

From the Shadow of Ignorance to the Light of Commitment: The Story of a Bystander

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I would like this evening to take you on a journey into the past: the past of the 20th century which is drawing to a close and my life roughly spans. It is a past I remember well from personal experience, having witnessed events which are now slowly sinking into history, and it is also a past which it is my mission to keep alive in the memory of the coming generations.

Dr. Bernie Vigod, whose tragically shortened life was dedicated to learning from the lessons of the past, would, I think, have approved. In the spirit of his work as a historian, I will try to put my own experiences in France in the context of the religious background, ignorance and apathy of the time, and illustrate how I moved from that dark shadow towards the light of truth about anti-Semitism and religious atonement. In the spirit of his work as a teacher, I hope my story will show how an ignorant bystander can first become aware of the reality of human evil, then undertake action in a commitment to rid the world of hatemongers.

At a time when the generation of Holocaust survivors and witnesses is passing away, there are many who claim that the Shoah was a mere aberration caused by a single maniac who held sway over millions as a result of unique conditions. Yet this does not acknowledge the dangerous position in which Jews remain today, with the revival of fascist neo-Nazism and the spread of racial and ethnic wars throughout the world. What have we learned and where are we heading? Using my own life as an example, I will aim to follow Dr. Vigod's legacy by indicating the depth of personal change required to move from the position of bystander to that of active campaigner. Perhaps first, some brief historical remarks are necessary to provide the background for my personal experience.

I was born a French Protestant, a descendant of a Huguenot family from Provence who in the 15th century had contributed to the foundation of a small village called Merindol. In 1545 this village was persecuted by the soldiers of Francis I, when they were confronted with a community of stubborn Protestants who refused to recant their faith. They chose to make an example of the village and it was subjected to a fate similar to that of many communities during the Nazi occupation. Women and children were herded into the church and it was then set on fire. Men were tortured, hanged or sent to the galleys, where very few escaped death. Such massacres also took place in Paris and other large French towns, the most famous being the massacre of St. Bartholomew when 3,000 well known Protestants were murdered. They were the catalyst for the

French Wars of Religion, disastrous civil wars which lasted for 35 years and were characterised by atrocious cruelty on both sides. Peace was precariously restored in 1598 by Henry IV who gave the Protestants the right of worship in a decree of tolerance called the Edict of Nantes, but Louis XIV's revocation of this right in 1685 was to provoke a renewal of persecutions against them.

Because of this historical background, I knew from childhood about religious intolerance and persecution. Within my immediate family, too, I grew up aware of religious conflict, for my father was Protestant and my mother a Catholic; and this was at a time when Protestants did not marry outside their faith and when in my father's family, everything Catholic was anathema. Such was the pressure from the Huguenot side that my sister and I were brought up as Protestants and my mother was duly excommunicated, an excommunication which was only lifted 20 years later by the then Pope Pius XI.

My own religious education was dominated by reading the Bible, the Old and New Testaments, and preparation for first communion at 16 was taken very seriously by a learned Minister in Lyon. Yet not once was I made aware of the persecution of the Jews, nor was I taught about the Jewish Rabbinic religion which developed in parallel to Christianity. In France, as a schoolgirl, I was quite unaware of how far legalised anti-Semitism had progressed across the border.

We lived in a modern apartment in the old Jewish quarter of Paris, an ancient district just a stone's throw from Notre Dame, yet it was only when the Nazis invaded and yellow stars appeared on people's clothes that I first became aware of discrimination against the Jews. My religious upbringing had, however, implanted the idea in my head that the Jews were Pharisees and it was the elders of the synagogue who had condemned Jesus to death.

At the age of 18, all I knew about anti-Semitism was the witch-hunt in the 1890's against Alfred Dreyfus, a French officer of Jewish origin who was falsely accused of spying, an episode of violent injustice which divided France into two camps. This I had learnt both in history lessons and from my own father, a young cavalry officer at the time, who was convinced of Dreyfus' innocence. At the French lycee where I went to school, anti-Semitism was never a topic of conversation even though many of my friends were Jewish. Yet they did not invite me to their homes and when I invited them to mine, they would find excuses. There was definitely a tacit physical distancing between 'them' and 'us'. I had no idea then that Jews had different dietary laws that they could not come and eat in my home. Nowadays, I regularly attend Sabbath dinner with my many Jewish friends; they visit me at home and we share holidays together, but this would have been unthinkable in my youth.

I realise now that because of their successful assimilation into French culture and the Dreyfus affair itself, Jews and Judaism had somehow become an abstract concept for me. There was an abstract sense in which Jews had killed Christ in Christian theology, but it was never made concrete in terms of any individual guilt, it was generally the 'elders' of the temple.

As I was writing this lecture, I was struck by the fact that this was precisely what Hitler did to a far greater degree: He also turned the Jews into an abstract concept, calling for the elimination of people who did not exist as such in the minds of Europe's population. The very core of Nazi methodology was to de-personalise the Jews, removing all trace of individuality, character and legacy. So the Nazis' method drew upon a larger complicity, the sense that people were reduced to concepts and numbers rather than considered as flesh and blood. And they were able to trade on the pre-existing abstraction in families like mine, who had no direct experience of welcoming Jews to their home. Of course, they also prevented people from meeting Jews by isolating them physically, and dehumanised them even more completely by taking away their clothes and their hair, replacing their names with numbers and thus paved the way for their annihilation.

This abstraction, the total opposite of compassion, was an essential factor in Europe's receptiveness to virulent anti-Semitism. Its counter, of course, is human connection, but this is precisely what the Nazis outlawed. For connection - touching, knowing, reacting, loving - makes it impossible to forget, impossible not to care, impossible to ignore the other. We do not and cannot make simply abstract connections with others, or we do so at our peril, since, as the Holocaust proves, that sort of connection is not sufficient to prevent harm. We must have actual connection, person to person, family to family to have real human solidarity. How many of us know a Jew well, as I do now? How many of us today are willing to meet and make a Muslim a real person in our lives? Unless we do, we may be lost, lost in the same de-humanising process which we so righteously condemn in fundamentalist terrorists when they treat Israeli shoppers merely as abstract enemies.

Such is the background of shadow which underlay my own silence, and France's deafening denial of what was taking place next door in Germany and Poland and even in our own backyard, in camps like Gurs, Rivesaltes and Drancy.

Throughout the war, we would listen to the BBC world service every night, with the radio set muffled under blankets since it was forbidden to tune in to it. Although the BBC is said to have broadcast information about the fate of the Jews, I cannot ever remember hearing reports like that. Nor was radio used to warn the Jews themselves or urge them to resist arrest or go into hiding. And Christians were not encouraged to shelter or assist them. At the very least a few propaganda broadcasts or leaflet raids directed at the

camps might have made a great difference, for if there is anything more crushing than the burden of atrocious captivity, it is the sense of being completely forgotten by the world outside.

My own experience in occupied France is pertinent here: I often found Allied propaganda leaflets on my walks, which I carefully concealed to read in the secrecy of my own room, and then spread the news by word of mouth. Those leaflets would urge us to support the Resistance, telling young men to refuse compulsory labour in Germany and join the Maquis. They denounced the Vichy government as a pack of traitors and let us know that General de Gaulle had established the real French government in Algiers. They would give details of roundups, shooting of hostages, life for French workers in Germany, everything the Germans were doing their best to keep hidden. They dealt with Allied military successes and German defeats. Surely something of this sort could have been attempted for the Jews or used to warn European Christians of their fate? It was a conspiracy of silence from one end of the world to the other. Had I known then what I know now, I believe I might have acted quite differently.

Then, shortly after Paris was liberated in September 1944, I met my husband who, a Czech by birth had joined the underground in Hungary in 1939, made his way to France in 1940 where he fought the Germans, escaped to Gibraltar and landed in Liverpool when he was barely 17. He had served for 5 years in the British army, was commissioned in the field and awarded the Military Cross, one of the highest decorations for gallantry. We were married the following March: there was no time for long courtships in the war! But it was not until after VE day in July 1945 that Auschwitz survivors from his native village told him of the deaths of his father, mother, siblings and most of the people he had left behind.

After the war, I lived for 30 years in a kind of limbo of personal life that never really brought the issue of the Holocaust home to me. Firstly, like most survivors, my husband did not talk about it. The deaths of his family and especially his mother, marked him to the end of his life, but he bottled up his grief and would not allow it to surface. As for me, having moved to England, I first had to cope with the change of country, language and culture. My husband and I came from two different worlds and there were serious adjustments to be made if our relationship was to survive. Then we had nine children and also brought up Bob's younger sister who had survived the Holocaust, all of this as he pursued a busy career in business and politics. I did my best on all fronts, but had little time to spare for personal action. It was only years after, in the late 1970's, when our family and business no longer needed my undivided attention, that I became fully aware of the catastrophic, cold-blooded destruction of European Jewry.

In 1978 we travelled in search of my husband's roots to his native village, a former Czechoslovakian shtetl of some 2,000 Jews where not a single Jew was then to be found. In the cemetery, there were no commemorative tombstones of the period. What had happened to these people? To Rabbi Halbersam and his 11 children, Grandfather Yankel, my parents in law and their young children? Aunt Dvora Rivka who owned the pub and her family? Uncle Slomowitz who owned the sawmill and his children? Aunt Myriam Feuerman who farmed nearby and her children? Uncle Rachmil Hoch and his sons? All gone up in smoke? Alas! Yes, literally.

It was there that I came to face with the appalling reality that, except for two sisters and a few cousins, three generations of my husband's family had been wiped out, murdered, in Auschwitz. I decided to try and reconstruct his family tree, with Elie Wiesel's words guiding my work: "They knew they would not survive, and most of them perished. But they wanted to be remembered. They wanted their story to be told".(1) As I discovered the links between families and heard their fate from survivors, I added a small yellow star of David beside the names of all those murdered in the Holocaust. Entire families had been wiped out and when you unfolded that concertina of a family tree, you were practically blinded by a shower of golden stars. I was numb. Nothing could ever convey so graphically, so cruelly what had happened in 1940-45, in that ordinary village at the foot of the Carpathians. To rescue these innocent and unfortunate people from oblivion became my scared duty, my secular Kaddish, a lament in memory of a family my husband had loved, and who had died before he could tell them so.

But that was only the beginning of a long process of remembrance and atonement. I was so shocked that I wanted to understand how such an unfathomable crime could have happened. For the next five years, I studied the subject extensively. Some fundamental and often unpalatable truths emerged, affecting the whole of my thinking and shaking my faith to its very foundations. It was then that I made a personal commitment never to remain a bystander, never to remain silent when I disagreed with an opinion or action, especially if directed against the Jews. And in making this commitment, I felt liberated. I also felt the need to increase public awareness of the Holocaust and its impact on the contemporary world, and that was how I began travelling widely to lecture on the subject. That, in a nutshell, is how I come to be with you today.

My own ignorance about anti-Semitism was not unique; it had developed within the silent acceptance of racism and ethnic hatred which was prevalent in Europe at the time. In Germany, on the eve of World War II, 80 million baptised German Christians were registered as Church members, including most of the 3 million Nazi party members. These were the very people who en masse abandoned their faith and the teaching of the Bible, forgetting the Commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 22:34-40) and embracing the new ethic of Nazism.

The truth was that most German Christians did not feel they were renouncing their faith because Jews were not considered as the 'neighbour' Christians were called upon to love. There were sporadic protests by such people as Karl Barth and Paul Tillich, but they fell short of rejecting anti-Semitism altogether, and the majority of churches remained silent. Not only in Germany, but elsewhere as well, millions of Christians did too little to thwart and too much to support a regime that would have sent Jesus, Mary, Peter, Paul and the apostles to the gas chambers.

There was an equally deafening silence in the political world. As late as 1939, an inter-governmental conference at Evian les Bains on the status of refugees was a total failure. The Herald Tribune's leader declared "650,000 Exiled Jews Refused at Evian" and one German article read "Jews for sale...Who wants them?" No country offered a safe haven for any significant number of Jews who were again being exiled from their land. The world's lack of response to this conference must surely have encouraged Hitler to move ahead with plans for the Final Solution without fear of consequences.

One of the most mind-numbing aspects of the prewar situation in which I grew up was the process by which Nazi persecution of Jews was systematically legalised. A new set of ethics was created according to which Germans came to regard actions aimed at eliminating Jews as part of a greater good. "Thou Shalt Not Kill" gradually became "Thou Shalt Kill." Because people genuinely respect law, the legalisation of anti-Semitism kept the masses quiet, deterring many who might otherwise have objected. As assistant prosecutor Edgar Faure showed at the Nuremberg Tribunal, the Nazis built up a truly "criminal public service" which organised its murderous acts with an administrative machinery other states might envy for its efficiency, if not its morality.

Where was the greater mass of Germans, not to mention their elite, as this new, virulent nationalism subordinated the individual to the good of the German nation and Aryan race? The American scholar, Peter Haas, believes as I do that:

an important psychological barrier was crossed sometime in 1941 or 1942. The exact time and place cannot be defined. The change did not hit everyone at the same time. But the killing of Jews en masse by the Einsatzgruppen...indicates that something had radically altered and that the unthinkable was now fully conceivable as a policy. A whole civilisation, virtually a whole continent, was enmeshed in a new ethic of racial warfare.(2)

Yet the elites, the very people who should "individually and collectively, exercise independent, self-critical judgement", (3) failed the German masses because they were not objective about the Jews, nor about their own complicity or responsibility for independent thought and action. Far from giving a moral lead, the intelligentsia and professionals fell in with Nazi ideology rather than providing a counter-ethic or patriotic

opposition. They made no objection as Jews were eliminated from normal social intercourse, employment, and finally from life itself. Lawyers became tools and went further than asked to purge their institutions of Jewish influence. Judges persecuted Jews with abandon, sealing the individual fate of thousands, if not millions, by refusing appeals and supporting state decisions.

Many doctors engaged in activities contrary to the Hippocratic Oath, religious leaders did not speak publicly on behalf of Jews, professors and teachers exceeded legal requirements in dismissing Jewish staff and students, captains of industry ensured the rapid Aryanisation of German industry and employed slave labour. At the same time, press and radio were completely controlled by the State propaganda machine, even before Hitler took power in 1933.

After the Nazi invasion of France, life was no longer normal for us, nor did we expect normal morality to continue. Unless you have experienced life under an occupying power, you cannot understand how life changes from the freedom taken for granted here in Canada. You learn to toe the line, follow orders, avoid asking too many questions or giving too many answers. This state of affairs was aptly summarised by Primo Levi: "In Hitler's Germany, the rules of life were of a particular kind. Those who knew did not talk, those who did not know did not ask questions, those who asked questions did not get answers."

We were one of only two non-Jewish families in our building. One night in 1943, the Nazis came. Amid nightmarish scenes, they took away for deportation every one of the 145 Jews living there. I was away at the time, but my mother told me that it was the most painful, inhuman event they lived through. A German soldier was posted outside our door, and when my parents inquired what was happening, they were told to stay indoors, it was no concern of theirs. The first I knew of it was that the whole building was silent, there was no one going up and down in the lifts. My parents were told that the Jews were being sent back to their respective countries of origin, which we thought was terrible enough since they had sought refuge in France. Had we been told the truth, that they had all been deported to death camps and the gas chambers, we simply would not have believed it.

As the Reich's armies swept over Europe apparently without opposition, and the individual began to be swallowed up in the masses, becoming subservient to German totalitarian power, our sense of reality altered. Each of us could only cope individually, largely minding our own business. Even if you are not deported to a camp, but have your freedom curtailed by a foreign army, with papers checked at every corner, you learn subconsciously to narrow your scope, forget about ethics and philosophies, and concentrate on your own survival. In all of this, the last of our immediate concerns was the fate of the Jews.

But where were our Allied governments on this issue? The records reveal a blatant disregard for their fate, not only during the appeasement years, but even after our leaders became fully aware of the Holocaust. The Allies were not only reluctant to describe the murder of Jews in plain language, but for 5 months held back official confirmation of the exterminations, during which time one million more Jews were murdered. Courageous voices were heard like those of Gerhardt Riegner in Switzerland and James Parkes in England but the information they supplied was suppressed. The language used at Whitehall's lofty heights shows only too clearly how little Jewish suffering counted:

Why should the Jews be spared distress and humiliation when they have earned it?" reads one record. And another: "In my opinion, a disproportionate amount of the time of the Office is wasted on dealing with these wailing Jews.(4)

And what of Canada's role during the Holocaust? It maintained a position as bystander par excellence - a fact that has been almost universally deplored ever since. Canada's racism and introspective attitude in the 1930's has to be acknowledged and severe criticism has been levelled at immigration policies during that period. This attitude was described and castigated in the book of Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many*(5), whose title became a slogan. There can be no doubt that the anti-Semitism of many Canadians reinforced their antipathy towards Hitler's main victims. In 1940, even transit visas for refugees on route to the USA or Latin America were refused. Like other Westerners, Canada's educated elite shared the widespread scepticism about tales of atrocities taking place in remote countries. There is no doubt that Canadian attitudes towards the victims of Nazi persecution and especially the Jews, were heartless and apathetic. According to one authoritative source, in allowing only some 4,000 Jews to immigrate in the period of the Holocaust and beyond, Canada "has, arguably, the worst record of any country of the western world."(6)

Since then, however, Canadian society has changed greatly, partly because the lesson of the Holocaust has been learnt. Canada now has an official policy of assisting refugees, and has often shown commendable sympathy to the victims of international violence, playing a courageous part in the endeavour to assist the more than 12 million refugees of the world.

So the world knew and did nothing because it was profoundly anti-Semitic. But what was the origin of this poisonous myth? The traditional Church view was that the Jews had rejected their Messiah and crucified him. God in turn had punished them by destroying Jerusalem and their temple and scattering them in exile. They had forfeited the promises made in the Old Covenant and these promises had been taken over by the Church, the new Israel, which lived by grace, not law. Christians came to speak of the Jews as children of the devil, invented infamous libels about them, made them wear

distinctive dress and forced them to live in ghettos. Thus, it is now generally accepted that 1,800 years of anti-Semitic teaching had done it treacherous work.

Returning to my own story, as I came to the full awareness that I had A Mind of My Own,(7) subtle, but powerful changes occurred in my life and work. As my family grew up, I was gradually able to give more time and effort to my own pursuits. After I took my degrees at Oxford in the 1970's, I entered into a personal commitment, which since 1980 has been to help ensure that the Shoah will always remain pivotal to modern thinking. I am inspired now, in a most profound way, by Genesis 4(8-10):

The Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he replied. Am I my brother's keeper?"

The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen!

Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground."

I urge those of you here today who are bystanders to join me in this mission. For it is imperative to reach several levels of audience. First, we have to challenge ourselves and our fellow scholars to further research and understanding through dialogue, conferences and writing. Next, we have to reach out to younger scholars, students, teachers, journalists, the hierarchy of churches, to challenge and demand change, and to teach the masses in Europe, America and the whole world that to become civilised means to accept rather than hate the other.

Finally I firmly believe that we also have an obligation to reach out in our personal worlds, to challenge and inspire our children, friends and colleagues, to respond in a more moral way to the Holocaust itself as the defining event of this century. We can inspire others with our commitment, and this is why we must speak out often, despite our hectic schedules, because we can never know whom we may inspire, in an academic audience, a speech to the public, or even a dinner with friends. Drawing on the insight of colleagues, I suggest a threefold set of priorities for action. First, and perhaps most important for long-term impact, is to encourage Interfaith Dialogue and Christian Atonement for anti-Semitism. Second, is to create a greater priority for Holocaust studies in schools and colleges. Third, is to become a moral activist in the public sphere.

First and foremost we must face the spiritual emergency. Christian churches must address their responsibility for their past and continuing anti-Semitism, their denial of the atrocities, their pandering to Nazi authority, and their continuing moral mistakes - especially through inaction. Christian teaching must not only identify, dislodge and disavow anti-Semitism, it must drive out the displacement myth that God's Covenant

with the Jewish people was cancelled and support the continuing relevance of Jews and Judaism for the 2,000 years since Christ and into the future. It must specifically highlight the continued validity of the old Covenant, the Jewishness of Jesus, the existence of rabbinic Judaism, the relevance of Jewish Oral Tradition and the origin of the Gospels. In the spirit of Judaism, I fully agree with Dr. Blu Greenberg,(8) that in the Catholic and Protestant churches today, we need a living process for creating Commentaries of the Gospels. It is crucial that, through dialogue and interpretation, the Gospels no longer present a threat to Jews, that Christians treat Jews not only without bigotry but with genuine interest and concern, and that the impact of the new teachings should spread far beyond a very small group of Christians and Jews who are primarily academics and religious leaders. In France, a few days ago, a major step forward was taken when Catholic bishops led their church in a public act of repentance, asking the forgiveness of both God and the Jewish people for their failure to speak out against the persecution of the Jews by the Vichy regime. There is a major opportunity for education within churches and synagogues throughout the world. If you teach a priest, you teach a parish and clearly, we must look to congregations as the best audience for ending race hatred.

Secondly, we must recognise the potential for new information to reach the young through our schools and colleges. We have to put Jewish history on the curriculum alongside Egyptian, Greek and Roman history. We have to teach the Shoah. We need to make changes in history textbooks to expand coverage and acknowledge the truth which has been emerging. We must see that throughout the whole developed and developing world, school and college curricula include this subject to a level far beyond a mere token gesture.

And this is all the more important today in the fight against Holocaust denial, which in the worst tradition of race hatred, reinvigorates anti-Semitism throughout the world. For one of the greatest dangers is disinformation, not merely outright lies, but the kind of dreadful euphemism that were used before and during the war. 'Sent to the East' meant 'exterminated,' 'banished from German land' stood for 'killed,' 'resettled' meant 'deportation to death camps,' 'relocated' masqueraded for 'imprisoned,' 'prisoners' became 'cargo' or mere 'pieces.' Finally, the largest-scale mass murder in the world's history became merely 'the Final Solution.'

It is today a positive sign that more university chairs for Holocaust studies are being created, that more major cities offer Holocaust museums and large-scale efforts are being made to record the testimonies of survivors. More than any other survivor, Elie Wiesel has reached out to both academics and the public at large with his call for the preservation of these memories. And the work of Steven Spielberg's Foundation, aiming to videotape 50,000 survivors' testimonies, is to be much applauded, all the more so

because soon most of the survivors will be dead and no one will be alive to say, "I was there".

These personal testimonies are important not only to preserve the truth, but if learning is to have real impact, it has to include the sort of personal detail textbooks specifically avoid. The uninformed can be more effectively moved by films like Spielberg's Schindler's List, Claude Lanzman's Shoah or archive films of camp liberations than by any other medium, because they set the horror in a personal frame. One very small book I had the honour to introduce, a book of testimonies and drawings of the concentration camps(9), had more impact on one American bystander I know than all the textbooks he had read in his adult life.

And thirdly, we must embark on an active public campaign on every level, local, national and international, if we are to rid the world of the scourge of holocausts in the 21st century.

The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: that is the essence of inhumanity.(10)

George Bernard Shaw's telling words warn us against indifference in the public sphere of politics and culture, the sort of indifference which allowed the Nazis to proceed with impunity and the Jews to die without hope. Before and during the Holocaust, there were of course some courageous people who openly refused to persecute the Jews, who refused to be bystanders, mostly at the cost of their own lives, to whom Israel has given the highest accolade, the title of Righteous Gentiles. We must all endeavour to follow their example, even if our campaign begins on a humble level.

The public activity means writing letters to the press to respond to bigotry against gays, immigrants or any 'deviant' group. It means asking priests to preach about the Holocaust, the Jews today or Bosnia. It means challenging politicians, professors, elites of all kinds to take strong, moral positions. It also means supporting organisations like the United Nations, UNESCO, NATO and the treaty organisations in Asia, the Americas and Africa. It means working to increase the effectiveness of aid organisations like the Red Cross, Red Crescent, CARE, OXFAM and other refugee agencies. It means working in every way towards freedom, caring and peace among neighbours, peoples and cultures.

One of the most promising elements in world politics today is the developing role of human rights treaties and tribunals. A major step forward was taken in the Hague with the first international tribunal for Crimes Against Humanity since Nuremberg to bring Bosnian genocidists to justice, and this has now been followed by a tribunal in Rwanda. Many further steps can be taken to support this work, including setting up Institutes of Human Rights in more colleges and law schools, linking them closely with faculties of

Holocaust studies, further study of peacemaking methodology, school-teaching using model genocide tribunals to help students learn about the international mistakes of adults, and so on.

Another very useful contribution was made by Franklin Littell, a major American pioneer in Christian-Jewish dialogue, who defined an early warning system with fifteen events that potentially can signal genocides.(11) These early warning signs should be included in the work of all major foreign affairs and defence departments throughout the worlds, as well as in education programmes, to help us distinguish between legitimate dissent versus a terrorist movement in the making.

"Let's face it," as Elie Wiesel reminds us, "the world did not care, humanity was unconcerned..."(12) We must now ensure that we do everything in our power to combat humanity's indifference to horror, each one of us making his or her small contribution towards peace in the world for we can all contribute through modest personal action in our daily lives. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "What you do may indeed be insignificant, but it is no less important that you do it".

It is in this spirit of making a contribution that I want to tell you about Remembering for the Future 2000, an international conference on the Holocaust which is to take place in Oxford in July 2000. It will be an academic meeting on similar lines to the first highly successful conference of the same name in 1988, which was the largest international conference of its kind on the history of the Holocaust and Christian-Jewish relations. It was innovative in several respects: it brought together virtually all the leading scholars in Holocaust studies; for the first time representatives from behind the Iron Curtain were present; it was deliberately timed 10 days before the Anglican Lambeth Conference of Bishops to influence their declaration of contrition atonement and recognition of the State of Israel and the Jewish people's right to a peaceful existence. Original papers presenting new historical documentary evidence were an important addition to Holocaust scholarship and it also included the first survivors, meeting to take place in Great Britain. The conference marked a turning point in Holocaust studies which ceased to be considered a primarily Jewish issue and became a world concern. We can say that in 1988, Holocaust studies came of age in the world.

Remembering for the Future 2000 will comprise three major themes:

- 1) Historical and Archival Issues, to include
 - a) Historical update and newly discovered archives relating to the Holocaust
 - b) The Holocaust in the context of contemporary genocides and mass slaughters
 - c) Update on denial, disinformation and new forms of anti-Semitism

2) The Role of Religion in the Holocaust, and other Genocides.

- a) the Impact of Religion on the Holocaust
- b) Repairing the world: Religious Responses to Genocide and Political Catastrophe
- c) Ethics, the Holocaust and other mass slaughters

3) The Future of Remembering - the dissemination of scholars' work to teachers and students at all levels.

- a) Contents: issues to be included in Holocaust education
- b) Method: pedagogy: national, religious and interdisciplinary considerations
- c) Use of Resources: new technology; multimedia and cyberspace; museums and memorials; art, literature and film

A number of associated events will also take place in London: a public meeting, a gathering of Holocaust survivors, an art of the Holocaust exhibition to be staged by the Holocaust Permanent Exhibition at the Imperial War museum, a season of films organised by the Spiro Institute and many other events.

We, the old generations, have had our share in the great adventure of the new Europe, "leaving the Holocaust to stand out sharply, but not unlike a reef at low tide" on the great European sea of change. But it is up to those who straddle the turn of the 20th century to ensure that as much as possible of the true story is also preserved for the coming generations.

I urge you then to come and join us on the crusade of Remembering for the Future 2000 so that together we may recite these memorable lines by Robert Frost:

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less travelled by
And that has made all the difference.

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