

On the Eve of Yom Ha Shoah a Courageous Survivor Speaks of the Islamist Threat Facing Israel and Jews



Tonight marks the onset of [Yom Ha Shoah](#) or Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel and the Jewish Diaspora. The date in the Hebrew calendar, [27th Nisan](#), marks the anniversary of valiant [Warsaw Ghetto Uprising](#) against Nazi occupation forces by young Jewish resistance fighters in April 1943. Yom Ha Shoah falls one week after the Passover holiday and a week before [Yom Hazikaron](#), Israel's Remembrance Day for its fallen soldiers.

We are republishing a remarkably prescient speech by a courageous Holocaust Survivor Ms. Barbara Welner delivered on the 27th of Nissan at her synagogue in Pittsburgh April 14, 2007. Ms. Welner is a Holocaust survivor who ran away from Nazi killers in a Polish ghetto and survived innumerable threats to her life until liberated. Arriving with her husband, a fellow survivor in the US, she ultimately became a professional gerontology nurse before her retirement. Ms. Welner is the mother of *New English Review* contributor, Dr. Michael Welner, renowned Forensic Psychiatrist and Chairman of the Manhattan-based Forensic Panel developer of the Depravity Standard.

Ms. Welner is one of the few persons of her background who has recognized the threat of Islamic Jihadism to both Israel and the Jewish people. That is reflected in the contemporary rise of barbarity of the Islamic State seeking to cleanse the Middle East of Jews, Christian and ancient religious

minorities in unspeakable ways reminiscent of the Nazi Holocaust. A holocaust that destroyed the lives of six million European Jewish men, women and children including family members of Ms. Welner.

Demonstrable of her activism in defense of these threats against the Jewish people was her participation with her son in a rally in Manhattan in the fall of 2014 [protesting](#) the controversial production of *The Death of Klinghoffer*. John Adam's opera production mounted at the New York Metropolitan Opera.



Barbara Welner

Here is Ms. Welner's Yom Ha Shoah address originally published by this writer in the *Israpundit* blog, ["Moral Clarity from a Holocaust Survivor: Yom Ha Shoah comments of Barbara Welner"](#).

When Cantor Rick Berlin approached me about sharing my experiences of the Holocaust with you and giving you my thoughts on it, I responded rather reluctantly. You see, although it is almost 70 years since the events of the Holocaust took place, the horror and the trauma of the period have deeply marked my psyche. The passage of time did little to diminish the hurt. It is like an exposed nerve that sears in pain whenever touched. And so, I find it painful to rake up the very gruesome story of the incredible tragedy that befell me at the age of 12, when I still lived with my parents and siblings in Poland.

I do not intend to go into details of the barbarism of the Nazis and their Polish allies, though one could not discuss it too often.

There are too many potential Nazis in our present day world, waiting for the opportunity to continue where

Hitler left off, for anyone to afford the luxury of thinking that the Holocaust is overdone, overstated, overemphasized.

And one can never learn to cope with reality by denying it. Most of us would love to forget that the Holocaust ever happened. But it did happen, and the effects and ramifications of it are part of our lives.

Jews in the Holocaust were methodically hounded, degraded, deprived of all means of defense, starved and beaten into submission, lured into gas chambers with signs of "Work Sets Free" to the tune of orchestra playing Viennese waltzes, and then, their bodies were used as raw materials for things like soap, calcium from bones, gold from artificial teeth, hair for stuffing mattresses, skin for lampshades.

This kind of thing has no parallel; not in Rwanda, not in Cambodia, not in Darfur.

I remember distinctly that at the time of the Allied invasion on Normandy in 1944, I was in an area regularly bombed by the Allies.

At one time, bombs were exploding all around me and I prayed ever so intensely that I should be given the privilege of being killed by a bomb, like a free human being, rather than like a sewer rat or vermin that everybody despises.

The degradation of the Holocaust. and the re-birth of the State of Israel, both monumental happenings of the 20th century Jewish life, have become a part of the fiber of our lives. I think it is fair to say that Israel is alive today because it has learned the lessons of the Holocaust, and that is, that in order to survive one has to have the power to survive. Powerlessness is an invitation to death camps.

If the Holocaust, and the sacrifice of the many millions of innocent lives is to have any meaning for future generations, then our immediate lesson should be to insure our resolve.

I recognize the same intense desire to dehumanize the Jews to utterly destroy them from all quarters of Arab and Muslim life today. The only difference between what I saw from the Nazis is that the Nazis were coy to the outside world about how much they wanted to kill the Jews. The Arabs are quite loudly and vocally advertising how they plan to annihilate Israel .

But, let us not feel sorry for ourselves. Let us be proud of Jewish philanthropy, Jewish scholarship, Jewish Israel , Jewish power.

Yes, Jewish power – the power we are at times timid to exercise in media, in scholarship, in military, for fear of “what they will say.”

Let us stand up to the haters as proud Jewish Americans and ambassadors of our great heritage!

If you don't, may you be fortunate to be spared the history I endured as too many Jews of World War II America remained silent while their own brethren were turned into fertilizer and bars of soap.