

## Open Letter to Mr. Netanyahu

Mr. Netanyahu, take back those hateful and untruthful words that Nazi Germany and Poland are responsible for the Holocaust of WWII. You are also asking America to agree with you. What in the world and who in the world made you think that way? German Jews who always considered themselves German first and Jews second? Polish Jews always considered themselves Jews first. They were loyal to their faith. When other countries in Europe told the Jews to convert or leave their country, some did convert, but most proud Jews chose not to. Poland opened its doors and invited the Jews to come to poor Poland. They had representation in Poland's Congress giving them recognition and status as citizens of Poland. They invited their relatives and friends to come to Poland. And they did. They prospered in their profession as doctors, lawyers, poets, authors, musicians etc. Poland was good to them and they were good citizens of a world that existed at that time. They had their own synagogues and temples and worshiped their God as their faith dictated. Great Jewish learning institutes were everywhere.

German Jews looked down at the poor Polish Jews who often came to Germany hoping to sell something to their coreligionists. But the German Jews who were referred to as "yakkis" (one who always wears a jacket), chased them away. They were considered poor and dirty. I learned all this from a good friend who is a German Jew Holocaust Survivor. I have many such friends and they tell me how it was with them in Germany. History seems to follow some kind of agenda. It is written with a plan to lift somebody up or to put someone else down. Decent people see that and wonder when it will be their turn to be maligned. It won't take long. Stay alert world. Here it comes.

According to historian Nechama Tec, 80% of Polish Jews never learned to speak proper Polish. They had their own language "Yiddish" which majority was satisfied with. Those who learned proper Polish prospered in their chosen professions as doctors, lawyers, musicians, poets etc. They established great learning institutions, built great synagogues and Temples and worshipped their God. Jewish parents who wanted to keep their children from intermarrying with Catholic youth, stayed in their own little Shtetle . The Catholic parents felt the same and kept their children away from the Jewish community. But do parents ever get what they want? In Polish schools the Jewish students, lacking the Polish language, sat in back of the class, sparing them from being humiliated by their lack of the Polish language. Jewish historians have put a different spin on this.

Polish rescuers of Jews are remembered in Yad Vashem, Israel. How in the world can Israel now turn around and explain this to the world. Anyone reading this should stay alert and be on guard for you are next. As a Polish Catholic Holocaust survivor I am in touch with many Jewish survivors and they have taught me much. We speak in schools, Universities, churches etc. and have a very good support from the teachers. US Holocaust Museum in Wash. DC recognizes 11 million victims of the Holocaust. Not just 6 million. Does Mr. Netanyahu wish to challenge that?

In Warsaw there existed a very strong religious Jewish district that on Shabat night the religious Jews chased the Catholic Polish pedestrians shouting "Your streets, but our buildings".

During the Communist occupation of Poland after WWII, Israel began the "March of the Living" and taking teachers and students to Auschwitz Concentration Camp. But first they were prepared as to how they are to behave. They were told to spit at the Polish youth, call them anti-Semites and hate everything that was Polish. We saw films of their March on television reviling the Polish population. They thrashed hotels, destroyed property, behaved like hate mongers. Eventually, Poland had to designate only certain hotels to the group. This was perceived as anti-Semitic.

After the war that left so many Jewish orphans, a representative of the Bundt came to America to ask for money from the rich American Jews to help the poor orphans. The rich American Jews said "not a dime" will they give and the poor man returned with empty pockets. There was plenty of blame to go around.

Poles and Poland value their independence just as Israel does. When people throw bricks at us, we as Christians refrain from throwing them back. This is perceived by others as a weakness on our part. But it was our Catholic strength that held us back. Poles sometimes behaved badly towards Jews. Jews also behaved badly towards Poles. There was plenty of that to go around. It seems like the slogan "Never again" is becoming "Never enough".

Mr. Netanyahu, why does Israel feel superior to all others? Telling America what to do and where to stand on certain issues is a political stance. The whole world is looking at Israel and wondering maybe we are next to feel the muscle of Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu, take back your hateful words and trying to change history and gain sympathy for Israel. Decent people don't do that to other decent people. We Poles are aware of our faults, but you seem to bury your own.

Asking America to stand with you to change history is repugnant to decent human beings. Take back those hateful words. Stop "bullying" America into doing as she is told. If you want peace on earth, behave peacefully. If you want respect you must be first to show it.

I am a mother crying for the children of the world who are being manipulated by a world of hate mongers. You are trying to bring Catholic Poland to her knees. The only time Catholic Poland goes to her knees is when she prays to her Jewish Savior.

*Bożenna Urbanowicz Gilbride*  
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