

We were just talking about human nature and wondering, well, what could we do for the future that would prevent this kind of stuff. And we decided education was primary.

Primary would be if you want prevent it. You have to start from babyhood.

And you have to have everybody agreeing, too. You can't have--

Yeah, but you never will have a clear field for that. Never.

That's a big problem, yeah.

There will always be the people that-- should I-- should I say boorish?

They feel hatred.

They cling-- you know, the rednecks and so on.

They feel prejudiced.

They fear. That is right. That is what they should do.

The hatefulness.

You know, you never get rid of these. Or if you want to get rid of these, then you do the same thing.

Then you are the Nazi.

Right.

Yeah, that's true. That's true.

That is it. I mean, in principle. I do not think that will ever totally go away.

So it's something that's just in human nature--

It is human nature.

-- to discriminate and segregate.

It is human nature from way, way back. They were always types that thought one type is the other, one power with the other, always did it by destroying the weak.

But as I read more and more about the Holocaust, I can't help but feel that this was the most unique.

Yes, it was unique.

Uniquely horrifying thing that we've pulled on each other so far.

Well, I think-- what I think is the Holocaust was, as it is now, you are-- any news, you aren't get every news. You didn't get that much news before the time.

Mm-hmm.

Till that even some that think in that was going on. OK? Think even FDR, he didn't believe it. He didn't want to believe it.

Mm-hmm.

OK? He didn't want to believe it.

And what's more scary to me is, once they knew the truth, concealing the problem so that they wouldn't have to deal with all these refugees, actually allowing what was going on to continue--

Yeah.

--because the alternative would have been problematic. All these refugees coming into the country would have been a huge problem for the country at that time they felt, and allowing it to continue because they didn't want to deal with the rescue.

Make the problem bigger.

That just appalls me. It just appalls me.

It makes the problem bigger. I don't know if you have seen "Ship of Fools." I've heard it was excellent. The pretend-- the people you know, first off is the people that have money. You know, first class person. You know, poor people on that ship, and they took care of their-- when they left Germany, they were-- and then they couldn't land anywhere with all the money they had. OK? They couldn't buy themselves their freedom. They couldn't buy.

From the British, they wouldn't let them-- let them-- let them land I don't know where, OK, including Palestine. They wouldn't let them land. And the final end was that they had to come back. Now, you have in that "Ship of Fools," you have an example of all the people. But I mean, there was some [INAUDIBLE].

OK. He knew if he comes back he will live another day. OK. Anybody misshapen, when they were picked up, they never came out. Never. Anything that was in mind wrong, OK, didn't come out. They didn't live long.

I had my own cousin who was in the First World War. And he was a soldier. And he was-- I don't know what you call it now. You know the ranks what they build for the soldiers? What they could shoot from?

What is it? What is it called?

Pillbox?

Hmm?

Pillboxes? Bunkers?

Yeah, bunker. Bunkers in the ground, OK?

Underground bunker.

Yeah, his tough luck was He was a young man, very young. He was in that bunker apparently. He was covered by ground and the dirt, OK? He became-- he was disabled only insofar-- not normal anymore.

He got oxygen-deprived? His brain got damaged?

Yes, he got it--

He was buried.

He was an epileptic through that.

Oh.

OK? A very good guy. You could trust him everything. But he was damaged, brain damaged. OK, now what was it things from Hitler. When my-- this cousin of mine, he was at a brewery. You know, that delivery things because he was a strong guy. And then finally the brewery said they're not sure if he didn't-- wouldn't fall, get a seizure and would fall off. You know, the brewery cut things.

At least they used that excuse. It didn't take long. Then he was picked up for a safe-- a home. It didn't-- it didn't take long and my cousin was gone.

You mean the Nazis collected him.

Of course, of course.

For selection, as they called it, selection.

Of course. Anybody who was deformed-- I had in our building, a woman. She had a hunchback. A hunchback. That was all what was wrong with her-- a hunchback. And that's very popular, very popular, especially with those children. OK.

One day after the Nazis, I don't know, she went into her home. How long did she live? Not long. She was then must have been in her 50s or so. She had a good family. She had a good background. She had everything. The family cared for her. Who could-- was able to care for her. It didn't take long either. That was it. That was-- anything that was not Aryan.

Perfect.

Perfect.

Perfect model of something.

The ideal.

Their ideal--

Yeah.

--in their minds.

When there were people that were dwarf-like and so on, the same thing. Didn't matter.

I think one of the most upsetting exhibits in the Holocaust museum to me--

Yeah.

--among the many upsetting things--

Yeah.

--but the most-- I think the most intensely emotional things for me was the fact that they destroyed young children. They experimented on young retarded children, and then killed them and--

Yes.

--incinerated them in this factory-like hospital that they had appropriated from another-- I just-- and some of the photography there was of the cruelty of the people--

Yes.

--upset me deeply. Just-- just the idea.

Would upset any normal person.

I mean--

You couldn't believe that when you heard it from people that saw it in the camps. That means former camp people. OK?

Mm-hmm.

They saw it in front of their eyes.

You mean friends of yours over in Shanghai that had--

There were people that come out to Shanghai.

Come out of the--

That were in concentration camps.

Did they tell you their stories?

They talked about it when they were-- in fact, there were young people, like a young woman. She just-- she just couldn't hold it down there. She was wild. You know.

She-- the woman, the refugee woman?

No, no. That saw all these things. She lived-- was in a concentration camp.

Oh, OK.

And she saw the men just hurting the babies, pulling--

Ripping them.

They pulled them apart.

Pulled babies apart?

By the legs.

By the legs? Oh my goodness.

They smashed them against the wall. Whatever. You had terrible-- and that is not a lie. That was the truth of what they did. And of course, that woman had to get-- she was at that time when I knew her in Shanghai, she was maybe in the early 20s, just my age, when I heard wild stories that she told.

How was that woman's sanity? Was she--

Who knows? I don't know what happened to her.

She was able to continue, though, but she was-- she was there.

So too these people couldn't get a hold again on life. You know, they always did. I think-- I do believe that these people always will have nightmare. Yes, until they are dying. So the thing is inhumanity to man which you can't believe.

Mm-hmm.

This is the worst thing of the Holocaust-- the inhumanity. If they didn't like your nose, in you went.

It is-- I don't know if I mentioned it, but at the time when I was engaged in Berlin, I brought my fiance home all the time because I felt, and they looked at me, they didn't know. They looked at him, and he looked really-- I think I mentioned it-- like an Italian when we were on the train.

Yes, you did.

OK, he really looked like an Italian, totally. Features, good features, curly black hair, but I felt safer to bring him home. And then I walked home at night by myself, a 20 minutes walk. That was it.

I guess it was all a good thing. My looks didn't give me away, but that was luck. That was totally luck. So and I believe that happened to other people, too, of course, lots of people.

If you crossed on the street you passed-- there was a group, let's say, in uniform you went the-- if they came grouped in uniform, you would cross that street to the other side. You wouldn't stay on the same side.

But if they couldn't do it, they would sometimes-- they wouldn't let you you know. That is also something that happened to my brother-in-law. They just wouldn't let him pass by. You know how-- how they make--

Intimidation.

They make it, you know, the human wall. any which way you tried to go through, they couldn't escape these people. They had their army. They wanted to upset you. And they did. And they had fun.

That's why I think that it's something that's in some humans and that is uncontrollable.

It has been a question for me as I'm reading all these things and learning and listening and stuff. I think to myself, how revolting this is, these horrible things. I'm revolted by them.

Yeah.

I am absolutely emotional about hearing it. It's so revolting to me.

Yeah.

And it's something that my imagination would never have dreamed up, even on a bad night. You know? Even in a bad nightmare, I don't-- I've never had such a violent way of thinking. And I wonder how much of that is my culture and how I was raised.

Yeah.

And how much of that is somehow in my nature that I'm not that way.

Well, that is--

And you wonder, on the other side of the fence, then how can these really violent people live with that, and do those things, and continue living after they've done those things and feel no conscience? You wonder how much of it is culture and how much of it is nature in a person?

I think it's a lot of nature.

Like what they were born to be like--

Human nature.

--or something. Because culturally, personally, I mean, physically, it revolts me. It can make me positively sick to my stomach to think about it. And yet, some people are so comfortable with this and doing these things.

Well--

That's a scary thing to me.

I do believe that these are people that physically get fun out of doing this sort of-- they don't care what comes out of it, what's behind. The background may be first class, but there are always people who would surprise-- surprise how could they. But if you see today with the shootings in families--

Mm-hmm. Elie Wiesel said something very interesting about that, because he had been-- he couldn't believe that some of his research led him to learn that college professors and people with PhDs, highly educated people, were put in charge of Einsatzgruppen, going around the countryside, wiping out villages by gunshot fire and these mass graves.

And many of the administrators right in the field, right there watching this stuff, were college graduates with fine educations from German universities. PhDs!

Didn't make any difference.

They were put into service and sent out to wipe out whole villages-- men, women, children, grandmas, and grandpas. And they were comfortable with this.

Yes.

He could not understand that. And I'm so relieved that he couldn't, because I can't.

No.

And if he can't, then I feel comfortable with my own groping.

And to know when it all--

I don't get it.

And to know when it all ended, then they all said, we had to follow orders.

Yeah, yeah.

OK. I guess that's enough of that. I think that's enough of it.

Isn't that something?

Yeah.

There's a new--

Because you always come back to the same point.

You come back to the same--

How? How?

How could anybody go that low?

Yeah.

And especially with backgrounds with integrity, allegedly-- alleged backgrounds of integrity.

No, I don't believe in that kind of integrity. Because you have people that are poor like anything, can't get most things what they need in, and they wouldn't do anything like that. You couldn't get them to do it.

OK? And as you say, highly educated, they would excuse them, make their own excuses.

Find a way around--

It has nothing to do with their education.

--accountability.

I do not believe in that.

Interesting.

I do not believe in that.

You just-- you would like to believe that a person who has come into an education has along the way become a thinker.

Yes, I understand what you are--

And somehow a thinker also has high values and high moral standards, but that isn't necessarily a conviction.

No, it ain't necessarily so.

It's just amazing. And another thing that upset me very, very deeply, because I've been raised as a Christian, OK, was when I'm reading that Elie Wiesel himself-- this is in his biography-- had learned to be afraid on the Eve of Easter Sunday and on Christmas Eve, when the local Christians-- and he was raised in Transylvania, Romania area there-- the local Christians, the rowdier ones I'm sure, would actually put on costumes, and go out in the street, and harass any Jew they could find--

Yes.

--and parade around with devil's horns on and stuff--

Yes.

--shaking their fists at the Jewish community--

Yeah.

--on the eve of these holidays that I was always trained were spiritual celebrations that-- where peace was reigning. Peace was there, and you were just so full of this-- this religious fervor--

Yeah.

--that was very peaceful. In my own home, it was never a directed outward hatred for anyone.

You wouldn't think about it.

It was a private religious appreciation of some history, some stories, some traditions, a good dinner.

Yeah.

Easter basket, whatever your family has.

You know, it was a holy day.

Innocent!

You weren't supposed to be--

Innocent! A holiday of innocence and just love.

And of course--

When I heard that--

From this period I don't know.

I felt like something hideous had been taught to those people. Because nowhere in the tradition have I ever seen this taught or encouraged or--

Yeah.

Nowhere in any holy book or any history of a saint did they ever say, well, now I want you on Easter Eve to go out there and harass the nearest Jews.

No.

Never! This must have been the most horrible region of the world for the Jews. And yet, it was their big population there, in Poland, into the Ukraine, and into the Russia there at the border. That was the largest Jewish community, I think, at that time possibly on Earth.

Well--

In terms of numbers, I think that America and Poland and the Ukraine were the two huge Jewish communities in the world.



Yes.

And then some in Israel. This was before Israel became a nation. That was the heartbeat of the Eastern Jewish world.

Of course.

And it amazes me completely to hear that Christians-- it makes me ashamed to even say it-- went out and harassed these people and then felt good about celebrating their holy day the next day and felt completely comfortable--

And then you go and buy a goose.

--with their crimes or whatever they were up to. That just does not fit what I was raised in.

Yeah.

And I am so ashamed personally.

Yeah.

And I can't make that go away. That's the way they learned. That's the way they were trained.

Of course.

These kids were trained into that.

Look, if you are a child and you find your elders doing it--

Oh, yeah, sure.

--you do it, too.

Well, where did they come up with this, though? It has no basis--

I don't know. I don't know.

--in what I understood as Christianity.

I don't know.

That is also the basis of the pogroms and all that.

I read somewhere it said that you have to understand that region--

Yeah.

--had been inculturated over 1,000 years of hate. From the Middle Ages, that region had been soaked in hate for the Jews.

Yeah, I know.

Just drenched in it, inculturated, taught.

It was taught. It was hate.

A 1,000 year tradition of hatred.

Yes.

And scholars are not that amazed that it got that ugly in that part of the world.

Yeah.

And I think--

It is-- the whole how that came together from the beginning, I don't know. OK.

Middle Ages was a strange time. I read of many strange book pogroms where a whole city would decide to wipe out its Jewish population.

Yes.

With the blessing of the Church.

Yeah.

And during the Reformation.

Yes, that--

That's the scary part. And during the Reformation, Martin Luther in Germany--

Yeah.

Martin Luther had all kinds of hate for the Jews, and he told those Christians what to do with those Jews.

Yeah.

Burn down their houses, smash them up. If they don't cooperate, kill them. Reduce their place to dust, and don't even have a sign of it.

But that was also in-- that was also in Russia. That was also in the pogroms everywhere.

Yes.

OK.

And this hatred was hundreds of years old by the time Hitler took advantage of it.

Of course he took.

He knew it was there, and he just fanned it.

Of course.

Like a flame.

Of course.

He took a little, tiny coal, and he just fanned it until it became--

Yeah.

--a Holocaust.

Yeah. Until they couldn't handle it anymore anywhere else. OK. But the basic people, that they were good, take again, Schindler. He didn't give a damn about the Jews.

Not really, but he didn't hate them either.

No. He didn't love them, and he didn't hate them.

To him-- to him, they were just people.

He didn't know.

He wouldn't want to offend them. You know, to do with them personal business it's different, but otherwise forget about it. But even he was basic. He was basic good. Otherwise, it wouldn't have hit him.

And, you know, that's an interesting thing you just said because we're talking about nature, human nature. Somewhere in his nature--

Yeah.

--was a kind of compassion that couldn't tolerate what he was seeing.

No.

Combined with a schemer and a dreamer--

Yeah.

--who had the tools--

Yeah.

--up here in his head to go out and manipulate the Nazis.

Well, one--

He had a lot of gifts that were interesting.

It's a personality of Schindler was that he wants his shop-- you see once, and you turn around, and you see the same thing, but you didn't notice before. OK?

And then you get-- once they get alerted to this what they feel it's wrong, it shouldn't be, OK, then they get alerted. Then they see that with any kind of scheme, right? Because he put the companies. He had companies and friends with whom he drank and so on to get to what he thought was right.

Mm-hmm.

But that is in a person. That is in a person.

At any time, they could have uncovered it, and looked at him, and just shot him. If they could shoot their own cabinet member who was their friend--

Cabinet? At that time, it was the basic circle. OK? That was Goring--

Goebbels.

Goebbels, Rohm, that was the one that was shot. And also the one who was in Spandau. He used to be in there, you know. Hess.

He had the youth. He led the youth. He had the whole. He was a top man. OK. But some we saw a little bit in life. But they didn't know how to get out. OK.

But this was the original group. That was the original group. And I do not know what kind of charisma Hitler had because this Goebbels and Goring were educated people. Rohm, I don't know.

That proves that-- it just proves that education does not necessarily make you a better person if you ignore its gifts.

No.

You can ignore its gifts.

Education doesn't tell you--

The character.

--right from wrong.

Values training, it's what is important training. It's values.

It is like you know somebody and you hate them. OK? Now, if you hate that person, really hate that person, you may be feeling like, hey, get rid of him. OK, if you can.

That is in you. That is not--

I think that's really true. Because in my own experience, I've had people who have really tormented me, like that last boss I told you about.

Yeah.

Where he was very racist. He offended me morally--

Yeah.

--and then he went on to offend me personally.

Yeah.

And I can honestly say that there have been times when I have felt hate for this person.

Yeah.

Yes, but never in my worst fantasies did I ever think, wouldn't it be great if something horrible happened to this guy and he were dead.

Yeah, yeah.

I wouldn't feel good if I heard the news that he had been killed in an automobile accident. I would have felt very bad.

You just want him off your back.

And that's an interesting, thing because he pushed me about as far as I've ever been pushed--

Yeah.

--by a person whose values I disrespected, and who I felt was cruel and stupid.

Yeah.

And he pushed my emotions as far as I think I've ever gone. I don't believe I've ever disliked a person more than I've disliked him.

Yes.

But at the same time, for me, my own instincts would not lead me to murder or would not lead me to wanting anybody else to murder him.

Yeah.

I would feel very sad if I heard that he had been a victim of something.

Yeah. No. No, it is in the people.

That is amazing. And what scares me is that it was in so many people. When I think of the country of Germany, and I compare it in size to the nation of the United States--

Yeah.

--it is not that huge a place. It was the home, though, of millions of people--

Yes, of course.

--with an extremely high standard of living compared to many other places.

Yeah.

And a good educational system.

Yes.

And a very organized kind of society that got things done, and was neat and tidy, and did their homework, and did their- they took their baths, and you know what I'm saying there, where they seemed like your basic civilized nation. And it amazes me that they found so many people willing to do such horrible things.

Yes.

And that the government never had a shortage of volunteers for these killing squads in the East, for the people to work in the concentration camps. They never had a shortage of fresh volunteers to replace the exhausted murderers when they

were done with their tours of duty.

Let's say [? diffident, ?] too.

That--

Even if they didn't have the volunteers, if they were in the party, stormtroopers or whatever.