganda apparatus: in 1983, P.P. McGuinness, then editor of the *Australian Financial Review* and today editor of *Quadrant* magazine, visited East Timor under Indonesian military escort. On his return to Australia, he claimed that he had observed no food shortages and seen no military repression. But this visit had a Potemkin quality – McGuinness, by his own admission, spoke none of the local languages and had everything translated for him by his military tour guides.³⁵

The case of East Timor provides an important insight into Chomsky's moral calculus: atrocities are abhorrent regardless of who commits them, but we have a special obligation to terminate those atrocities for which we bear responsibility. From 1975 to 1979, there was mass murder of comparable proportions in East Timor and in Cambodia. The US, the UK and Australia aided Indonesia's genocide in East Timor, where up to a third of the population died.

This was the worst slaughter relative to population since the Holocaust. It could have been terminated by withdrawing Western support to the Indonesian military. Instead, many self-described 'public intellectuals' in Australia and the US said little about it, preferring instead to denounce Pol Pot in Cambodia, where they had no prospect of terminating the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge.

A case in point is Robert Manne's recent book *Left Right Left*³⁶ where Cambodia – not the genocide in East Timor – is examined in detail. Mr Manne is a former editor of *Quadrant*, and his stewardship of that journal between 1989 and 1997 provides a revealing look at this kind of cost-free sermonising. After Indonesian troops murdered over 271 unarmed East Timorese civilians in Dili on 12 November 1991, Manne's editorial discussed Sigmund Freud's 'doctrine of negation':

A patient who embarked upon analysis by proclaiming love for his mother alerted his doctor at once to the source of his psychic difficulty. It is in a similar spirit that one of the most cherished pieties of contemporary Australian discourse – 'Australia is a part of Asia' – must be read.

Manne noted that "it is simply not possible to condemn slaughters in Beijing and condone them in Dili", but his overwhelming concern was Australia's relationship with Indonesia and Malaysia, in particular the "tensions between newly confident post-colonial societies and a newly despondent Western power which has only half-abandoned its own manner of moral superiority".³⁷ Reading through every issue of *Quadrant* during the eight years of his term as editor, the paucity of East Timorese voices is remarkable;³⁸ instead, space was extended to "a Perth lawyer and poet", Hal Colebatch, who had spent a few days in East Timor nearly twenty years before. *Quadrant's* readers were assured that, "those attempting to sabotage Australian-Indonesian relations over Timor are doing the Timorese people no service". After all, during his stay in 1973, he had "heard, second-hand from Australians in Baucau who had travelled across the island, that things were a good deal better in Indonesian West Timor . . . To think of an independent East Timor mounting its own defence force, health service, police, social security and diplomatic representation without years of preparation was a fantasy".³⁹ Another *Quadrant* writer, Peter Ryan, complained about "these left-

wing lunatics” in the “Timor clique” who “resemble the English prigs of the left in the 1930s”.⁴⁰

Mr Manne’s journal also carried a long article defending Indonesia’s actions:

Indonesia has not merely been a repressive force. It has heeded the advice of its critics and spent heavily on improving public facilities and education in East Timor. It spends much more per head in this province than any other, and infinitely more than the Portuguese did.⁴¹

As for the state of the bilateral relationship, the writer blamed the Australian media, saying that “perhaps the press should be more careful about what it publishes”. Also, “we should impose some limits on Asian refugees in their campaigning against the governments they have fled”. Finally, “[w]e already know a style appropriate for an Australian foreign policy – live and let live; don’t give needless trouble to the neighbours, especially big ones; bend with the seasons; be tough in defending our own farm and cunning in seizing what chances come our way”.

Mr Manne railed against crimes that he had no ability to stop, while largely ignoring a privileged opportunity to struggle against crimes in which his government was complicit. This is morally comparable to a Soviet commissar denouncing racism in the USA while saying little about the USSR’s support for tyranny in Eastern Europe. Perhaps the comparison is unfair . . . to the commissar, who had reason to fear for his physical wellbeing in a way that a Western intellectual did not. This is why Chomsky says that “the intellectual tradition is one of servility to power and if I didn’t betray it I’d be ashamed of myself”.⁴²

That Chomsky lives his politics is demonstrated in full measure by his defence of free speech in an area requiring perhaps the greatest degree of personal courage and commitment. I am referring, of course, to the Faurisson affair: Professor Robert Faurisson had been prevented from teaching French Literature at the University of Lyons in the late 1970s on the ground that he could not be protected from attacks against him as a result of his views about the Holocaust. He was brought before the French courts for denying the existence of gas chambers. Approximately five hundred people, among them Noam Chomsky, signed a petition defending Faurisson’s civil liberties. Sensing an opportunity to settle old scores, the press immediately called it ‘Chomsky’s

petition’ and accused him of supporting Faurisson’s views. Missing from this hysteria was the obvious principle that support for a person’s right to express certain views is independent of the views actually expressed. Thus, one might defend Salman Rushdie’s freedom to write the *Satanic Verses* without agreeing with the content of that book – or even needing to read it. Chomsky wrote a brief article clarifying this distinction. Without Chomsky’s knowledge, this article was used as the preface to a book on the case by Faurisson. Chomsky, who did not know of the existence of the book, was always concerned with the narrow issue of the injustice of preventing Faurisson from teaching French literature and of allowing the state to define historical truth and punish deviationism. Needless to say, however, Chomsky was labelled a ‘Holocaust-denier’ by his enemies, especially since his free speech convictions meant that he was unlikely to sue for defamation.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVISM

Chomsky’s view is “that the burden of proof has to be placed on authority, and that it should be dismantled if that burden cannot be met”. As for practical advice on what to do, the temptation to quote Chomsky’s own words is irresistible:

I think it only makes sense to seek out and identify structures of authority, hierarchy, and domination in every aspect of life, and to challenge them; unless a justification for them can be given, they are illegitimate, and should be dismantled, to increase the scope of human freedom. That includes political power, ownership and management, relations among men and women, parents and children, our control over the fate of future generations (the basic moral imperative behind the environmental movement, in my view), and much else. Naturally this means a challenge to the huge institutions of coercion and control: the state, the unaccountable private tyrannies that control most of the domestic and international economy, and so on . . .

There’s a tremendous diversity and range of interests and concerns now, and an awful lot of people are involved. And that gives us a kind of strength: an organised, centralised movement can easily be crushed; a very diverse movement that’s rooted all over the society – well, you can get rid of this piece and that piece and the other piece, but it’ll just come back up somewhere else . . . The fact that there’s

a tremendous diversity can be a real advantage – it can be a real way of learning . . . But, of course, if it's going to bring about real change, that broad array of concerns is going to require some form of integration and inter-communication and collaboration among its various sub-parts . . .

Now, we're not going to develop that sort of integration through the mainstream institutions . . . because they've got their own commitments, which are basically to private power. In the case of the media, they have a commitment to indoctrination in the interests of power, and that imposes pretty strict limits on what they can do. So the answer is, we've got to create alternatives, and the alternatives have got to integrate these lots and lots of different interests and concerns into a . . . series of interconnected [movements]: lots of associations of people with similar concerns, who've got in mind the other people next door who have related concerns, and who can get together with them to work for changes.⁴⁴

As for the prospects of success:

Whether people will react or not, who knows? You know? Everyone's got to decide.

1. M. Bundy, 'The End of Either/Or', *Foreign Affairs* 45:2, 1967, p.191. Also included in this sobriquet were conservative Republicans like Barry Goldwater.
2. N. Chomsky, 23 February 1967. It first appeared in 1966 in *Mosaic*, the magazine of the Hillel Foundation, a Jewish group at Harvard University. The NYRB later refused to publish him, beginning with its rejection of his article on the Paris Peace Agreements of January 1973. The article showed the sharp contrast between the Agreements and the White House's representation of them.
3. N. Mailer, *The Armies of the Night*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1968, pp.191–192.
4. K. Windschuttle, 'A Disgraceful Career', *The New Criterion*, 23:1, 2004. I am grateful to Dr Peter Slezak for this witticism.
5. C.P. Otero, 'Chomsky and the Libertarian Tradition: A Renewed Egalitarian Vision, a Coherent Social Theory and Incisive, Up-to-Date Analysis', vol.3, p.5 of C.P. Otero (ed.), *Noam Chomsky: Critical Assessments*, 4 vols, Routledge, London, 1994. Otero remarks that "[i]t is hard to improve on this as a description of Noam Chomsky as an individual".
6. H. Chomsky, '70th Birthday wishes', <www.zmag.org>, 1998.
7. J. Peck (ed.), *The Chomsky Reader*, Serpents Tail, London, 1987, p.11.
8. M. Brinton, *The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control, 1917 to 1921: the State and Counter-Revolution*, Solidarity, London. Also see A. Pannekoek, *Lenin as Philosopher: A critical examination of the philosophical basis of Leninism*, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, 1938 (2003).
9. *The Chomsky Reader*, p.12.
10. *ibid.*, p.7.
11. See, however, Y. Grodzinsky, *In the Shadow of the Holocaust*, Common Courage Press, Monroe, 2004.
12. H. Feinberg, *Elsie Chomsky: A life in Jewish education*, Hadassah International Research Institute on Jewish Women,

- Waltham, 1999, pp.20–21.
13. *The Chomsky Reader*, p.9.
14. N. Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the exploitation of Jewish suffering*, Verso, London, 2003, p.18.
15. *ibid.*, pp.17–21.
16. N. Chomsky, *Middle East Illusions*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, p.99. He later realised that the threat to Israel was "pretty dubious at best".
17. *The Holocaust Industry*, pp.17–21, 24.
18. N. Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians*, South End Press, Boston, 1999, p.4.
19. See N. Chomsky, *Advocacy and Realism*, <www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=22&ItemID=6110>, 26 August 2004, for current proposals.
20. A.J. Heschel, *The Prophets*, 2 vols, Harper & Row, New York, 1962, vol.1, p.3.
21. *The Prophets*, vol.2, p.144.
22. Z. Szabó, *Noam Chomsky*, in E. LePoré (ed.), *Dictionary of Modern American Philosophers, 1860–1960*, Thoemmes Press, Bristol, 2004.
23. A.N. Whitehead, *An Introduction to Mathematics*, Oxford University Press, London, 1948, p.101, in C.P. Otero (ed.), *Noam Chomsky: Language and Politics*, AK Press, Oakland, 2004, p.46.
24. F. Newmeyer 1986, *Linguistic Theory in America*, Academic Press, Orlando, p.30.
25. T. Bever & M. Montalbetti 2002, 'Noam's Ark', *Science*, vol.298, pp.1565–1566.
26. *ibid.*, p.1566.
27. N. Chomsky, *Language and Problems of Knowledge*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1987, pp.185–186.
28. Consider, by contrast, the absurdity that would result if theoretical physicists were excluded from the discipline of physics. Cognitive science bypasses this empiricism by uniting experimenters with theoreticians.
29. Chomsky, *Language and Politics*, p.657.
30. N. Chomsky, *Government in the Future*, Seven Stories, New York, 2005, pp.17–18.
31. For a detailed analysis, see A. Edgely, *The Social and Political Thought of Noam Chomsky*, Routledge, London, 2002.
32. Chomsky, *Language and Politics*, p.648.
33. N. Chomsky, *Powers and Prospects*, South End Press, Boston, 1996, ch.4.
34. A. Pereira, Preface to N. Chomsky, *Perspectives on Power*, Black Rose, Montreal, 1997, p.viii. Chomsky rejects talk of his 'leadership', pointing instead to the activists who actually did the crucial and fatiguing work of organising transnational solidarity for the East Timorese.
35. *Conversation with Terry Lane*, Radio 3LO, ABC Melbourne, 7 February 1983.
36. R. Manne, *Left Right Left*, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2005.
37. R. Manne, 'Thoughts After Dili', *Quadrant*, December 1991, p.2.
38. For a rare exception, see D. Glover 1995, 'East Timor: A challenge to conservatives', *Quadrant*, December 1995, pp.30–36.
39. H. Colebatch, 'Impressions of Timor, 1973', *Quadrant*, December 1992, pp.20–23.
40. P. Ryan, 'Indonesia and Me', *Quadrant*, July–August 1995, p.120.
41. J. Hirst, 'In Defence of Appeasement', *Quadrant*, April 1996, pp.10–16.
42. N. Chomsky, *Interview*, BBC2, 25 November 1992.
43. N. Chomsky 1995, *Anarchism, Marxism and Hope for the Future*, Interview with Kevin Doyle.
44. P. Mitchell & J. Schoeffel (eds), *Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky*, New Press, New York, 2002, chs 6,10.

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