

A short speech given on Holocaust Memorial Day at the 'Tree of life' Beach House Park, Worthing

by

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My Friend's,

Genocide is not something that happens all of a sudden. It's not something that occurs out of the blue. Many genocides have occurred throughout human history, though the religion, ethnicity and location of both the perpetrators and victims of genocide have been different. The pattern and propaganda that has led to genocides has usually been the same. Which is exactly why we have to repeat the lessons learnt again and again before we find that we are on the first steps of history repeating itself?

The main ingredient of genocide is not weapons or artillery. The main ingredient is dehumanisation of another group of people. It is obvious that among most people there is a great reluctance to commit atrocities; atrocities that contravene values taught in the family, religious teachings, and perhaps even instinct itself. Nevertheless, most people can be conditioned through fear and propaganda in such a way that, under certain circumstances, the perpetration of extreme violence becomes possible.

And this conditioning is what I would like to speak about today. What is most extraordinary about the holocaust is not the actions of a few elite in the nazi party but in fact it is the widespread anti-Semitism which led most Germans to nurture an attitude toward Jews that was "blind hatred," The path towards mass murder was straightforward once almost every German nurtured this "blind hatred" against Jews.

The Quran which Muslims believe to be the final word of God describes this fear and propaganda in the story of Moses (pbuh). "Fear" Where nationalist sentiments are aroused and "Propaganda" where alleged or convicted misdemeanours of a few are magnified and fastened towards all. This is what has been used by enemies of humanity to escape with their evil. Chapter 26 verse 36, Moses (pbuh) goes to Pharaoh to inform him of the revelation and to ask him to stop killing the children of Jacob. Pharaoh responds by saying "He wants to drive you out of your land by his sorcery, they are envious of our power and I only want what is best for our people" Imagine that! Pharaoh who had killed thousands of innocent people would claim that it is not me but Moses who is the trouble maker. It is he who is disrupting the harmony in our land.

Therefore it is the duty of every one of us to place our humanity which unites us above everything else which divides us and fight fear, propaganda and Islamophobia. Before it's too late!

I would like to end my talk with a quote from **Rev.** Martin Niemoller and a tradition of prophet Muhammed (pbuh)

They came first for the Communists... but I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews...but I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the Unionists ... but I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Unionist. Then they came for the Catholics ... but I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me... and by that time...there was no-one left to speak (Rev. Martin Niemoller)

A quote from prophet Muhammed (pbuh) "*Beware the supplication of the oppressed for there is no barrier between that supplication and Allah. Allah does not reject the supplication of the oppressed regardless of whether or not he is a believer*" For many righteous people including Jesus, Moses and Muhammed have been the oppressed but the righteous ones are never the oppressors."

Finally, Remember! If one has the might of weapons and propaganda, it doesn't necessarily mean that God is on their side as well.