

'So they want to go to Germany!'

By
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They want to go to Germany,
For freedom, jobs and peace;
From the Syrian nightmare,
To find full release.

'As neighbours and colleagues,
We'll welcome those who come
We'll take half a million –
An unprecedented sum.'

Thus spoke the Labour Minister
Of the German State,
That once viewed its own Jews
As objects of hate!

Yes, we know the advantages
For the German purse;
With an ageing population,
And pensions to disburse;
With a very low birthrate
And contracting labour force,
New immigrants will provide
An invaluable resource.

But it's still a proud record,
When one contemplates
That every fifth person there
Is from a foreign state,
In the European Union or the Middle East,
Many arriving penniless,
By people-traffickers,
Fleeced.

I remember the Germany of my youth,
A by-word, a pariah;
Symbol of Concentration Camp,
Chimneys and barbed wire;
Of man's inhumanity,
Of the ultimate in depravity,
Of Aryan vanity,
And racist insanity.

In my childhood,
Reports of the camps appeared.
When I was told about them,
My tender mind was seared
By images of horrific scenes -
Emaciated bodies,
In ravines.

<p>I would ask myself, Is this real, Or an apparition, Most surreal?</p> <p>And how did those victims feel As by the pit They were made to kneel? Was their mind Rendered numb? To loss of faith Did they succumb? Did they 'love the Lord With all their soul,' As they stared into The depth of Sheol?</p> <p><i>Men tor nit fregen</i> (We dare not ask) - For humans, That's a brazen task!</p> <p>That's all our teachers had to offer, All the guidance They could proffer To our confused generation; Searching for Faith's foundation.</p>	<p>No German goods would Jews buy; No one needed to question, 'why?'; Just one small gesture for martyrs gone - A simple, loving denouement.</p> <p>'Is this what grown-ups Do to Jews?' As I grew older I searched for clues To the rationale of that timeless hate, That just refused to abate?</p> <p>I even considered its justification! - Dare one undertake an exploration Of such a clearly obscene causation? Perhaps, given the realization That obscenity is hatred's Near relation!</p> <p>Can the leopard change its spots? Can blame attach to those mere tots When the Nazi venom, With Germany, mated; With the cream of Jewry Incinerated?</p>
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A new age has dawned –
And that's for sure;
Though, elsewhere, elusive
Is the cure
For the virulence
Of that hate,
That just refuses
To abate.

Grandchildren of storm-troopers

Who screamed '*Juden raus!*'

A spirit of hospitality,

Have learnt to espouse;

Offspring of those

Who watched unmoved

As Jews were carted away,

Now welcome penniless newcomers,

With food and floral spray.

For all that, we must admit

That Germany can take credit

For extending welcome,

Hope and home

To those displaced,

And forced to roam.

From Aryan to humanitarian,

In the space of fifty years;

A model for other nations,

Prolonging war and tears.

So let us all wish her well

As she embarks on this plan

To absorb countless asylum-seekers,

From Syria and Sudan.

Is it not a gamble?

Indeed, much like life;

They must hope that the in-comers

Won't generate strife;

But, like Jews, just contribute,

And acculturate;

But, unlike them,

That they'll escape

Prejudice and hate.

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