

Essay on is a holocaust still possible?

People, Adolf Hitler



\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

\n \t

1. [What can be done to prevent this?](#) \n \t
2. [Why do people follow madmen?](#) \n \t
3. [Why did most of the world keep silent?](#) \n \t
4. [Works Cited](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

Sadly a holocaust is still possible. There have been two events since the | Holocaust of World War two which show that humanity's ability to hate and kill each other in a systematic way is still possible. All over the world different groups hate each other, based on centuries' old prejudice – often to do with racial or religious differences: until we start to see that, as human beings, we have more in common with each other than we have differences. I think a Holocaust involving Jews is less likely because of the economic and military power of the state of Israel, but other minority groups have suffered terribly since World War Two. In the former Yugoslavia ethnic and religious tensions between the various different ethnic groups led to a new coinage, a new term ' ethnic cleansing. Hundreds of thousands of non- Serbian Croats and Bosnians were killed by death squads, similar to the German Army's Einsatzgruppen – the SS units charged with the responsibility of kill in g as many Jews as possible. Under the rule of the Communist dictator general Tito, these ethnic tensions had been kept at bay, but with his death and the collapse of communism in eastern Europe in the late 1980s centuries old grievances and hatreds were released. Appalling atrocities were committed – on the grounds of race and religion: Serbs are Orthodox Christians; Croats <https://assignbuster.com/essay-on-is-a-holocaust-still-possible/>

are Catholic; and Bosnians are largely Muslim - but secular Muslims - under Communist rule the state was officially atheist and even today Bosnian Muslims are not especially devout in their observance of their religion. Other tensions existed. During World War Two itself the Croats had been enthusiastic supporters of the invading Germans; while the Yugoslav resistance had been largely Serbian. Tito had been able to unify the country not just because he was a dictator and allowed no opposition - he was ethnically a Croat, but because of his Communist ideals he had fought with the Yugoslav resistance against the Germans. In addition, his position as dictator of a police state was effective in crushing any ethnic discord. The ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims was not as well organized as the Nazi Holocaust - no gas chambers, no crematoria - but it was a smaller version of the Holocaust ('Ethnic Cleansing in Yugoslavia'). Genocide on a massive scale also took place in Rwanda in the mid-1990s. In April to June 1994 800,000 members of one tribe were murdered in the space of one hundred days. ('Rwanda: How the Genocide Happened').

What can be done to prevent this?

I think, however, that as we progress another holocaust is unlikely. Education programs in schools are one way of preventing this, as well as adult groups dedicated to keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive. Jewish groups are more vocal in many countries now when they feel even a hint of anti-Semitism has been expressed as is shown by the recent outcry over constant references to the Holocaust by right-wing news pundit Glenn Beck (Alterman, Huffington Post). The Rwandan genocide took place in 1996, but technology

has progressed since then. I think the advance of technology and the way news can spread around the world may help to prevent another Holocaust. Facebook and Twitter were used extensively in the recent 'revolutions' in Tunisia and Egypt. It is a cliché to say the world is becoming smaller, but new technology allows word to spread around the planet very quickly which makes a holocaust less likely, because other countries would be aware of what was going on much more quickly than in the past.

Why do people follow madmen?

I am not sure people do follow madmen. I think madmen like Hitler are clever politicians who try to unify the people they govern by identifying a scapegoat and then using the bigotry of the general populace to carry out their murderous policies. Martin Gilbert (Gilbert p. 614) shows that in some European countries the Nazis found many of the local population who were willing collaborators in the Holocaust. Jews in the Baltic States stood the lowest chance of survival in the whole of Europe because the population harbored centuries of resentment against them. However, all the Jews of Denmark survived – put on a ship and sent to neutral Sweden by the Danish police force. Clever politicians manipulate differences between people to serve their own ends and to encourage hatred between people of different races.

Why did most of the world keep silent?

During the Holocaust most of the world kept silent because they did not know what was happening. Hitler's anti-Semitic policies were known about before the war broke out, but the mass killing of Jews did not start until Hitler

invaded the Soviet Union on July 1941. The Soviet Union is a vast country and communications were difficult; the German SS went on an unprecedented murder spree. The death camps and gas chambers were only introduced as a more efficient way of killing than by shooting people. It is true that rumors leaked out of something terrible happening in Eastern Europe, but no-one imagined the scale or the systematic way in which Jews were being transported and murdered. The Germans themselves were keen to ensure co-operation and maintained the lie that Jews were being taken to eastern Europe for resettlement. Gilbert (p251) points out that the Jews in eastern Europe itself, herded into ghettos and denied any contact with the outside world, believed that they were being resettled:

The Chronicle of the Lodz ghetto recorded with precision the number of deportees: 5, 353 men and 5, 750 women. The Chronicle only knew that they had been 'resettled, not that they had been deported to Chelmo, and gassed.

The world kept silent because it did not know. Why is why the speed of modern communication makes any Holocaust in the future less likely.

Works Cited

- ' Rwanda: How the Genocide Happened'. www. bbc. co. uk. BBC: 2008. Web.
- Ethnic Cleansing in Yugoslavia' www. globalsecurity. org/ N. p: n. d. Web.
- Alterman, Eric. ' Think Again: Glenn Beck and the Uses of Anti-Semitic Propaganda'. Huffington Post: November 10th 2010. Web.
- Gilbert, Martin, The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy. London: William Collins, 1986. Print.