Writen in 2009: Never again, is up to us

Spech given on April.25.2009 Tazria – Metzora (Holocaust) 1.Yiar.5769

This is a difficult week for a Rabbi to decide on a subject for his speech. This Shabbat falls in between the commemoration of the Holocaust, Yom HaShoah, and Yom Haatzmaut: respectively the biggest tragedy and the biggest achievement of the Jewish people in modern History. Luckily, YMJC Board made my life easier by deciding to celebrate Yom Haatzmaut next Shabbat.

I will dedicate this week's sermon, therefore, to reflect on Yom haShoa, or better said to reflect on the circumstances that surrounded the advancement of the Nazi death machinery. This past Monday night, we commemorated in this building Yom haShoa and we had two special guests. First, we had a veteran American soldier who was present at the moment of liberating the concentration camps. We saw some very shocking pictures that he took with his camera, but as we said to him that night, the most important thing for us was to be able to look directly at the eyes that witnessed this horror. This will be our way to become witnesses ourselves… Then we listen to Mr. Stephen Berger, a Holocaust survivor who was born in Hungry and lost in the Shoa 26 members of his immediate family. The fate of the Hungarian Jews was unique. Unlike other Jewish communities in Europe, the deportation of Hungarian Jews started when the Nazis knew that the war was lost: they invested their forces to pursue the final solution rather than fighting the Soviets. In a matter of months, half a million Jews were deported, mainly to Auschwitz, where 90% of them were killed at their arrival…. Winston Churchill wrote in a letter to his Foreign Secretary dated July 11, 1944, "There is no doubt that the persecution of Jews in Hungary and their

expulsion from enemy territory is probably the greatest and most horrible crime ever committed in the whole history of the world…."

Mr. Berger told us many stories of the horrors he and his family had lived. But what personally shocked me the most was to hear him saying that in his dictionary, the word "never" does not exist. I think that he was hinting at the fact that, ironically, on the same day that we remembered the Holocaust in Europe, specifically in neutral Geneva, Switzerland, the Durban II conference was taking place. Very much like Durban I, back in 2001, Israel -the Jew among the nations- was bashed over and over. The deplorable highlight of the conference was –incredibly- the President of Iran, Mr. Ahmadinejad, who once again hinted at the denial of the Holocaust and advocated for a second one.

Interestingly, when this man started to speak, many European countries walked out of the room, and some European countries stayed in the room: Switzerland because they still didn't get that neutrality is a form of collaboration, and when a member of the UN is calling for the elimination of another UN member, silence is agreement. Do you know who else stayed from Europe? One of Israel's "best" friends Norway. Norway justified its presence because it defended "freedom of speech". So, they should let anyone, including a dictator who incites to mass murder like Ahmadinejad, freely express his ideas. Norwegians are very consistent with their beliefs. Last month, as it was reported in a Norwegian newspaper, Adressavisa, an exhibition by painter Guillvag took place: "Requiem for the children of Gaza" (check: http://www.israelwhat.com/?p=1116) where you could enjoy the art of giant paintings depicting blood thirsty Israeli soldiers stepping on the heads of naked.

Palestinian children… everything in the name of freedom of speech. However, that same week in the same city, there was another important exhibition: "It's not forbidden to think" by Ahmed Mashhouri, who, in a series of prints, exhibited some of

the most controversial parts of the Koran. After only a few hours, the exhibition was attacked, partly demolished and subsequently taken down from the town. Not surprisingly, nobody complained, no demonstrations about freedom of speech because when “Islam” is criticized, Norway does not advocate freedom of speech. In Norway, NO newspaper would dare to reproduce the drawings of the Prophet or to say anything critical of Muslims. It is a new kind of selective and COWARD freedom of speech, typical of the new era of paralyzing personal fear, which started so victoriously for radical Islam with Salman Rushdie’s persecution. Even in America, cartoons like “The Simpson” or “Family Guy” will make frequent unrestricted fun of the Jewish or Christian faith, but they would NEVER, EVER make fun of Mohammad or Islam. More from Norway, a country that obviously has no geographical or political reason to hold any conflict with Israel: This week, I’ve got an email called: “Why I won’t be seeing the fjords this summer”. Thanks to this email, I’ve learned that the Norwegian supermarkets decided to place special identification stickers on products coming from Israel. To add insult to injury, they dare to affirm to the press that the stickers “do not constitute a boycott of Israel”. Norwegians do not have anti-Semitic feelings! They just are pro-Palestinians. Now, why a European country would be Pro-Palestinian? In which sense the Israeli Palestinian conflict affects Norway, directly or indirectly? When the Norwegians care so much exclusively about Palestinians, it raises a flag of suspicion!!!. Let me explain: Is Norway weighing boycotting Chinese products from their supermarket in protest of China killing and expelling the Tibetans from their territories? Are the Norwegians going to ban Sri Lankan products because Norwegians identify with the Tamil victims? I guess that only if the Tamil Tigers decided to fight Israel instead of Sri Lanka, would Norway and many European countries will pay a lot more attention to the Tigers and less attention to the Palestinians. (PLEASE, PLEASE see the following link: you won’t believe your eyes!!!

http://www.israelwhat.com/?p=1778&cpage=1#comment-79. This fixation to empathize exclusively with the enemies of Israel is very suspicious of a different kind of hate. Interestingly -and ironically- in 1941, the popular graffiti on Jewish business in Oslo read: “Jews, go to Palestine”. But now that Jews have built a beautiful country, to their distress, the new Norwegian slogan is: “After 50 years of Jewish occupation: free Palestine!” Talking of anti-Semitism and Norway. I’m reading here from Asianews.Net,. I quote: “Judges of the organization of the Islamic conferences and Norwegian lawyers accuse Israel of war crimes and ethnic cleansing during the recent war in Gaza….Norway and Iran want to sue Tel Aviv for the bombings in Gaza. … Norwegian lawyers have accused Israel of war crimes for the Gaza offensive…The lawyers have said that they will charge Tzipi Livni (prime minister at the time) and Ehud Barak (defense minister at the time), asking for their extradition and arrest”.

Going back to Mr. Berger’s; as he was leaving the building, somebody asked him: “Do you think it can happen again?” And he said: NO. But not because the world has changed. Our case study, Norway, is the living proof that anti-Semitism disguised as “anti-Israelism” is still very much alive. Mr. Berger believes that the Shoa is very unlikely to happen again

because now we have Medinat Israel. Now we have an army to deter those who seek our annihilation. Now we can defend ourselves!!!.

I agree. Anti-Semitism is on the rise in a level that the world has not seen, probably since 1939. Incredibly, in an era of scientific progress and unprecedented progress in human rights, a dictator who is explicitly known to support terrorist organizations denies the horror of the Shoa in European soil, advocates for the extermination of the Jewish people on an International Forum gathered to fight persecution and racism, and he does not only walk away with murder but he is also applauded by more than 100 nations of the world… Can

we still have faith in any international system of law or justice? If Chas veShalom there is a new threat of a Shoa against the Jewish people, do you think that these 100 nations will raise a finger to stop it? I can't help but believe that the conditions right now are, unfortunately, fertile for a new Shoa. Radical Islamic regimes are gaining more and more ground. The Muslim demographic is a huge threat to Europe and even to America (I urge you to watch this video clip: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-3X5hIFXYU&eurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.jerusalemon)

I really hope I'm wrong, but I believe that the world would not do anything that will imply even a diplomatic risk for them, in order to save Israel…

HaShem Almighty is on our side and He will always protect us from our enemies. And they know that now, unlike 1939, we have Medinat Israel. All the modern Hitlers and Ahmadinejad are fully aware that if they ever want to pursue their evil plans, they will have to face one of the most powerful armies in the world and the most amazing and motivated soldiers.

May HaShem always protect us. May He inspire the world to see the truth and pursue peace. May we have the merit of seeing the dream of SHALOM coming true in our days,