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Has the World Remained Silent during Another Atrocity?

No matter how advanced the world becomes, it is still plagued by tragedies. The worst of these are caused by groups that see themselves as superior to another group of people. Even worse, the global response to these crises is often silent, even if the signs of genocide are visible. Such a response led to the unthinkable during the Holocaust, yet global leaders still turn their heads to the suffering of religious groups in Iraq and Syria. The persecution of Christians, Yazidis, and other minorities at the hands of ISIS and the lack of action to prevent it are both evocative of the Holocaust and must

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or "Daesh" as many Middle Eastern civilians call it, has persecuted virtually all religious groups that see differently than its leaders. These groups include Christians, Yazidis, Jews, and even Shia Muslims, among others. This persecution began with the expulsion of Assyrian Christians in Mosul, Iraq after the terrorist group first took control of the city in mid-2014. Since then, evidence has surfaced of ISIS committing numerous forced conversions, executions, and mass-killings against the minorities of Syria and Iraq. They have also destroyed many religious monuments, some of which had stood for two millennia. The group has stated many times that they want to wipe out all faiths other than Sunni Islam. These actions are similar to those of Nazi Germany against the Jews, Gypsies, and homosexuals, and other peoples of Europe that it deemed inferior to its people. ISIS, therefore, is guilty of genocide against innocent people of different religions.

The most remarkable aspect of these terrible events is the fact that very few world leaders have addressed them as problems. Those who have publicly identified the genocide during its height still did not attempt to help persecuted groups. Such behavior prolonged the reign of ISIS in many areas, resulting in more executions of minorities by ISIS. Even as the military threat of ISIS dwindles, the US, UN, and other international groups are beginning to fund projects aiming to rebuild cities affected by ISIS, but they have neglected to reach the vast majority of Christian and Yazidi communities, causing them to stay in temporary refuges with no way to make money. This is similar to how many Holocaust survivors were not adequately helped and were forced to start their lives over after leaving concentration camps with very few possessions. The lack of aid to the survivors of genocide is often a tragedy in itself.

The suffering of religious minorities caused by ISIS and the resulting silence by the rest of the world are unacceptable atrocities similar to those of the Holocaust. Taking no action against these injustices would only show that the world has not learned from the past. To prove that the world has not forgotten the terrible events of the 1940s, its leaders need to take action now to help the victims of ISIS's religious cleansing in the Middle East before it is too late.

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