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Horror News, This Time From Munich

By Victor Grossman
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Berlin.

es, the double horror is reaching Germany too. The shots in a shopping center in Munich, killing ten people and injuring another at least 27 are bloody symptoms of an ailment which has already shocked – or killed – so many in a Paris dance hall, a Brussels airport, a Norwegian holiday island, a seaside promenade in Nice, a dancehall in Orlando – and market places in Baghdad – and so many, many more. Those pulling triggers or otherwise doing the killing are often young males, up-rooted by the waves of mass migration of recent years, who feel rejected by their newly-found locations which have not become homes, who have difficulties finding proper education, an occupation, a decent job, a wife and family, and who feel rejected by the society forced upon them by events, most commonly because of their nationality or religion. This leads to crime, frequently to increased misogyny, and in a few cases – rare but never rare enough, such alienation, the feeling of being humiliated, sometimes exaggerated but all too frequently well-founded, leads to a violent reaction and the murder of as many as they can reach – and themselves as well.

Religious bigotry and fanaticism often play a role, as they have with nearly every other religion in certain places and periods. I would also submit that a lust to kill may not only be inspired and strengthened by bigotry and a desire for vengeance. I am convinced that a constant diet of violence and cruelty in films, in games, in videos, in books takes its toll on some in the population. Not everyone fed on this diet wants to try out killing for himself. But there are a few

who do, and a few is more than sufficient. Manufacturers make their goods in order to sell them, and people buy commodities in order to use them. When it is as easy for the violent few, like everybody else, to buy weapons as easily as loaves of bread – even assault guns – then symptoms of a grave and dangerous ailment are revealed, indeed the symptoms of a sickening society, now extended so cruelly to Munich in Germany.

Indeed, according to the latest police reports, neither religion nor ISIS nor nationalism played a role with the unhinged young man in Munich – of Afghani descent but German born and bred. The motivation was not connected with Afghan nationalism or Islamic beliefs. Unfortunately, this may not prevent new increased waves of fear and hatred in Bavaria and Germany, directed, with the willing assistance of the gutter media and many in the social media, against all immigrants, or all Muslims.

But his action was rather caused by the kind of twisted emotions witnessed at Columbine High School and Sandy Hook School, with symptoms closely related to that ailment so commonly demonstrated in many such killings. In the USA some people buy weapons because they like shooting pheasants or ducks or deer. Let them, I say, as long as they don't endanger whole species. Some like the sport of shooting, testing their eyes and their fingers against a distant target. Let them enjoy their sport! And some may indeed fear for the safety of their home and loved ones, though this reasoning is beset by many flaws. But some want weapons clearly for reasons of hatred, most commonly hatred of people they believe inferior to themselves, plus the fear that such "inferior" people are no longer willing to remain in inferior positions, and can thus endanger their own imagined superiority, something they fear losing since it is often all they have left in a hard, difficult world. They see themselves encircled by myriad many-colored dangers – derived largely from such hatred and fear. "They want to take our weapons away!" they cry. "Protect our rights! Raise the barricades even higher!" And for this purpose assault rifles are an optimal resource – unless or until you get tanks and planes and drones.

And some do get tanks, planes and drones. This affliction has spread – not just recently – to all the world. The wars in Korea, against Vietnam, against Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria, even Panama and Grenada – and against Palestine – have all been against people who often did not have pale white skins. More important, they refused to behave the way inferiors were supposed to behave toward their "betters", courageous men in uniform waving stars and stripes or in suits and ties extolling democracy (but always democracy plus free)! Such insubordinate rebellion must be chastised and brought to heel, in the past, not always so successfully, in Hanoi or the Bay of Pigs, today in Tripoli, Ramallah, Caracas – or all too similarly with darker-skinned brothers and sisters in Ferguson, St. Paul or Baton Rouge.

Is it surprising that some such people, hearing of bombs dropped against Bagdad or Kunduz, in Fallujah or Tripoli, seeing videos of unmanned drones firing into wedding gatherings and other undesirable activities in a dozen countries, killing parents or brothers and sisters, learning of uranium and phosphorous poisoning which will remain for generations, and finding no outlets for their rage and sorrow, seek vengeance, even wild vengeance against the whole world which they see as hostile? Sadly, they have found no better way of protesting, one without the horror but with higher chances of results.

This is where Germany again fits in. Though clever or lucky enough to avoid direct involvement in Iraq and Libya, it joined in the destruction and killing in Afghanistan, which has not led to more rights for women or anyone else, but only to more and more misery. It has tested the waters in other regions as well, sending weapons, advisors, or soldiers to Mali, to its artillery units along Turkey's border and in its AWAC spy planes over Syria. It is supplying a dozen wars and conflagrations, not only with Heckler & Koch's hand-held weapons but with tanks, planes and submarines, some of them easily adaptable for atomic mass murder. Now, in addition to the white skin motivation, so reminiscent of colonial days, a new rationale is being built up: "Hit the Russians"! In this lucrative new endeavor, soldiers in tanks and planes from Germany, retracing the heavy tramp or the dogfights and bombing raid routes of their grandfathers, are joining the USA, Britain, and 27 other countries in constant military maneuvers along the Russian border, not far from its second-largest city, St. Petersburg. And Germany's Secretary of Defense, Ursula von der Leyen, is demanding billions and billions more to build up the armed forces, for "defense" she says. Defense against whom or what? Who is even dreaming of attacking Germany? Is the shoe really on the other foot? Germany may have to remain a junior to its partner across the Atlantic, but that leaves plenty of room for growing power and wealth in Europe— and in Asia and Africa as well.

When a country goes on a course of attack against others, can it be surprised when some retaliate? Can it mourn the brutal deaths in European centers but ignore its own killing of men, women and children in Afghanistan, simply because they were killed "cleanly" from the air, not close up with an axe or a rifle? But then, after all, they were not Germans!

Munich is a pleasant city to visit, with wonderful art works. And yet, eighty-odd years ago, its Brown House, center of Nazi domination, sent out its killers to destroy resistance in Germany, then in Spain, and then to conquer the world. Before that war had ended the city and its people paid a bitter price. Bavaria, of which it is the capital, perhaps the most beautiful German state, is also furthest to the right among them, and is the home of the largest number of weapons manufacturers. Its politicians have shown the most vigor directed against the refugees.

Behind the pious men and women preaching democracy and human rights to justify their maneuvers abroad are giant, wealthy forces, many of whom were already powerful and guilty in the years of the Brown House. They disguise their costly expansion by misleading Bavarians and all Germans into seeing the cause of all their worries, problems and hardships in the waves of refugees, fleeing the wars and the poverty for which these very powers are to blame. The story is almost exactly like that of their soul-mates in Britain, France and other regions, but especially in the most powerful of them all, the USA – with the current diatribes against immigrants, Mexicans, Muslims and any other scapegoats except the truly guilty ones.

Can the people of Munich and Germany, in the USA and elsewhere, learn from the bitter past and join with many among the refugees and with Muslims and people of every religion, or none at all, in getting to the roots of these terrible problems, whose names can be found on nearly every business page? Such actions, and not the ever-mounting surveillance and hysterical attacks on human rights and human beings, are the only real long-run answer to horrible news items like the one from Munich and which are now becoming so prevalent everywhere. True enough, this is

neither a quick nor an easy answer. But in the long run, I am convinced, it is the only genuine answer.