

Sung Jim Kim,
North Bethesda, Maryland

People tend to forget what happened in the past, though many acknowledge the notion that history repeats itself. However, in a period when the speed of globalization is increasing constantly, it is necessary for people to be retrospective of history, especially the Holocaust. Only then can people avoid prejudice and the use of scapegoats in adverse times and secure a peaceful future.

The Cause of the Holocaust

When Germany signed The Treaty of Versailles in 1919, it was left penniless. With the high taxes during the war and the debilitated work force, Germany was in economic ruin. Added to their internal economic depression was the additional 30 billion dollar debt to be paid to the Allied Countries, the loss of their colonies overseas, and a forced demilitarization of Germany, which impacted its weapon's industry, an important pillar of the German economy. Germany was left with unimaginable debt and little of its economic foundation, but the broken government could do nothing. The Allies occupied the German territory to enforce the treaty laws for the next fifteen years, which inflicted great humiliation on the already horrified citizens¹.

The citizens' morale continued to plummet as the years passed. Because Germany had no way of paying its 30 billion dollar debt on top of reviving its economy, the government raised taxes and inflated currency. The price of a single meal tripled in hours, and the value of paper money decreased exponentially². Germany went through a period of relief during the 1920's, when President Harding of the United States persuaded corporations to lend money to the deteriorated country. When the Great Depression struck, however, the German economy sank once more. Not only did inflation reoccur, but when President Hoover

¹ Davidson, James West, et al. *Nation of Nations: A Narrative History of the American Republic*. N.p.: McGraw-Hill Companies, n.d. N. pag. Print.

² Anderson, Joel. "A Look at German Inflation 1914-1924." *World Paper Money from Joel Anderson*. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2010. <<http://www.joelscoins.com/exhibger2.htm>>.

enforced the Smoot-Hawley Act, raising tariffs, trade across the Atlantic dropped along with that amongst the European countries by 66%³. After World War I, 6 million workers lost their jobs, and women used paper money as fuel to heat their houses as it held no value⁴. The once almighty dignity of Germany was a story of the long-gone past.

To restore the nation's greatness, the National Socialist German Worker's Party emerged. This party, better known today as the Nazis, quickly gained popularity, as the Germans sought to redeem their national identity. The people supported the radical ideas to better their situation. The party reiterated anti-Semitism to use the Jewish community as a scapegoat for Germany's economic troubles. The Germans gained dignity from this, for they believed they held no responsibility for Germany's downfall. Instead, the Germans found themselves angry at the innocent Jewish population, and this anger brought forth the Holocaust: the persecution of six million Jewish and many others, most of whom were innocent⁵. Although the persecution was enough to bring vitality back into the Germans, the costs far outweighed the outcome.

Current Events of Hatred against the Innocent

There are many reincarnations of the scapegoating of the Holocaust. The most recent is the scapegoating of Muslims after 9/11.

During the George W. Bush's Presidency, the economy slowed. Amidst this, the twin towers in New York were attacked and America was left in a state of fear and anger; the American population's attention shifted towards the Taliban, Al Qae'da and the larger Muslim community. President Bush launched the "War on Terrorism" against Afghanistan, which was supported by many Americans at the time. Domestically, there was also a war-like

³ "Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act." *Wikipedia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2010. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smoot%E2%80%93Hawley_Tariff_Act>.

⁴ "Weimar Republic." *Wikipedia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2010. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weimar_Republic#Reasons_for_failure>.

⁵ *Jewish Virtual Library*. AICE, n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2010. <<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/holo.html>>.

response against those who were thought to be associated with the fanatical Al Qae'da. Though some citizens of the United States deny the discrimination, it is easy to witness the existing schism between White Americans and Muslim Americans. Though it has already been a decade, embassies continually deny visas and citizenships to Muslims, rarely give out jobs, and view them with suspicion⁶.

Some argue that the prejudice shown to the Muslim community, unlike the treatment of the Jewish during the Holocaust, is legitimate because of the 9/11 attacks. Though the degrees of violence and organized hate are unequal in scope, it is imperative to remember that hate has not disappeared, it has simply evolved. Any use of scapegoating needs to be remedied as it can quickly spiral into violence. The terrorist attacks are legitimate cause for anger, but many Americans responded by discriminating an internal minority group. Despite the fact that Al Qae'da comprises an extremely small group of Muslims, hatred and prejudice today is geared towards the whole Middle East. Conclusively, the economic instability within the country was forgotten after the attacks⁷.

The Holocaust is a historical marker for when societies perversely believed that extreme nationalism and bias were successful means of handling domestic crises. Five years after the attacks, around 40% of Americans polled said they still harbor negative and discriminatory feelings against Muslims⁸. Though anti-Semitism and other forms of hate are harder to pinpoint now, new types of social discrimination are mushrooming. Racism still exists within the United States as can be seen with the statements and attitudes of high ranking individuals in reference to President Obama⁹; the seeds of scapegoating are obviously

⁶ Malos, Stan. "Post-9/11 Backlash in the Workplace: Employer Liability for Discrimination against Arab- and Muslim- Americans Based on Religion or National Origin." *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal* (Oct. 2009): n. pag. Abstract. Web. 31 Mar. 2010. <<http://www.springerlink.com/content/em2qll3757505626/>>.

⁷ Irwin, Neil, and Dan Eggen. *Washington Post* 12 Jan. 2009: n. pag. Web. 30 Mar. 2010. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/01/11/AR2009011102301.html>>.

⁸ Babcock, Pamela "Backlash discrimination lasts five years after 9/11". HR Magazine. FindArticles.com. Web 30 Mar. 2010. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m3495/is_9_51/ai_n26993565/

⁹ Netter, Sarah "Racism in Obama's America: One Year into Obama Presidency, Some Still Use Race to Define First Family." *ABC News.com*, 27 Jan. 2010. Web. 29 March 2010. <<http://abcnews.go.com/WN/Obama/racism-obamas-america->

still present. The Holocaust is an example of what prejudice and scapegoating can result in; remembering the holocaust is key to preventing the application and excuses of scapegoating for violence and genocide.

Why remember the Holocaust?

In the 21st century, the world is moving from a plane of nationalism to a more intertwined internationalism and globalization. Not only to prohibit further mass executions, but also to establish a peaceful place, members of the world must remember the Holocaust: what caused it, and what can be done to prevent it. Whether a particular group deserves the hatred or not does not hold great importance in the current era. Security and peace will be found only if we override all the hate and prejudice that lead to the isolation and blaming of a single group. It is important for people to meditate on the past and become cognizant of what the consequences will be if discrimination and hatred grow. If we fail to remember the consequences of the Holocaust and distance ourselves from scapegoating, we may reignite another catastrophe.

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