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’How many innocent souls must die?’’

In November 1942, the Washington Post included a brief news item on an inside page, under the headline, ’Two million Jews slain.’ On 17 December that year, Britain and the Allies issued a proclamation condemning the “extermination of the Jewish people.’’

Recent UN documents reveal that Churchill was on record at that time as stating that Britain already had too many immigrants and couldn’t accommodate any more. See Johann Hari, *Not his finest hour: The dark side of Winston Churchill, www.The Independent*, Wednesday 27 October 2010; www. ‘When did Churchill know of the Holocaust?’ Accessed 04/05/2017:

How many innocent souls

Must die

Before the world attends;

How many flowing

Rivers of blood

Before tyrants achieve their ends;

How many secret dossiers

Must cross world leaders’ desks;

How much indifference must be displayed

And rejection of requests?

How much priority will be shown

To appeasing leading nations;

How much horse-trading will be done

In international relations?

Human life trailing as

The least of considerations,

As if it were a commodity

To be bought or rejected;

As if natives,

By foreigners,

Could, somehow, be infected!

O, Winston, what made me think
That you stood apart;
That diplomacy, in your book,
Was ruled by the heart?
It seems we were deluded
By data now revealed,
That, in ’42, you were made aware
How Jewry’s fate was sealed.

The ’42 report disclosed
That two million Jews had died;
That the ‘Final Solution’
Was being mercilessly applied;
With a further five million
Listed for annihilation,
That history might jettison
The entire Jewish nation.

Al tivtechu vindivim,
‘’Trust not in those with power’’—
Said the ancient sages
Who’d seen patronage
Turn sour;
Especially when Jews
Were identified with wealth,
Of which they might be relieved
By violence or by stealth.

No wonder we commemorate
So many past woes;

Offering memorial prayers

For the tranquil repose

Of those who died as martyrs

For the faith that was their all,

And whose pride in their host countries

Did not prevent their fall.

They’re also a reminder,

To us and to our kin,

That the bonds of human kindness

Are often wafer-thin;

And that, but for the grace of God,

We’d have shared the martyrs’ lot,

With our remains,

In some cavernous pit,

Having been left to rot.

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