''I visualise a black hole"

by

Jeffrey M Cohen

(On January 7th 2015 a terror attack by Muslim extremists was launched against the Paris offices of the satirical magazine, Charlie Hebdo, killing 12 people, among which were some of the country's leading journalists and cartoonists. Their crime* – which we do not condone –** *was the publication of a cartoon depicting a naked Mohammed being pushed in a wheelchair by an Orthodox Jew. Two days later a Jewish grocery store was raided and four of the people being kept hostage were murdered before the arrival of the police.

This poem was written at the time as a response to those atrocities, but the sentiments expressed continue to resonate as a manifestation of the depth of Jew-hatred that underpins the desire of Hamas and its kindred spirits to make the world Judenrein.* Hence our revision of the poem to include allusions to the situations at the time of the Gaza war.*)

I visualise a black hole

Toward which

Life is sucked,

A graveyard for justice

And fine moral conduct.

A dump for objectivity,

For values

And for truth,

A tip for peace and amity,

For the idealism

Of youth.

I visualise a world

Wherein right becomes wrong,

A world that seeks to outlaw

Romance and song.

A world wherein coercion

And violence hold sway,

Suppressing open-mindedness

Some dare to display.

A world wherein culture

Is equated with sin,

And artistic creativity

Is consigned to the bin.

A world wherein children

Are taught to fight and hate,

And aspire,

When they're older,

To a suicide bomber's

Fate.

I visualise a world
Wherein history
Is denied,
And it's axiomatic
That our ancestors lied.
For, no Holocaust happened,
No gas chambers were built,
And it was all a mere Jewish ploy
To allege Nazi guilt.
For, no 'Final Solution'
For us was devised,
And no millions were murdered,
Nor a nation traumatized

I visualise a world
Devoid of moral courage,
That, to tyranny, allies itself,
And pays a grovelling homage.
A world that, readily,
Dubs Israel the aggressor,
And, in anti-Jewish prejudice,
Ranks as a professor.

World – it's for you
That I bitterly lament.
For, into that black hole,
Your values
Have been sent.

I don't support those who mock
Others' belief,
Even when, above all else,
They hail it as chief.

I respect one's right
To demonstrate,
And to protest,
If one's religion is ever
Restricted in the West.

But minorities must accept
That they don't rule the roost,
And actions are improper
If to fear they give a boost.

Though Jews are not the outgrowth
Of Britain's Christian roots,
Our forebears proudly donned
Their uniforms and boots,
To defend that precious liberty –
Since Runnymede secured –
For which the British nation,
Wars' horrors, endured.

Our land is a garden,

With plants of every hue.

Each nourished and nurtured,

And accorded its value.

Paris 2015,

They gunned down In Allah's name,

A group of harmless journalists,

Who did, indeed, defame

The Prophet's reputation,

With satire and pen,

So, to mighty Islam,

Were hardly bogeymen?

We understand the real fear

That the Islamists instill

Into co-religionists

That they'd strike at will.

But if the world is to be rid

Of such a deadly scourge,

It requires all moderate Muslims

to initiate a surge

Of righteous condemnation

Of hatred and jihad

Of declaring our society

Dissolute and bad.

And, as for Islam's message of peace

That its adherents regularly claim

lies at the very heart

Of their faith and name –

Why is it not an overture

The Ayatollahs are seen to promote,

To jihad and violence,

A preferred antidote?

Four million French people

Rallied and vowed

That, by the jihadists,

They wouldn't

Be cowed.

A sea of banners

They had on display.

'Je suis Charlie'

They announced that day.

But, amid the high profile

Jewish grief,

Not one proclaimed,

'Je suis Juif'.

Our hearts go out in sympathy,

Our prayers we express,

For the families of the journalists,

Their grief and distress.

But equal thoughts we reserve

For our Jewish slain,

Guiltless of any crime,

Caught in the hurricane

Of utter loathing for our faith

And for the Jewish state,

The scapegoat of

The gentile world,

Pariah,

Incarnate.

Lord,

Send Your salvation

To your deeply-fractured world.

Forgive it for the banners

Of hatred unfurled.

Implant a new heart,

An eye that looks with grace,

A hand outstretched

In peace to all,

And steps

Fully retraced.

© Jeffrey M Cohen
January 11th 2015. **Revised 20/11/2023**