

## **A World of Darkness**

In a world of darkness, I find it hard to laugh out loud and stay positive as days pass. In 1977, I left the Soviet Union, the godforsaken country of my birth, to escape antisemitism. At twenty-three, I naively thought when I signed the paperwork for my exit visa inside the American Embassy in Moscow on Thanksgiving Day, antisemitism and I also parted ways.

Forty-six years later, I find it appalling to stare into the ugly face of hatred again, of all the places in the world, my beloved America. Seeing the demonstrations against the Jews on Ivy League campuses upsets and worries me. What happened to the morals of our all-inclusive, embracing diversity society? Have we lost our way?

The words "We are Hamas and Intifada," followed by the chant "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free," calling for Israel to be wiped off the map and screamed by students in support of terrorists, terrify me.

When did we stop caring about human lives? Not long ago, the same students shouted, "Defund the Police. No justice, no peace!" saying that America was racist and that Black lives matter. What about other lives? Don't Jewish lives matter? All lives should matter.

I cannot wrap my thoughts around the terrifying trend of antisemitism blatantly being portrayed by social media. Instead of being non-biased, the newscasters pick sides when they deliver the news.

History is replicating itself. Hitler's idea of targeted mass murder was a central part of his Final Solution strategy to create a new world order based on fascist ideology and racial superiority. The Holocaust started with the persecution of the Jews and ended with 6,000,000 Jewish lives exterminated, plus many others, such as Roma and homosexuals, who the Nazis considered undesirables.

To see the atrocities committed by the Arian nation, one does not have to travel to Buchenwald, Dachau, or Auschwitz. They do not have to view the gas chambers or the ovens that killed them. To understand Hitler's evil plan, it is enough for a person to pay tribute to the Children's Museum at Yad Vashem in Tel Aviv.

Immersed in total darkness, holding on to a metal rail, you walk along a winding tunnel, looking at the motion pictures of the innocent children whose lives abruptly ended in concentration camps. A voice in the background announces each child's name, place of origin, and age at their execution. The stark contrast between the black and white images and those children's brief lives made my skin crawl and my eyes fill with tears. I know it. I was there, and I cried uncontrollably.

My emotions went into high gear with the first image I saw. At the moment, I could not explain why it touched me so profoundly. But today, with antisemitism on the rise, I figured it out. The Nazis implemented Hitler's Final Solution to exterminate a nation. His logic was simple yet horrifying—kill all the children, stop reproduction, and eradicate the future of a people.

When humanity forgets or ignores history, it is bound to repeat itself. The memory of what happened to my people during WWII comes to mind when I watch the demonstration proclaiming death to the Jews each time I turn on the TV. The images of annihilated Jews in concentration camps and the Babi Yar massacre appear in front of my eyes when I read a statement signed by thirty student groups at Harvard blaming Israel for the largest massacre of Jews since the Holocaust. My heart fills with rage when I hear a Columbia professor calling the Hamas massacre "awesome" and a Cornell professor announcing his "exhilaration" over the murder of innocent Israeli civilians.

I want to vomit when the media hosts portray terrorists as freedom fighters, the same people responsible for infanticide, rape, and mass murder. People accountable for executing barbaric actions, such as beheading babies, are not fighters. They are cowards of the worst kind, the lowest of the lowest. Savages. When mass murder is committed in such a barbaric way and done in the name of liberation, such freedom cannot be justified.

Since leaving the USSR, where the totalitarian regime, built on Marxism ideology, encouraged the persecution of the Jews, I see more and more of the techniques the communists used taking root in America. Brainwashing dominates classrooms and college campuses. The expression of different opinions is no longer acceptable. Our children and grandchildren are being taught to admire the teachings of Marx and embrace socialism. The educators teach them to disregard the traditional family values of our society, the essential nucleus of its structure, the importance of patriotism, the appreciation of freedom, and the unsurmountable value of historical facts. Our culture creates a generation of "useful" idiots for future political gain.

In the aftermath of Hamas supporting demonstrations, I want to see and hear a proclamation that Jewish lives matter from every college campus' administration, including politicians, college students, human rights activists, and every institution that claims to care about the Jews. I want to see it on every major news channel. But, deep inside, I know I should not hold my breath. For years, I have been searching for a logic behind antisemitism and hate of any kind, but the answer has eluded me. Hate should have no place in America or anywhere in the world. We must eradicate it, just like we must destroy Hamas, and the time to do it is now. Remember, the Holocaust happened, and it could happen again.

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