The Role Played By The NY Times During The Holocaust (Part 2/2)

To see what we wrote yesterday, click here
We began to write about the role played by the prestigious newspaper The New York Times and the lack of information about the Holocaust in the American population.
It should be noted that the New York Times, especially in the 1940s, was not only the most important newspaper in the world, but also the "leading" newspaper, in the sense that thousands of other newspapers and newscasts in the US and around the world got their information from the Times and followed its leadership (this, obviously, is changing in the modern news-media-world).
We will see now some examples that illustrate the biased attitude of the New York Times in reporting the atrocities that were occurring in Europe.
A New York Times article of July 2, 1942 reports the killing of 700,000 Jews, "one fifth of the entire Jewish population of Poland." It even mentions concentration camps and gas chambers. The article says: "Children in orphanages, elderly in hospices, sick in hospitals and women were killed in the streets. In many places Jews were detained and deported to undisclosed destinations or massacred in nearby forests. " The article continues to list how many Jews had been killed in each province, and then says that "the massacre still continues in Lvov."
This story is typical. The information is objective, detailed and even contemporary. However, the American public was largely unaware of the magnitude of what was happening. Then that generates two questions. The first question is, how did this happen? And then the second question is, why did this happen?
How? The answer is that these news were buried in the middle of the newspaper. The article of July 2, 1942 appeared on page 6 under a small subtitle reserved for unimportant material.
Another article of June 27, 1942 that describes the same

massacre as “probably the biggest mass slaughter in history”, was on page 5 and had no title!
Why? This tendentious down-playment of the Shoah did not occur because the front page of the newspaper was full of momentous news. The day this horrific story appeared in the New York Times, the front page featured articles about tennis shoes and canned fruit.
Then we ask ourselves again why?
The answer is: Arthur Hays Sulzberger. Sulzberger was the owner and editor of the New York Times. And what makes it so amazing is that Sulzberger was Jewish.
Sulzberger felt no religious or emotional connection to the threatened mass of European Jews. Although hard to believe, it seemed that, on the contrary, he did the impossible to ignore them.
Sulzberger wrote the following:
“There is no common denominator between the poor and unfortunate Jew led [to death] in Poland and … .I. Certainly, in Poland, this Jew is part of a persecuted minority. … fortunately, I’m not in that category. “
According to Leslie Leff, the author of “Buried by the Times” who denounces Sulzberger’s silence and minimization of the information about the Shoah, Sulzberger’s lack of empathy and tendency towards European Jews was due to his reformist ideology. Sulzberger’s political grandfather, Isaac Wise, was the founder of the Jewish reform movement in the US. In those times reform Judaism promoted the idea that Jews are not a nation but simply followers of a creed.
Sulzberger was an assimilationist Jew: for him Jews are not a people, in the same way that Catholics or Protestants are not a people. In December 1942, in a note to the staff of the New York Times he wrote: “I have been trying to instruct the people of my newspaper on the subject of the word ‘Jews’; that they are not a race or a people, etc. “
Former New York Times journalist Ari Goldman, in his review of Leff’s book, writes:” There is no doubt that Sulzberger’s views on Judaism influenced what what he did in his newspaper. “
Again and again the views of Sulzberger are reflected in the editorials of the New York Times, in which the difficult situation of the Jews is not mentioned but is rather

deliberately ignored.
On the German refugee children, almost all of them Jews, the New York Times generalized: “[those children] are of any race and faith.”
On the Hitler regime, the New York Times wrote: “It is decency and justice that are being persecuted [by Hitler], not a race, nor a nationality, nor a faith.”
On the millions of Jewish refugees, the New York Times said: “They have nothing to do with a specific race or creed. It is not a Jewish or a Gentile problem. “
And notably in an editorial on the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in 1943, the New York Times did not mention Jews at all!
Leff also examined the positions and actions of the editorial staff of the Times. Leff concludes: Sulzberger’s bias was shared by other Jewish staffers who decided to minimize, bury and downplay the news about the killings of Jews: “Between them and influential Catholics among the crucial night editors, who decided where to place news items, the imperiled Jews of Europe had no advocate in the NYT’s newsroom.”
For more information on this subject read:
BURIED BY THE TIMES, by Leslie Leff.
Watch “Reporting on the Times: The New York Times and the Holocaust”, a fascinating documentary by Emily Harrold.
And see a short paper by Anna Blech here (most of the information of this article was adapted from this paper).