

Letting Theories Die Instead of People

This article is posted as part of the January 27, 2005, **BlogBurst**, to commemorate the liberation of the **Auschwitz death camp**, sixty years ago, on January 27, 1945.

January 20th was the anniversary of the 1942 **Wannsee Conference**, in the course of which the Nazi hierarchy formalised Hitler's plan to annihilate the Jewish people. Understanding the horrors of Auschwitz requires that one be aware of the premeditated mass murder that was presented at Wannsee.

Highlighting these events now is important. Even as the press reports that 45% of Britons have **never heard** of Auschwitz, a group of 500 Russian intellectuals, including 19 members of Parliament, marked the anniversary with an **open letter** linking Judaism to ritual murder, and calling on the authorities to close down Jewish organisations across Russia. The Muslim Council of Britain, representing 350 Muslim organisations, is **boycotting the official commemoration** because it makes no reference to the "holocaust of the Palestinian intifada". A British Muslim MP has opposed the boycott, saying "if people are boycotting this then I think it's a mistake. People who were exterminated in the Holocaust were not just Jews".

The World's tiny contribution is to write about a key difference between the Nazis and the West: their view of the best way to change the world.

As a result of an antisemitic **conspiracy theory**, the Nazis saw The Jews as their enemy. Their response to this perceived problem was to kill all Jews. In addition to antisemitism, this policy also implemented two other fundamental principles of Nazism: that there are no individuals, only groups; and that differences between groups can be resolved only by violence. Thus they embarked, collectively, upon the mass murder known as the Holocaust. Nevertheless, each of the murderers committed murder individually, and each of the victims suffered it individually.

When the Allies liberated the few surviving Jews of Europe in 1945, including some in Auschwitz itself, Allied governments, who were themselves largely antisemitic, weren't pleased to have about 250,000 surplus Jews on their hands. However, the Western Allies took for granted that human life is intrinsically valuable and the idea of killing those Jews did not occur to them. They recognised

that there is no problem so bad that people can't fix it by spreading good ideas. Germany is a democratic country today because the Western Allies spread some of their good ideas to the Germans. And we support **Israel** as part of our struggle against bad ideas including the antisemitism that has survived to this day even in the open societies of the West.

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Only groups

"In addition to antisemitism, this policy also implemented two other fundamental principles of Nazism: that there are no individuals, only groups; and that differences between groups can be resolved only by violence."

In this statement, the World hones in on two fundamental principles that have caused and continue to cause great problems within the group we call humanity. Nazism was the worst of this thinking but not the only recent historical example of it. The principles are subtle and underpin most violent abuses of and by "groups". There is the oppositional nature of the principles which create the group ideal and the offending group other. The group ideal, named, creates a name or names for the 'other' group and then en masse sorts individuals into one or the other.

Witness, for example, the intentional starvation and extermination of nearly 8 million agrarian Russians prior to World War II. It was necessary in the eyes of Stalin in order to collectivise farms and labor to eliminate the individual peasant and his family by the will of the supreme state. In contrast to antisemitism the group other, peasant, was by transformed into the group ideal, peasant labor collectivised. Mass starvation which ensued by collective method was excused as incidental.

Hundreds of examples of this thinking exist, but it is sufficient here to name only a few. We can mention Nazism and Stalinism, to name two. The reasons stated and the specific tactics may appear different, but the impetus always comes from the same deadly principles: There are only groups. Groups rise or fall by violent dominance. The individual means nothing. Ideas must become group ideologies. Ideology is supreme over all.

by a reader on Wed, 01/26/2005 - 16:42 | [reply](#)