

“In the State of Israel the Jewish mother is disappearing”

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[Translated from Hebrew]

I thank Women in Black for inviting me to speak here today.

At this hour, I would like to dedicate my words to the children of the Gaza Strip, who are withering slowly from hunger and disease, and to their mothers, who continue to bring children into the world, to feed and to educate them wonderfully. The rate of literacy in the Gaza Strip today stands at 92% – among the highest in the world, and all that in the most terrible concentration camp on earth, the residents of which are being strangled as the civilized world looks on in silence.

I wish we could celebrate today the conclusion of the activities of the Women in Black. But the truth is that their activities are becoming harder every day.

In a state in which the gods of death and money rule, in a state where *the economy is flourishing while the children are hungry*, where the mythological heroes are fearless murderers, where the leaders openly and publicly admit that human life is not worth a fig in their eyes, in a state that sends its sons to be killed without even bothering to invent a reason for it, in a state that imprisons millions of human beings in ghettos and enclosures and kills them slowly, the persistent quiet voice of the Women in Black is the strongest conscientious voice of refusal.

The Women in Black are example and paragon of refusal to worship the god of death, refusal to obey the racist laws of the State of Israel .

The action of The Women in Black is in itself the rejection of racist education and the routine systematic poisoning of minds that sustains the schools, the media and the speeches of the nation's elected representatives.

In the State of Israel the Jewish mother is facing extinction.

The Jewish mother of today is closed off in neighbourhoods like Mea Shearim*, there the mothers protect their children from the army, and outside those neighbourhoods the voice of the Jewish mother is not heard except in organizations like Women in Black, which the society in general condemns and vilifies.

The State of Israel condemns and vilifies the voice of the Jewish mother, which is the voice of compassion, tolerance and dialogue.

The State of Israel does all it can to ensure that that voice will be muted and silenced forever.

Outside the peace organizations that are considered in the general discourse to be marginal sleepwalkers and extreme leftists, the voice of the Jewish mother ceased long ago to be a maternal voice. The Israeli mother as she exists today embodies a motherhood that is distorted, lost, confused and sick.

The Jewish mothers like Yochabad the mother of Moses; like Rachel who wept for her children and refused to be comforted; like Mother Courage; the mother who cannot find solace and healing in the death of the children of another mother, have been replaced by mothers who are nothing but golems that have turned on their creators and are more terrible and cruel than they, who dedicate their wombs to the apartheid state and to the occupation army, who educate their children in uncompromising racism and are prepared to sacrifice the fruits of their bellies on the altar of their leaders' megalomania, greed and bloodthirstiness.

Those mothers are also to be found among the teachers and the educators of our day.

And only the women who stand here week after week, in the rain and the sun, they are the one and only reminder that the voice of the other motherhood, the natural one, has not completely disappeared from the face of this wasteland that had once been the Holy Land..

Few are the parents in Israel *who admit to themselves* that the murderers of children, destroyers of houses, uprooters of olive trees and poisoners of wells are *none other than their own beautiful sons and daughters, their children who have been educated in this place over the years in the school of hatred and racism.*

The children who have learned for 18 years to fear and despise the stranger, to always fear the neighbours, the gentiles, children who were brought up in the fear of Islam - a fear that prepares them to be brutal soldiers and disciples of mass murderers. And not only do those boys and girls kill and torment; they do so with the full support of Mom, with the full appreciation of Dad, encouraged by this entire nation, which does not so much as raise an eyebrow at the deaths of children, of old and of disabled people.

A nation that rallies around pilots who do not feel a thing except a bump on the wing** when they drop bombs on entire families and crush them to death.

In this hell in which we live, in the daily inferno under which stirs and grows the underground kingdom of dead children, the role of the Women in Black, the mothers and the grandmothers who stand at this square*** and in similar squares all over the world, is to be the guardian of sane natural motherhood and to ensure that its voice is not silenced and does not disappear from the face of the Earth.

To remind a world that has lost its human image that we were all made in His Image; consistently and tirelessly to say that still, despite the apartheid Wall, despite the cruel siege of Gaza, despite the wars without cause, and in the face of the fury of the rulers of this

country, all of whom down to the last one are criminals against humanity, the voice of women and mothers – the voice of compassion, justice and hope – will not be silenced. More power to you.

* An ultra-orthodox Jewish neighbourhood in Jerusalem most of whose residents do not recognize the State of Israel and most of whom do not serve in the Israeli armed forces – trans.

** The reference is to Israeli air force pilot and former IDF Chief-of-Staff Dan Halutz, who, when asked by a journalist – shortly after the Israeli air force dropped a one-ton bomb on an apartment building in the Gaza Strip killing several civilians – what he felt as a pilot when he dropped a bomb, replied “I feel a slight bump on the wing when the bomb is released” – trans.

*** Paris Square in Jerusalem

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