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Bosnian holocaust ignored at our peril; [FINAL Edition]

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Abstract (Summary)

For more than two years we have all been witnessing, almost daily, news of unprecedented crimes against humanity. History has been written in the blood of hundreds of thousands (20 per cent of the Bosnian nation so far) of men, women and children aged three to 82 who have been raped and/or tortured to death, as documented by international agencies. In the future, we will all be condemned for depriving Bosnians of their God-given right to defend themselves, as well as for denying them their identity and instead of calling them what they are -- Bosnians -- pejoratively referring to them as Muslims.

Are there any Christians left in the world to raise their voices against the Hitlerian ``final solution" of an innocent and decent people with a culture of tolerance and compassion going back to the 15th century? Where did Sephardic Jews escape from the Spanish Inquisition if not to Bosnia? Sarajevo was a city of exemplary co-existence of religious beliefs -- centuries before the Philadelphia declaration of human rights -- a church there, a mosque adjacent to it and a synagogue next to it.

Full Text (575 words)

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Mel Dilli is a Vancouver psychiatrist and president of the B.C. Bosnian Association.

AS B.C. BOSNIANS, we monitor closely the western news-media reports on the holocaust in the former Yugoslavia, and we are immeasurably pained by the considerable ambivalence, if not indifference, that is shown by Judeo-Christian civilizations.

For more than two years we have all been witnessing, almost daily, news of unprecedented crimes against humanity. History has been written in the blood of hundreds of thousands (20 per cent of the Bosnian nation so far) of men, women and children aged three to 82 who have been raped and/or tortured to death, as documented by international agencies. In the future, we will all be condemned for depriving Bosnians of their God-given right to defend themselves, as well as for denying them their identity and instead of calling them what they are -- Bosnians -- pejoratively referring to them as Muslims.

Even the late president of the United States, Richard Nixon, concluded that had this genocide been perpetrated on Christians or Jews, it would have been stopped a long time ago.

The prospects for survival of humankind are indeed bleaker than ever, not from nuclear winters, but from ``ethnic cleansing" wars that are spreading in Asia and Africa. For the wise and cultured white man of Europe has again set a precedent that our enslaved, colonized and exploited ``lesser beings" copycat. We forget the adage that what goes around comes around. Yesterday to you, today to us, tomorrow to whom?

Remember the quote of the minister in Nazi Germany. When they picked up the physically and mentally disabled and homosexuals, he did and said nothing. He also did not speak when they took the Jews and then the Catholics. When it was time for him to be taken away, there was nobody to speak for him.

As Canadians, are we willing to continue acquiescing to our United Nations soldiers being kidnapped (and a few months ago subjected to mock executions)?

Are there any Christians left in the world to raise their voices against the Hitlerian ``final solution" of an innocent and decent people with a culture of tolerance and compassion going back to the 15th century? Where did Sephardic Jews escape from the Spanish Inquisition if not to Bosnia? Sarajevo was a city of exemplary co-existence of religious beliefs -- centuries before the Philadelphia declaration of human rights -- a church there, a mosque adjacent to it and a synagogue next to it.

Has the world really become so numb and so indifferent? Why not take pity at least on women and children and take them away from the least-safe havens on planet Earth, even to the Arctic or the Sahara desert, where they may perish with more human dignity? Even Palestine, comparatively speaking, would be a great premium. If nothing else, let us send a horde of Kevorkian doctors to put them out of their misery in a far more humane manner than the constant fear, torture, rape, hunger and deprivation they have been going through for years.

We will continue appealing to the whole world in the name of God and humanity that we all wake up tomorrow sober, and each and every one of us does our fair share in putting an end to this present-day holocaust.

We owe this to our children and grandchildren and to our human race as a whole.

[Illustration]

Black & White Photo; MEL DILLI (93-1852)

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