

# Antisemitism and celebrating the Holocaust

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### *German-Turkish propaganda and a Latvian court: brothers in arms?*

We are facing a new movement in Europe: celebrating the Holocaust. We know that Hitler's "Mein Kampf" is a bestseller in the Arab world. However, it is a new development in Europe and the European Union that people can publicly applaud Nazi Germany. Latvian-Turkish axis? Celebrating and not denying the Holocaust: What does this mean?

Before explaining this new and dangerous phenomenon let's have a short look at the history of some types of anti-Semitism after the Shoah.

#### **1) Silence**

After the Shoah Europe kept silent about what happened and particularly Germans and Austrians went on implementing their own national agenda. The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and its national soccer team was a kind of starting point in 1954, singing the first line of its old/new national anthem when coming home from Switzerland, after having won the soccer World Cup. This line goes "Germany, Germany, over all" – Deutschland, Deutschland über alles. The same line was sung during National Socialism alongside with the Horst-Wessel-Lied. Horst Wessel was a Nazi who became a hero for the Nazi movement after he died in 1930 due to a conflict with a Communist. In the 1950s/1960s Germany went on working on the

national economic recovery, ignoring Jewish survivors and keeping silent about the Holocaust in public, while putting pictures of fallen brothers, men, or sons with their SS, Wehrmacht, or other German uniforms on their living room walls.

## **2) Projection of guilt onto the Jews: the victim as perpetrator**

Left-wing anti-Semitism had a kind of start-up on November 9, 1969, when left terrorist anti-Semites planted a bomb at a Jewish community center in West Berlin; because of a malfunction the bomb did not explode. After the six-day war in 1967 anti-Semitism became more and more fashionable, now disguised under the framework of anti-Zionism. In July 1976 left-wing Germans were the first in the FRG after Auschwitz to separate out (i.e. select) Jews from their group of captives during an aircraft kidnapping to Entebbe, ruled by Ugandan dictator Idi Amin.

The portrayal of Jews as “Nazis” is one of the most widespread anti-Semitic motifs since the 1960s. Today this inversion of truth has become a key tool for Islamists, leftists, and the mainstream to denounce the Jewish state of Israel. Among those who agitate against Israel by saying it behaves like Germans did during National Socialism are several Jewish scholars and authors.

## **3) Holocaust trivialization**

After the screening of the TV series *Holocaust* on German TV early in 1979 for the first time West Germans started to think about the Holocaust. However, a few weeks after the screening left-wingers or ‘alternative people’ who protested nuclear power plants displayed posters that read: “Yesterday the gas chamber – tomorrow the atomic state”. Such wanna-be-Jews trivialize the Holocaust by equalizing gas chambers with

nuclear power plants etc. This reminds me of German philosopher Martin Heidegger, one of the leading philosophers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, because (and not although) he introduced National Socialism into 'philosophy.' Heidegger said in 1949:

"Agriculture is nowadays a motorized nutritional industry, by nature the same as the production of corpses in gas chambers and extermination camps, the same as the blockade and the starving out of countries, the same as the production of the H-bomb." [i]

The trivialization of the Holocaust entails equalizing it with the "motorized nutritional industry" or with abortion ("Babycaust"), "Holocaust on your plate" (PETA) and other allegedly analogous phenomena.

Furthermore this trivialization is part of a universalization of the Holocaust, by blaming modernity itself for having been responsible for the Shoah.

#### **4) Holocaust Obfuscation**

One of the most fashionable forms of anti-Semitism today is the obfuscating of the Holocaust by equating National Socialism and the Shoah with the crimes of Stalin, communism and the Eastern Bloc. The key document of this movement is the Prague Declaration, adopted June 3, 2008, calling for a common European remembrance day on August 23, aiming at the "Hitler-Stalin-Pact". This obfuscates not just the unprecedented crimes by Germans during the Holocaust, it also helps some states like Lithuania, Ukraine or Latvia, to get rid of their criminal history. The ideology of the Prague Declaration has been discussed in the European Parliament and resolutions have already been adopted there which may lead to laws in the near future. This is an anti-Semitic movement because it wants to minimize the importance of Holocaust remembrance day, January 27. Many other aspects of Holocaust obfuscation were picked up by my radar, though this would be too much for this short

piece.

## 5) “Celebrating-the-Holocaust” Movement

The newest and most disagreeable anti-Semitic movement is even worse: applauding the Holocaust. In Riga, capital of Latvia, Nazis will hold a remembrance march on July 1, 2010, to commemorate the German invasion of that city and country at that day in 1941. The ongoing Holocaust at that time is being affirmed, applauded by these Latvian Nazis. Latvia is an EU country and it is hard to believe that a court in an EU country allowed such a pro-Nazi, read: pro-Holocaust march.

Parallel to that we have another celebrating-the-Holocaust movement: immediately after the Gaza crisis on May 31, 2010, dozens, hundreds, and thousands of German-Turkish citizens wrote on Facebook probably the most aggressive and pro-Nazi statements ever since 1945. They wrote “Hitler don’t worry, we’ll take the rest of the Jews”, “Jews to the gas”, “I would like to kill Jews” etc. etc. Don’t forget: these people wrote this on Facebook and everyone, including those with no Facebook account, can read such entries and they are well aware of this. Almost all of these entries were written under real names, including pictures, informations about city or village they live etc. They applauded the Holocaust! They do not even deny the Holocaust or say that the numbers of Jewish victims have been exaggerated – this was the method of typical Holocaust deniers like Frenchmen Robert Faurisson, or Ernst Zündel, and several others, including Iranian leader Ahmadinejad. The latter anti-Semites deny the Holocaust.

The Latvian march on July 1, 2010, and the German-Turkish (and others, but in this case mostly German-Turkish) anti-Semites say: “National Socialism did exist, Hitler was its leader and we are grateful for what they have done. Jews to the gas – great”.

This is the situation in 2010. We are facing several very

dangerous anti-Semitic tendencies and I am afraid mainstream media, politics, activists, human rights NGOs etc. won't worry much about it. The world is obsessed with fighting Israel, with appeasing Islamic Jihad and with spreading cultural relativist philosophy to denounce America and Western values. Even the aggressive pro-Nazi movement, the "celebrating the Holocaust" movement, does not confuse anyone. Leading intellectuals are obsessed with attacking Israel, or working on social problems in post-industrial societies, or they are worried about ecology, economic crisis etc. These are issues – but fighting anti-Semitism has to be a priority for those who have learned the lesson from the Holocaust. And academia, politics, NGOs, activists, musicians, the cultural elite etc. fails on a daily basis to deal with anti-Semitism, to analyze, decode and fight this dangerous and "longest hatred" (Robert Wistrich).

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