

The Nazis and the war on drugs

By Aaron Clemens
Contributing Opinion Writer

Holocaust Remembrance occurred the week before last at UNLV in the Moyer Student Union. The self-guided exhibit was horrific but informative. I met a gentleman who survived Auschwitz. The stories and pictures of concentration camps, the dead and Nazi storm troopers killing innocent people were all extremely moving, but the most emotional part of the exhibit looked very placid. Picture a class of happy young school children with the chilling caption, "Only four from this class survived."

Hillel, a Jewish organization, put on this program. Of the 14 million killed during the Holocaust, six million were Jews. The Nazis needed a scapegoat to vilify since solving Germany's depression was the platform they were elected on. They claimed that only pure Aryans were people and the other "parasites" caused all of Germany's problems. They felt that Jews, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals and any other non-Nazi Aryans deserved their punishment of slave labor and execution as decided by Hitler and the other Nazi leaders.

The Nazi's irrationally claimed that Jews controlled commerce when Jews only owned a small percentage of German shops. They perpetrated many prejudices

so that they could rise to power. In history it is common for groups of people wishing to oppress and enslave others to justify their action with contrived thought that they wouldn't believe if it didn't come from their own mouth. Americans justified slavery and Jim Crow laws with Biblical passages but looked down on Mormons when they attempted to justify polygamy the same way.

One theme of Holocaust Remembrance is that we need to remember what happened so history will not repeat itself. If Nazis would've seen the Jews as people, they would be unable to commit those heinous crimes.

Remembrance hasn't worked, as evidenced by the ethnic cleansing in Africa and Europe. Both Rwanda and Bosnia have been in the news because war criminals are now being brought to justice. Justice for the mass murderers does little to comfort the orphaned, crippled, and dead. War breeds the environment in which genocide is possible.

For America to stand for "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" we need to call for an end to all war. The instigators of a war should face the rest of the world's nations. France and Britain ignored their treaty with Poland and this caused a great deal of suffering in W.W.II. A world moratorium must be made and enforced by all with violence.

America fought a war against its natives and won convincingly. America is currently fighting a war against drugs ostensibly for self-protection. The war on drugs has started many gangs in metropolitan inner cities, which do form a menace to society. These gangs are protecting their turf with violence because controlling an area means easier distribution of drugs. The laws making drugs illegal were aimed at raising drug prices high and lowering the quality available. Prices are now higher than before but so is the profit from drug dealing.

Before drug prohibition, a ten-year-old child could walk into a drug store and buy heroin. At that time there was no drug problem. With the new scourge of drugs on our nation many of Orwell's predictions in the book *1984* are coming true. A newly proposed law would equip all phones with a tap so police can listen in. The rise in drug use and abuse has created many more addicts who threaten lives when stealing to pay for their habits. The police aren't liable even if acting negligent towards the citizens they swear to protect and serve, but they are mandated to break into houses wielding guns. Mistaken police raids have killed innocent citizens, but I guess it's just their bad luck.

It's good politics to "fight the war on drugs" and attack your opponent for being "soft" on drugs. The charismatic Hitler taught us

that good politics don't make good politicians. A recent study by the government agency Partnership for a Drug Free America indicated that 60% of adults had smoked marijuana. It makes sense to at least legalize a medically valuable plant and tax it enough to subsidize any treatment that might result from abuse. That's what the government does with alcohol and tobacco.

It took the U.S. a long time and many lost lives to realize that Vietnam and the Volstead Act were unsuccessful. How long can the American public stand the war on drugs? While we spend our resources to raise drug prices and put drug abusers in jail we ignore the fact that other nations are still sponsoring genocide. After 60 years of our drug war, America has a higher per capita imprisonment rate than South Africa did at the height of Apartheid. This war is tearing up poor and mainly minority filled inner cities. Does America feel safer, now that more young black males are in prison than in college?

Unless our police force grew exponentially for a decade drugs would still be readily available. To win this war a lot of resources that could be used for anything else would be squandered. Should we keep violent criminals where they belong or end drug prohibition and spend our billion-dollar drug budget on treatment rather than punishment?

Letter to the Editor

Cavagnaro comments

Reference *The Rebel Yell* April 30, Editor in Chief Darryl Richardson's "Random Musings" commentary concerning the alleged racist remarks of the \$131,000 man - Charles Cavagnaro.

There must be a full "public" investigation of the allegations without intimidation or retribution against those (faculty and students) who come forward to testify. Further, no cover-ups! Plus, if our present Senate are not a bunch of cowardly wimps, they must take a stand on this vital campus issue, as well as other campus organizations. Pious platitudes and disingenuousness are anathema to democracy and UNLV's standing in the country.

Since I believe in "Real" change democracy, my position is quite clear: if the charges against Director Cavagnaro are true - he must immediately resign or be fired! I will accept nothing less.

As a loyal supporter of President Carol Harter, I have faith she will do the right thing. There is an insidious, divisive, racist cancer eating at the very soul of UNLV. It must be eliminated!

Len Dinkins
Freshman, English

MUSINGS: Thanks to all of the readers for making this paper a part of their day

progress next year. Work hard at it, but remember to have some fun with the job as well. Good luck!

There are also countless others around this campus who deserve thanks for their cooperation and support of the paper over the year. I can't name them all, but a few deserve special mention. Carol Harter and Bob Ackerman have been free with their time and kind words and I appreciate both of them for it. Luis Valera, Terry Moore and the student senate always were ready with a quote or information or whatever we needed from CSUN. Evan Blythin was quick with ideas and encouragement from the Advisory Board. You will be missed next year.

One person who deserves his own paragraph is Jim Moore. People on this campus have no idea how important you are to both CSUN and the *Yell*. Without you, the financial aspect of the paper would have been pure chaos. Thanks for all of your work.

Of course, we wouldn't have a newspaper without those

people making news. To Keon Clark, Bill Bayno and the Runnin' Rebels, Jon Denton, Charles Cavagnaro, Mehran Tamadonfar, Douglas Ferraro, Eric Coyle, CSUN and all the rest of the newsmakers on campus, thanks for everything. A special thanks to Joe Mills and the whole Mills gang for coming up with stuff that I couldn't have made up in my wildest dreams.

Personally, I have several other people to thank. First, Mary Hausch for her devotion to this paper and the people who work on it (not to mention all of the candy). You have no idea how grateful I am for your support and advice. To my other professors, especially Dennis Mazzocco, Jerry Simich, Steven Parker, Larry Mullen, Dina Titus and John Swetnam, thanks for the challenges and for making my education at UNLV one of the best I could have gotten.

I also want to thank my friends (yes, I actually have some) for putting up with me over the past year. Christian, Rich, Shep, Matt, Jon, Jen, Vicki, Kapono, Willie, Dan and all of

the rest, thanks and let's do lunch sometime!

Thank you to my family for their support and encouragement when I needed it. Those late-night phone calls sometimes were the only things that kept me sane.

Finally, to all of you loyal readers. When I got this job, I didn't know if we would ever get our readership up. But, from all of the comments that I have received over the year, I know that at least somebody was reading. We may not have satisfied all of you, but it was a start.

Thanks for letting me become a part of your school day twice a week. I'm going to miss writing these little missives. It was fun and I hope you have enjoyed them. Only one more to go.

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