

Editorials/Op-Ed

Undeniable historical links

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By Chuck Morse and Carol Greenwald
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The sacred memory of the victims of the Nazi Holocaust must not be victimized by political correctness. The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum has done this by avoiding any mention of the Arab or Muslim role in the Holocaust and by ignoring the link between Nazism and current Islamic extremism.

Iran's president announces that the Holocaust never happened while simultaneously announcing that Israel should "be wiped off the map." The vilest anti-Semitic conspiracy theories are promulgated in the Arab press and taught to Arab children as a matter of routine. Anti-Semitic incitement has become a state-sponsored article of faith in much of the Islamic world.

The museum has programs on the role of Christianity in promoting anti-Semitism -- but nothing on Islam. It has programs on current genocidal threats such as Darfur -- but not when the threat is against Jews. It does mention current anti-Semitism in Europe -- but not in the Middle East.

Just as the Nazi threat was not confined to Jews, the Islamofascist threat is not confined to Jews, as demonstrated by the events of September 11, 2001 and by Islamic terrorist bombings in London, Madrid, Bali and Israel.

Nazism held a genuine appeal for the Arab populace, who were attracted to its messages of rejection of democracy, recovery of past military glory and Jew-hating. In 1935, Reza Shah, the ruler of Persia, changed the country's name from Persia to Iran to reflect that they, like the Nazis, were Aryans. A popular Arab song during the war went, "Allah in heaven, Hitler on earth."

The historic Nazi connection to today's Islamic terrorism is Haj Amin al-Husseini, the grand mufti of Jerusalem. He became a Nazi agent after meeting Adolf Eichmann, an architect of the Holocaust, in Palestine in 1937, and with Nazi funds organized the Arab Revolt of 1936-39 which led to the British closing Palestine to Jewish immigration. This facilitated the "Final Solution" by closing off the avenue of refuge. In 1941, the mufti orchestrated a short-lived Nazi-backed generals' coup in Iraq. One of the participants in that coup, Gen. Khayrallah Tulfah, was Saddam Hussein's uncle and mentor.

The Iraq coup was followed by the Farhud, a pogrom against Baghdad's Jews, an event viewed by Sephardic Jews as comparable to the German "Kristallnacht," but never mentioned by the museum. The Mufti obtained Hitler's assurance in November 1941 that after dealing with the Jews of Europe, Hitler would treat the Jews of the Middle East similarly. Husseini promised the support of the Arabs for the Nazi war effort. In Berlin, Husseini used the "sonderfund," money confiscated from Jewish victims, to finance subversive pro-Nazi activities in the Middle East and to raise 20,000 Muslim troops in Bosnia, the infamous Hanjar S.S. Waffen, who murdered tens of thousands of Serbs and Jews in the Balkans and served as police auxiliary in Hungary.

There is no mention of the grand mufti in the museum's permanent exhibit, although only Hitler received more pages in the Encyclopedia of the Holocaust.

But the Mufti's Nazi heritage did not end with the Holocaust. Nazi war criminals found employment in Arab capitals as advisers in murder. The notorious SS killer Alois Brunner was the personal adviser to Hafez Assad's brother, who was in charge of the Syrian security forces. Husseini, Yasser Arafat's mentor, brought former Nazi commandos to Egypt to teach Mr. Arafat and others how to become terrorists.

Walter Reich, director of the U.S. Holocaust Museum from 1995 to 1998, has recently said: "a focus on Arab and Muslim anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial at the Holocaust museum... would be, I believe, appropriately within the museum's mandate. Indeed, it would be strange if the museum did not focus on such anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial, given the museum's devotion not only to the Holocaust but also to contemporary genocides and given the prevalence in contemporary Arab rhetoric of not only the kind of anti-Semitism that helped lead to the Holocaust but also the calls for genocide that are aimed at the Jews of Israel."

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum should be an authoritative voice educating the museum's visitors and the public about the re-emergence of genocidal hatred as a political tool. The museum's mission requires it to

publicize this rebirth of Nazi propaganda though exhibits and educational programs.

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