

Long Silence Again

BY DR. BERNARD MANDELBAUM

This is the year 1972, with a United Nations and its Commission on Human Rights, and yet we still hear sounds of the medieval, dark ages. Uganda announces the inhuman ejection of 50,000 Asians (or possibly 90,000) from its land, and it doesn't create a ripple in the councils of nations. Again the world is silent.

Politicians running for election are silent because there are not many votes in this issue. UN Secretary Waldheim is lamely silent about this horrendous offense to human rights. But Jews cannot be silent. We know from our history and contemporary events what cruelty is involved in with the forcible eviction of citizens from land or the equally inhuman, forcible prevention of their free choice to leave if they wish. Consider the stated reasons for Uganda's actions. The leaders and local residents refer to the unwanted Indians and Pakistanis as the cause of the "problem of withering financial reserves" the

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saboteurs of the economy. The news reports that "the resentment toward the Asians is vast even among intellectuals," and they are clearly being used as scapegoats for anything that may be wrong in the land.

The politics of caution must be put aside in the face of such immorality. The hour demands an especially loud call from the voice of the Jewish conscience, expressing repugnance at such behavior and the urgent appeal for its immediate halt. The world was silent when Uganda summarily evicted Israelis from their land, without rhyme or reason, but with accusations of tyrannical "biglie" technique. Jews must not be silent when others - this time other Asians suffer the same wicked, uncivilized treatment: "... for strangers in the land of Egypt." (Exodus 23:9).

Of all men's shortcomings, nothing has done more harm to society than the sin of silence when evil appears. Silence in the face of continuous acts of evil was the cause of World War II; silence made the holocaust a reality; silence followed the Lod massacre, and now silence

about the plight of innocent people in a land which is a bona-fide member of the UN. Every Jewish organization that represents a concern for the sacredness of human rights - The American Jewish Committee and Congress, A.D.L. - has a duty to speak up in the name of a tradition that believes in the Family of Mankind living in One World. Evil or sickness in any member of the human family is a danger to us all.

SALZBURG (WNS) -- Pres. Nixon will bring the issue of Soviet Jewry to the attention of Soviet leaders according to Dr. Henry Kissinger, who said the President was aware of the more than one million petitions on behalf of Soviet Jewry which had been sent to the White House.

NEW YORK -- Rita E. Hauser, former United States Representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, predicted that the Senate, after 23 years of inaction, will ratify the UN Convention on the Elimination of Genocide this year.



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