

# Netanyahu and Violence against Jews

The *New York Times* is overjoyed that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, strained in the tension of the Arab stabbing of Jews in Jerusalem and other places, “misspoke” in remarks on October 20, 2015, when he said that Muslim Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Haj Amin al-Husseini gave Adolf Hitler the idea for the extermination of Jews in the Holocaust.

Everyone, including Netanyahu, knows it was Hitler who initiated and was responsible for the Final Solution, the Holocaust. Even the Mufti, defending himself, said that Hitler did not need any convincing from him.

Netanyahu might no doubt have formulated his remarks differently if he was not distraught by the Muslim terrorist attacks of recent weeks. But his critics ignore the reality that his argument, if an exaggeration, was not a historical distortion, but a truthful indication that the former leader of the Palestinians had been responsible for a systematic incitement for more than 40 years from 1921 until after World War II for the extermination of Jews. The implicit parallel with contemporary Palestinian leaders, both of Fatah and Hamas, refusing to make peace with the State of Israel is unmistakable.

In view of the violence and terrorist acts against Jews in Israel and the West Bank it is useful to remember the influence on the activities of current Palestinian leaders by the past Palestinian leader, internationally held to be a war criminal, and the similar rhetoric and false allegations about Israeli intentions towards the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem of the past and present leaders.

The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem was the most influential past

spokesperson of Palestinians, a crucial player in igniting the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the epitome of hatred and intolerance towards Jews. From the 1930s he was a supporter of the Nazi regime, first ideologically and then physically. He was appointed to the position of Mufti in 1921, even though he was responsible for the riots in Jerusalem in April 1920, which resulted in the deaths of five Jews along with 234 others injured. He was sentenced by the British military court to ten years imprisonment but never served the sentence since he fled the area, and was pardoned a few months later.

The Mufti in 1929 anticipated the current allegations of the Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that Israel was imperiling the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

Both Islamic leaders argued that the Jews were seeking to control the Muslim holy places in Jerusalem. In August of that year he instigated the anti-Jewish riots in Jerusalem and in Hebron where 67 Jews were massacred, including the beheading of babies and castration of elderly rabbis, and later the riots in Safed, Motza, and Haifa.

The Mufti was largely responsible for the Arab revolt that  began in April 1936 with mob attacks in Haifa followed by an Arab strike. At that time he was already collaborating with Nazi Germany. He admitted that it was due to the money from Germany that he was able to carry out that uprising in Palestine.

During World War II he fled the Middle East, going to Italy where he met Mussolini and then to Germany. His most famous and notorious meeting was with Adolf Hitler on November 28, 1941 at which he told the Nazi leader that the Arabs were Germany's natural friends because they had the same enemies. Therefore the Mufti declared, the Arabs would collaborate with Nazi Germany. In his turn, Hitler assured him that the struggle against the Jewish homeland in Palestine was part of the uncompromising struggle against the Jews.

In a study released by the United States National Archives in 2010 it was revealed that the Mufti was paid a salary of 50,000 marks a month by the Nazis, 80,000 marks as living expenses in Germany, and was given a house and a chauffeur in Berlin.

It is not coincidental that the Mufti-Hitler meeting took place a day before , on November 29, invitations were sent by Reinhard Heydrich, director of the Main Security Office of the SS, to 13 senior Nazis to attend the Wannsee Conference held on January 20, 1942 to plan the Final Solution to the Jewish Question.

Husseini became friendly with Heinrich Himmler and Herman Goering, and especially with Adolf Eichmann, with whom he visited Auschwitz. In broadcasts on Germany's Arab language radio service he called for a jihad against Jews as well as the Allies.

On June 28, 1943 the Mufti wrote to the foreign ministers of Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Italy, urging them not to send any Jews from their countries to Palestine. He was even more extreme than Himmler, who in 1943 was prepared to trade 5,000 Jewish children in the Balkans in return for the release of 20,000 German POWs. However, the Mufti demanded that this not be done. Instead, he said European countries should rescind any plan to allow Jewish emigration, and that all the Jews be sent to Poland where "they are under active control." He opposed and prevented the Nazi plan to allow 10,000 Jewish children to leave Poland in exchange for German civilian prisoners. As a result, half a million Jews in the four countries were exterminated in the camps.

In addition, the Mufti recruited Muslims for the Nazis by organizing the SS 13th Waffen Division (Handschar) of 20,000 men in the Balkans to fight with the Nazis.

The Mufti always denied knowing Eichmann but this lie was

exposed by testimony at the Nuremberg trials in July 1946. This came from SS Hauptsturmführer Dieter Wisliczeny, a close associate of Eichmann, who said, "the Mufti was one of the initiators of the systematic extermination of European Jewry... He was one of Eichmann's best friends and had constantly incited him to accelerate the extermination measures."

Even if Netanyahu in his speech was attempting to discredit the Palestinian leadership for failure to stop terrorist activities by alluding to their past leader, he was not absolving the Nazi regime for the murder of six million Jews. Rather he was alluding to the familiar pattern, past and present, of Palestinian violence against Jews. Even the *New York Times* might pay heed to this.

First published in the