

Pogonowski - Kielce from 4

perpetrators of the murder in Kielce must be absolutely and without any reservations condemned in the light of God's and human laws and that all rumors about Jewish ritual murders are lies. (July 7, 1946, Bishop Teodor Kubina). Cardinal Hlond, the Catholic Primate of Poland, stated on July 11, 1946: "The Catholic Church always and everywhere condemns all murders. It also condemns those that take place in Poland regardless of who commits them and regardless of whether they are committed against Poles or Jews, whether in Kielce or elsewhere in the country. The way the unfortunate and deplorable events unfolded in Kielce demonstrates that they were not spurred by racism. Their basis was entirely different, and both painful and tragic. These events are a hideous calamity which fills me with sadness and sorrow." Czesław Miłosz, Nobel Prize laureate for Polish literature, called these tactics "socialist terrorism." Among victims of the Soviet or socialist terrorism were many Polish democratic leaders who were neither anti-Semitic nor reactionary.

Unfortunately, the Moscow files on the Kielce violence have never been opened. These perhaps contain the reports of NKVD/KGB Col. Natan Shpilevoi and G.R.U. high ranking officer Mikhail Dyomin, who apparently was in charge of choosing the site and staging the provocation in Kielce. Thus, in the absence of direct evidence from Moscow, the Soviet provocation remains the most likely hypothesis, one that is corroborated by all of the available evidence. Clearly, the presence and activities of these two Soviet officers preclude any possibility that the violence in Kielce erupted spontaneously.

Conclusion

The tragic events known as the Pogrom of Kielce of 1946 are demonstrably a part of the Soviet postwar global strategy. The Soviets ruthlessly exploited Jews for Soviet political purposes. The pogroms staged behind the lines of the Red Army were provoked or condoned in order to generate an exodus of Jews who otherwise would not emigrate. The migration of Jews to Palestine was needed by the Soviets to abolish the British mandate there and profit from Arab-Israeli conflict in order to interfere with oil supplies to the West. Meanwhile, a minority of the Jewish population was used by the Soviets to establish communist regimes in the satellite states.

The Pogrom of Kielce was ignited by the Soviet introduction of an organized provocation based on planting false reports of ritual murders, a method of provoking violence originally started by the czarist governments. As was detailed, a very similar provocation was staged a year earlier in Rzeszów by the same NKVD agents. The Pogrom of Kielce was timed for anti-Polish propaganda purposes to persuade the Western powers that Poland should remain a colony of the Soviets, rather than being allowed to return to freedom as did other Allied nations. For that reason it was singled out for extensive news coverage which was to convince Western politicians that "Polish anti-Semitism" could only be tamed by the Soviets and that allowing Poland to become free would cause another wave of anti-Semitism and murders of Jews.

The Kielce Pogrom, perhaps more than any other historical occurrence, has been used to falsely show evidence of Polish actions to exterminate Jews. This view, clearly put forward by a 1940's Soviet establishment keen to subjugate Poland, has been allowed to become the commonly accepted "conventional wisdom." In this case, the conventional wisdom is wrong: it does not square with the historical facts. Those who can examine the historical record but then choose to ignore it and purposely libel an entire nation and ethnic group are on the

wrong side of history: they are using the methods of Hitler and Stalin.

It is sometimes said that throughout history people and their nations are inclined to gear up to fight the last war. So it may be with attempts at ethnic destruction. In the Information Age, new Holocausts may be possible not so much by gas chambers, the technology of genocide for World War II, but by printing presses and their modern-day electronic equivalents. Is hatred for a person simply because of his ethnicity more acceptable today, as long as the object of the hatred is a Pole rather than a Jew? And once it is decided that it is important to instill hatred against members of a given ethnic group, can there be any limit to the perpetration of lies, myths, and mischaracterizations to drive the hatred home? And once ethnic hatred is started and nurtured in a people, where will it end? The Holocaust itself unfortunately provides one answer, one such ending point.

Clear and reprehensible evidence of anti-Polonism can be seen by inclusion of the events at Kielce, horrible though they were, as a Polish continuation of Hitler's evil work of the Holocaust. This defamation of Polish people can be seen in downtown Washington, D.C., at the Holocaust Museum. This type of anti-Polonism can be read in occasional press accounts that slur the Polish people and sometimes can even be heard in informal discussions. Despite these open sores, it is not too far-fetched, I think, to imagine that Jews and Poles, two peoples who survived a twin Holocaust perpetrated by the same country, could develop a new relationship based on friendship and goodwill. It may well be time, fifty years after this tragic event took place, to put the Kielce Pogrom in its proper perspective as an event unconnected with the Holocaust and an event not conducted by a free and willing Polish population, a population that in actual fact abhorred this violence. The Soviet design to falsely discredit the Polish people through this staged event has amazingly outlived even the Soviet Union itself. The spirit of hatred of World War II and the associated Holocaust, and the habit of hate against Poles promoted by the former "evil empire" of the Soviet Union will still exist as long as its tentacles still reach into the minds and actions of ordinary people. Shalom, my friends, and pokój. Peace to all. □

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Winetzki - November from 6

grandparents endeavored to understand and empathize with other sincere individuals holding different beliefs. Fundamentally, we are all one in spirit. So by communicating heart to heart, instead of fist to fist, we are able to find common ground.

Grandpa loved the Arts and always found consolation and insight in music, literature and painting. He encouraged us to seek self-knowledge through the Arts because in a multitude of forms they tell the stories of humanity. Listopad ("November") a play based on the novel by Henryk Rzewuski (1791-1866) addresses the idea of extremism. I was privileged to watch the play, in an unusual venue, at a crucial time in recent Polish history. By describing my experience, I hope to illuminate the absurdity of extremism. Contradictions abound. Julian Krzyżanowski's History of Polish Literature states, "He (Rzewuski) did not cut a good figure in history, for he was a servile of the Tsars, but he was gifted with no mean literary talent..." The venue was St Mary's Church in Krakow beneath the magnificent 15th c. carved wood altarpiece by Wit Stwos. The year, 1984. ZOMO roamed the streets of Krakow, strutting two in front, two behind, like robots from a Stanislaw Lem science fiction story. I sat spellbound in the church, an accidental tourist with a minimal grasp of the language but acutely aware of the significance of the performance for this contemporary audience.

The play portrays the conflict between two brothers. The first, an advocate of the Enlightenment and member of the court of King Stanislaw II Augustus, the second, a follower of Sarmatian ideals. Both indulge in hubris, hyperbole and histrionics to amplify their ideas. When the military, strutting like ZOMO, stalks in to resolve the conflict, the audience breaks into knowing, uproarious laughter. At that moment, I realized the director was using this 19th century play to expose the absurd and often damaging effects of extremism. A memorable scene brings his point of view to life. A servant stands at one end of the stage holding a pasek ("belt") while the Sarmatian brother turns round and round across the stage, wrapping it around his portly waist. The

message is clear. Just as the enlightened fop represents excess on one end of the political spectrum, the myopic traditionalist epitomizes immoderation on the opposite end.

The pasek is a good metaphor for Poland. We have a very long history woven of many nationalities, religions, ethnic minorities and immigrants. We can recall the German burghers in Gdańsk who remained loyal to Jan Kazimierz at the time of The Deluge, the Swedish Invasion. A charter of 1551 gave Jews autonomy within the Commonwealth. According to historian Adam Zamoyski in The Polish Way, "By the mid-sixteenth century the szlachta ("the gentry") included Lithuanian and Ruthene boyars, Prussian and Baltic gentry of German origin as well as Tatars, and smaller numbers of Moldavians, Armenians, Italians, Magyars and Bohemians." And, let us not forget the immigration to Poland of a young Frenchman by the name of Nicolas Chopin, the father of our beloved favorite son, Fryderyk. Many diverse people comprise the warp and woof of the colorful fabric of our culture. Like the pasek, it includes a small "fringe element." But that element must never overshadow the intrinsic harmony woven over centuries into the cloth of our society. □

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