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Skloot, Robert

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If the Whole Body Dies

Raphael Lemkin and the Treaty Against Genocide



by Robert Skloot

IF THE WHOLE BODY DIES

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Raphael Lemkin (1900–1959)

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If the Whole Body Dies was given its first reading on December 15, 2005, at the University of Wisconsin–Madison with the following cast:

RAPHAEL LEMKIN	Donavon Armbruster
GIRL	Carrie Coon
MAN	Craig Jacobson
WOMAN	Susan Sweeney
MEN'S VOICES	Pete Bissen
WOMEN'S VOICES	Amy Sawyers

The reading was directed by Roseann Sheridan.

INTRODUCTION

Why this play? Why now?

If the Whole Body Dies was written with three objectives in mind. First, the play aims to give Raphael Lemkin his “due” by raising his extraordinary achievements to a higher level of recognition. The origin of the word genocide is not popular knowledge, just as few know that Lemkin was the author of the *U.N. Convention Against Genocide*.

Second, the play is my own attempt to add a small comment to the store of anti-genocide materials, a play that can stimulate discussion of the phenomenon that Lemkin worked most of his life to outlaw. If the scourge of genocide is to be diminished, the pressure to work toward that goal must involve all disciplines and professions, including artists whose public testimony is part of history’s record against atrocity and killing. Euripides and Rabe, Verdi and Britten, Goya and Picasso, Maya Lin and Iri and Toshi Maruki have all contributed to our knowledge and feeling about the devastation of war and its tragic aftermath, and their work, in the aggregate, comprises a storehouse of compassion and horror, of anger and shame, of witness and memory we know is necessary to comprehending the world, past and future.

The (antiwar) work of artists, however, tends to be overlooked by many in politics and academe who carry a negative bias toward things freighted with idealism and emotion. The work is greeted as soft and starry-eyed, depressing and irrelevant, distractive and untrustworthy, and a host of other dismissive pejoratives. But artists know better, and so do the millions who over time have seen *Guernica*, heard the *Requiem* or stood in the confounding, deathly courtyard of the Berlin Jewish Museum. I hope that getting to know Lemkin and his work will show colleagues (especially in the social sciences) that knowledge can be obtained in ways grounded as much in feeling as fact, and that the power of theatrically communicated insights can assist in the work they do.

Third, plays do things to people. What the theatre can provide uniquely is a connection between human beings and among groups through the creation of empathy. It is a connection that, however brief, creates visible, remarkable humane possibilities that differ from the violent and terror-filled world too many know, even

though many others are, with luck and resources, seemingly exempt from danger.

It's likely that the historical Lemkin of *If the Whole Body Dies* is a Lemkin who shares some of my own characteristics, which is why I was drawn to him: his Polish roots, his love of language (and puns), his passion for justice; we even share the same Hebrew name, though not the fate of family in Hitler's Europe. (There are likely less positive characteristics too.) I think of a number of characters in Chekhov's plays whose disappointments with life provoke them to work harder for something tangible that will keep the world on the path to something better for the future, and I connect that to the way Lemkin lived and died with his one obsessional conviction: that in the law, universally endorsed, can be found the mechanism to prevent the wholesale slaughter of innocents. The problem, of course, is that people throughout history don't abide by that conviction, and behave in ways that recreate genocidal devastation with seemingly endless regularity.

As I have written elsewhere, the first problem of teaching about genocide is the challenge to maintain hope. Raphael Lemkin, ingesting heart medication in a cheap Manhattan walk-up, depressed that his adopted country refused to accept his plan to stop genocide, hounded by bill collectors and sustained by a few friends and not a little vanity, was battered by storms internal and outside himself. But in the darkness of another tempest, this time Shakespeare's, I hear, as he must have felt, Miranda's immediate, empathic connection watching the visitors' ship battered by the furious waves:

“O, I have suffered with those I saw suffer....
O, the cry did knock against my very heart!”

Robert Skloot
University of Wisconsin–Madison

IF THE WHOLE BODY DIES: ¹

Raphael Lemkin and the Treaty Against Genocide

“The conscience of humanity is like that of a dying man. All his sins invade his mind in his last hour, when he is powerless to repair them.”

—Raphael Lemkin, from his unpublished autobiography

CAST

RAPHAEL LEMKIN

GIRL

MAN

WOMAN

OTHER OCCASIONAL VOICES

Time

August 27, 1959, in and around the 1950s, and other times too.

The Setting

Lemkin’s flat. A sparsely furnished studio apartment in upper Manhattan. Prominent features are a desk, telephone, and a back wall on which projections can be shown. Many books and papers, and boxes of “stuff” that can be consulted if necessary. Manual typewriter, fountain pen, and radio. On the desk is a pair of horn rimmed glasses, comb and small hand mirror, and a 1950s radio microphone with a table name sign identifying the speaker as “Dr. Lemkin.” The room is neat despite the substantial clutter, though it might get messier as the play proceeds.

On the rear screen appears a picture of the Roman Coliseum as, before the play begins, we hear music from the “The Triumphal March” from the Miklos Rozsa soundtrack for the 1951 M-G-M movie *Quo Vadis* ©DRG Records #19060 (4 minutes). After the music concludes, the background image on the wall changes to a photo of an upper Manhattan apartment house of the time of the play. A man in his 50s with thinning hair is dozing in his desk chair in worn but neat clothes, including a white shirt, white pants, and white socks. His dark silk tie and white shoes are nearby.

(Music ends. Man startles awake. Rises slowly and with effort. Combs his hair. Puts on glasses. Sits. Begins to type.)

LEMKIN

(With Yiddish/Polish accent throughout)

In my early childhood I read *Quo Vadis* by Henryk Sienkiewicz dealing with the Romans’ attempt to destroy the early Christians. It moved me greatly. I couldn’t

believe that people could be so cruel or understand why the murdered were so helpless. (*Stops typing*) The movie was highly praised for its pageantry but not very good otherwise. Ustinov was a travesty as Nero. There is in the nature of mankind something not to be trusted.

(*A young GIRL with dark hair about 13 or 14 appears in light that expands to include her. Image on wall changes to exterior shot of Prinsengracht 263, Amsterdam, from 1942.*)

GIRL

Bon jour, Professor Lemkin. Am I calling too early?

LEMKIN

Non, mademoiselle. I overslept. (*Thinks of the linguistic connection, as he will often*) Overslept. On top of the blankets. (*Smiles*) A little joke. It must be afternoon where you live. *Bon jour*.

GIRL

The world spins along and is everywhere at once. I'm not certain why I'm awake when you're asleep, but I am going to study more science to find out.

LEMKIN

Be patient. It will get clearer. Scientific laws are something you can't ever disregard . . . or shouldn't. If it were the same time everywhere, the world would run out of breakfasts.

GIRL

That's what I think too. (*Laughs*) But there are laws that aren't good. Bad laws made our lives miserable before we moved to where we are now. I would tell you where, but it's better if you don't know. Maybe if we only had a few good laws, we could obey them more easily.

LEMKIN

That's what I think too. (*Laughs*)

GIRL

Like not having to put up with people I'm fed up with, who always misinterpret my intentions.

LEMKIN

That's not exactly what I had in mind. (*Seriously*) Laws are serious. They are written to make it harder to do away with people you don't get along with.

GIRL

Cheer up, *monsieur*, we shall still have our jokes and tease each other, and our holidays to celebrate. It won't do us any good . . . to go on being gloomy. Chins up, stick it out, better times will come! Oh, we're going to have dinner now. I hope your breakfast is more ample and better tasting than mine was. We had *oeufs au chou*, but without the eggs. I call it a *sans omelette*. (*Laughs*) *Bon appetit!*

LEMKIN

Your French is getting very good, *tres bon!* *Auf wiedersehen, mein Mädchen.*

GIRL

Au revoir, Professor Lemkin. (*She leaves with her light.*)

(*He tries to put on a shoe with great difficulty, gives up and instead puts on slippers. Puts on his tie. Combs hair. Glasses. Scenic image of U.N. building in New York. Gets document, reads.*)

LEMKIN

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Syria, His Excellency Mr. Khalid El-Azem, has submitted 25 June 1955, in the office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the Veterans Building in San Francisco, the instrument of Accession of Syria to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Genocide is defined as the deliberate destruction of national, religious, racial, or ethnic groups. This latest ratification is of special significance because it brings the number of ratifications of the Genocide Convention to fifty . . . (*He makes some corrections on the paper he is reading, indicates he is skipping through some text, and resumes.*) . . . The Genocide Convention came into force on January 12, 1951. Since then it became the best ratified convention among those adopted under the auspices of the U.N. It is hoped that more ratifications and more implementation through domestic legislation will come soon. The list of the 50 . . . (*skips text*) . . . Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, (*writes*) S-Y-R-I-A, Turkey, Ukraine, Uni . . . (*long pause*) . . . Vietnam . . ."

(*Stops. Squeezes his brow as if he had a bad headache, takes a pill with glass of water.*² *Light expands as MAN walks into it.*)

MAN

Raphael Lemkin . . . ?

LEMKIN

Yes, I'm Dr. Lemkin.

MAN

Hello. I'm William Proxmire . . . Bill . . . the new junior senator from Wisconsin.³ The state shaped like your right hand. When you look at the palm. (*He shows that.*) I got your number from our U.N. people. They said you wanted to talk to me. Just what do you have in mind, Professor?

LEMKIN

First, congratulations on your victory.

MAN

Too bad you weren't there to run my campaign for governor. Or campaigns. There were a few of them. I admire the way you lined up all those countries for ratifying the convention. I very much admire the convention too. It's a brilliant and necessary piece of legislation. Congratulations to you.

LEMKIN

The work never ends, Senator. I look for assistance wherever I can. I'm going to count on you for the help I need to get the treaty through the Senate. As the law says in Latin, I do, *Facio* [*fā-ki-o*] that you might do, *ut facias* [*oot fā-kee-as*]. Never mind. It's urgent that someone lead the way to convince your colleagues that it is the only hope for stopping the wholesale killing of innocent groups. President Truman sent it up years ago, but still no vote. It's a disgrace.

MAN

Once I move down to Washington, I'll do whatever I can. You know, I've got a sign on my kitchen wall with a Chinese proverb that kind of says it all: "The glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time you fall." I suppose you can say it in Chinese, Professor?

LEMKIN

No, Chinese isn't one of my languages.

MAN

It got me to Washington. The proverb, not the Chinese. It's not even the Chinese that concern me. I'll call you after I settle in and we can talk about all those innocent people who'll die without the ratification. You can count on me to help in any way I can.

LEMKIN

Thank you for calling, Senator . . . Senator, since you're here, maybe we could make the appointment now. (*He's looking for his appointment book.*) What about during the week of the fourteenth . . .

MAN

I hear it's real hot in New York. Keep up your spirits and strength. Eat lots of vegetables. And exercise. That's the real secret of keeping fit and on top of things.

LEMKIN

If that week won't work, what about . . .

MAN

(Overlaps)

Broccoli. Try broccoli. I'll be in touch.

(Light out)

LEMKIN

(Writes in his book)

William. Means "protector." Proxmire. "Close to a swamp." *(Laughs at his joke)* I read he's a Yale man. Well, I am too. We're together on the seal: Mr. Lux meet Mr. Veritas. *(Chuckles)* Likes Chinese proverbs, green vegetables, and exercise. *(He looks at his right hand.)* From Wisconsin.

(Massages his head. Drinks water. Takes off his tie. Puts on his glasses. Begins to type and then speak.)

*"Estimado Presidente Rafael Trijillo Molina,
No es porque tenemos el mismo nombre que escribo . . ."*

No. It's got to be more formal. He's a general of the armies.

"Excelentísimo Señor Generalísimo Marcus Vinicius Molina,"⁴

La trágica situación que ha vivido la humanidad, y que esta viviendo ahora . . ."
(Continues)

I am writing to you, Mr. Axelrod, to acknowledge that the Foreign Economic Administration overpaid my salary in 1947, and to say I am anxious to liquidate this indebtedness before you refer it to the Department of Justice for collection. But I ask your patience because my work abroad has distracted me from this obligation that at the moment I am not able to pay. Before you begin a procedure we both want to avoid . . .

"de su Excelencia atentamente, Raphael Lemkin, fundador del movimiento mundial contra el genocidio." Basta!

(He turns on the radio. Quo Vadis music. Scenic image of rural farm in Poland. A middle-aged WOMAN, dressed modestly, appears in light.)

(*Quietly*)

Mama, why when the Roman emperor ordered the lions to kill the Christians did no one stop them? Why did they scream for blood and vengeance? Before Jesus was a Christian he was, and died, a Jew. To be slaughtered for what you believe, or believed, or just for being who you are, is to be victim of the worst evil man can commit. (*Radio off*)

WOMAN

(*Hebrew*)

"*Kum lech l'cha ayl eer ha-harega.*" Bialik.⁵

LEMKIN

"Come with me to the city of slaughter." Bialystock.⁶ You and pappa died as Jews too. Not killed by lions, but by something even worse. Those were Christians ate your flesh. I want you to be proud of me, Mama. Like Kosciuszko, I came to America to fight tyranny and oppression. He was able to return to Poland. Here in America, I am condemned to loneliness. This is an essential condition of my life. I talk to the most important people in the world, and in their own language, but I'm still alone. I also talk to you, Mama, whom I miss so much.

WOMAN

(*She hums a Yiddish lullaby.*)

*Ess mein Kind.*⁷ Pancakes and sour cream, Raphael!

LEMKIN

And your home-made jam!

(*Scenic image of New York. He checks address book, old newspaper. At typewriter.*)

Dear Mr. Ben Hecht,

We have never met but I have not forgotten what I read about your pageant at Madison Square Garden, the one with Paul Muni and Edward Robinson. Szyk, Szyk who did your souvenir program drew the illustration for the review of my article entitled "Axis Rule in Occupied Europe" in the *New York Times*! Did you know that? I was only in this country three years then. In North Carolina.

WOMAN

If three people share a blanket, my son, make sure you're the one in the middle.

(*She leaves. Light returns to usual.*)

LEMKIN

The calling the roll of the famous Jews in history was your masterstroke, 119 names I read in the paper! And that is why genocide—do you know the word? I invented it the year after your pageant—must be stopped, because mass killing destroys the diverse, distinct cultures of groups and every one of these groups has its mission to fulfill and a contribution to make in terms of culture. Even Karl Marx, whom you left off the list, deserved mention. That would have made 120. *Me'a esrim*.⁸ Your age in bibles. You called the show *We Will Never Die*, but six million is too many to lose . . . 49 of them were my family, Mr. Hecht. I am writing you to help me to stop genocide. Please write me at 504 W. 112th Street in New York. Perhaps we can meet? I'm sure you'll understand why my phone number isn't in the book . . .”

(Phone rings; LEMKIN answers.)

This is Dr. Lemkin.

VOICE

We're ready for the interview, Mr. Lemkin.

LEMKIN

Just a moment. (*He quickly puts on his tie.*) All right.

(Puts down phone; rear image of U.N. building.)

VOICE

We have before our microphone today Professor Raphael Lemkin who is known in the United Nations and the world over as the man who coined the word *genocide* and conceived the idea of the Genocide Convention. . . .

LEMKIN

(Ardently)

Il pensiero legale italiano (*Woman's Voice translates*: “Italian legal thought”) mi ha interessato sempre [“has always interested me”], come il Diritto Romano su cui si basa . . . [“like the Roman Code on which it is based . . .”]; Nobody else has ever depicted human suffering and the abyss into which a human personality can be thrown better than Dante in *Purgatoria*. . . . But genocide is the greatest degradation to which humanity can be brought . . .

VOICE

(Comic)

Excuse me. Dr. Lemkin? This is John J. Carroll, the credit manager of the Henry

Hudson Hotel. We wish to call attention to your account which amounts to \$129.86 and is now past due. (*LEMKIN sags*) The management would appreciate you giving the payment of this account your immediate attention in bringing it up to date. (*He removes his tie*) It is . . . policy . . . that all accounts are paid when the bill is rendered.

(*He hangs up phone. Image of apartment building. Drinks more water. Begins to type.*)

Chapter three. In order to be successful with fellow men one must learn to be fully alone with an integration into the sublime world of feelings and faith. I learned to love the obstacles by making them a test of my moral strength. In this moral strength I believe fervently. It is stronger than temporal power. It is stronger than technology and government. It is life itself. Caleb was a hero in the Bible, but his name in Hebrew spells dog.

(*LEMKIN turns on radio. Some music from the Quo Vadis movie plus the piece of the soundtrack where we hear an English accent by a MAN's voice speaking the words of Nero [Ustinov]: "When I have finished with these Christians, Petronius, history may not know they ever existed."*)

LEMKIN

That is the issue, Petronius, the maniacs of history. How to stop them. I have an answer now. In law. The law can do what nothing else is capable of. The law is our best protector. And I have a wonderful friend in the Senate now. No, not the Roman one. Proxmire in Washington. He will help me get the ratification. "History may not know they ever existed." [*Radio off*] How will people know about the Jews if they are "finished off"? By what we leave to history that we created. Not our blood. Not our suffering. Our books. Our brains. Our dreams. *Hatikvah*.⁹ Humanity is enlarged by the contributions of all. Killing one group diminishes all. That film was terrible and funny at the same time. No, not *Quo Vadis* . . . it got eight nominations! No, Hitler's film. Where Jews are "the plague that threatens the Aryan people. . . a race of parasites" it said. Parasites. Parasites. Two footnotes. (*Laughs*) "Their homelessness is a matter of choice," it said. As if I chose to live like this and here, though I live here now, with less of a home than I deserve but more on \$25.00 a week is not possible. *The Eternal Jew* was the film.¹⁰ *Der Ewig Jude*. E-wig-e. E-wig-e. We are a head-covering people. (*Laughs*) We "assimilate and destroy from within . . . forever foreign bodies . . . regardless of appearance," it said. So I bought a white suit with white shoes and white socks all of which I wore with a dark silk tie in order to attend the dinners I was invited to. . . . In America, I saw that one first cut a piece of meat, then put the knife on the plate, shifted the fork to the other hand, and ate it. This did not

fit well into my notions of American economy, and it slowed down the eating process considerably. (*Smiles*) We are like rats it said, no, we *are* rats, “that migrate everywhere, . . . cunning, cowardly, cruel.” “What if my house be troubled with a rat . . .?” Einstein is “the relativity Jew,” but I have no more relatives. “Jewish blood will never pollute the German nation,” wasn’t that what Nero said, Mama? So you were murdered. Is that why they hate us? Is that why they hate me? “. . . I can give no reason, nor will I not, more than a lodged hate and a certain loathing . . .”¹¹

(Holds his head. His hands begin to shake. Image of Prinsengracht 263 on the back wall; light up on GIRL.)

GIRL

(Cheery)

Bon jour, Professor Lemkin. Are you well, today?

LEMKIN

My head aches a little. I take these pills. What do you want?

GIRL

Je voudrais de fromage et des saucisses.

LEMKIN

(Laughs)

Cheese and sausage? You are very silly, *ma chérie*.

GIRL

Oui. It is very silly to learn all the foods in the world when all we have are cabbages, potatoes, and beans. But one day I will go to the grandest restaurant and order everything on the menu . . . but only to test my vocabulary, you understand.

LEMKIN

The writer Victor Hugo said: As many languages you know, as many times you are a human being. (*Drinks some water*) Do you know about the brave Cyrano de Bergerac? He was a very proud Frenchman who once, rather than admitting he was too poor to buy anything to eat, only took a grape and a glass of water from a big banquet.

GIRL

*Der Mann hat einen grossen Geist
Und ist so klein van Taten!*

LEMKIN

The spirit of man is great,
How puny are his deeds.

(*Thinks*)

*Wenig brauche, so ess, ich glaube,
Nur Nip und kleine Traube.*

GIRL

Little I need, I'll take a plate
Have a sip plus one small grape.

(*They laugh together.*)

GIRL

I'll ask Daddy to ask Miep to bring the book so we can read it together. Now, excuse me, Professor. *Adieu.*

(*Light out on GIRL.*)

LEMKIN

Do you know I worry about you? I have the way to save you all. . . . (*Pause*)
Haiti. We don't have Haiti yet!

(*Writes*) "*Je formule cette requete au nom de l'humanite, Monsieur le President, and please allow me to urge in the strongest possible terms that you use all the influence you have with your colleagues in Haiti. . . . (Uses pen to sign.) Excellence, Professeur Raphael Lemkin, fondateur du mouvement mondial contre le genocide, and five-time nominee, Nobel Peace Prize.*

(*Phone rings. Scenic image of New York apartment.*)

VOICE

(*Comic*)

Dr. Lemkin, this is Francine Zeller. I represent Gates Ambulance and Oxygen Service, who has turned over to my office a claim against you for the sum of \$18.00 for services rendered in moving you from 159 St. Paul Road, Hempstead to South Nassau Hospital. May I please have your remittance by return mail, and thank you. (*Click*)

LEMKIN

“So, when I win some triumph, by some chance,
Render no share to Caesar—in a word,
I am too proud to be a parasite,
And if my nature wants the germ that grows
Towering like the mountain pine,
Or like the oak, sheltering multitudes—
I stand, not high it may be—but alone!”
Ah, Cyrano . . .

(Drinks a glass of water)

Chapter seven. *(Types a bit, then)*

Through the open window an old oak tree, planted some 50 years ago in the Yale garden, looked quite indifferently at my disturbance. But the decision was made, not so much by me but by something inside me. Perhaps the destruction of the Moors . . . had influenced my decision to travel to Geneva. I had not been there since 1938. . . . In this city I buried the hopes for a better world in the sentimental and confusing days of the old League of Nations. There I had talked for days and nights to the paralyzed minds of men who were unable to stir themselves into action to save the peace of the world.

RECORDED VOICE

(We hear a tape recording from February 1949; as the Announcer starts, LEMKIN again puts on his tie and jacket, drinks, tries to quiet his shaking hands.)

And now we come to our third guest, who is a Professor of Law at Yale University and specializing in teaching matters about the United Nations. Dr. Lemkin is the man who created the word genocide and really he has fought this thing from long, long ago. Dr. Lemkin, can you give us a little background about how you came to be interested in this genocide fight, originally?

(He listens to his own voice on tape approvingly; combs hair.)

Gladly, Mr. Howe. It leads me very far back to my childhood. Everybody has sentimental memories from childhood. And everybody has a book they love the most. One of my inspirations in this field was by Sienkiewicz, *Quo Vadis*. It describes the terrible suffering of the early Christians . . .

(LEMKIN interjects over the tape.)

He won the Nobel Prize! “Later on I became interested in genocide because it happened so many times. It happened to the Armenians.”

(The tape fades out.)

LEMKIN

I should win the prize too. Who will ratify me? I thought a crime should not be punished by the victims, but should be punished by a court, by international law. Saith the Jew: “For the intent and purpose of the law hath full relation to the penalty . . . By my soul I swear there is no power in the tongue of man to alter me.”

(Light up on GIRL)

GIRL

Bon jour, Monsieur. Are you happy or sad today?

LEMKIN

“I’ll not answer that . . . say it is my humor.”

GIRL

I’d say you’re in a very bad mood. The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely, or unhappy, is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quite alone with the heavens, nature, and God. That’s hard for me to do, but perhaps you can do that where you live. I want to tell you that lately I have developed a great love for family trees and genealogical tables. Did your family have any trees, Monsieur?
(Laughs)

LEMKIN

We had many on the farm. I loved the cherry trees most. And we had a white dog I called Riabczyk. He was shot by a passing rider.

GIRL

If you think of your fellow creatures, then you only want to cry, you could really cry the whole day long.

(He picks up a postcard. Light up on WOMAN.)

WOMAN

Dearest Raphael. We have been moved with the others of the town. Do not worry. The weather is hot. We are well and send our love, Mama.

(Light out)

LEMKIN

Postcards from the East.¹²

GIRL

The only thing to do is to pray that God will perform a miracle and save some of them. Now you've made me sad, Monsieur. *Adieu.*

(Light out)

LEMKIN

When Sienkiewicz accepted his prize in 1905 he said: "Nations are represented by their poets and their writers." . . . the Nobel Prize he said . . . "bears witness that that nation has a share in the universal achievement . . ." Pasternak, the coward, turned his prize back. (*He types*) Mr. Charles A. Hite, Storage Superintendent, Merchants Storage and Transfer Co., Washington 4, D.C. Dear Mr. Hite, The letter marked "LAST NOTICE" has reached me at my Yale Law School office. I am writing to request your forbearance, as my travel schedule and personal circumstances have prevented me from dealing with personal matters, no matter how urgent. Despite my neglect of payment of my account, I plan to have the bill paid forthwith, and I earnestly desire that you not sell my goods at your next sale as you indicate you plan to do. Thanking you in advance, I am sincerely yours, Professor Raphael Lemkin, Author of the Word Genocide and Founder of the World Movement Against Genocide.

(Image of Washington; light up on MAN)

MAN

Congratulations, Dr. Lemkin! I see you've got Ghana and Morocco to ratify.

LEMKIN

But the one I want most isn't there, Senator. The United States is missing. Why, Senator?

MAN

You must be nearing sixty ratifications now.

LEMKIN

No, Syria and Egypt have merged to become the United Arab Republic so we lost one by the count. America could make up for that loss.

MAN

I talked with the Bar Association folks.¹³ They are leading the opposition and won't be moved. Reason is lost on them. They're worried that allowing foreign

interventions into domestic matters would make us vulnerable here at home . . . some of my southern colleagues in the Senate even think we'll be invaded from four directions for our treatment of the Negroes, which I do admit is very bad. I don't think they're eating their vegetables.

(*Chuckle*)

LEMKIN

(*Angry*)

But genocide is an international issue. America must take the leadership in the world to prevent it.

MAN

And I'm determined that Wisconsin will take the lead for America.

LEMKIN

Wisconsin must become the shape of things to come. The strong right hand. With the palm facing you. Remember? (*They laugh.*) A friend once told me: "Chins up. Stick it out. Better times will come." Senator, do you know Ben Hecht, the writer? He's from Racine, in your Wisconsin.

MAN

I know the Hechts from Fond du Lac. Lyle and Rayleen. Their son is Ben. No, it's Bert. Or Buddy. You've done magnificent work and I hope you get the Nobel, Professor. Lots of people do. There's a sign on my Senate office wall that says: "It is not necessary to hope in order to undertake, or to succeed in order to persevere." Not as long as you get exercise, anyway. *Time* magazine called me "Quixote from Wisconsin." So, I won't give up if you don't.

LEMKIN

It's all I care about, Senator. In my line of work, I'm called a *nudnik*. That's a Yiddish word. For a pest. I could come down to Washington and see you this week. I have time on my calendar . . .

MAN

My secretary will call you next week, Professor. She's the one who deals with, uh, nude-niks . . . but only if they have their clothes on. (*Laughs*)

(*Light out. Drinks. Takes pills. Finds old sandwich and eats it. Begins to type. Lights up on WOMAN; she sings the Yiddish song.*)

LEMKIN

Was I not under a moral duty to repay my mother for having stimulated in me the interest in Genocide? Was it not the best form of gratitude to make a “Genocide Pact” as an epitaph on her grave and as a common recognition that she and many millions did not die in vain? Mama. You own what you name: genocide, geno . . . cide, to kill a people. You are what you are named: Raphael, God has healed. You blot out the name of him who kills you: Amalek,¹⁴ and remember instead . . .
Ama-lek, Ama-lek: she loves milk.

(Smiles. Cries. He drinks. Light off on WOMAN. Types.)

Mr. Judah Shapiro, Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, 270 Madison Ave., New York, 16. Dear Mr. Shapiro, I was sorry to learn that the grant to me from the Conference cannot be made in a lump sum, but only in bimonthly payments through April. I shall try to carry on as best I can with the volume on the Genocide Pact. Though my situation is dire, your encouragement is received with gratitude. *(Pause)* Signed, Lemkin. *(Thinks)* No. Lambkin. God has healed his sacrifice.

(Smiles. He dials the phone.)

WOMAN’S VOICE

John Day Publishing.

LEMKIN

This is Dr. Lemkin. I want to speak with Richard Walsh. *(Pause)*

WOMAN’S VOICE

One moment please. *(Long pause; LEMKIN squirms.)* I’ll put you through now.

MAN’S VOICE

Doctor Lemkin? Richard Walsh. I must apologize because we have taken so long about considering your material and ideas.

LEMKIN

They are good, not so?

MAN'S VOICE

This morning, my colleagues and I had a chance to discuss the sample chapters of your manuscript, which we found of great interest. Unfortunately, we had to come to the conclusion that it would not be possible for us to find a large enough audience of buyers for a book of this nature. It is a fascinating and important record, however, so we regret the commercial aspect prevents us from submitting a publishing offer.

LEMKIN

(This is a blow.)

Quo vadis, domine?

WOMAN'S VOICE

You have a call on line three, Mr. Walsh. It's Mrs. W.

MAN'S VOICE

I'm sorry, Professor.

(He hangs up.)

LEMKIN

You say that again and again, Petronius: "People will believe any lie if it is fantastic enough."

(LEMKIN hangs up. Light up on WOMAN.)

When I had the surgery, Mama, I knew that I would not die. I could not die for the simple reason that I was convinced that my work would have died without me. I did not have the good sense to prepare enough disciples to continue my work.

WOMAN

(Angry)

You did not have the good sense to find a wife, Raphael. We are not eternal, any of us. Jacob worked for fourteen years and got *two* wives. You've worked longer than that and don't have any.

(Light out; rear image: Prinsengracht 263, Amsterdam)

LEMKIN

I often felt deserted, but because I was on the go the whole day long, I didn't think about it and enjoyed myself as much as I could.

(Lights begin to come up on GIRL and she speaks softly these lines along with LEMKIN as his voice fades.)

Consciously or unconsciously, I tried to drive away the emptiness I felt with jokes and pranks. Now I think seriously about life and what I have to do. . . . I can't just only enjoy myself as my serious side is always there. . . . I couldn't understand it . . . and the only way I could keep up some bearing was by being impertinent.

GIRL

I have done just like you. We won't win prizes for popularity. I'm working hard on my French and manage to add to my store five irregular verbs a day. Today's are: *ecrire, craindre, faillir, maudire* and *mourir*. There are so many of them, I don't think I can ever learn them all, Professor.

LEMKIN

To write, to fear, to fail, to curse, to die. You are a student a teacher would be delighted to have in class. What are you reading now, *ma cherie*?

GIRL

Lots and lots of history. Schiller's *Don Carlos*. But I'm going to read Shakespeare. He knows so much about people and places and evil and good and hate and love. Papa says the Germans love Shakespeare as much as they love Goethe. If I am to love anyone, above all I must have admiration for them, admiration and respect. Who do you love, Professor?

(Light up on WOMAN)

LEMKIN

I love justice. I love the law. *Sous les lois, nous devenons tous freres*. Perhaps I love it too much. Of course, I love Goethe and Shakespeare.

WOMAN

But are you sure that every book is more important than a friend, Raphael? More important than family?

LEMKIN

And I love language. I do have many books, it's true. I'm even writing one now, the story of my life.

GIRL

So am I. I say things in mine that I can't say to anyone else. I'm the best and sharpest critic of my own work. I know myself what is and what is not well written. (*She might go to him.*) *Courage, mon profeseur*, uphold your ideals, and I am sure you will be content . . . content in the end. If you love the law, and the laws are good, and the people who made them are good at heart, in spite of the suffering of millions, . . . I think it will all come right. *Au revoir.*

(*Light out on GIRL and WOMAN. He drinks. His hands tremble.*)

LEMKIN

(*Whispers*)

"I charge you by the law . . ." *bei dem Gesetz* . . . (*Louder*) *bei dem Gesetz!*

(*Scenic image changes back to United Nations building. Puts on tie; hands shake.*)

Mama, it was the most beautiful day of my life, January 12, 1951, the day when the Convention went into force. I told them, I told them: "The spiritual force of a humanitarian crusade is stronger than any obstacles so that individuals and governments must bow before this force. . . . I am sure that when the Genocide Convention will be fully understood in all its implications, nobody will oppose it. For example, in a certain country certain groups became cool to the Convention because they thought that the Convention deals with discrimination. . . . The idea of discrimination is embodied not in the Genocide Convention but in the Declaration of Human Rights, and whoever confuses these two documents produced by the United Nations may do a great harm to both documents."

(*He collapses in chair.*)

WOMAN

(*Scenic image: Auschwitz. She might go to him and caress his brow.*)

Of all of us you are the lonely and the loveless one, Raphael. Is a life of the law better than a life of the heart?

LEMKIN

I take my briefcases and confront them. In their halls, in their offices, in their languages. They look angry or exasperated or resigned when I approach. The *nudnik* cometh. But I would not let them escape. And I still don't. Yes, I fainted from hunger and ruined my health. At Yale, they complained I make too many phone calls, too many telegrams are sent. I have to pay bills for secretaries and office services. But that day, that day was a triumph for mankind, Mama, and more than that, it was an epitaph for your grave.

WOMAN

I have no grave, Raphael!

(He subsides. Rear image changes to Washington. Light on MAN.)

MAN

Hello Dr. Lemkin.

(WOMAN retreats and goes.)

It's Senator Quixote *(said "kay-hotie")*.

(Chuckle)

LEMKIN

Not Quixote (*kay-hotie*), Senator, Que-sote (*kays-otie*)? *(Silence)* It was a little joke, Senator. *Queso* in Spanish means cheese. My research told me that cheese is very important in Wisconsin. So, . . . Quesote.

(Silence)

MAN

We don't speak much Spanish in Wisconsin, Professor. Sorry. How are you feeling these days? Those ratifications are still coming in. Great work. You must be very satisfied. People really talk about your persistence. The way you focus in on something and don't let up. Like a dog with a bone. That's one reason I'm keeping my optimism that the U.S.A. will sign the treaty too, though I admit it's harder work than I thought it was going to be. You know, we have a tuna treaty with Costa Rica, a halibut treaty with Canada, and a shrimp convention with Cuba. Maybe you need to name your treaty after a fish?

(Silence)

It was a little joke, Professor.

LEMKIN

The Human Rights people are saying now that their document is stronger than mine.¹⁵

MAN

Well, if it's Mrs. Roosevelt you're thinking of, I believe she'll come around. Eleanor is the most popular woman in America, and she sent me a check for \$25 when I ran for governor. She's not what I worry about.

LEMKIN

Popularity means nothing. It distracts from what's important. What do you worry about, Senator?

MAN

And it's not the communists either, though that's all those McCarthy nutcases want to talk about. They've got cheese between their ears. Swiss, with lots of holes. I really worry about three things: mischief by big banks, government waste and . . . Professor . . . can you keep this confidential? . . . losing my hair.
(*They smile at each other.*)

LEMKIN

Then let's meet next week, Senator, and talk over our very mutual concerns. I've got my appointment calendar . . .

MAN

That's not the reason for the visit, Professor. I wanted to tell you about a movie I saw last night. Right up your New York alley.

LEMKIN

I don't have much time for movies, Senator. But I have plenty for appointments with treaty supporters . . .

MAN

Everybody's talking about it around the office.¹⁶ It's about a girl being chased by the Nazis during the war. She hides in a secret annex with her family and boy friend and a cat. Only one of them made it through, Professor. Maybe you heard about the girl? She wrote a diary. She was Jewish like you, though the movie didn't make a big deal out of that. And she was German, too! We have lots of Germans in Wisconsin. Milwaukee is full of them. I did my military service in Chicago, so I never got over to Europe. My secretary told me that Eleanor, the president's wife and my twenty-five dollar benefactor, wrote an introduction to the girl's book.

LEMKIN

Yes, I know the girl who you mean.

(*LEMKIN and the GIRL look at each other.*)

MAN

So, I decided I'm going to make a speech in the Senate sometime and I thought you'd like to get a chance to hear it first.

(LEMKIN combs hair)

It goes like this: “Mr. President” . . . that’s the president of the Senate, not the President of the United States . . . “no treaty by this country could ever make up for the loss of Anne Frank and 6 million others who perished in the Holocaust. But we have an obligation to join with the other nations that have not ratified the Genocide Treaty to make clear to them that we share their sorrow at the tragedy that claimed Anne Frank’s life. We need to make clear, Mr. President, our intention to prevent such a tragedy from ever happening again. We need to make clear that we will bring those who would commit genocide to justice.” What do you think, Professor?

LEMKIN

Very good, Senator, *my bien*. Thank you for writing it. You are a very good man and a loyal ally.

MAN

This week a journalist called me “the number one jackass in the Senate.” Now I like being number one, but he’ll think differently when the treaty gets ratified. This is America. We’re on the side of the good not the side of the barn. We’ll win this one for that kid hiding from the Nazis.

(Pause)

My office will get back to you about setting a meeting, Professor. Maybe next week.

LEMKIN

Please don’t go. Senator . . .

MAN

(Distracted)

Yes?

LEMKIN

(Pause)

Just one question more, Senator . . . Are potatoes counted as vegetables?

MAN

The ones grown in Wisconsin are. Don’t forget to exercise, Professor. If you don’t like broccoli, try spinach. Does wonders for Popeye.

(Pause. Light out. Scenic image: New York apartment house.)

LEMKIN

Popeye.

(Looks at his glasses)

Popeye . . . a.k.a. Kepler . . . Popeye Kepler . . . Father of spectacles.

(Smiles. Puts down glasses. He is exhausted. Radio on. The March from Quo Vadis is heard. Slowly, he begins to type.)

Mr. Guy W. Pearson, Collector of Taxes, Revenue Collection Enforcement Unit, District of Columbia. Dear Mr. Pearson, I am in receipt of Mr. Holler's letter referring to a delinquent and unpaid tax item identified as Personal Property Tax, Account No. 66909. I would like to arrange a meeting with you or Mr. Holler to identify the best method of satisfying the levy now totaling \$20.16. I hope you will understand that my work forces me to spend long periods out of the country, and my attention to correspondence is not always timely. I will call you next week to schedule a visit. Thank you for your consideration. Raphael Lemkin, Inventor of the word Genocide, author of the *Convention Against Genocide*, five time nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize . . . and Good Friend of the Girl Hiding in the Secret Annex.

(Radio off. Dials phone.)

MAN'S VOICE

Charlie Pierce . . .

LEMKIN

This is Dr. Lemkin . . .

MAN'S VOICE

Oh, yes, the genocide book. The fact is that we have considered your materials very seriously . . . but our conclusions are . . . negative. That is, we don't feel that we could successfully sell a book about the history of genocide, whether condensed or at length. Furthermore, we now feel that in spite of our first impression, we could not sell successfully a biography of you.

(The next lines are overlapped and repeated to a crescendo.)

WOMAN'S VOICE

Your meeting will be starting in five minutes, Mr. Pierce . . .

MAN'S VOICE

If you pay the bill in full by the end of the month . . .

WOMAN

I have no grave, Raphael . . .

GIRL

Bad laws made our lives miserable, *Monsieur Professeur* . . .

MAN

It was a little joke, Dr. You should try fish . . .

LEMKIN

(Pushes books off desk. Rises in fury.)

*Jestem kontent!*¹⁷

(Pause. LEMKIN hangs up. Defeated.)

I am content.

(He drinks a glass of water. He is profoundly alone. Lights up on the WOMAN and the GIRL.)

I could not fail, because I spoke in the name and for the benefit of the innocent. This is the reason why heads of state, members of cabinets, senators, and other persons in power never refuse to talk to me, and they have always recognized me as a messenger of humanity.

(The two women embrace and exit. Light out. Pause. He begins to hum the Yiddish song.)

Mama, I promise I'll do better tomorrow. Oh, Mama . . .

(Lights fade. On the wall upstage appears the legend: "The Genocide Convention Implementation Act was adopted in the U.S. Senate in 1988 under the Reagan administration and called The Proxmire Act." Then, "Raphael Lemkin died on August 28, 1959. Seven people attended his funeral.")

END OF PLAY

ENDOTES

1. The play's title is taken from a passage in Primo Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz*: "... if you wound the body of a dying man, the wound will begin to heal, even if the whole body dies within a day." Some of the words spoken by the characters are taken from several documents and plays, the most important ones being Lemkin's unpublished autobiography and Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl*. Lemkin's papers are housed at the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio; the Center for Jewish History, New York; and the New York Public Library.
2. Raphael Lemkin suffered from high blood pressure, which was treated in the 1950s with diuretics [Reserpine] to relieve the pressure of fluids and decrease the strain on his heart. The side effects of the medicine included: shaking, difficulty breathing, fatigue and even mental depression. Headaches were common. After some time, without successful treatment, heart attacks were possible. Lemkin's obituary in the *New York Times* reported that Lemkin died of a heart attack on August 28, 1959 in the office of a public relations consultant where he had gone to discuss the publication of his autobiography; others report that he died in his Manhattan apartment or in a New York hotel.
3. William Proxmire was the U.S. Senate's most ardent and persistent supporter of the Genocide Treaty. From 1967, eight years after Lemkin's death, until the Treaty was approved—though not implemented—nineteen years later, he delivered more than 3,200 speeches in favor of ratification.
4. Marcus Vicinius was the Roman general in *Quo Vadis*; here and later, Lemkin is "mixing things up."
5. Chaim Nachman Bialik (1873–1934). His poem *In the City of Slaughter* was written to commemorate the notorious and terrible Kishinev pogrom in 1903.
6. Lemkin's mind "hears" the city of Bialystock in eastern Poland whose Jewish population was destroyed in World War II.
7. "Eat, my child." (Yiddish)
8. One hundred twenty in Hebrew, the Biblical "long life."
9. Hebrew for "The Hope," the name of Israel's national anthem.
10. The most famous of the Nazis' antisemitic propaganda films, made in 1940.
11. Here, and elsewhere, Lemkin speaks Shylock's words from *The Merchant of Venice*.
12. The Nazis often ordered deported Jews, prior to their murder, to write postcards back to their families saying they were well.
13. Opposition to ratifying the Genocide Convention was led by the American Bar Association which felt the treaty would leave Americans vulnerable to arrest and penalty for their actions abroad and at home.
14. See *Exodus* 17: 8–16 and *Deuteronomy* 25: 17–19.
15. The Declaration of Human Rights, whose leading advocate was Eleanor Roosevelt, was advanced for ratification in the United Nations at the same time as Lemkin's Genocide Treaty. For political reasons, it came to be seen as a competing rather than a complementary document.
16. The Hollywood film based on Anne Frank's diary was released in 1959.
17. "I am content." (Polish) See *The Merchant of Venice*, IV, i.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The attention paid to Raphael Lemkin in recent years results directly from increased incidences of genocide in the world. Lemkin, of course, was the one who coined the word in 1944, and then who used it in the name of the *Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, which he single-handedly shepherded through the United Nations in those early years of its existence. Today, nearly sixty years after its passage, historians are unanimous in their assessment of Lemkin's extraordinary achievement. The discussion continues, however, concerning the effectiveness of the Convention in the light of ongoing human savagery and mass murder everywhere in the world.

The play I have written approaches the subject of genocide from the perspective of the man, not the treaty. From the available evidence, Lemkin was obsessed with the creation and ratification of the *UN Genocide Convention* (as it is called) all of his professional life, from his early thinking in the 1930s at the League of Nations and continuing to his death on August 28, 1959. He had no time for personal entanglements and little time for his few friends, with whom he sought occasional respite from the intensity of his mission.

We know about Lemkin from those who knew and wrote about him, and from what he wrote about himself. Off and on throughout the 1950s, he put time into writing his autobiography, which he called *Totally Unofficial* after a phrase describing him in a *New York Times* editorial in 1957. It was a title full of truth and adversity (because he represented no government) and some irony (because it became a kind of badge of honor and a mark of his outsider status). The book was never finished and exists in several revisions, as if Lemkin couldn't stop himself from tinkering with a story that moved between remarkable personal experience and extended historical disquisition.

In truth, the many hundreds of pages are stylistically ordinary, a surprising result from an engaged man who was well educated, well read, and well spoken (in at least nine languages). Reading his autobiography gives the impression that he lived some of his life through literature. In addition, his correspondence (excerpts of which appear in this play) discloses several letters from publishers declining to consider his manuscript, surely one of a number of painful disappointments in a productive life both unofficial and, I believe, in an important way, unfulfilled.

Contemporary scholars of genocide and of Lemkin's part in getting the world to acknowledge it (Steven Schnur, Samantha Power, William Korey, Michael Ignatieff, Jim Fussell) focus on Lemkin's remarkable qualities: his perseverance, idealism, ethical imagination, linguistic brilliance, and his single-mindedness of purpose. They also refer to periods of ill health, loneliness, and professional frustration (most especially by the refusal of his adopted country to ratify the treaty), augmented by his precarious personal finances and, above all, by the murder of most of his family during the Holocaust. Power, who credits Lemkin's effectiveness, is perhaps harshest in her evaluation of Lemkin, but to her I owe the affirmation of a connection I had made, for different reasons, with a senator from Wisconsin. (See: "*A Problem From Hell*," p. 79.)

If the Whole Body Dies tries to give a sense of who Lemkin was according to the experiences and various cultures that shaped and influenced him. If the play succeeds, I hope it will enlarge the "attention being paid" to him and to his incontrovertible achievements. (The phrase is famous from Miller's *Death of a Salesman*; Lemkin had seven people at his funeral, two more than Willy Loman did.) Lemkin was very human too, and wrote how the three things he hoped to avoid in life came "in implacable succession": wearing eyeglasses, becoming a refugee, and losing his hair.

Lemkin's thinking was determined by his status as an intellectual and an outsider. Perhaps the question I was most determined to answer was what might have made Lemkin laugh, or at least smile. Thus, in the play, he makes an identical connection to a person many Americans turned to in the 1950s as a way to feel better about themselves and the world. And his genius with languages helped too. In notes to the first part of another book Lemkin was writing, *Introduction to the Study of Genocide*, he lists a number of neologisms by writers from Cicero to others in the 20th century, and he is clearly well-aware of the inherent opportunities for pun-making in the word-coining work for which he will always be known.

"I always wanted to shorten the distance between the heart and the deed," wrote Lemkin in the unpublished autobiography, by which he meant "to live an idea" through action. That he did shorten the distance is beyond doubt, even though my interest is to know what lay under "the deeds" of this important, complicated, and (I hope) interesting figure at the very end of his difficult life.

CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE

Adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1948.

Article 1

The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish.

Article 2

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Article 3

The following acts shall be punishable:

- (a) Genocide;
- (b) Conspiracy to commit genocide;
- (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;
- (d) Attempt to commit genocide;
- (e) Complicity in genocide.

Article 4

Persons committing genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3 shall be punished, whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals.

Article 5

The Contracting Parties undertake to enact, in accordance with their respective Constitutions, the necessary legislation to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and, in particular, to provide effective penalties for persons guilty of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3.

Article 6

Persons charged with genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3 shall be tried by a competent tribunal of the State in the territory of which the act was committed, or by such international penal tribunal as may have jurisdiction with respect to those Contracting Parties which shall have accepted its jurisdiction.

Article 7

Genocide and the other acts enumerated in Article 3 shall not be considered as political crimes for the purpose of extradition.

The Contracting Parties pledge themselves in such cases to grant extradition in accordance with their laws and treaties in force.

Article 8

Any Contracting Party may call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take such action under the Charter of the United Nations as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3.

Article 9

Disputes between the Contracting Parties relating to the interpretation, application or fulfilment of the present Convention, including those relating to the responsibility of a State for genocide or any of the other acts enumerated in Article 3, shall be submitted to the International Court of Justice at the request of any of the parties to the dispute.

Article 10

The present Convention, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall bear the date of 9 December 1948.

Article 11

The present Convention shall be open until 31 December 1949 for signature on behalf of any Member of the United Nations and of any non-member State to which an invitation to sign has been addressed by the General Assembly.

The present Convention shall be ratified, and the instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

After 1 January 1950, the present Convention may be acceded to on behalf of any Member of the United Nations and of any non-member State which has received an invitation as aforesaid.

Instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 12

Any Contracting Party may at any time, by notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, extend the application of the present Convention to all or any of the territories for the conduct of whose foreign relations that Contracting Party is responsible.

Article 13

On the day when the first twenty instruments of ratification or accession have been deposited, the Secretary-General shall draw up a proces-verbal and transmit a copy of it to each Member of the United Nations and to each of the non-member States contemplated in Article 11.

The present Convention shall come into force on the ninetieth day following the date of deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

Any ratification or accession effected subsequent to the latter date shall become effective on the ninetieth day following the deposit of the instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 14

The present Convention shall remain in effect for a period of ten years as from the date of its coming into force.

It shall thereafter remain in force for successive periods of five years for such Contracting Parties as have not denounced it at least six months before the expiration of the current period.

Denunciation shall be effected by a written notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 15

If, as a result of denunciations, the number of Parties to the present Convention should become less than sixteen, the Convention shall cease to be in force as from the date on which the last of these denunciations shall become effective.

Article 16

A request for the revision of the present Convention may be made at any time by any Contracting Party by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Secretary-General.

The General Assembly shall decide upon the steps, if any, to be taken in respect of such request.

Article 17

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall notify all Members of the United Nations and the non-member States contemplated in Article 11 of the following:

- (a) Signatures, ratifications and accessions received in accordance with Article 11;
- (b) Notifications received in accordance with Article 12;
- (c) The date upon which the present Convention comes into force in accordance with Article 13;
- (d) Denunciations received in accordance with Article 14;
- (e) The abrogation of the Convention in accordance with Article 15;
- (f) Notifications received in accordance with Article 16.

Article 18

The original of the present Convention shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations.

A certified copy of the Convention shall be transmitted to all Members of the United Nations and to the non-member States contemplated in Article 11.

Article 19

The present Convention shall be registered by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the date of its coming into force.

[The Convention was *entered into force* on January 12, 1951.]

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Robert Skloot (rskloot@wisc.edu) has taught and directed plays at the University of Wisconsin–Madison since 1968 and served as an associate vice chancellor from 1996 to 2002. He is the author of *The Darkness We Carry: The Drama of the Holocaust* (1988) and the editor of the two-volume anthology, *The Theatre of the Holocaust* (1982, 1999). He served as a Fulbright Professor in Israel, Austria, Chile, and the Netherlands, and he holds a joint appointment in the UW–Madison’s Mosse-Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies.

“As challenging as it is thoughtful, Robert Skloot's play makes clear that Raphael Lemkin's battle against genocide is far from over. ‘Will genocide ever end?’ and ‘What can I do?’ are the questions that are embedded in Skloot's rich and well-crafted script. As the curtain falls, choices awaiting us form the next act of this drama of courage, loneliness and despair.”

John K. Roth

Edward J. Sexton Professor of Philosophy

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“Robert Skloot is to be commended for bringing Raphael Lemkin to life and for bringing to a new generation the work and complex personality of the man who coined our word *genocide* to describe this ever-present global tragedy. We remain solidly in his debt. Kudos!”

Dr. Steven Leonard Jacobs

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